

MINUTES  
Committee of the Whole  
February 3, 2003

The Penn Manor School Board met as a Committee of the Whole at 7:06 p.m. in the Board Room of the Manor Middle School. Present were Mr. Anderson, Dr. Frerichs, Mr. C. Willis Herr, Mr. H. Thomas Herr, Mr. Kline, Mr. Kreider, Mr. Lyon, Mrs. Wert, and Mrs. Withum. Present from the administrative staff were Mr. Stewart, Mrs. Griffis, and Mr. Skrocki. Also in attendance were Mr. Lechlitter and Mrs. Carroll for their presentation, Penn Manor residents, Mrs. Rhoades, and Mrs. Warfel.

Mr. Willis Herr asked if there were any Citizen's Comments. Mrs. Isabelle Rudisill informed those in attendance that she is very pleased with the school board and administration.

Mr. Willis Herr asked the committee whether there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes of the January 13, 2003, Committee of the Whole Meeting. Hearing none, on a motion by Mr. Thomas Herr, a second by Mr. Kline, and a unanimous voice vote, the Minutes were approved as printed.

Mr. Stewart stated that in an effort to find a more effective way to serve students in grades 7-8 a middle school scheduling evaluation is being conducted. He introduced Mrs. Carroll and Mr. Lechlitter who presented information regarding the middle school scheduling evaluation. Mr. Lechlitter reviewed the history behind the evaluation. He stated that the process began with the grade 6-7 transition committee started by Mrs. Griffis during the 1998-99 school year. Marticville Middle School teachers and administrators began meeting during the 1999-2000 school year and Manor Middle School began meeting during the 2000-2001 school year. A combined committee representing both middle schools was formed during the 2001-2002 school year. Findings from this committee led to the evaluation of middle school scheduling. Mrs. Carroll reviewed the present configuration of the middle schools which has been in place since the 1970's. She stated that students are currently assigned to core teams with approximately 125 students per team. Core subjects would be math, English, social studies, science, and reading/foreign

language in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students on each team would have the same five core teachers. Students also see approximately seven other cultural arts teachers during a six-day cycle. There are three teams at Marticville Middle School and four teams at Manor Middle School. The number of teams in each building is determined by enrollments. Enrollments at Marticville have been declining while enrollments at Manor have been increasing. Mrs. Carroll reviewed a sample current student schedule that has cultural arts classes randomly scheduled during the six-day cycle. Mrs. Carroll then reviewed the goals of the evaluation. She stated that the committee has determined a need to provide more consistency and routine for the students. They hoped to do this by clustering the core classes. A possible schedule for 2003-2004 which would accomplish this goal would operate on the six-day cycle with two cultural arts classes per day scheduled during periods one and two to be followed by five periods of core subjects. The day would end with band/orchestra/chorus, REM, or a club period. Mrs. Carroll said other goals are to increase the flexibility for teams, ease the transition from elementary to middle school and from middle school to the high school, and to reduce or consolidate the curriculum by reducing the number of courses for students. The reduction/consolidation of curriculum is more difficult at the middle school level due to staff being shared between buildings. The timeline for implementation of the proposed scheduling was reviewed. Joint middle school committees will continue to discuss the possible implementation of a schedule revision for the 2003/2004 school year with a possible phase one of a revised schedule at one or both schools. During 2003/2004 the joint committee will continue to meet to decide upon the final framework. Mr. Leichliter said they would continue to meet with students and parents for input. Dr. Frerichs asked when Mrs. Carroll and Mr. Leichliter would be coming back to the board with plans for this program. Mr. Stewart said it might not be possible to have the program in place for 2003/2004. He stated it might not be possible to match up schedules because the two middle schools do not mirror each other. He stated that shared staff, especially in the foreign language area, is also a problem. Possible solutions to the shared staff in the foreign language area would be to narrow the offerings or offer a sample of foreign languages in the middle schools. Discussion ensued regarding middle school schedules and how middle school students adjust to various types of schedules. Mr. Willis Herr thanked Mr. Leichliter and Mrs. Carroll for their presentation.

