

BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

NOVEMBER 10, 2008

A Special Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Bethlehem Area School District was held on Monday, November 10, 2008, at 7:48 p.m. in the Dining Room at the Education Center, 1516 Sycamore Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

SPECIAL
MEETING

The Board Secretary called the roll:

MEMBERS
PRESENT

Members present: Directors Amato, Cann, Dexter, Follweiler, Haytmanek, Koch (departed at 8:40 p.m.), McKeon, Tenaglia and Leeson – 9.

Others present: Dr. Joseph A. Lewis, Superintendent of Schools; Stanley J. Majewski, Jr., Board Secretary; administrators, members of the press, and other interested citizens and staff members.

OTHERS
PRESENT

At this point of the meeting, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PLEDGE OF
ALLEGIANCE

President Leeson requested that all present observe a moment of silent meditation.

SILENT
MEDITATION

President Leeson stated that there were no special meetings held this evening.

SPECIAL
MEETINGS

Dr. Lewis stated there was no information to report.

FEDERAL
PROGRAMS
UPDATE

President Leeson thanked Director Tenaglia for the reminder that tomorrow was Veteran's Day and asked everyone present to keep our veterans in mind.

PRESIDENT'S
COMMUNICATION

President Leeson offered courtesy of the floor to visitors. Speakers are asked to come to the podium, stating their name and address. Public comment in the first session is limited to 30 minutes. Speakers are limited to three minutes each. The board requests that, when possible, all individuals supporting a like position on a topic select a speaker to present their views to avoid repetition. If that is not possible, all are welcome to speak. As per school board policy, generally, speakers are limited to taxpayers, residents, or employees of this school district. At the conclusion of the regular school board meeting, another block of time will be allocated for public comment. At that time, the same rules will apply. It is asked that speakers observe proper decorum, without personal attacks towards a specific individual or individuals. It is not the custom for the board to enter into a dialogue at these meetings about concerns.

COURTESY OF
THE FLOOR
TO VISITORS

However, the board does listen with care to issues raised. Speakers will receive responses, in some form, by the administration.

The following persons addressed the Board of School Directors:

1. Lindsey Hunsicker – 910 West Market Street, Bethlehem –
Lindsey, a senior at Liberty High School, stated that she wished to express her views concerning the events, which occurred at the Liberty-Freedom Football Game. She strongly agreed that the students and spectators who caused any harm or danger to any other person at the game should be severely punished. They could also agree that certain members of both fan bases acted inappropriately. She was more concerned about the opinions stated by the media and the community about her high school. She was very proud of her high school's academic and athletic achievements and was surrounded by teachers and coaches who were truly dedicated to her educational and athletic success. For people to make biased and sweeping generalizations about her school was hurtful and unfair. For adults to judge an entire school community and its leaders on the actions of a few students was disheartening and those associated with Liberty High School found it unacceptable and inexcusable. Lindsey noted that Mrs. Durante, Mr. Senneca and Coach Moncman all led by example. They were leaders who not only exemplified class, but also constantly demanded good behavior and good sportsmanship from all students and athletes at Liberty High School. She thought that a stronger commitment from the administration and police force was necessary to avoid future problems at Liberty-Freedom events. Both high schools could be very proud of their accomplishments and they could be recognized without trying to demean students and school administrators. She pointed out that their goal was a healthy admiration for both schools. Lindsey thanked the board and administration for their time.
2. Kristen Lambert – 3324 Beaufort Drive, Bethlehem –
Kristen addressed the events that took place at the Liberty-Freedom Football Game two weekends ago, noting that the violence and hatred which transpired was widespread and affected students from both schools. In the aftermath of the events, safety was identified as a key issue, as various incidents occurred that threatened the well being of the school district's students. She pointed out an element of safety greatly overlooked, which was the very dangerous stunt involving the skydivers as part of the Liberty High School Band Show during half time. It should be known that the members of the Freedom High School Band were not aware of the skydiving stunt until it was announced on the stadium speakers. Additionally, their band directors, chaperones, and drum major were also equally caught off guard and they were the individuals who were supposed to lead and protect the band members.

Kristen said it was obvious that it did not help that they were not informed. She noted that although the stunt was meant to be a surprise, it created mass confusion for the one hundred plus members of the Freedom High School Band spread out around the perimeter of the field. Because they did not receive prior notification or instructions, they were not sure if they were safe in the areas where they stood. She noted that she was standing in the north end zone and had the skydivers fly right over her head near the goalpost. She said that many people standing in that area were concerned about the parachutes clearing the goalpost and if they didn't, what would happen. They watched as the Liberty Band moved out of the way to allow adequate room for the parachutes and began to wonder if they also should have moved. Once again, there was no one to instruct them as to where they should stand for safe observation. Kristen stated that they certainly did not want to be in the way and absolutely did not want to be standing in a spot that would place them in danger. The lack of communication as well as the unprofessional nature of the Liberty High School Band resulted in chaos and a potentially hazardous situation. The absence of these basic common courtesies was also further demonstrated by the skydiving stunt's monopoly of the halftime period. The period, which was for a total of 20 minutes and intended to be split by both bands for 10 minutes each, was almost entirely used by the Liberty High School Band and their parachuting act. When their show was done, the Freedom High School Band only had 5 minutes to perform, in comparison to Liberty High School Band's 15 minutes.

3. Codi Januszkiewicz – 4735 Pheasant Run Court, Bethlehem –
Codi stated that the safety issues were a concern at the game but there was also a lot of unprofessionalism involved starting on the Wednesday before the game began. Every year both bands practice the pregame show together during first block on the Wednesday prior to the game. When both groups were on the field, an award was presented to Liberty High School's Band, which took approximately 20 minutes so when they got back to school they were late for their class. Codi stated that the students from Freedom High School had an allotted time to be at Liberty High School, but because of that presentation, they were late. She noted that she struggled in the class which she returned to and missed a lot of important information and added that the same thing happened with a few other students. She was informed that uniformed officers in attendance wore Liberty High School Hats, which she thought was unprofessional and should not have been allowed. She focused on the fact that they were not informed about the details of their halftime show, which was a safety issue. She said that only a few students caused the accident and something should be done to them rather than giving Liberty High School a bad name. Miss Januszkiewicz concluded that the safety issues should be addressed so that it wouldn't happen again.

4. Patrick Foos – 4283 Kathy Drive, Bethlehem – Liberty High School Senior Class Treasurer/Student Body Senator –
Patrick stated that he was present to discuss matters concerning the Liberty-Freedom Football Game. He felt the accusations made about Liberty High School did not accurately describe the events which took place and the way their community behaved. He said that both schools provoked the events that occurred at Elizabeth Avenue. The accusation about Liberty High School students tipping over a bus were not true, as stated by the bus driver on duty. He attempted to read an accusation made by a Freedom High School Patriot Band Parent.

