

The Millville Area School Board held a special interest meeting on Thursday, June 6, 2013, in the Millville High School Auditorium. President Frank Suchwala called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

The following Board members answered roll call: William Berger, Larry Breech, Erin Comly, Cheryl Kessler, Heather Mausteller, Susan Myers, and Frank Suchwala. Arriving after roll call was Chris Farr. ABSENT: Dean Kelchner

One hundred fourteen guests signed the register.

RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM THE MAY 13, 2013 MEETING:

Frank Suchwala addressed the following questions/concerns from the May 13, 2013 Board meeting:

- 1) Enrollment
 - Concern about Kindergarten Class Sizes and Retentions
 - Student Teacher Ratio
 - Class Size
- 2) Academic Issues
 - Courses
 - Testing
 - Scheduling
 - Dual Enrollment/Online Learning
 - General
- 3) Educational Environment
 - How the District Plans to Motivate Students
 - Availability of the Guidance Counselor
 - School Day Should Not End at 2:30 p.m.
 - Students Do Not Want Technology
- 4) Structural Function/Operations
 - Wants to See Itemized Budget
 - Wants Dates of Employee Evaluations
 - Merging with Benton?
 - Concerns about Furlough Process

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Susan Myers

- We, as Board members are available. Contact us by phone or e-mail. We will get answers.

Cheryl Kessler

- Did not get calls or e-mails but would also welcome contact.

William Berger

- Welcomed contact by phone or e-mail.

Heather Mausteller

- Feels there is a misunderstanding that the Board doesn't care or do their research. She has been contacted in the past, especially by taxpayers wanting to know where their tax dollars are going. She is actively involved in the Budget Committee and frequently questions Mr. Bowser about expenses or budget items. She has always been open to parent and community contact and will continue to do so.

Erin Comly

- Stated we need to talk, work together, clear up the miscommunication and fear of working together.

Larry Breech

- Stated it was great that we were meeting. He was pleased with the turnout. We need to get rid of the negativity and advance, not just as a school but also as a community. We need to lead and not follow. We need to advance with technology, market our school, and make our school and community strong again.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

Cara Shultz

- 1) Stated she was disappointed. She feels she is reaching out but is being misunderstood and her comments are being dismissed. She didn't like the "tone" of the meeting. Her wish is that everyone would work together.
- 2) She requested more contact with the Board via phone or e-mail.
- 3) She feels there should be a direct contact with the principal and/or guidance counselor for course offerings and electives, felt there was a proliferation of study halls.
- 4) Feels it is difficult for those working in the school (intimidation and fear). Feels the climate is damaging. How can we resolve things quickly? Suggested mediation.
- 5) Feels the community and parents should be invited to have more involvement in processes.
- 6) Who evaluates the Superintendent and how often?
- 7) Asked about a line item budget.

Michelle Reichner

- 1) Would like to reinforce the first statement from above of Cara Shultz. She stated it should never be Board against the community and parents, but to work together. She asked the parents to step up and work with the Board members.
- 2) Was opposed to 8th grade students having 3 study halls every other day.
- 3) On-line courses should use our teachers 1st.
- 4) How many retired teachers will be replaced? Will the gaps be filled?

Jodi Love

- 1) Feels things are being misinterpreted.
- 2) She supports the teachers we have. Feels online courses should be used as a supplement but not to replace courses.
- 3) Suggested the setup of the meeting be more informal. With the setup the way it is it feels like it is "us versus them".

Jenn Rine

- 1) She feels the teachers fear the Board.
- 2) Asked if Mrs. Fairchild did the schedule?

Karen Cramer

- 1) As she has done, parents need to get active and be an advocate for their child. More personal involvement is needed. Check their schedules. We have great teachers and everyone just needs to work together. The main goal should be the need of the students.
- 2) Feels more electives are needed.

Christie Kittle

- 1) Against having three study halls.
- 2) She check the schedule and signed the career guide. Courses were either denied, dropped, or wouldn't fit in the schedule, and she regrets not pursuing it further. Feels parents and scheduling should both share the responsibility.
- 3) She addressed the Board that they now know the concerns and to please do the research and act.

Renee Hodgson

- 1) Appreciates the Board. Noted it was often a thankless job. She felt the opening of the meeting was defensive and does not want that.
- 2) Asked for more communication with the Board. Asked them to check e-mails daily.

Marilyn Strauch

- 1) It is important to remember who we are and why we are here.

Sherri Longenberger

- 1) Asked about time-lines for schedules to be available?
- 2) Agrees that the parents need to be active but feels that students without parental support may not have anyone to advocate for them.

Dottie Grocott:

- 1) Our goal should be to be here for all student needs, not just the over achievers or the disadvantaged.
- 2) We may disagree with one another but we need to agree that it is okay to disagree.
- 3) Feels that education should be a meld of old and new teachers and not to dismiss the value of older teachers.

Sandra Lewis:

- 1) Inquired of math credits necessary for graduation and if total required credits were increasing.
- 2) With the number of teachers retiring, will it allow to offer the credits the students need?

Dr. Lisa Strausser:

- 1) Asked if Dr. Stark had any comments?
*It was noted Dr. Stark would comment near the end of the meeting.

Paula Holtzinger:

- 1) Feels more is needed to offer the students the courses they need /would like to take. A pre-calculus course was not fit into her schedule and she had to take it online. She felt she didn't do as well by taking the class online.

Colleen Eves

- 1) Is LCCC different than online classes offered? The teachers we have should be teaching classes.
*We have at least three teachers in the District that are willing to be trained and teach the classes.

Ginny Spangenberg

- 1) Urged the Board members to get out into the community and talk.

MILLVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special Interest Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2013

Kim Derr

- 1) Is there a resource documenting what the students are scheduled to take? She feels the school has a responsibility to review the document and make sure all the gaps are filled and the students aren't left with excess study halls.

Monique Heffner

- 1) Research what the student and teacher needs are.
- 2) Have more electives available.

Wanda Allegar

- 1) Make sure what you see is real and not smoke and mirrors. Feels that the community, parents, faculty and staff are fearful.

Chandra Johnson

- 1) Would like to see the District do away with activity period and have the students makeup what they have missed.
- 2) She prefers extended math classes rather than activity periods.

Bobbi Jo Mordan

- 1) Getting schedules two weeks before school starts doesn't allow enough time to make adjustments to the schedule.

???

- 1) Is it true in the future, we may not be a District?
- 2) People are leaving the area because of our school. We need to market our district. Support the art, music, and sports programs.

Unidentified guest

- 1) Who determines the District lines between Central and Millville?

Dr. Stark

- 1) Online classes cannot replace teachers but feels it is a good alternative to provide unique opportunities for electives.
- 2) Math for 7th and 8th grade students was increased by 50% in 2012-13.
- 3) Many of the courses and scheduling are determined by the Keystones.
- 4) We have a high Title I (poverty) group which requires greater allocation of resources.
- 5) Is an advocate of electives, arts, and sports. She feels they play an important part in education.
- 6) Invited community and parent involvement in the following committees: Community Advisory Committee, Comprehensive/Strategic Planning.

Before adjournment, Frank Suchwala stated the formation of an Ad hoc Public Relations Committee might be a possibility.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion by Larry Breech and seconded by Heather Mausteller to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

David B. Bowser
Board Secretary