

# MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

PUTNAM VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
146 PEEKSKILL HOLLOW ROAD  
PUTNAM VALLEY, NEW YORK 10579

TIME: 7:00pm  
No. of Pages: 8

Type of Meeting: Business Meeting

Date: March 17, 2011

---

**BOARD OF EDUCATION:** Valerie Fitzgerald, President  
Guy Cohen, Vice President  
Joseph Ferraro, Trustee  
Jeanine Rufo, Trustee  
David Spittal, Trustee

PRESENT

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Barbara Fuchs, Interim Superintendent of Schools  
Paul Lee, Asst. Superintendent  
Vincent Burruano, High School Principal  
Edward Hallisey, Middle School Principal  
Jamie Edelman, Elementary School Principal  
Nick Bellantoni, Director of Buildings & Grounds

**OTHERS:** Maureen Bellino, District Clerk  
Johnmichael Chiriyan, Student Rep. to the BOE  
Christine Alexander, Student Rep. to the BOE  
Dan Mahoney, Meeting Videographer  
Reporter from PCNR  
Approx 40 members of the community, faculty & staff

Ms. Fitzgerald convened the meeting at 7:01pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONVENE MEETING

Ms. Fitzgerald asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

**APPROVE MINUTES**  
#235/11

On motion by Ms. Rufo, seconded by Mr. Ferraro, the minutes of the Business Meeting of February 17, the Work Session/Business Meeting of March 3 and the Special Business Meeting of March 9, 2011 were approved. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Fitzgerald noted that the Treasurer's Report for December 2010 was available in the District Office.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

Dr. Fuchs and Mr. Lee presented information with regard to the budget for the 2011-12 school year. They noted that they would be presenting their final proposed budget to the Board at the Board meeting on April 7. They reported that the estimated tax levy increase with the addition of full-day kindergarten would be 1.6%. Dr. Fuchs summarized the proposed staff changes, which she had presented to the Board on March 9. Mr. Lee noted that unfunded mandates totaled approximately \$9,900,000, which represents a quarter of the budget. Also noted was the fact that enrollments were predicted to decrease over the next ten years. They reported that due to the enrollment decreases, no additional staff will need to be hired for the full-day kindergarten program and that Putnam Valley currently has the lowest proposed tax levy increase in the surrounding area. It was noted that the surrounding area includes 18 school districts. (Presentation is attached to the official minutes of this meeting).

The Board of Education members each spoke regarding their feelings with regard to the addition of a full-day kindergarten program. The Board members each noted that they supported the full-day program. Individually, they noted that they supported the program both educationally and fiscally, and they felt that a full-day program puts the child first and foremost by permitting the child to maximize their potential. It was noted that the one-time \$300,000 conversion aid payment may not be available in future years, and it was a financially sound decision to apply for it now. Also noted by the Board was the fact that due to declining enrollments, the District will be able to sustain the program in future years without hiring additional teachers. It was also reported that the addition of full-time kindergarten would result in the loss of two additional teacher aides, which the Board noted was unfortunate for those staff members. It was also noted that the newly adopted common core standards include kindergarten, and the additional time with the students would help the District meet the new core standards, which will be implemented next year.

An update on the benchmarks for writing (BOE/District goal) was presented by District English teachers (Angela Capodanno, Liz Barrette and Phyllis Lutz). It was noted that Beth Poust was part of the planning for the presentation but was unable to attend the meeting. (Presentation attached to the official minutes of this meeting.) The Board inquired whether the length or amount of writing was being added to the new practices and how the teachers were ensuring that the students were being exposed to a variety of writing styles. Ms. Capodanno responded that they were doing "coachable" writing and those areas of concern were being addressed. Ms. Barrette noted that at the Elementary School all teachers were instructing the students on expanding their writing. The Board also asked how the items on the curriculum maps were being executed with regard to different types of papers and number of books read. The committee responded that students, at every grade level, are being exposed to all types of genres for both writing and reading. The Board asked how the teachers could communicate with the parents regarding the feedback they were giving to students. The committee responded that there is constant communication and feedback given to the students and that the parents should always ensure that they have contact with the teachers.

Ms. Maria Obando reported on the status of foreign languages in the District. It was noted that the study on what languages to offer in the coming years is a BOE/District goal. Ms. Obando reported that it was the goal of the District to continue to offer two foreign languages (one of which will be Spanish) to the students. In recent years, there has been a steady decline in the amount of students choosing French as their language choice and the offering of French is currently being phased out. Ms. Obando noted that a survey was administered to all students and their parents in grades 4 through 8. The results of the surveys (parents and the children) showed the largest interest in having Italian being offered as the 2nd language taught in the District. It was noted that there are currently two teachers on staff who are certified in teaching Italian and that the District would continue to look for funds and grants for start-up materials. It was suggested that next year be an exploratory year for this new offering and that French would be offered next year as well.