President Leeson interrupted the speaker, stating that personal attacks were not allowed. She said that he could relay his comments without attacking an individual.

Patrick asked President Leeson why she allowed the preposterous accusations to be the highlight of not only this meeting but also the news.

President Leeson replied that she did not have the opportunity to control what was put into the newspapers, but she did have control over the Courtesy of the Floor. She said he could continue with his comments, but he could not speak directly about any one individual. She apologized for interrupting his flow of communication.

Patrick requested that Dr. Lewis read his information after he was finished speaking.

He continued to comment that he admired Dr. Lewis for his leadership in the school district and the way he handled the board through his tenure as the superintendent of schools. He thought the blame on both schools.

President Leeson mentioned that she might have thrown off his momentum and offered to allow another speaker to come forth while he collected his thoughts. She said he could resume his position afterward.

Patrick expressed that he wanted it to be on record that Liberty and Freedom High School Bands both had the ability to make additions onto each of their respected field shows. He asked why Liberty High School Band was being criticized for exercising that right and why did the Freedom High School Band use up more time by blocking them from getting off of the field. He noted that he wanted the board members to read his composition.

5. Patricia Woods – 2808 Hope Ridge Drive, Easton –
Mrs. Woods stated she was a board member of the Freedom High School Patriot Club. She noted they were a 501(3)(c) nonprofit group and supported all of the athletic programs associated with the high school.

Mrs. Woods congratulated both football teams for a great game and also commended the Liberty Football Team for their win. She said that she had been asked to represent the Patriot Club regarding their concerns for the safety of the students for both Liberty and Freedom High Schools and to request that the Code of Conduct be enforced for all of the Bethlehem Area School District children who chose to break it. Mrs. Woods pointed out that students from both schools were blatantly disrespectful at the latest game. The 2008-2009 Bethlehem Area School District Slogan was "No Place For Hate." They thought that the slogan should have been, "A Place For Respect and Friendship." The signs hanging in the stadium, on the building, and being distributed by the fans, did not make it feel like a very friendly place. There was nothing better than a good rivalry, noting all of the pageantry with Spirit Week and the traditions; but when they turned as ugly as they did during the last game, then it should be time for something to be done proactively and productively. The Bethlehem Area School District parents, children, teachers and administrators had become a laughing stock among other school districts and in the media. The letters to the editors in the two local newspapers, the editorials, and blogs were not painting a positive picture for the district. Traditions sometimes change and it was recommended that they create some new traditions while holding on to some of the old traditions. It was suggested that they learn from their mistakes and recommended that both schools form a committee from their respective student advisory boards to work on an equitable and fair solution for sharing the stadium with respect and admiration for each other's accomplishments. They recommended bringing back the pageantry and rivalry for all of the sports played by the sister schools. Children, students, and parents should not fear attending their own school's activities. Numerous announcements were made during the game to inform fans that they were to remain on their own sides, and yet, the gates were left opened, allowing continuous access from both sides. They commended the decision to close the gates for the upcoming games. The fans were informed that if they left the stadium, they could not come back in, but that did not occur and there was no follow-up. It was suggested that they increase the security both inside and outside the stadium. They were thankful that the announcement was made regarding increased security at future games. They recommended that the administration for both Liberty and Freedom High Schools enforce the rule, "No Negative Signs" and to accentuate the positives of the teams and their school and not the negatives of the rival. Freedom athletes would love to have their own field, as it had been stated upon numerous occasions, however, their tax dollars were already maxed out. They had money situations within the school district that far outweigh the need for an additional stadium. If they were to build an additional stadium, the Liberty High School parents and families would all be required to pay their fair share of the taxes to support it. The changes must come down from the top. Adults should not be taunting students.

Mrs. Woods stated that they needed to lose their arrogance and disrespect. The alumni had their wonderful times and memories. They should let their children and the students form their own fond memories of high school and their special community. Instead of receiving the “Turkey Award,” it was suggested they try to achieve the “Trophy Award.”

President Leeson offered the floor to Patrick Foos, the student from Liberty High School, to complete his thoughts.

4. Patrick Foos (continued) commented on the accusations regarding the signs at the football game. He didn't think it was rude and said it was school spirit. He stated that it was getting ridiculous and thought they should be able to have some fun, adding that the PSSA testing was controlling their lives. He noted that for some students, school was the only thing that mattered to them and it was all they had. He expressed his frustration because they used to be able to put up signs which did not say anything nasty about Freedom High School. With regard to the bands and the award that Mr. McGill received, he noted they didn't know about it and that Mrs. Durante came out and presented the award to him. He added that every year the band members from Freedom High School always returned to their school late after their shared practice. He felt bad for Mrs. Durante because the whole problem was not the fault of any administrator, but rather the police department's fault. Patrick said that there were inadequate numbers at the stadium and there were none at Elizabeth Avenue. He stated that it had to stop. He questioned how they could enjoy their time at Liberty High School and asked them to keep that in mind when they make a decision.

6. Kyle Troxell – 3912 Autumn Ridge Road, Bethlehem –
Kyle recalled that the weeks leading up to the Freedom-Liberty Football Game were always filled with tradition including Spirit Week and an overall healthy and friendly rivalry. Saturday, November 1, however, demonstrated the cataclysmic breakdown of those traditions, which turned a friendly rivalry into distasteful acts of disrespect, violence and vulgarity from both sides of the stadium. The Liberty High School directed tradition included Spirit Week, where the students dressed up, decorated the hallways, made harmless signs and t-shirts, and had a pep rally to get everyone fired up. It was central to the Liberty High School community and culture. Kyle stated that over the last four years he had noticed a pattern, noting that in 2005, his freshman year, traditions were the same with an active and fulfilling Spirit Week. After that game, however, the parents started to complain and suddenly Liberty High School was no longer allowed to hang signs outside the school or have Spirit Week T-shirts made with the statement, “This is Our House” written on them. This brought sour grapes and resentment to students. Kyle recalled his junior year when Freedom High School demanded they sit on the opposite side of stadium with the school board in agreement, breaking tradition.

