

**ORADELL BOARD OF EDUCATION
ORADELL, NEW JERSEY 07649**

REGULAR PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING

**MINUTES
JANUARY 23, 2002**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Public Business Meeting of the Oradell Board of Education was called to order at 8:07 p.m. by President Shinevar.

II. FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mrs. LaForgia.

III. SUNSHINE LAW STATEMENT

The Sunshine Law Statement was read by Mrs. Shinevar.

All requirements of the Open Public Business Meetings Law have been met for this meeting of the Board of Education of the Borough of Oradell. Notice of this meeting was filed with the Borough Clerk, posted in Borough Hall and the Oradell Free Public Library, faxed to the Town News, The Record, and all persons requesting such notice on January 18, 2002.

IV. MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement was read by Mrs. Landau.

The Mission of the Oradell School District is to develop in each student strong self-esteem, ethical values, respect and an appreciation of diversity and passion for learning to enable every student to perform at his/her maximum potential through a flexible and inclusive educational system.

To accomplish this, the Board, in active collaboration with parents, staff and administration, and in partnership with the total community, will provide a comprehensive and academically challenging educational program that responds to the unique and changing needs of students and society.

Adopted by the Oradell Board of Education December 20, 1993

V. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mr. Julis, Mrs. LaForgia, Mrs. Landau, Mrs. Looram, Mrs. Norian, Mr. Spadaccini, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Feigenson, Mrs. Shinevar

Also present were Mr. Jeffrey Mohre, Superintendent, John Esposito, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, sixth grade students participating in the Peace Poster contest, Mr. Rubin Camins, Representative from the Oradell Lion's Club and approximately one hundred members of the community.

VI. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

There were no comments made at this time from the public. Mrs. Shinevar asked the audience to kindly hold off on comments regarding the math ESPA scores until after Mr. Mohre discussed the exam and the associated action plan.

VII. MINUTES

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Spadaccini, seconded by Mr. Feigenson, that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Public Business Meeting of Wednesday, December 12, 2001.

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by roll call vote with one abstention (Mrs. LaForgia).

It was moved by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Feigenson, that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Public Meeting of Wednesday, December 12, 2001.

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by roll call vote with one abstention (Mrs. LaForgia).

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT/BOARD PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Mr. Mohre stated that the performance by the Oradell Public School's *Advanced Handbell Choir* scheduled for this evening was postponed due to Ms. Tice's illness and will be rescheduled for a future Board meeting.

The Superintendent congratulated all the children who participated in the Peace Poster contest. He then introduced Mr. Camins who presented awards to the sixth graders who submitted the winning posters.

Mr. Mohre then talked about the training and certification he and other staff members received in CPR and in the use of the defibrillator.

He then noted that Ms. Jacobs and Mrs. Gonzalez presented a workshop

(Project P.R.I.D.E.) to the OPS staff during the professional development session held on the afternoon of January 21, 2002.

The Superintendent then talked about the math ESPA scores for Oradell and the 2001/02 action plan created to strengthen the math program in the school. Some of the items in the plan include, but are not limited to:

- Math specialist intervention
- Examining instructional methodologies
- Involving students in problem solving, estimation and mental math
- Maintaining a pace to foster time on task
- Teacher collaboration, inservice and workshops related to math

Mr. Mohre noted that the plan was shared with all math teachers in November, 2001, following the release of the ESPA scores. The action plan will be reviewed again as part of ongoing grade level meetings and then again at combined grade level meetings in the weeks ahead.

Finally, he stated that the administrative team will be monitoring progress through observations and evaluations. He also said that a "pre-test" would be given.

Mrs. Norian asked about the proposed ESPA pre-test, such as when it would be taken and what format it would be given in. Mr. Mohre responded that it would be given within two weeks, and over a two day period.

Mrs. Loram asked about the Iowa Test and if the District helped those students with the preparation for that battery of exams. The Board then discussed the options for administering testing in the school, and the Superintendent noted that the administrators were exploring the various options available.

Mr. Walsh asked how many of the points in the action plan were in place last year, and Mr. Mohre stated that several were, but now teachers are more aware of the tools available to them.

Mrs. Norian asked if the pre-test would be a one-time thing and Mr. Mohre responded that he would like to see how the children handle the exam and how well they perform on it. Mrs. Norian also asked about how the District would track those students who did not perform well on the ESPA's. The Superintendent answered that their progress would be monitored via daily work, test scores, and report card grades.

Mrs. Landau commented that the current methods for assessing students may not be rigorous enough. Mr. Mohre responded by pointing out that the assessment portion of the strategic plan calls for evaluating Oradell's current practices and

exploring viable assessment options.

