

**MONTROSE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA  
MEETING DATE MARCH 6, 2008 7:00 P.M.**

## **Community Advisory Committee Meeting**

**6 MARCH 2008**

Community Advisory Committee Members Present: Dolores Quinn, Kirk Van Zandbergen, Tammy Bonnice, Lisa Adriance, Rich Niederberger, Celeste Ridler

Board Members Present: Mary Homan and Kathy Mordovancey

Administration Present: Mike Ognosky and Don Golden

Meeting commenced at 7:00 PM.

### **Items Discussed:**

I. Mike Ognosky took the roll and noted the attendance as listed above.

II. Old Business: The following item was presented under Old Business

- **Natural Gas and Oil Drilling:** Mr. Ognosky explained that the Board was still in the process of evaluating the possibility of entering into a lease agreement for the purpose of exploration of natural gas and oil reserves on school property. Companies have contacted the school and made offers for that purpose, much as they have done with Elk Lake. The Elk Lake Board of Directors has entered into such an agreement with Cabot, one of the companies involved. Mrs. Homan has attended meetings of the Choconut Core Group – those meetings have provided additional information that has been reported to the board. Land owners in that area are discussing the possibility of working as a group in negotiating with the companies. They would then sign individual leases should their terms be met. That group has established a time line of mid May to make a decision. They have also established goals of maintaining and protecting the land, emphasis on up front per acreage lease arrangements as well as a percentage of the royalties on any resources discovered.
- **Middle States Preliminary Report:** The preliminary written report from the visiting Middle States Committee was distributed to members present. Mr. Ognosky will also include an electronic copy of the report for members' review

prior to the next scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. Members are asked to review the report, make note of any questions you would like to ask, and Mr. Tallarico will be available at the March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting to entertain questions.

- **Choconut Valley Well:** Mr. Ognosky reported that the new well is now operational at Choconut Valley. Although all water tests have returned okay, there is a concern about the “taste” of the water. The company that did the well work will back on site early next week and a remedy will be discussed. Any such remedy will be at a cost to the company.

III. New Business: The following items were discussed under New Business:

- Mr. Ognosky discussed the procedures utilized in the canceling of school or the delaying of school due to the weather. Input was asked of the members present and the overwhelming response on the part of those present that they appreciate the fact that the administration is “cautious” on behalf of the students when making that decision.
- Dr. Golden made a thirty minute presentation regarding the Special Education services and programs offered in the District. Dr. Golden began by listing the various programs now in operation serving district students including Learning Support, Life Skills, Multi-handicapped, Emotional Support, Partial Hospitalization, Occupational and Physical Therapy, Extended School Year and Gifted Programs. There are currently 270 students receiving Special Education Services and an additional 80 receiving Gifted Services. That number is approximately 18 % of our student body. Dr. Golden went on to enumerate the services provided in each of those programs. He explained that our Life Skills, Multi-handicapped and Emotional Support services are provided at a variety of off site locations, including Elk Lake, Blue Ridge, Susquehanna and BOCES in Binghamton. We also have students that attend locations in Scranton and a select few that are in residential placements off site. Dr. Golden explained that the district is in the process of evaluating the potential of serving these students in our own schools and that process has begun with the establishment of a Secondary Emotional Support class in the Junior-Senior High School next year. He then detailed the plans that are being made in order to prepare the district for such a move, including the professional development of staff and administration. He then elaborated on the services that are available for our gifted students and encouraged any member to contact him with any further questions. Finally, it is Dr. Golden’s plan to initiate parent meetings throughout the 2008-2009 school year to be held in the evenings in order to provide parents with information on a variety of topics including Reading Strategies Training, Autism, the parents’ role in the IEP process, Study Skills, etc.

IV. Open Forum: The meeting was then opened for discussion on any item by members of the committee:

- Rich Niederberger inquired as to the status of the current budget and the millage impact that may result. Mr. Ognosky explained that the current status of the budget and potential tax increase has not changed since our last meeting and the board, at this time, does not expect a tax increase of any kind.
- Rich also asked if the district has received any information from the Department of Education regarding the distribution of potential gambling revenue. Mr. Ognosky responded that as of this time the District has not received any information regarding the status of gambling revenues in the state and the potential for the distribution of funds back to the districts.
- Rich also asked about the status of the recently created Energy Committee. Mr. Ognosky explained that the committee membership has been established and includes community members, board members, professional and support staff members, administrators and students. The Board will discuss the establish an initial meeting date for that committee and it will be communicated to the members.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

**Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> in the Faculty Room of the Choconut Valley Elementary School at 7:00 p.m.**

Submitted by *Mike Ognosky*