Kyle noted that as punishment for their low PSSA scores, there was a cut down in their Spirit Week, even though when they had Spirit Week, there was no loss of academic time. Kyle noted that the breaking of traditions and the failure to replace them with anything meaningful led to arguments and hatred between the two schools. Freedom High School was angry about the signs, shirts and which side of the field they sat and Liberty High School was angry about the fact that tradition was changed. He said it was unfortunate that the incoming classes at both schools would not know about the once friendly rivalry and overall healthy school unity founded through the game. They might only know about the hatred. He predicted that as the years go by, one rock will turn into five rocks and paint getting thrown onto cheerleaders and teachers will get them to the point where they won't be able to have the game any longer. He said that the new tradition did not work. He added that when they were able to put up signs and made t-shirts, no one got hurt. Kyle concluded that they might be able to find some common ground where both schools would be happy with new traditions.

7. Kevin Peterman – 323 West Lehigh Street, Bethlehem –
Sophomore Class President – Liberty High School –
Kevin addressed some statements he thought were untrue, such as the Freedom Band not being aware of the fact that their field show would be going overtime. He said that the director was, in fact, aware of it, before the game. He noted that it was a common fact in Bethlehem that the field show at the Freedom-Liberty Football Game went overtime. There were surprises and things that happen. He also stated it was his understanding that there was no tipping of the bus. With regard to signs distributed that were derogatory, he disagreed and pointed out that they said, “Home In Any Seat” and “Refuse To Lose.” He agreed that the action of a rock going through a bus window was totally inappropriate and he thought it was horrible and should not have happened. He commented about people making up things that did not actually happen and putting it on the principals. Kevin emphasized that the band, principal and band director did not know that Walmart was coming to honor their director. He said it was not their fault that the Freedom Band Members returned to school late and was sorry that it happened but they did not have control over Walmart coming out to surprise them on that morning.
8. Elliott Paden – 521 Ninth Avenue, Bethlehem –
Senior Class Treasurer – Liberty High School –
Elliott stated that the actions on Saturday, October 1, 2008 were equally disrespectful between both sides. Their schools were both portrayed as bad because of a few inappropriate fans. The media portrayed Liberty High School as the worse of the two and gave them a negative appearance. The Morning Call featured an article about fans in general shaking the Freedom bus, which, he claimed did not happen.

Elliott also noted that a parent stated that the actions made her daughter tell her that she never wanted to attend another Freedom-Liberty Football Game again. Elliott agreed that if the bus was shaken, it would make him not want to go to another game. The other side of the story was not written in the papers. He pointed out that several students in the Freedom cheering section who painted themselves were spitting on the officers of the Bethlehem Police Department. It was also said that several Freedom students came over to the Liberty side of the stadium and had to be escorted away for inappropriate behavior as they were starting fights and throwing sodas, which could have been hazardous. He also commented that Freedom students splattered black and gold paint and soda, ruining a few of the Liberty High School Cheerleader's jackets. Elliott concluded that he did not want to point fingers, but wanted to state some things that were not published in the newspapers.

9. Joanne Kelly – 3510 Summit Court, Bethlehem –
Ms. Kelly commended the students for being present to represent their school. She attended the meeting last week as a member of the Patriot Club and after listening to the student speakers tonight and agreed with Mrs. Woods' recommendation. She pointed out that both schools had t-shirts that were not very nice but thought they could come together involving the student government. She felt they could come together next year with a new tradition, making one shirt that praised both schools. The students needed to recognize that the stadium was shared with both teams. She suggested that both schools take the whole 20 minutes together at halftime to show everybody how great the bands were, because they were both excellent. She believed the Student Advisory Board represented every grade level during the meetings. She said to let the students come up with their own ideas because it wasn't about adults but the traditions for the students that should be good. Ms. Kelly stated that she followed the Freedom High School cheerleading bus and noted that it was stoned. She reiterated that the students should come together as a student government to work on ideas to make it a good thing because they might meet again soon. She suggested they create a competitive and friendly rivalry.
10. Alyssa Lambert – 3324 Beaufort Drive, Bethlehem –
Alyssa stated that as a member of the Patriot Band and a sophomore at Freedom High School, she could say that she was one of the students on the bus who was physically shaken by a Liberty High School student. She added that the thunder sticks were thrown through their open windows in addition to pebbles thrown at the windows and a thrown rock hit one of her friends in the face. She didn't think that it was fair that it happened. She thought more safety precautions needed to be taken. She didn't think it was fair that her safety at a football game, which should be fun, be jeopardized.

11. Justin Amann – 319 East Locust Street, Bethlehem –
Justin stated that the game was awesome and enjoyable on Saturday. He agreed that a rock being thrown through the window was totally inappropriate. He asked if there was actual proof that the student was from Liberty High School. He thought that calling them classless in the newspaper was so degrading. He said that no shirt or sign could compare to calling teenagers classless. The band director from Freedom High School, Mr. Moran, was aware that the halftime show was going over the given time, but the Freedom Band would not move out of the way so their band could leave the field. He found that to be inappropriate. He noted the big rivalry between the schools and said they were not permitted to make certain t-shirts and couldn't hang a sign outside of the school, which was previously done yearly, until last year when they had to take it down. Justin said that many of his family members previously attended Liberty High School and pointed out that it changed when he started in his sophomore year. The blame should be equally placed on both schools. Justin concluded that other school districts in the area were looking at the entire Bethlehem community as classless and he thought it was wrong.

12. Vince Paden – 521 Ninth Avenue, Bethlehem –
Mr. Paden stated that he was on church council at St. Stephen's Church and recognized many outstanding youths who might say they were on the other side of the fence, which led him to believe that sometimes our problems weren't really as bad as perceived. Nonetheless, they were serious. He thought they were dealing with two distinct issues and thought they needed to keep them separate. The first one would be security, which he thought was the major issue. He found it hard to believe that in a crowd of almost 13,000 people, the police were allowed to leave before the game ended. He found it to be totally absurd and unacceptable. He thought that anyone who attended a Bethlehem Area School District function, no matter what it was, should feel 100 percent safe and secure and be provided that safety and security. He added that anytime there was a game at the school district stadium, there should be no walking around once the game started, the gates should be closed, and people should only be walking around to go to the refreshment stand and/or the restroom facilities. The gates should be opened at halftime and closed as soon as the game starts in the second half. He pointed out that it was a definite step in the right direction with the increased police protection last week. He predicted a Freedom-Liberty rematch in two weeks and advised them to be ready. Another issue was respect for one another, for each other's school and their tradition. The school district and coaches could try their best to make the players and students respect each side, but making the parents and alumni respect each other was the hardest part. Mr. Paden pointed out that if children learned from their parents, the day that the school district announced that Liberty fans would have to sit on the opposite side of the field for this year's game, in the name of fairness, that step basically incensed every living Liberty graduate who attended the game.