Mr. Feigenson asked if the Kumon technique of math instruction would help the students. Mr. Mohre stated that there are many ways to approach teaching, and he is in favor of using a blend of various, balanced methods of teaching.

Mr. Walsh stated that he wanted the 'best' teachers to help the children who needed the most assistance in math.

Mrs. Loram asked if we could build up skills in 2nd and 3rd grades by requiring more homework. Mr. Mohre noted that he and Mrs. Albrecht, math specialist, will be holding three seminars, looking at children's literature as a springboard to learning math.

Mrs. LaForgia commented that she would like to ensure that teachers are sharing ideas and resources and that all grade levels are consistent in their approach to teaching concepts.

At this time the public was invited to speak regarding the math ESPA scores.

Mrs. Callahan is concerned that some children are not being challenged enough.

Mrs. Keating is concerned that the labor negotiations from three years ago still affect the teaching.

Mrs. Lessersohn asked how we know that the math curriculum is being taught correctly.

Mr. Kasturas, sixth grade teacher, commented that he felt good about the school and that it was moving in a positive direction.

Mrs. Didio stated that she thinks the problem is 'across the board'.

Mr. Mohre noted that there is a Language Arts committee whose goals are to enhance the materials and methods of teaching that curriculum.

Mrs. Halligan commended Mr. Mohre on his action plan and asked about the use of math textbooks.

Mrs. Mills commented that she was trying to decide if her children should stay in Oradell or attend private schools. She also stated she thought the math department should be doing memorization and rote skills.

Mr. Mohre classified the difference between memorization and internalized learning stating that the reason humans appear to have memorized something is

because their previous experiences with a concept were relevant and meaningful.

One parent asked if Oradell had a full-time math specialist and Mr. Mohre responded that one half-time person is on staff, but he is looking for creative ways to better utilize other teachers' skills.

Mrs. DeBold asked why Oradell doesn't look at what River Edge does for its math program. Mr. Mohre answered that there are many models from which to choose, and he would work with staff to identify effective practices.

Mrs. Gilbert suggested looking at other schools for ideas on teaching. She also stated that the 3rd grade policies on grading were confusing and hard to decipher.

Dr. Moskowitz noted that Oradell has a long record of success in teaching its children. He was interested first in defining clearly the problem that exists, and questioned why doing more of the same would make a positive difference. He also asked why many of the in-service courses were in technology.

Mr. Mohre responded by noting that many technological applications do use math concepts, such as spreadsheets and graphing.

Mrs. Weber is concerned that her son and his class will not be prepared for the test, because they have not yet been exposed to some of the concepts that will be on the test this spring.

Mrs. Roberts suggested looking at Best Practices and see how Oradell compares to other schools. She also stated that the curriculum guide is vague and she is unsure of what it says.

Mr. Hill asked if the lower math scores were merely a blip, and pointed out that previous years' scores were in the low 90th percentile for proficient and advanced proficient. He wants kids to learn basic math facts, such as the multiplication tables.

Ms. Puzen asked if the teacher turnover of last year affected test scores. She also wanted to know if the teachers themselves have been tested, and whether or not the math specialist could have after-school hours.

Mr. Chakansky asked if the deficiencies in class were being addressed and how can parents know so they could help their children.

Mrs. Falco complimented the teaching staff and wanted to see continued improvement.

Mrs. Healey is happy with her children's Oradell experience.

Mrs. Marulis asked how much time is allocated to each subject and Mr. Mohre replied that 'blocks' of time were provided for math, language arts, etc.

Mrs. Ahern is concerned that her child misses math for music and wants to know if teachers could be available after school.

Mrs. Callison asked about class size and why Ms. Boyle was teaching Kindergarten when she has a math degree.

Mrs. Gallow stated that parents should approach the teaching staff, as most are always willing to help.

Mr. Belthoff asked the Board what they believed caused the low math scores and if the reasons are identified, would they follow through with the action plan. Mr. Mohre stated that meetings to address many topics, including mathematics teaching are ongoing.

Mrs. Vargas said she is pleased with the District, but wants to see immediate changes to address the low math scores. Mrs. Salerno also wants immediate help, including after school hours.

Mrs. Chester asked if Oradell could look at other schools for what they're doing, and also if children who scored well could be used as peer tutors for those who did not score as well on the test. Mr. Mohre stated that Dr. John DiGiovachino is looking at similar schools that did perform well on the ESPA's.

