

**TRENTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**108 North Clinton Avenue**  
**Trenton, New Jersey 08609**  
**BOARD RETREAT**  
**Friday – December 4, 2009 – 5:00 P.M.**  
**MINUTES**

**Completed December 7, 2009**  
**Convened at 5:20 P.M.**

**Call to Order**

Dr. Diane Campbell, President, called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Dr. Diane Campbell, President, led the salute to the flag.

**Roll Call**

**Present:**

T. Missy Balmir – arrived 5:25 p.m.

Alexander Brown

Elizabeth Johnson

Donald O. Shelton – arrived approximately 5:40 p.m.

Marcellus Smith – arrived 5:25 p.m.

Nicola Tatum – arrived approximately 5:30 p.m.

L. Diane Campbell

**Absent:**

Harry Luna

**Superintendent of Schools** - Rodney Lofton - Present

**New Jersey Sunshine Law** - Read by Jayne Howard, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

The New Jersey Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right to the public to have advanced notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted on.

On the rules of this act, the Trenton Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by publicizing the date, time and place, therefore posted in the Central Services Building, 108 North Clinton Avenue, City Clerk's Office, City Hall and the Times. Anyone whose name is on the mailing list should receive a notice.

Formal action will take place at this meeting.

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**Introduction**

Dr. Campbell advised that the purpose of the retreat is for the Board to review the budget and see the direction the District is going, and to get an understanding of how we will operate within the anticipated financial constraints for the year ahead. She said the meeting will not be formal, but rather an opportunity for discussion and planning.

**Adoption Of Agenda**

Motioned by Mr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Balmir to adopt the agenda. Agenda was adopted by all Board Members present.

<b><u>ROLL CALL</u></b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
T. Missy Balmir	X		
Alexander Brown	X		
Elizabeth Johnson	X		
Harry Luna	absent		
Donald O. Shelton	not present for vote		
Marcellus Smith	X		
Nicola Tatum	not present for vote		
L. Diane Campbell	X		

**BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Mr. Lofton said the Principals were invited to tonight's meeting to give their perspective on budgetary needs. He said future community meetings are planned to solicit input from the community regarding the budget. Mr. Lofton said a new three-year Strategic Plan is being developed with its main focus being instruction and the reorganization of Central Office. Further details will be forthcoming in January. He briefly discussed the School Reconfiguration Plan.

Ms. Howard introduced the 2010-2011 Budget Presentation. She asked the members of the Principals Budget Task Force to introduce themselves to the Board and to speak about their experiences in the budget process. The members of the task force are Jeanette Harris, Principal of Cadwalader School, Brenda Torrance, Interim Principal of TCHS-West, Rosario Casiano, Principal of Hedgepeth/Williams School, and Heather Jackson, Principal of Mott School.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith had concerns about the Principals having sufficient funds in their budgets to improve student achievement. A concentrated discussion took place with the Principals offering their ideas and opinions on working within their budgets to achieve this goal. Ms. Balmir was glad that Principals are being included on such an in-depth level in the budget planning this year. Mr. Shelton had concerns about teacher staffing levels under the new budget. Principals discussed additional staff and resources they would like to have.

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A discussion ensued regarding State funding under the incoming Governor. Ms. Howard said there are many uncertainties regarding school funding with the new administration. Bringing back Out of District students to increase enrollment, and therefore funding, was also discussed. Ms. Balmir observed that this is not an easy process and there are procedures that must be followed. Mr. Lofton briefly discussed plans on creating programs In District that will compete with the Charter Schools. Ways to bring additional funding into the District were discussed, including the hiring of a grant writer and pursuing the Local Tax Levy from the City.

Ms. Howard gave an explanation of school-based budgets and staffing. She discussed per pupil funding amounts for the different categories of students. She also gave a breakdown of the proposed cuts in the 2010-11 Central Office budget, and the 2010-11 District-wide budget. Internal controls to limit unanticipated costs were also discussed in depth. Ms. Howard stated that every Principal will be responsible for having a budget meeting with their staff during the week of December 7-11.

Budget Incentives for 2010-11 include Lunch Applications and Classroom Teacher Attendance. Ms. Howard said that encouraging the completion of the lunch applications will ensure we are funded at an adequate per pupil level. The new position control system will help in maintaining proper staffing levels.

Ms. Howard closed by briefly outlining the next steps in the Budget process. She asked for questions or comments. Audience members had concerns about monitoring overspending at the school level and the possibility of applying for additional Federal funding.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown expressed concern that the District move forward with increasing student achievement and continue to advocate for the former Abbott districts in the courts and with the Governor.

The retreat adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Jayne S. Howard

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Business Administrator/Board Secretary

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