What truly disturbed Mr. Paden, in his opinion, was that very thought went into making the decision with far reaching and now proven to be volatile consequences, just to placate a vocal minority of people. There was no respect shown to the Liberty alumni or fans by the school district; not to mention those of us who could not stand the constant creeping of political correctness into our everyday lives. Mr. Paden commented that rest assured in two weeks they would meet again. He asked what the district had in store for them and replied that there would be no signs, a silent sideline, and outlawing of the thunder sticks. He questioned where it would end. He sympathized, to a point, with the Freedom parents who had been barraging the local papers with letters, complaints, and generalizations about Liberty students and fans. He also realized that there must be a distinction drawn between the rock-throwing incident, which was a police security issue and the feelings of being “second banana” in Bethlehem, which no one wanted to be. It was a school district issue, and noted that it should not be taken out on the kids from Liberty High School. He thought that those who violated the rules should be punished from both schools and those who did not, should be left alone by those whose feelings of inadequacies got the best of them. As a truly shared stadium, he proposed that they construct an exact duplicate press box on the opposite side of the stadium. If it was truly a shared stadium then everyone should have equal facilities, split the stadium in half and stop the arguing. During intercity football games, he recommended switching the chains from side to side at halftime. He said it was Mr. Roeder’s main objection because players had to jump over the chains. He reiterated that they should switch them at halftime so each team had to deal with it for two quarters. He added that they should enforce the halftime band performance time limits and enforce the penalties once they run over. He recommended holding all bands inside the stadium in the stands for 10 minutes until the stadium was empty and then escort them out to the field. Mr. Paden concluded that it would give the police the time to empty the stadium, evacuate the premises, and provide the proper security to evacuate the bands.

President Leeson commented that she was in attendance at the Liberty-Freedom Football Game and left a minute or two before the game ended. She stated that she had an absolutely delightful experience and noted that it was one of the best games she had ever seen. The halftime show was spectacular and the weather was great. The tailgating before the game was a lot of fun. She expressed that it could not have been a better all around day. She thought they had a lot to be proud of in the district and from both of the high schools. They had two outstanding football teams on the field that day and they all knew that the game could have gone either way. President Leeson also thought that both bands were outstanding. She pointed out that there were 12,500 people in attendance and estimated that well over 12,000 were well behaved and enjoyed the game.

President Leeson stated that she was aware of the incidents and it was her perspective, as correctly noted by Mr. Paden, that many things surrounded security. It was an issue that usually was handled by the home team. She asked Dr. Lewis what the police were instructed to do at the game. She questioned if they were instructed to keep the gates closed.

Dr. Lewis replied that they instructed the police to keep the gates closed. He added that it was standard protocol that was previously put into place.

President Leeson asked if they were instructed on that day to keep the gates closed.

Dr. Lewis replied affirmatively.

President Leeson questioned him if the police were asked to station themselves around the field, which she stated, seemed to be an issue.

Dr. Lewis responded that he wanted to answer her questions but he did not want to castigate the city police who had met with them on twice, with the most recent being after the events of last Saturday, to correct and increase security. He pointed out that they admitted there were some inefficiencies or inconsistencies in what was delivered. Dr. Lewis further commented that he was at both games this past weekend and noted that Commissioner Miller was also at both games. The commissioner wanted to make sure that it was done properly. Dr. Lewis noted that both Mr. Senneca and Mr. Harris had consistently instructed the police on what the rule was he emphasized that the gates were supposed to be closed. He did not know why the decision was made to open them. He agreed that there was no trafficking around there and noted that this weekend they didn't have the trafficking, but they didn't have both schools playing. He said that it should be the rule in effect so someone doesn't wander over to taunt someone else or throw paint, water, eggs or profanities at the opposing fans. In response to Mr. Paden's statements, he said that the police had generally escorted people to the bus in the bus channel and he was correct that it was not done. He expressed that it was now back in place and did not know why it was not carried out. Dr. Lewis said that he was there the entire time and had left just before the incident because he had a commitment in Allentown that evening. He brought attention to the fact that at both games there was a police car on the island with a light on, with three police officers, to ensure that the people were escorted to the buses to be safely boarded. He noted that ultimately it was the school district's responsibility to make sure that they had a secure environment for student competition. He was very proud of both schools with the fact that their teams were advancing and he hoped that they were the first district to have both high schools competing for a district championship. He thought it would be a tribute. Dr. Lewis agreed with many of the comments stated about greater degrees of cooperation, and wanted it to be known that it was being fostered.

He stated they had multiple meetings with both high school administrations and noted that many of the students present this evening were in his student advisory group. They would discuss the issues openly and honestly with him, Dr. Donaher, their building principals, and others directly involved with athletics, which was a good thing. He recalled that he made the statement that if they took the parents out of the equation, they might not have had half of the problems. He added that they ran deep with their feelings but everyone did. He cautioned the parents to not live vicariously through their children and allow them to compete and have some fun. As it was stated earlier, don't mute this to the point that the students could not have fun. He concluded that it should be safe, secure and enjoyable.

President Leeson stated that he was asking them not to point fingers at the police and she was glad that they had the discussions and that security had been increased. She noted that he was beginning to point fingers at parents and alumni. She added that fingers had been pointed at administrators and she didn't believe the fingers were being pointed in the right direction. If the police followed through with what they had asked, she believed that they would not have had some of the incidents. She believed that the most serious incidents seemed to have occurred as students were leaving the field. She thought that it was important for them to look at increasing and ensuring that security would be in place.

Dr. Lewis replied that with all due respect, they had a traditional hourly contract and this particular event ran longer, which was why there was a misunderstanding and miscommunication about how long the police remained on site. He wanted to be fair to the police. He added that they normally did not have the spans of time for a football event, before the stadium emptied, as they had with the Liberty-Freedom event. He reviewed that there were 12,600 people with an extended halftime show including pageantry beforehand and tailgating in the parking lots. It was a longer event and that was where the miscommunication occurred. The officers admitted that they went out the side exit and were done for the day. He emphasized that it could not happen again.

President Leeson responded that they needed to make sure that they allocated an adequate amount of time for the Liberty-Freedom Football Game.

Dr. Lewis replied that they had given them the authority to extend their hours, at will and at the district's expense, especially in situations that they might not be able to predict.

Director Amato asked to be recognized while everyone was present.

President Leeson responded that he could be recognized in Old Business.

Director Amato expressed that he wanted to be recognized at the present time.

President Leeson replied that when it was his turn, she would recognize him.

President Leeson stated that under additional communications of the president, she inquired about the scheduling of the DE (Distinguished Educators) Meeting.

Directors Koch and Amato objected to the manner in which the meeting was being run.