Ms. Fitzgerald summarized the District's policy on allowing the children of non-resident staff members to attend District schools. It was noted that there is a cost associated with this and that given the cuts that the Board is making, as well as being fiscally responsible to the community, she does not feel that the District can continue this practice. Mr. Spittal noted that he assumed that all current children attending would be grandfathered in to continue their education in the District. Ms. Fitzgerald noted that the discussion was related to any future children of non-resident staff members receiving approval. Mr. Ferraro noted that he felt there was more parental engagement by teachers who have their children enrolled in the District and that at this point in time there was minimal impact to class sizes. Mr. Lee summarized the cost implications and noted that the District receives no state aid for these students. He noted that cost of educating a child at the Elementary School in a half-day kindergarten program is approximately \$6,000, full day at the Elementary School is approximately \$13,000 and grades 7-12 is approximately \$14,500. He also noted the costs for educating a student who is classified.

The Board discussed combining the positions of the Superintendent of Schools and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. It was noted that Dr. Fuchs has been assuming both roles since August of 2010. Dr. Fuchs noted that by combining these two positions, the District would be saving the equivalent of 1.5 FTE teaching positions. The Board noted that Dr. Fuchs is able to do this combined position due to her experience in the Assistant Superintendent's role with the District. It was noted that the Board felt that a person from outside the District would not be in a position to be able to succeed in this dual role. It was noted that Mr. Paul Lee would be the person of first appeal if a staff member had a reason to appeal a decision made by Dr. Fuchs. As of this date, this has not been necessary. Dr. Fuchs also noted that Ms. Natalie Doherty was now the Title IX Officer. The Board asked Dr. Fuchs to create one job description that includes the roles of both positions.

Mr. Hallisey gave an update to the Board regarding the reconfiguration of the grade six program at the Middle School. He noted that this program, which began in September, was not a new model and that it was not experimental or uncommon. He also reported that this type of program helps the students in their transition from 6th grade to 7th grade. He did a survey of middle schools in the Putnam Northern Westchester area and most were running a departmentalized program. He noted that the reconfiguration included a reduction in math instruction time (20 minutes) but this reduction in time for math instruction was added to instruction in ELA. The students' skills periods are being utilized to make up the loss of the 20 minutes of math instruction with extra math help being provided. Teachers were also offering help in all areas during the recess time. Mr. Hallisey noted that he had met with faculty and students to get feedback on the reconfiguration. The faculty reported that they appreciated having more academic time with the students both in the writing class and the extra-help sessions. The students reported that they felt more grown-up with the program. The students also told Mr. Hallisey that they preferred having free time to the extra-help sessions, and they felt they were receiving too much homework. Mr. Hallisey noted that the team continues to meet every day and that the new program will be re-evaluated this summer after the test data is received to see if student progress in ELA (as well as increased mastery in math) is being made. A question was raised by Mr. Ferraro regarding whether any of the teachers were teaching outside of their certification area. Mr. Hallisey responded that they may be teaching a different content area but the teachers were all within their certification areas.

In the Superintendent's report, Dr. Fuchs congratulated the members and the managers of the Destination Imagination teams (press release attached to the official minutes of this meeting). She also noted that she would be presenting the budget at the senior center, at upcoming PTA and PTSA meetings, at each faculty meeting (including the transportation office), at an upcoming Town Board meeting and that she had filmed a discussion on the budget with Mrs. Marie Zarcone, which would be shown on the local cable TV stations. She is anticipating that she (along with Paul Lee) will present the final proposed budget to the Board at the meeting on April 7 and that the Board could adopt the proposed budget on April 14. Dr. Fuchs noted that she had attended the Childside production, *Imagine*, and it was a wonderful uplifting event that stressed the message, "Be safe, be respectful, be responsible and be kind." She also reported that she attended the kick-off assembly at the Elementary School for their Go Green Club. Middle School students, under the direction of the Middle School Recycling Club advisor, Mr. Gerry Carlin, put on a highly spirited and enjoyable production regarding the value of recycling.

The PTA/PTSA report included performance information regarding the upcoming play, *Jungle Book*, at the Elementary School, an upcoming PTA meeting (March 23) and a family "Pizza and Cranium" night for third graders on March 24 at the Elementary School.

The report from the Student BOE representatives congratulated the newly inducted members of the Mu Alpha Theta Honor Society (program attached to the official minutes of this meeting).

Ms. Fitzgerald asked for comments on the agenda items.

The Board thanked the Putnam Valley Education Foundation for their wonderful auction fundraiser. It was noted that it was a great night and a lot of money was raised to benefit the students of the District. Dr. Fuchs noted that members of the PVEF will be coming to the Board meeting on April 14.

Ms. Barbra Parmly, Elementary School teacher, reported on the science night at Elementary School. She noted that Ms. Heidi Gessen organizes and oversees the event but that all the tables were run this year by High School students who contacted Ms. Gessen and volunteered their time. The students talked to and encouraged the Elementary School students throughout the evening. Ms. Parmly noted that the High School students had provided great service to the students as well as the community.