Following the conclusion of discussion on the ESPA scores, Mr. Mohre gave an overview of the District's Strategic Plan. He talked about the process, structure and outcome of the plan. He asked that the community and Board come together in support of the plan. It is intended to be a blueprint for the direction of the educational process for the next five years.

Mrs. Shinevar asked if the Board would like to open up discussion of the plan to the public first, and most members agreed. She stated that the Board would listen to comments from the community until approximately 11:00 p.m.

Dr. Moskowitz thanked the Board for its hard work on the strategic plan. He stated that goal number one should reflect what children are learning and how to measure it.

Mr. Montemareno stated that he was unsure about the curriculum and grading process and would like more information so he could reinforce it with his children at home.

Mrs. Gilbert commended the plan and asked why it would take five years to

complete.

Mrs. Petersen asked how the parents could be involved in developing curriculum. She also asked about the Academically Talented program and whether or not it had been evaluated.

Mrs. Sherlock stated she wanted parents to be on a curriculum committee to help develop the curriculum. She is also concerned about the science curriculum.

Mrs. Callahan said she was concerned that the social studies texts were outdated.

IX. COMMITTEE ACTION

A. FINANCE – Mr. Walsh, Chairperson

1. Monthly Certifications – It was moved by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Feigenson, that the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary and the Treasurer of School Moneys for the month end, December, 2001, be accepted as attached and, furthermore, that the Board certify in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6:20-2A.10 (e) that no major account or fund in the 2001/2002 Budget has been over-expended in violation of 6:20-2A.10 (b) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligation for the remainder of the fiscal year.

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

2. Payment of Invoices – It was moved by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Feigenson, that the invoices for the period of November 29, 2001 through December 19, 2001 be approved as follows:

Fund 11 (<i>General Current Expense</i>)	\$476,434.19
Fund 12 (<i>Capital Outlay</i>)	\$ 81.00
Fund 20 (<i>Special Revenue</i>)	\$ 21,438.55
Fund 40 (<i>Debt Service Fund</i>)	\$.00
Fund 55 (<i>Milk</i>)	\$ 536.78
Fund 50 (<i>Summer School</i>)	\$.00
TOTAL	\$498,490.52

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

3. Payment of Invoices – It was moved by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Feigenson, that the invoices for the period December 20, 2001 through January 23, 2002 be approved as follows:

Fund 11 (<i>General Current Expense</i>)	\$545,136.31
Fund 12 (<i>Capital Outlay</i>)	\$.00
Fund 20 (<i>Special Revenue</i>)	\$ 29,286.47
Fund 40 (<i>Debt Service Fund</i>)	\$.00
Fund 55 (<i>Milk</i>)	\$ 254.17
Fund 50 (<i>Summer School</i>)	\$.00
TOTAL	\$574,676.95

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

4. Transfer of Funds – It was moved by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Feigenson, that the Board approve the following transfer of funds as noted:

**Meeting of January 23, 2002
Transfer of Funds***

#	From Account (Credit)	To Account (Debit)	Credit	Debit
1	11-000-223-110-00-0214	11-000-100-562-00-0801	\$1,595.00	\$1,595.00
2	11-000-262-620-00-0603	11-000-262-100-00-0614	\$1,127.39	\$1,127.39
3	11-000-262-620-00-0603	11-213-100-101-00-0222	\$952.50	\$952.50
4	11-000-262-620-00-0603	11-000-230-610-00-0112	\$875.16	\$875.16
5	11-000-262-300-00-0613	11-000-213-100-00-0222	\$849.00	\$849.00
6	11-000-262-620-00-0603	11-000-262-610-00-0606	\$297.76	\$297.76
7	11-000-223-580-00-0221	11-000-223-500-00-0217	\$115.00	\$115.00
8	11-000-262-620-00-0603	11-000-290-610-00-0100	\$94.75	\$94.75
9	11-000-262-620-00-0603	11-000-262-800-00-0819	\$73.00	\$73.00
10	11-000-262-620-00-0603	11-120-100-101-00-1703	\$15.00	\$15.00
Total			\$5,994.56	\$5,994.56

* Transaction Date For Above Transfers 12/31/01

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Note: At this time, Mr. Spadaccini asked to be excused from the remainder of the meeting due to illness.