Director Amato stated that President Leeson ran the meetings the way she wanted to but she never gave anybody else a chance.

President Leeson called for order and stated that his concern could be addressed under Unfinished Business. She brought attention to Point of Order.

Director Koch commented that she addressed everyone and gave her opinion to Dr. Lewis. She questioned why they could not give their opinion.

President Leeson replied that they were currently under President's Communications, but they may give their opinion, as she had at other times, under Unfinished Business.

Director Haytmanek stated that they were on the topic now.

Director Amato also expressed that they were on the topic now.

President Leeson concluded that she made the ruling and was running the meeting. She asked Dr. Lewis if there were dates for the Distinguished Educators' meeting.

Dr. Lewis replied that he did have a series of dates that were possible but they were not confirmed by Dr. Persing, so he did not have them tonight.

President Leeson pointed out that Unfinished Business was not on the agenda, but she believed it was next in order.

Dr. Lewis stated that he did not have a report this evening.

SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT

Director Amato stated that after listening about what had gone on, he was sorry that he was not present for the football game. He noted that he was not a Liberty High School graduate, but he had been in the system for quite awhile and was very proud of them. He pointed out that the newspaper could take one little thing and brutalize the district. Director Amato commented about the Easton-Phillipsburg rivalry and a related incident that happened which was similar. He said that Easton always sat on the "big" side and one day Phillipsburg said that they wanted to sit on the "big" side every other year.

UNFINISHED
BUSINESS

Director Amato commented that it was tearing out the hearts from the people of Easton. They put some committees together, including student bodies and they worked through it and continued that strong, healthy rivalry without becoming barbaric. He thought it was something they had to do in this situation. Director Amato further commented on the halftime situation. He noted that it would have had a tremendous effect on the school district if something had happened. He said to forget about the issue with Liberty taking a little longer than the allowable 10-minute period. The Freedom High School band director knew it would be 3 minutes longer and was okay with it, but they came to find out there was an air show. Director Amato asked Dr. Lewis if he was aware of the event.

Dr. Lewis replied, "No."

Director Amato asked if the principal was aware of the show.

Principal Durante stated that she was not aware until they were looking up at the sky.

Director Amato said they were in a budget crunch and questioned who paid for the show.

An undetermined group of people answered that it was paid for by the band parents.

Director Amato asked who gave the right to them to have the air show without the principal's or superintendent's knowledge. He noted that both bands were on the field when the parachuters came down. He brought attention to the possibility of one of the divers hitting the goal post and sustaining serious injuries or colliding with the students with someone being hurt. He added that the district also would have been sued. He thought the adults and some of the people in charge were the ones who kept the fire smoldering between the two schools. Director Amato stated that they needed to find out who was the individual who gave the right to have the air show. If the individual was an employee, he needed to be written up, disciplined and given time off, because he put the welfare of 13,000 people at risk. He didn't think the Bethlehem Education Association would challenge them because it was a safety issue, which put the group in jeopardy. He added that a good spiritual rivalry could exist between the schools similar to the Easton and Phillipsburg High Schools. He said that they were one big family but were split apart to have a game and they needed to treat each other with respect.

Director Tenaglia addressed Dr. Lewis and stated that he spoke with them last Monday night and noted that he implemented a number of meetings and a number of changes. He added that he was at the game last Friday night and saw some of those changes in place and asked if Dr. Lewis was comfortable with the discussions he had and the changes placed with regard to crowd control and behaviors at the stadium, during and following the game. He asked if he thought that they were adequately protected.

Dr. Lewis replied, “Yes – absolutely.”

President Leeson asked Dr. Lewis if the Liberty Band came to them a few years ago to ask permission to do a skydiving routine, which she believed was postponed because of the weather conditions.

Dr. Lewis replied that he remembered a request, but was not sure if it was for a fly over or for parachuting. He noted that they requested some type of air event some years ago.

President Leeson could not recall when the request was made, but she thought they went to Dr. Lewis and that he brought it as a recommendation to the board for consideration. She believed that it was considered to be secret, but it was canceled because of the weather.

Director Amato stated that he was talking about this year and not past years. He reiterated that they had an air show this year and nobody in the district was aware of it. He expressed that it was unacceptable and advised Dr. Lewis that he needed to find out who was in charge of the activity and that individual needed to be disciplined or they would never be able to settle it and live in peace with one another.

Director Dexter said that she echoed Director Tenaglia. She noted that she went to Friday night’s game and also attended Saturday’s game and sat with Director McKeon. She observed that the police were well aware of their duties and also pointed out that she knew Dr. Lewis was on duty as well. She thought that everyone’s attention had been heightened to the issue of student teasing that was pushed a bit too far. She brought attention to the gentleman who spoke about putting the fun back into it. She said that she thought that she shared the same feelings as most of the people in the room, stating that she had a wonderful day that Saturday. She said the day was marred later that evening by news of the incidents. Director Dexter stated that she had not been aware of them and added that they should not have occurred. She thought they took the steps to address the situation and hopefully they would not have it again. She addressed the air show and commented that she did not think that anyone was ill intentioned and didn’t believe that the Liberty Band Parents wanted to “steal the thunder” from the Freedom Band. She believed it was just a show intended to bring joy to everyone and highlight the game as part of the pageantry. Director Dexter added that she actually researched online to see if skydiving was a dangerous sport and she noted that if what she read online was correct, skydiving was less dangerous than driving a car, playing football in high school, and many other things. She said that she sent the information to Dr. Lewis and the high school bandleaders because it was a concern she heard from a few parents. She wasn’t saying that the board or Dr. Lewis should not have been notified about the special event because there were concerns about insurance, required safety measures placed, and an inquiry made about the skill level of the divers. They knew that it all went beautifully with the skydivers being impressive and masterful.

Director Dexter stated she didn't want, for a moment, to take away what she remembered about that day, and hoped those present would leave the meeting, sharing that opinion. Director Dexter said that if Freedom and Liberty met again in two weeks, she intended to attend the game, and also hoped that everyone present would be in attendance and model their best behavior and if they observed something awry, then report it to the people hired to take care of the problems. She said there would be comments, gestures, text messages such as teasing or taunting, which some might consider inappropriate and that was the fun of it. It was the fun of it when she was a student and it should be the same fun for the present students also. A minute handful of people spoiled it for all of them. They could not let their spirits drag theirs down. She also brought attention to her observation of many mixed groups and recalled the announcers from the local television station comment about the football teams and bands and that it was the best that the Bethlehem Area School District had to offer. She observed groups of mixed students gathered around both snack bars, noting a mix of Freedom and Liberty shirts. She concluded that they would do it again in two weeks if they could and would do it better.

