



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
WEST POINT SCHOOLS
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996-1196

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

MAPA-E

3 December 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of West Point School Board Meeting, 5 November 2008

1. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the West Point School Board of Education was called to order by President, on Wednesday, 5 November 2008, at 1632 in the Superintendent's Conference Room, Building 705.

2. **Members Present were:**

Board Member
Vice President
Board Member
President
Board Member

Mr. Michael Gould, Superintendent
Command Rep

Others Present:

Mr. Gary Gerstner, Assistant. Superintendent
Elementary School Principal
Middle School Principal
Parent/PTO
WPESTA
Parent

PTO
WPES Teacher
WPES Teacher
Garrison Commander
School Liaison
Recorder

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** A motion was made to approve the agenda, it was seconded and the agenda was approved as written.

4. **APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES:** There are some additional details on a few items that the board would like to have added to the minutes from the meeting of October 8, 2008. Therefore, they postponed voting on approving those minutes until the additional details are added. It was expected that those minutes would be approved in December. The President will contact the recorder in regard to the things the board would like to have added.

5. **INDIVIDUALS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE SCHOOL BOARD:** None

6. BOARD PRESIDENT COMMENTS:

a. *Chain of Concern:* President and the board are continuing to hold discussions on revisions to the Chain of Concern Letter. The existing Chain of Concern is linked to the Middle School website and the procedure is very sound and something they want to follow. The board will come back in December to vote on a new Chain of Concern.

7. REPORTS:

a. **Superintendent's Reports:** Mr. Gould reported on the following:

(1) **Staffing Update:** Mr. Gould reported that there were no vacancies, no new employees, and no departing employees since the last meeting. He added there are 36 individuals who are approved substitute teachers and this is a great number for the principals to be able to draw from. There are open and continuous announcements for education technicians, education aides, and substitute teachers. In addition, he mentioned the Superintendents receive the staffing documents in December for the next school year and that he may be able to give an early indicator at the next school board meeting of staffing issues for the upcoming school year.

(2) **Logistics Update:** Mr. Gould stated we are taking a different approach to the Logistics Update by adding a presentation to include pictures. At his time he asked Mr. Gerstner to review the update. Mr. Gerstner explained that our Logistics Manager in our Virginia office and he worked with folks in their office to prepare this report. The following was reported:

Safety & Security: The contract was awarded for the call back system, training is being developed. The system will only be used for safety and emergency type announcements, i.e. school closings for inclement weather. Within the next couple of months, folks will hear more about it. *Facility Projects:* The AI phone installation is complete at the Elementary and Middle School; however, they are awaiting a part to complete the New Gym. The system works in the New Gym, however, the "buzz in" mechanism doesn't work, and someone still has to physically go to the door. The Middle School lights are complete with the exception of repairing one light that does not work and the install of one more set of lights. Mr. Gerstner added that it is unbelievably bright in the room. *Middle School Roof Replacement:* The staging and site prep is in progress, trailer was put in today, the pre-construction meeting was held, they are beginning to put up safety fence, all contract workers will be on the outside of the building; all workers will have background checks and will have ID badges; anyone on-site without a badge will be escorted by the SRO or MPs. *Facility Projects:* A work order was submitted for screens and replacement glasses the Middle School windows. The glass replacement estimate was received in the amount of \$9,650.00 and funds been requested from DDESS; The Cafeteria Fire Suppression System has been installed and the cafeteria workers are very happy that this increases the safety aspect in the area, however, it has not yet been signed off as complete. Elementary Roof repairs were done over the summer and 'no' leaks were reported until yesterday. The recommendation for the ES roof was that it should be replaced. DDESS will put it under consideration as they are looking at the list of projects. *Food Services:* It was reported that Meals Plus Program continues to work great and the feedback has been positive. Fifty families are loaded in the system viewing accounts. All families are encouraged to sign up. Mr. Gerstner added that West Point has one of the 'best' Food Service Directors. *Working Items:* A \$55,000 estimate was received from DPW to replace the 7th & 8th grade lockers; funds were requested from DDESS. Estimates are also being requested from DPW for the middle school playground, basketball court and interior painting of both schools. We are awaiting instructions from DDESS on a carpet replacement plan in which all carpets will be replaced with VTC tiles which is better for hygiene and cleanliness.