5. Annual School Election – It was moved by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mrs. Landau, that the following Election and Budget Timetable be approved as follows:

2002 ELECTION AND BUDGET TIMETABLE
ORADELL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Appointment of Election Workers	Responsibility of County Bd. of Elections
Adoption of Tentative 2002/03 Budget	Wed., Feb. 27, 2002, 8:00 PM (Business Meeting)
Advertise Military/Civilian Absentee Voting Machines	Responsibility of County Clerk-Co. Elections Mon., Feb. 25, 2002
Deadline for Filing Nominating Petitions	Mon., Feb. 25, 2002 - 4:00 PM
Submission of Tentative 2002/03 Budget to Co. Supt.	Mon., March 4, 2002 - County Office
Deliver Advertised Budget to Newspaper (Must be 10 days before publication)	Sat., March 16, 2002
Last Day to File Objections to Candidates' Petitions	Mon., March 4, 2002
Last Day for Candidates to Withdraw/Amend Defective Petitions	Mon., March 4, 2002
Drawing for Position on Ballot (Bd. Conference Room)	Wed., March 6, 2002 - 4:00 PM
Certify Results to County Clerk (last day)	Fri., March 8, 2002 - 10:00 AM
Advertise Public Hearing on Budget	Sat., March 23, 2002
Last Day Persons may Register to Vote for Election (29 days preceding school election)	Mon., March 18, 2002
Public Budget Hearing & Adoption of Proposed 2002/03 School Budget	Wed., March 27, 2002 - 8:00 PM (Business Meeting)
Proposition Election Copies to County Clerk	Fri., March 29, 2002
Last Day for Appointment of Challengers	Tues., April 2, 2002
Advertise Election in Newspaper (County Board of Elections)	Mon., February 25, 2002
Mail Sample Ballots (County/Municipal Clerks)	Mon., April 8, 2002
Last Day to Receive Mail Applications in County Clerk's Office for Absentee Ballots	Tues., April 9, 2002
Last Day to Apply in Person to Co. Clerk's Office for Civilian Absentee Ballots	Mon., April 15, 2002 Up to 3:00 PM
<u>ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION</u>	Tues., April 16, 2002 2:00-9:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

6. Application for Extraordinary Aid, FY 01/02 – It was moved by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mrs. Looram, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Board of Education submit to the NJ Department of Education an Application for Extraordinary Aid in accordance with Section 19 (b.) of P.L. 1996, Chapter 138, “Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996”, N.J.S.A. 18A: 7F-19 (b.).

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

B. PERSONNEL – Mr. Feigenson, Chairperson

1. Approval of Student Teacher Assignment – It was moved by Mr. Feigenson, seconded by Mr. Walsh, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Board approve Elizabeth Hamilton, a student of William Paterson University, to perform her special education student teaching assignment with Ms. Lesley Maklin, cooperating teacher, commencing January 23, 2002 and terminating May 9, 2002.

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

2. Approval of Substitute Teacher – It was moved by Mr. Feigenson, seconded by Mrs. Looram, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Board of Education approve Katerina Flogaites as a substitute teacher for the 2001/02 school year, at a per diem rate of \$75.00 per day which increases to \$80.00 per day after the 10th day of service during the 2001/02 school year.

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by roll call vote with one no (Mr. Julis).

C. CURRICULUM – Mrs. Norian, Chairperson

1. Approval of Winter/Spring In-Service Teacher Workshops – It was moved by Mrs. Norian, seconded by Mrs. LaForgia, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Board approve the delivery of the following winter/spring in-service workshops for the purpose of providing continuing education in the areas of Technology and Language Arts:

Language Arts Workshop: Holistic Scoring for Grades 1-3 (assessing student writing)

Instructor – Elinor Goeller

Dates: March 6, 13, 27, 2002 (3:30 - 5:30 p.m.) ½ in-service credit

Language Arts Workshop: Holistic Scoring for Grades 4-6 (assessing student writing)

Instructor – Scott Duthie

Dates: March 7, 14, 28, 2002 (3:30 - 5:30 p.m.) ½ in-service credit

Technology/Language Arts Workshop: Wiggleworks

Instructor – Kerri Gumbel

Dates: February 4, 11, 25, 2002 (3:30 - 5:30 p.m.) ½ in-service credit

Technology Workshop: Utilizing the Internet to Enhance the L.A. Curriculum

Instructor – Elinor Goeller

Dates: April 4, 11, 18, 2002 (3:30 - 5:30 p.m.) ½ in-service credit

Technology Workshop: Claris Advanced

Instructor – Carol Richardi

Dates: April 3, 10, 17, 2002 (3:30 - 5:30 p.m.) ½ in-service credit

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

X. OLD BUSINESS

The Board reviewed the Action Item list.

Mrs. Shinevar thanked Mr. Julis for his work on a draft calendar for the Board and said she would contact him regarding her comments.

Mrs. Loram stated that the Board meeting guide for community use was nearly complete and would be distributed at the next meeting.