Director Follweiler stated that she was a proud graduate of Freedom High School and pointed out that she married a proud graduate of Liberty High School. She said that they met at their ten-year high school reunion and married a few years later. She described the fun rivalry that they had amongst themselves. She said their relationship was fun, but in a clean and respectful way. She thought it was a wonderful thing to say that they both graduated from the Bethlehem Area School District. She brought attention to the Easton-Phillipsburg Football Game. She said that she lived in New Jersey for many years and drove back and forth for Thanksgiving and witnessed the crowds of people coming out to that game. She stated that the Freedom-Liberty game should be like that and there should be a mutual respect for each other. There was no need to fear new tradition. She agreed with Director Amato's point. She thought it was something that certainly should have been discussed with the principal and superintendent prior to the show. She said that they needed to learn from that error and move forward, taking appropriate action.

Director Amato said that he had one last comment regarding the air show and noted to Director Dexter that it should not be sugar coated. He added that he had seen many air shows when he officiated college football in Annapolis and West Point. He noted that when the divers came in, they could land on a dime, but there was nobody around the field. It was his understanding that their bands were on the field. He stated that they could not gloss over the situation because they put the district and their students in a situation where they could have been badly hurt. Director Amato concluded that he would continue to harp on it until his last day on the board.

Dr. Lewis stated there was no instructional report this evening.

INSTRUCTIONAL
REPORT

NOVEMBER 10, 2008

President Leeson announced that the reports were scheduled for next week's meeting.

REPORTS OF
COMMITTEES
AND OFFICERS

Directors Tenaglia and McKeon moved to approve the minutes from the August 18, 2008 Regular Board Meeting. The motion was carried by voice vote (Aye-7, Nay-1).

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Dr. Lewis presented the recommendations of the administration.

RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE
ADMINISTRATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item	Recommendations of the Administration	Page
1.	Approval of the School Improvement Plans for Donegan and Fountain Hill Elementary Schools, East Hills Middle School, Freedom and Liberty High Schools, and the Bethlehem Area School District	1
2.	Field Trip Attendance	2
3.	Resignation	3

1. ***Approval of the School Improvement Plans for Donegan and Fountain Hill Elementary Schools, East Hills Middle School, Freedom and Liberty High Schools, and the Bethlehem Area School District***

INFORMATION:

As required under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Donegan Elementary School, Fountain Hill Elementary School, East Hills Middle School, Freedom High School, Liberty High School, and the Bethlehem Area School District prepared Improvement Plans. These plans have been developed by each building's task force, comprised of administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members, who worked in cooperation with district level staff.

The District Improvement Plan was reviewed with the Board of School Directors at the October 13, 2008, Board Curriculum Committee Meeting. The Improvement Plans for Fountain Hill Elementary School, East Hills Middle School, and Freedom High School were reviewed with the board at the October 27, 2008, Board Curriculum Committee Meeting. The Improvement Plans for Donegan Elementary School and Liberty High School were reviewed with the board at the November 3, 2008, Board Curriculum Committee Meeting.

These Improvement Plans must be sent to the Pennsylvania Department of Education by November 14, 2008, for final approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of School Directors authorizes the administration to submit the Improvement Plans for Donegan Elementary School, Fountain Hill Elementary School, East Hills Middle School, Freedom High School, and Liberty High School, as well as the District Improvement Plan to the Pennsylvania Department of Education by November 14, 2008, for final approval.

The administration's recommendations 1 and 3 were considered together.

2. *Field Trip Attendance*

RECOMMENDATION:

That the following overnight student trip for students and staff be approved:

October 31-November 1, 2008 (18 Liberty High School Students) PIAA Foundation Cross Country Invitational Hershey, Pennsylvania	\$1,333.76
February 26-March 1, 2009 (24 Liberty High School Students) Contest of Champions – Cheerleading Competition Orlando, Florida	0.00
March 5-8, 2009 (27 Freedom High School Students) American Spirit Championships – Super Nationals – Cheerleading Competition San Antonio, Texas	0.00

Director Tenaglia addressed the supporting documentation for the trip (PIAA Foundation Cross Country Invitational). He noted the Cabinet Code: Athletics and Account Code: 29-3250-580. He referred to Supplemental Program Expenditures (conferences and travel) on Page 106, Account Code: 3250-580. He asked Mr. Majewski if it was correct.

Mr. Majewski replied that it should be correct.

Mr. Tenaglia stated that it showed a balance of \$600. Above that, the code 3250-440 was listed as rentals. He wondered why he was charging \$1,100 to the rental category.

Mr. Majewski replied that he did not create the code so it was not his charge.

Director Tenaglia said that it was a recommendation of the administration to charge \$1,198 to that account code.

Mr. Majewski responded that he did not say it was not the recommendation of the administration. He stated that he didn't indicate that he created the account code so it was not his recommendation. He could see that a portion of the cost for a van was a consideration as part of the rental charges.

Director Tenaglia stated that the budgeted amount was \$500, but you are telling us here that the budget balance was \$1,800.

Mr. Majewski said that he did not provide the numbers. They came from the people who were responsible for the athletic area. He thought that someone from athletics might be able to provide the information.

Directors Tenaglia and McKeon moved to table the recommendation. The question was called with roll call as follows: Yea, Directors Follweiler, Haytmanek, McKeon, Tenaglia, Cann, Dexter and Leeson – 7. Nay, Director Amato – 1.

DIRECTOR
TENAGLIA –
MOVE TO
TABLE ITEM 2

The motion to table Item 2 passed 7 – 1.

Dr. Lewis inquired if the board's concern was regarding the code information.

Director Tenaglia replied that he had other questions, but that information was paramount.

Dr. Lewis inquired about additional questions besides the code information, so he could bring the item back to the board as complete.

Director Tenaglia agreed.

President Leeson commented about the two cheerleading competitions. She applauded both of the groups for striving for excellence and going to national level of competition. She understood that the cheerleading competition was not a group through the school district.

Dr. Lewis brought forth an insurance concern expressed by Mr. Majewski. There were teachers going on the trip and although someone was paying for the substitutes, the district was granting them the day. He noted that Mr. Majewski felt there was a nexus and inquired if he had spoken with the district solicitor.

Mr. Majewski replied that he spoke with the solicitor and expressed that he had agreed with his position. The teacher who was going on the trip, was being paid, therefore even though the funding might be coming from other sources, it was still considered to be a school district activity and therefore the school board, according to their own policy, would need to act upon it.

Dr. Lewis added that they had typically approved the trips in the past, even though there was no expenditure involved.

