

United In Our Commitment to Excellence in Education the Plymouth Public Schools' mission is to ensure that all students learn to the best of their abilities. We support their growth into knowledgeable, skilled and contributing citizens capable of succeeding in their work, personal, and family lives.

SPECIAL MEETING
PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION
THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2013

MINUTES

Present: Mr. Perugino, Mr. Engle, Mr. Berube, Mr. Orsini, Mr. Bourbonniere, Mr. Wetzel, Mr. Santorso, and Mr. Gentile

Excused Absence: Mrs. Kulesa

Also Present: Board of Education Attorney Richard Mills

- 1. Mr. Perugino called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.*
- 2. Discussion and possible action regarding report concerning forensic accounting review.*

At this time, Mr. Perugino read the Conclusion portion of the forensic accounting report prepared by Marcum Advisory Group.

"We conducted a review of the expenditures of Plymouth BOE for the period of December 17, 2012 through February 27, 2013, in order to determine compliance with all applicable Plymouth BOE policies, rules and regulations, and all applicable accounting standards and procedures. In that regard, we have not found any issues of non-compliance with BOE policies, rules and regulations, and all applicable accounting standards and procedures".

Some small recommendations were made which will be discussed with Mr. Santogatta and will be taken care of by the Policy Subcommittee. Mr. Santogatta informed Board Members that individuals will begin to submit reimbursement for mileage on a monthly basis.

- 3. Discussion and possible action regarding Superintendent's leave status.*

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 6:40 p.m. for the purpose of discussion and possible action regarding Superintendent's leave status. Motion Mr. Engle, seconded Mr. Bourbonniere motion passed unanimously.

The following individuals were invited into executive session. All Board of Education Members, Attorney Mills, and Ms. Cruz, and Attorney Gesmonde as requested.

MOTION: To reconvene into Regular Session at 10:15 p.m. Motion Mr. Engle, seconded Martin Wetzel, motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: That the Board authorize Eleanor Cruz to return to work, effective April 8, 2013, with the understanding that the Board will continue to monitor matters related to Ms. Cruz's conduct and performance on an ongoing basis. Motion Mr. Berube, seconded Mr. Gentile. At this time the Chair called for a roll call vote: Mr. Engle, Mr. Berube, Mr. Orsini, Mr. Wetzel, Mr. Santorso, Mr. Bourbonniere, Mr. Gentile all voted "yes" in favor of the motion, the Chair voted "no". Motion passed 7 yes, 1 no.

Statement: *Mr. Perugino made the following statement on behalf of the Board:*

The Board has authorized Ms. Cruz to return to work, based on the following factors:

At the Special Board meeting on February 27, 2013, the Board voted to retain an independent forensic accountant for the purpose of conducting a review of the Plymouth Public Schools' expenditures for the period December 17, 2012 through the present, in the interest of ensuring compliance with all applicable Board policies, rules and regulations, and applicable accounting standards and procedures.

As you know, the forensic accounting review has been completed. The forensic accounting firm conducted a thorough review, and specifically concluded that there were no issues of non-compliance with Board of Education policies, rules and regulations, and no issues of non-compliance with applicable accounting standards and procedures. As a result, we are confident that there has been no improper conduct whatsoever with respect to financial matters in our school district.

We have very clear procedures in place in our district with respect to the handling of all financial matters. To the extent that the forensic accounting firm has recommended modifications to our procedures, we will address those recommendations promptly.

We also have the utmost confidence in our Business Manager, Michael Santogatta, and we know that he makes it his top priority to safeguard the financial interests of the district. Mr. Santogatta requires full compliance with the district's policies and procedures by all concerned, and he takes very seriously the responsibility to ensure that every expenditure of school district funds is for a proper, legitimate purpose.

It is important to recognize that our school district does not issue credit cards to anyone in the district. Further. We have absolutely no intention of authorizing the issuance of a credit card to anyone in the district.

We are aware that the matters related to Ms. Cruz's actions during the course of her employment with the Hebron Board of Education have not been fully resolved. While we intend to monitor those matters carefully, our focus is on Ms. Cruz's ability to carry out her responsibilities effectively as Superintendent of

Schools in Plymouth. At this juncture, we believe it is appropriate to have Ms. Cruz return to work as our educational leader, with the understanding that the Board will monitor matters related to Ms. Cruz's conduct and performance on an ongoing basis.

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn at 10:30 p.m. Motion Mr. Wetzel, seconded Mr. Gentile motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

*Mr. Bourbonniere
Secretary
Plymouth Board of Education*