Mr. Gerry Carlin, 5th grade teacher and President of the PVFT noted that he felt there was no higher honor for a teacher to pay to the District then wanting their children to attend its schools. He also noted that he did not like the reference to the distinction that was made between regular education students versus special education students.

Mr. Mark Cooperman, a community member, noted that there is continued talk about unfunded mandates but feels no one is doing anything about them. With regard to all-day kindergarten, he noted that all monies, whether taxes or state aid, ultimately come from the taxpayers, and he noted that he believed that the all-day kindergarten program will be a mistake.

Mr. Frank Zamberlin, a community member, reported that he wanted to offer a counterbalance to the previous comments made by a community member. He felt that the District's offering of full-day kindergarten was a way to invest in hope and the future and is not an act of futility. He noted that he felt the Board was making cuts where they were most needed. He also noted that the District is trying to do more with less while still investing in the future and noted the example of Dr. Fuchs holding two roles. He thanked the Board for their balanced approach to the budget.

Ms. Rufo apologized for her comments regarding costs for the education of regular education versus special education students and that it was not her intent to differentiate amongst the District's students, but she noted that the Board must look at the fiscal implications of their decisions as part of their responsibility to the public.

There were no further comments and the Board moved into the New Business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**AGREEMENT**  
**W/PUTNAM CO.**  
**TO PROVIDE**  
**REAL PROPERTY TAX**  
**SERVICES**  
**#236/11**

On motion by Ms. Rufo, seconded by Mr. Ferraro, it was resolved, on recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to approve the agreement with Putnam County to provide real property tax services as per Document #65/10 attached to the agenda and official minutes of this meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

It was explained that the county provides real property tax services to the District.

**APPOINT**  
**D. MOZILO FRASCA**  
**6-WK LV REPL. SPEC. ED.**  
**TEACHER**  
**HS 4/13/11-6/3/11**  
**#237/11**

On motion by Mr. Ferraro, seconded by Mr. Spittal, it was resolved, on recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to appoint Denise Mozilo Frasca to a six-week leave replacement as a Special Education teacher at Putnam Valley High School effective April 13, 2011 through June 3, 2011 (or sooner at the discretion of the Board of Education), on step 2-MA of the PVFT salary schedule. Ms. Frasca holds Pre-K, K, 1-6 and Special Education certifications. Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Fuchs noted that Ms. Frasca's certification in special education is K-12.

**MAKE CSE/CPSE**  
**PLACEMENTS**  
**#238/11**

On motion by Mr. Spittal, seconded by Mr. Cohen, it was resolved, on recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to make CSE/CPSE placements as per Document #66/11 attached to the agenda and official minutes of this meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

On motion by Mr. Cohen, seconded by Ms. Rufo, it was resolved, on recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to take personnel actions as per Document #67/11 attached to the agenda and official minutes of this meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVE**  
**PERSONNEL ACTIONS**  
#239/11

On motion by Ms. Rufo, seconded by Mr. Ferraro, it was resolved, on recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to enter into a contract for educational services by and between the Putnam Valley Central School District and the Mahopac Central School District as per Document #68/11 attached to the agenda and official minutes of this meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**ENTER INTO CONTRACT**  
**EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**  
**W/MAHOPAC CENTRAL**  
**SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
#240/11

On motion by Mr. Ferraro, seconded by Mr. Cohen, it was resolved, on recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to approve and authorize the President of the Board of Education to sign a 2010-11 contract for Health & Welfare Services provided to four resident students of Putnam Valley attending non-public schools in the Peekskill City School District at a cost of \$578 per student for a total cost of \$2,312 as per Document #69/11 attached to the agenda and official minutes of this meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVE & AUTHORIZE**  
**H&W SERVICES CONTRACT**  
**W/PEEKSKILL CITY**  
**SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
#241/11

Ms. Fitzgerald asked for comments from the Board and/or the community.

Mr. Cohen noted that members of the High School's Science Honor Society came to the Elementary School as facilitators for the recently held science night.

Mr. Ferraro commented on the District's 75th anniversary and the 10th anniversary of the High School. He noted that a website which summarizes the upcoming activities and events is now available and can be reached through the District's website. He also noted that on Saturday, June 18, there would be a formal celebration for the anniversaries.

There were no other comments.

**CONVENE**  
**EXECUTIVE SESSION**  
#242/11

On motion by Ms. Rufo, seconded by Mr. Ferraro, the Board moved into Executive Session at 9:35pm to discuss the employment history of two individuals. Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Fuchs and Ms. Edelman joined the Board in the Executive Session. At 9:47pm, Dr. Fuchs and Ms. Edelman were excused from the Executive Session.

**ADJOURN**  
**EXECUTIVE SESSION**  
#243/11

On motion by Mr. Cohen, seconded by Mr. Ferraro, the Board moved out of Executive Session at 10:22pm. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURN**  
**MEETING**  
#243/11

On motion by Mr. Cohen, seconded by Mr. Spittal, there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:23pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by:

Maureen Bellino  
District Clerk