(3) **Enrollment Report:** Mr. Gould reported the following:

West Point Elementary School – 521
West Point Middle School – 262

(4) **Customer Satisfaction Survey:** Mr. Gould stated that every two years DoDEA puts forward a huge effort to solicit input from parents and students in regard to customer satisfaction with our schools. The survey is electronic and is a very effective way to gather and tabulate information from parents. He added that support is solicited from the Command and School Board to help get the word out because it helps increase the response rate. The survey began November 1, 2008 and will run until February 28, 2009. Mr. Gerstner gave an overview of the survey to include how it helps guide the educational programs in the school system, how it is constructed, and who and how it is administered and reviewed. In addition, he reviewed some selected results from both schools from the previous survey. Mr. Gould explained that the results of the survey are available on-line through the DoDEA website (www.dodea.edu). Mr. Gerstner stated that this website will keep you up to speed and encouraged folks to visit it. There was lengthy discussion in regard to publicizing the results of last year's survey and giving incentives to help get the surveys completed. In regard to the results, Mr. Gould stated he would go back and check to see what we did last year and remember for the future that when the results become available a presentation is given to the school board and notification is given to the parents. Garrison Commander mentioned that the Army is also doing a survey at this time and he said it is important and helpful to know when you can get the results and how you can find the results of the previous year, he added that Command will help get the word out. He also added that giving incentives to complete the survey would help to get people to give their feedback. Mr. Gerstner stated that we can let the board know before the next meeting if there is indeed a window time to get the results and we will follow up. Mr. Gould will report regularly as we draw close to the conclusion date in February and that we are able to tap into what the response rate is throughout the life of the survey. At this point different ideas and suggestions were discussed in regard to incentives to complete the survey. Mr. Gould said there is time to work this and we will look at the current survey and see if there is something we can share with the principals and maybe link with the PTO for some incentives for the students to remind their parents to complete the survey. An additional incentive would be for DoDEA to act on some of the items and show that they are hearing folks. Mr. Gould added that it is important to let folks know that the information is being used and that it is valuable and that Dr. Miles is truly using this data in a meaningful way. DoDEA prepares public announcements that are provided to administrators to put the word out about the importance of the survey. These announcements are also sent to the Pointer View. Mr. Gould welcomed feedback as folks begin to see the information publicized and he will continue to share information about the response rate.

(5) **DoDEA Safe Schools Newsletter:** For informational purposes only, Mr. Gould shared a copy of the DoDEA Safe Schools Newsletter. This publication is provided to our administrators and staff members.

(6) **School Updates:**

a. **Elementary School:** Principal informed the board that Educational Technologist for the Elementary School, arrives on Sunday from Germany. They look forward to getting her on board and gave a special thanks to Computer Assistant for helping out immensely until she arrived. Picture retakes are scheduled for Wednesday, 12 November; DPTMS are coming to do an emergency awareness assembly on 21 November; next week the children will eat lunch with the principal as a "prize" if they read 50 minutes; next week is American Education Week and ES Principal took the opportunity to invite the GC to come spend the day on 20 November, or anytime that he has available, in honor of "Invite Your Commander to School"; kudos to the PTO for a very successful

Book Fair; 99.9% attendance was reported at Parent Conferences and she thanked the GC for his support; and the Holiday Concert will be 10 December 2008.