Mr. Stewart provided the board with class size information throughout the district. He reviewed current elementary class sizes. Mr. Stewart stated that he expects elementary enrollments to be down approximately 100 students next year. As a result of this anticipated decrease in elementary enrollment he has asked elementary principals to plan for the reduction of two staff members at the elementary level. Mr. Stewart reviewed current elementary class configurations and the combining of classes that are small in the older grades that would help to explain the reduction of elementary staff. He stated that this reduction in staff is tentative and contingent upon enrollments. Mr. Stewart then reviewed middle school enrollments. He stated that middle school enrollments would decline 40 students in two years and 100 students in three years. Board members indicated a concern with class size at the middle school level. Mr. Lyon expressed a concern that large classes at this level cut into the effectiveness of the academic program. He stated that labs are set up for 24 students and an extra 4-5 students pose a problem. Mr. Kline asked if there is any relief in enrollments expected from the 2002/2003 school year to the 2003/2004 school year. Mr. Stewart said 464 eighth grade students will be leaving middle school in 2002/2003 and 451 students will be entering middle school as seventh graders in 2003/2004. Mrs. Withum stated that she is also concerned with middle school teachers having class sizes of 30 students. Mrs. Wert asked what reaction middle school teachers have to large classes. Mr. Stewart said they have been very professional. He stated that the numbers at Marticville are good because of declining enrollments in the southern sectors of the district. Mrs. Griffis stated that the population has shifted from the southern area that used to have the larger enrollments to the northern area now having larger enrollments. Discussion ensued regarding the need to reduce class size. Mr. Stewart stated that an additional team (five teachers) would have to be added at the middle school level in order to reduce class sizes versus adding a classroom teacher at the elementary level to reduce class size. Mr. Stewart said specialists would need to be hired if a team was added. An additional team would also impact on scheduling. Mrs. Griffis stated that should a team be added at the middle school level at this time, in two or three years when middle school enrollments decrease an unneeded team would exist. Mrs. Stewart said that in two years when the numbers decline and result in an unneeded team the district would either have to reduce staff or have extremely low classes. Mr. Kreider asked if students in the large middle school classes suffer as a result of large classes. Mrs. Griffis said test results do not

indicate they do. Mr. Stewart said he would look at the middle school numbers and come back to the board in March with costs and related information regarding an option reflecting not adding a team and an option that reflects adding a team at the middle school level as a means of solving large class sizes. Mrs. Withum suggested that, since enrollments indicate this is a temporary problem, we should look into adding aides in the areas most affected. Dr. Frerichs stated that if looking at a block scheduling concept for middle school, classes with 30 students would be difficult. Mr. Stewart said he has thought of a self-contained seventh grade where you would add one or two teachers as a solution to large class size rather than adding a team but the middle school administration has voiced concerns with that concept. Mr. Stewart said he anticipates requesting the addition of a guidance counselor at the middle school level who would serve both buildings. Due to the difference in enrollment between Manor and Marticville this counselor would spend most of their time at Manor Middle School. High school enrollments were then reviewed. Mr. Stewart stated that he anticipates a gain of 50 students at the high school level for the 2003/2004 school year. He indicated he anticipates asking for support in the areas of math and English and perhaps for the foreign language area. Miss Stiklaitis, Math Department Coordinator, said ninth grade students struggling with math will take two math courses in 2003/2004. Mr. Stewart stated that he would present the board staff requests at the March meeting.

Mr. Skrocki reviewed Student Activity and Athletic Fund Accounts. He stated that the Student Activity Account had a balance of \$137,000 through December. The Athletic Fund account was reviewed. Mr. Skrocki indicated that information pertaining to these accounts would be reviewed as part of the presentation being provided at the next board meeting regarding the total cost for sports. He reminded the board of the transfer of \$6,000 from the activity account to the general fund to cover weight room expenses. Mr. Skrocki reminded board members that the primary revenue for this account comes from gate receipts and the primary expenditures are for officiating expenses and tournament costs. Mr. Stewart stated that Mr. Roth, Athletic Director, would be attending the February School Board Meeting to review costs and participation involved with co-curricular programs. Dr. Frerichs asked if the information to be presented could be reviewed by the board in advance of the presentation. Mr. Stewart said it will be included in the agenda and attached materials provided board members prior to the board meeting.

Mr. Skrocki reviewed the proposed “First Reading” of the Working From Home While on Approved Leave Policy. He stated that the policy would benefit both the district and the employee who is on leave. He stated that he was requesting approval for placement of this item on the February School Board Meeting Agenda for “First Reading.” Mr. Skrocki stated that the policy is written to be so restrictive that it applies to only a handful of people throughout the district. He said there are less than 10 individuals who could qualify for this policy and would pertain to select individuals in central office. Mr. Skrocki stated that the administration can revoke an individual’s right to work at home under this policy at any time and could also say “no” to anyone interested in applying for this policy at any time. He stated that the solicitor drafted the policy. Mrs. Withum asked if there will be a problem involved with the bookkeeping aspect of this policy. Mr. Skrocki said a medical doctor would have to state that the individual requesting the leave is able to work at home. Mrs. Wert asked if the leave taken is an unpaid leave. Mr. Skrocki said it could either be paid or unpaid. He stated that the policy came about as a request from a central office staff member. This item was approved for placement on the February School Board Meeting Agenda on a motion by Mrs. Wert, a second by Mr. Kline, and a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Skrocki reviewed the Revised Classified Staff Development Educational Improvement Policy. He indicated that the revision was being made to increase the number of reimbursable credits from 9 to 12. He stated that this request was being made due to the fact that the teachers contract and the Administrative Compensation Plan allow for the reimbursement of 12 credits. This change will avoid taxation problems for those individuals taking 12 credits. Mr. Skrocki stated that he anticipates the cost to the district as a result of this change to be approximately \$3,000-\$4,000 per year. Approval was granted for placement of “First Reading” of the revised policy on the February School Board Meeting Agenda on a motion by Mr. Kline, a second by Mr. Lyon, and a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Stewart discussed the proposed fields evaluation. He said proposals were received from the ELA Group and Architerra. Mr. Stewart said he was recommending the board accept ELA’s proposal and move ahead with it. He reminded the board of the \$250,000 grant money that is available for use and the fact that a one year extension was obtained for the grant. He stated that a plan would need to be fashioned for the utilization of this