Mrs. Norian noted that the Ultra Keys software program was almost ready to go out.

Mrs. Landau commented on the math action plan and the best way to keep the public informed. She wants to ensure there is dialogue between the Board and community. Mrs. Landau also noted that now that the defibrillator training is done, the policy addressing its use should be amended. Finally, she asked about the next steps in the strategic planning process.

Mrs. Shinevar talked about the revisions she had sent to the Board's action plan reflecting the Board's previous discussion and asked members to review the changes and let her know if any corrections were needed.

The Board then discussed the science curriculum. Mr. Mohre talked about the process of meeting with a science consultant, Mary Jo Diem. She was asked to submit a proposal to finalize the work she began three years ago. Ms. Diem's program would be very specific and directly tied to the core curriculum standards.

Mr. Julis inquired about the cost of this effort. Mr. Mohre noted that since Oradell is a District without a specific curriculum coordinator, using consultants was one way of gaining expertise in this area.

Mr. Feigenson spoke highly of the Ridgewood school's science program and would like to see Oradell attain the same level.

Mrs. Landau stated that she would like to see Oradell's curriculum exceed the core standards and believes students should have hands-on experience in class.

Mrs. Norian noted that Ridgewood uses science fairs and that our PTA supports and encourages our science program.

Mrs. LaForgia complimented the classes she witnessed as being hands-on for the students. She asked Mr. Mohre about Ms. Diem's timetable.

The Superintendent explained that Ms. Diem would meet with the third grade staff on February 5th, return later that month to convene with the upper grade levels; use March and April to identify grade level work, and develop the curriculum sometime in May.

Mr. Mohre stated that the kits may cost about \$14,000.00, but many contain non-consumable items that can be re-used. Mrs. LaForgia asked if this would be budgeted for next year.

Mrs. Norian said that someone must be accountable for materials management to ensure that the science kits and materials are there when needed. Mr. Mohre pointed out that materials management was part of the training.

At this point, the Board agreed upon a resolution as follows:

MOTION A motion was made by Mrs. Norian, seconded by Mr. Walsh, to authorize the Superintendent to enter into a contract with Per Diem Associates as per Ms. Diem's proposal for the science curriculum at a rate of \$750.00 per day, not to exceed a total of \$7,500.00.

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by roll call vote with two no's (Mr. Julis, Mrs. LaForgia).

The Board then discussed the strategic plan.

Mrs. Looram suggested that the Board invite the facilitator, Mr. Albano, back to help guide the plan. Mrs. Landau stated that Mrs. Lobsenz of NJSBA also be brought back into the process.

Mr. Walsh asked that both individuals be asked back for input.

Mr. Feigenson suggested hearing what each Board member's thoughts were on the plan.

Mr. Julis thought that the plan needed some fine-tuning and that Mr. Albano should be capable of doing that job.

Mrs. Landau commented that based on her participation in the initial planning phases as a community member, the plan doesn't fully address some of the concerns raised by the community in areas such as accountability, staff retention and recruitment, best practices, funding sources, assessments and indicators of success. She suggested sharing QENJ and other documents created earlier in the process.

Mrs. LaForgia also wanted to see the background and agreed the plan needed some revisions.

Mr. Feigenson thanked staff, community and administration, for their efforts in getting the plan to this point. He wants to move forward with the plan after some minor changes to the document.

Mr. Walsh noted that he thought the Indicators of Success could be strengthened.

Mrs. Shinevar thanked everyone for their hard work in putting the plan together.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. LaForgia shared an article from The Record regarding the State giving five million dollars to Dr. Grieco for charter schools. Mrs. Shinevar volunteered to help her draft a resolution opposing this allocation of funds for presentation to the Board.

XII. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Cioffi stated that the PTA had given money in the past for the science curriculum and wanted to know where the kits are now. She also said that she would like to see more family sciences.

Mr. Albano, strategic plan facilitator, noted that he had worked with Mrs. Lobsenz, Senior Field Service Representative from New Jersey School Boards Association, in the past on strategic plans. He also explained the process for changing the structure of a school board in New Jersey.

A parent asked about the policy governing the administering of epinephrine.

Mrs. Lessersohn stated that she wants to ensure that teachers attending seminars share what they've learned with other staff members.

Mrs. Alonso asked about the strategic plan and why it had to be completed now.

Mrs. Zacaria commented that substitute teachers are used quite often in Oradell and that when they are, no work gets done.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION (IF NECESSARY)

There was no Closed Session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Norian, seconded by Mr. Feigenson, that the meeting be adjourned at 12:43 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,


John Esposito
Business Administrator/Board Secretary