b. Middle School: MS Principal had several things to report. He reviewed some partnerships with ACS and MWR. Guidance Counselor, started a support group with ACS, who deals with Deployment Readiness. Twice a month there is an opportunity for students with deployed parents to meet in small group settings. Principal said there are about 20-30 students in the Middle School with a parent deployed. MWR has expanded their partnership by adding cross country and track and have incurred half the cost of the transportation. In addition to the athletics they have started an intramurals program for grades 5 and 6 has been established and will be repeated for the winter. Numbers are capped at 60 to maintain a 30-1 ratio. He added YS provides snack and the use of their facility. Calendar: Veteran's Day Assembly on 6 November; Progress Reports will be sent out NLT 26 November; Thanksgiving Break is 26-28 November. Transition: O'Neill High School Principal, will visit and tour the school to talk about transition issues before spring. Gradespeed: more than half of the parents are enrolled. A new part will begin 14 November where students can log in to review their grades. Safety Committee: The first meeting was 17 October; the committee will continue to monitor the physical security conditions of the school; continue with the anti bullying campaign; they are adding personal life safety awareness with USMA Safety Officer; The SRO, continues to be a member of the committee and is a valuable resource in helping us do all that we can do to keep safe. An Evacuation Drill was held today and all buildings were evacuated in just over 9 minutes, more drills will take place this year. The next meeting is 9 December 2008.

Board President asked the MS Principal if he had any concerns in regard to the roof contract job. He answered he felt very good about all the work that Logistics Management Specialist and the Project Manager, Corps of Engineers, have done in making it crystal clear to everyone involved in regard to the contract. He has no concerns.

Mr. Gould added the principals are drafting calendars for the upcoming school year and will be involved with their staffs to develop drafts. They will take discussions from last year in regard to the traditional calendar verses the public school calendar verses something in between and know that the USMA Calendar is evolving as well. An update will be supplied at the December School Board with the possibility of a proposed calendar.

Mr. Gould also took this opportunity to thank the staff and administrators for an incredibly smooth start to the school year. He extended the thanks to the GC for his support by recently putting the word out to all Commanders to support all active duty parents to attend parent teacher conferences. It is this type of support that helps make a difference in our schools.

(7) **PTO Report:** Vice President of the PTO was present to give the report. PTO welcomed Ink Cartridge Committee Chair; Box Tops awards went to 2nd grade for bringing in the most box tops, 12,000, and received an extra recess; Middle School student, brought in 110 box tops and received \$10 gift certificate to Bistro's Coffee/Ice Cream Shop, they raised over \$500; Labels for Education Chairperson, collected 12,745 Campbell Soup Labels and over 100 Tyson Labels; due to the huge success of the Read-a-Thon raising \$24,000, the Book Fair profit was taken in books instead of cash, PTO afforded every student the opportunity to spend \$5 at the book fair and they used \$3,771.19; coupons and raffles used at Family Night were \$1,469.34; available books on teachers' classroom wish lists were purchased and both Media Centers were given \$1,000 coupons to spend with more to come; Family Night was fun and spirit wear was available for sale; PTO funded the Arithmetickles Assembly for the Elementary School and they are working on bringing an assembly to the Middle School; PTO sponsored field trips from 1st and 5th grades; PTO distributed a FREE student directory to each of its 271 members thanks to Ms. R for chairing the committee; PTO is funding the reception for the Veteran's Day Assembly, PTO Distributed snack goody bags to staff and faculty on Teacher Conference Day, current balance in the PTO account is \$27,218.68; the next general meeting is 13 November at 3PM parents are welcome to bring their children.

(8) **Booster Club: No one present.**

8. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:** The next regular meeting will be held on 3 December 2008, 4:30 PM, in the MS Conference Room.

9. **OTHER:** President reported there was a Community Relations Council dinner last night with the Superintendents and School Board Reps West Point, Garrison and Highland Falls. He explained it has been an ongoing event that was started years ago. Command Rep stated it is part of the greater Community Relations Council which has many subcommittees. The dinner is very informal and each school shares updates so they learn best practices from one another. Some items discussed were the continued emphasis on Math, which plays right into our curriculum, transition and some current issues with the DoDEA contract. They plan to meet again in the spring.

10. **DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING:**

- a. Potential staffing issues for upcoming school year
- b. Call back system update
- c. Satisfaction Survey results from previous year
- d. 2008-2009 calendar scrub

11. **ADJOURN MEETING:** The meeting adjourned at 5:36 PM.

Approved by: _____

Michael Gould
Superintendent, NY & VA DDESS

President, West Point School Board