money. He suggested that ELA's plan be used with slight variations. Mr. Stewart said he would like to use the grant money to improve the field house at Comet Field and look at an alternate maintenance site that would free up space in the field house. He said he would like ELA to concentrate their proposal on the field house, middle school fields, and the acquisition of additional acreage. Mr. Stewart said he would ask ELA to solicit input from board members before beginning the project. He said he will invite ELA members to attend a board meeting. Dr. Frerichs asked that board members be provided with a timeline. Approval for placement of this item on the February School Board Meeting Agenda was granted on a motion by Mr. Kline, a second by Mr. Tom Herr, and a unanimous voice vote.

Mrs. Griffis informed board members of the new Align software being used by the district to help align Penn Manor's curriculum to the academic standards. Mrs. Griffis stated that figuring out how to match Penn Manor's curriculum to the standards has been a problem. She explained that the academic standards define what a student should know and be able to do. She stated that the Chapter 4 regulations are a broad umbrella under which academic standards fall. Chapter 4 regulations also cover the purpose of public education, strategic planning, requirements of instruction, graduation requirements, assessment responsibilities, seals of proficiency, and provisions for students in other than public schools. Mrs. Griffis reviewed the goals of the align software. In addition to matching curriculum to the standards other goals are defining areas of integration/overlap, developing common local assessments, and determining student proficiency levels. Mrs. Griffis stated that an additional goal is to help publish what our standards and curriculum look like. She stated that use of the align software is done through LetterGrade. Mrs. Griffis said LetterGrade was developed by James Ming. Mr. Ming is also involved with the development of the Align software. Mr. Ming has entered into an agreement with Tenex who can then sell the product. Penn Manor's involvement in the agreement is to co-market the product with Tenex. Other districts will visit Penn Manor and see how the align software actually works. Mrs. Griffis said Penn Manor is pleased to be part of the program. She said that Family and Consumer Science teachers, health and physical education teachers, English teachers, Math teachers, and social studies teachers have been trained to use the software that allows them to align their curriculum to the standards. Teachers who have been trained to date are pleased with it. Mrs. Griffis visited a Family

and Consumer Science site and demonstrated its use. She stated that the hope is to have the entire curriculum aligned within the next four years. One other district is helping to develop the align program.

Dr. Frerichs provided an Education Foundation Progress Report. He stated that the Foundation is doing well and making progress. Dr. Frerichs said a Progress Report would be provided every three months.

Mr. Stewart informed those in attendance that the new artwork displayed in the board room was done by elementary students. He updated the board with regard to the school age child care that is being explored. He stated that the elementary principals will meet with potential kindergarten parents and try to determine if there is interest in an on site kindergarten wrap around program at Pequea and Central Manor. He stated that the YWCA will be asked to run the program initially due to consideration that must be given to staffing, billing, and compliance with regulations from the Department of Public Welfare. He stated that Penn Manor would not only be benefiting from their expertise in this area but the YWCA can access United Way funds. Mr. Stewart provided each board member with an I.U. booklet and reviewed its contents. He informed board members of a water concern at Conestoga Elementary School that had just arisen and provided them with a copy of the Public Notice that was being sent home to parents and posted in the building. Mr. Stewart gave board members a list of upcoming events that board members might want to attend.

Mr. Stewart informed board members that a special meeting of the board would have to be scheduled for Monday, February 17, at 4:00 p.m. in the board room for the purpose of providing approval of the bids for the Martic Elementary School window project. He asked for and received input from board members regarding their attendance at this meeting.

Mr. Willis Herr informed fellow board members that he attended a recent swim meet and enjoyed watching the swimmers and was pleased at the attendance. Mr. Stewart thanked the board for their support of the purchase of touch pads for future swimming events. He thanked Millersville University for allowing Penn Manor to use their pads for the final meet.

The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. on a motion by Mrs. Wert, a second by Mr. Kreider, and a unanimous voice vote.