Mr. Majewski said that it was an overnight travel.

President Leeson stated that she understood, but it was not a school-sanctioned group, which involved issues with Title IX and other issues.

Dr. Lewis responded that they had sanctioned other athletic groups as in the cross- country group, which went to Colorado a number of years ago. It was technically not a school sponsored but the board approved the trip. As they look back at prior practices, they had approved the trips. They were not asking for funding.

President Leeson noted that the cross-country group was a school-sanctioned group. The competitive cheering group paid for their own training and it was not a requirement as a Freedom High School Cheerleader to belong to the group. She had no problem with the students attending the event and supported their ability to attend but she believed it was an attendance issue and was not a school field trip issue. She thought they were actually opening up liability issues and problems by approving it because it then implied that the district was sponsoring the group.

Dr. Lewis deferred to Mr. Majewski, stating that he spoke with Attorney Spry.

Mr. Majewski stated that it was also his feeling about it and the solicitor had agreed. They were releasing the teacher to accompany the students to the competition and the individual was being paid as a teacher. Therefore, if there was some type of event or occurrence, an opposing attorney could say that they were saying that it was not a school district activity, yet they were paying a teacher to be there and as instructional time, it could very likely pierce any type of argument that it was not a school sponsored activity. Mr. Majewski further noted Attorney Spry's opinion that by taking action, if there was any type of suit, their liability insurance would then more easily kick in because it was recognized. If they did not take the position that it was a school sponsored activity or take action on it and then there was a lawsuit, they might potentially be concerned about the lack of response from their insurance carrier. It was their opinion that it was a conservative and appropriate position to take action so they could reduce their exposure and liability.

President Leeson said that it was her understanding that it was predicated on the idea that they were paying a teacher to go with the students. She expressed that she didn't want to cause problems with the groups but questioned why the district was paying a teacher to accompany a group that was not school sponsored.

Dr. Lewis replied that they were paying the teacher her daily rate. They were not docking her for going on the trip. He thought that Director Tenaglia first asked the question about approving it.

Director Tenaglia added that Dr. Lewis changed his position on it also.

Dr. Lewis responded that it was only because the solicitor and Mr. Majewski came back to him with reservations. He added that President Leeson made perfectly clear sense to him when she originally broached the matter.

Director Amato stated that the trips were approved in the past and recalled when Freedom High School Cheerleaders wanted to go to California and the district paid the teachers/chaperones that went. He pointed out that now this group came back and said that they would pay for the teacher, they wanted to vote it down. He said they were destroying the activities in the district. He noted that they could not schedule their athletic teams to their maximum number of games that they were allowed to play because they put a budget restraint on them. He added that as an athletic director (down the road), he tried to schedule four middle school games with the district's middle school softball team and was told that they could not do it any longer because there was no money for buses and they would also be responsible for paying for the officials.

Director Amato said that he foresaw their activities ending up like Allentown School District, where they made similar cuts years ago and now, between the two schools, they can't put a competitive team on the field to play. Director Amato reiterated that the district approved the trips in the past and asked what they were doing now by saying they could not approve them now and that the solicitor just woke up and said that if they did it they would be under great liability. He repeated that they paid the teachers salaries when they went in the past and now they told the groups that they would no longer pay the teachers as chaperones. The salary was being picked up and now they were saying no. He concluded that they could tell them no, but he was not going to be a part of it.

President Leeson said that she thought he might have missed the point, in that it was not a point of saying no, but was a point with regard to the attendance policy, which she believed the superintendent had already addressed and had allowed the students to go.

Director Dexter stated that she heard from the lacrosse coach a few weeks ago, indicating that he was going to attempt to work out something with the district so that at least the girls' lacrosse coach could exist and she suspected they would hear the same regarding the boys. She asked if they had lacrosse teams in the community that were not school connected, and the coaches needed time off, would they release the teachers to go to a function with the team.

Dr. Lewis replied that he thought it would be consistent. Right now, the proposed coach was external to system, but if somebody from inside the system were the coach, he thought they would need to be consistent.

Director Dexter noted that last year the boys' lacrosse coach was a Liberty High School teacher. She was thinking in terms of setting a precedent. She said that it was a blend and wanted to make it clear that she did not mind if the cheerleaders went on the trip and thought it was a worthwhile venture. She also wondered if they were accepting some responsibility, noting that if something happened on the trip and the code of conduct came into play, she asked if they were being put into the discomposition where they might have to discipline students for an event which was or was not a school event.

Dr. Lewis said that her point was well taken and thought it to be tantamount to the band marching in the Halloween Parade.

Director Dexter disagreed and said the band was school sponsored.

Dr. Lewis replied that the cheerleaders were also school sponsored. They paid for a coach to train them and bought their uniforms.

President Leeson said that they did not pay for them to train for competition cheering. It was separate, just as AAU Basketball was separate. She noted that some high schools had an AAU Team and a high school team.

Dr. Lewis stated that he could say that they didn't pay the band to train for an adjudicated event, but they participated in those events. He said there was nothing in the band director's contract that said they must compete. His point was that if the solicitor ruled that they were better protected by approving it, then he thought they should endorse it.

Director Dexter moved to table the matter until the next meeting.

President Leeson seconded the motion.

Dr. Lewis stated that he thought it was already tabled.

Director Tenaglia confirmed that Item 2 was tabled. He pointed out that the questions that directed his motion were not taken upon the cheerleader's trip. To correct the record, he thought the superintendent should speak to the fact that when the Liberty High School Cheerleaders originally approached him, he declined to approve the trip based upon the number of days that they were going to be out. They then heard from the cheerleaders and their parents. There was a subsequent meeting and the superintendent came to a compromise with the cheerleading group and the expenses were to be covered. Director Tenaglia noted that as a result of conversations, Mr. Majewski and Attorney Spry felt that the board should make a stamp of approval on the trip, at no cost to the district. He said that he did not have any reservations for that part, but his concerns were regarding the other item regarding an expenditure for a separate trip.

Director McKeon stated that if there was a Code of Conduct violation, and they were going to say that it was in play, then they should be approving the trip. He wasn't saying to cover the costs. It was no different than the potential litigation that could happen if they had a teacher there or an assistant athletic director going to the event. They were compensating them for their time away from the facility. He noted that his initial question was why he was even seeing both cheerleading groups because they were not school-sanctioned events, but now that this was introduced, he agreed.

Dr. Lewis thought it was wise to have the solicitor address it and added that there was a nexus in terms that the students represented the school in their uniforms and they perform as a squad in the district. He added that if there was a nexus, there was a chance for liability.

Director Amato said that the cheerleading group from the school where he was athletic director went to the Colonial League Cheerleading Competition and he noted that the district paid for it. He said it was competitive and they approved that and allowed them to attend. He pointed out that President Leeson's argument that it was not their duty to coach them for the competitive events was wrong. They send them to the Lehigh Valley Conference Cheerleading Competition, which is competitive.

President Leeson debated that there was a difference between the two.

Director Amato agreed but he was saying that it involved a competitive portion.

President Leeson said that there was club volleyball, which was different than high school volleyball and sometimes it was the same group of people.

3. Resignations

RECOMMENDATION:

Instructional

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. NAME: | Jaffie, Sheldon M. |
| ASSIGNMENT: | Liberty, Social Studies Teacher |
| REASON: | Retirement |
| EFFECTIVE: | November 10, 2008 |

Directors Follweiler and Tenaglia moved the administration’s recommendations 1, 2, and 3. Director Tenaglia requested Item 2 be pulled for discussion. The question was called on Items 1 and 3 with roll call as follows: Yea, Directors Follweiler, Haytmanek, McKeon, Tenaglia, Amato, Cann, Dexter and Leeson.

ROLL CALL
ITEMS 1 and 3

The motion passed 8 – 0.

The administration’s recommendations 1 and 3 were considered together.

Director Follweiler inquired about the Distinguished Educator schedule.

Dr. Lewis replied that they needed to wait to hear from Dr. Persing for the information.

NEW AND
MISCELLANEOUS
BUSINESS

Director Dexter inquired about the busing of the Freedom High School students to the Liberty Football Game and the transportation of the Freedom students to the next play-off game. She asked if they had changed their busing decision.

Dr. Lewis responded that they bused them for the Freedom-Liberty Football Game and also for the home game this weekend as a precaution. He was pleased to say that there was no issue. He pointed out that the Patriot Club responded by picking up transportation for the Hazleton contest so the district transportation that was expended was offset, which was a wonderful gesture and noted that he should have mentioned that in his report this evening. They also were going to run fan buses at their cost, which would mean that the fans would pay for the bus.

Director Dexter inquired about the band and cheerleaders.

Dr. Lewis replied that he was not certain because he was just informed.

Director McKeon asked if the district would normally pick up the cost.

Dr. Lewis replied that they would normally pick up the cost.

Director Dexter asked if there were plans to bus for additional games, and if so, did the board have to consider the request because it was taken out of the budget.

Director Amato asked if the away games were taken out of the budget.

Director Dexter replied, "buses."

Dr. Lewis responded that the recommendation was made with the exception of extreme situations. He noted that Dr. Donaher came to him with that request. He thought there were some concerns expressed relative to transportation in the event that they met again.

Dr. Donaher stated that the original decisions with regard to transportation for the Freedom-Liberty Football Game were based on the fact that Freedom did not transport their band to Emmaus Football Game, which was an away game, because of the rain that evening and they felt that it would be a "quid pro quo." He said it was also based upon the fact that in the past, during a normal Freedom home game, the upper parking lot was the lot that was designated for Freedom High School band members and cheerleaders to park.

Dr. Donaher continued to explain that during the Liberty-Freedom Football Game, that parking lot would be designated as the Liberty tailgating area so therefore it was anticipated that there would be very tight parking situation. Given the fact that the band didn't go to the game at Emmaus and they knew there would be some parking difficulties, the request was made for the transportation of the cheerleaders and band members for the Freedom-Liberty Game.

Director Tenaglia thought Director Amato had a point in that they had approved the budget and subsequently the administration had come to them with a series of expenditure reductions and budget savings, but there had been no motion to amend the budget to include those savings. He said that it still fell under the purview of the administration because while there was a discussion of a change in administrative policy, there was never a change to the most recently approved budget.

Dr. Lewis stated that they were desperately trying to stay under that allocation and noted that both the rainout and Patriot Club helped them out. He thought that in the spirit of safety, he thought it was a good thing to do at the present time.

President Leeson pointed out that she believed the buses traveling within were cut out of the budget last year and she thought that the football team was added on in September.

Director Tenaglia said that they never changed the budget from what was approved in June.

President Leeson agreed that the buses were already cut in the budget from June. The football team was then added back in September. She noted that they now were adding the buses for the cheerleaders and band members for home games. She added that if she recalled correctly, the away buses were kept and only the home and middle school busing were cut.

Director Tenaglia stated that it was still the obligation of administration to stay within the budget cut line items that were approved in June.

President Leeson replied that he was correct.

Director McKeon recalled that there was just a dollar amount reduction in transportation. He said they could have had some potential savings by not utilizing transportation for the Liberty-Freedom or Freedom-Emmaus Football Games, but opted not to do that.

President Leeson thought the original discussion was that they were going to take them out but if Dr. Lewis could find a sway within the budget numbers.

She thought adjustments were made within the budget numbers at all times with an example being oil expenditures. Dr. Lewis might say that they would keep all the heat off in one building, but then find that they needed to use that building so savings needed to be found elsewhere. She thought that Dr. Lewis made adjustments as long as it stayed within the budget line.

Director Dexter reiterated her feeling as a board member, in that when they go through extensive budget hearings and cuts as they did in spring and made a decision that they would not fund a certain item, even if the district saved money in another category, she thought it to be protocol to come back to the board and say that they had rethought it. She gave the example of allocating \$180,000 for science textbooks and they were able to get them for \$160,000. She noted that they were under a budget crunch at the present time and directed the goal to save in order to replenish their fund balance and pay the debt which was run up in the last few years. She didn't think it was the prerogative of the administration to say in her hypothetical situation that there was \$20,000 savings in the textbook purchase so let's get some more books for the library. She pointed out that it wasn't that library books were not a good expenditure, but once the board had decided on a certain budget cut, it was her feeling that the protocol required the administration to come back and state their case. She noted that nothing had really changed about the Freedom-Liberty Football Game that they had not previously contemplated. They always knew that parking would be an issue that day and their feeling was that people would have to make plans to arrive earlier to find some creative places to park. She didn't think it was the prerogative of the administration to say that they were going to send the buses nor did she think it was the prerogative of Freedom to say that they didn't go to Emmaus so therefore they wanted to go to the Liberty on the buses. Director Dexter expressed that it was a board decision, once it had been decided. She noted that she would feel differently if they just allocated a pot of money and then offered it for field trips and then said not too spend too much. That would then be an administrative decision as to how to spend that money, unless they specifically said that they did not want to fund a field trip to the Poconos to cut Christmas Trees. It was her view and she hoped the board agreed, but if they didn't they could speak out regarding the matter. She concluded that if they were going to change what they were doing, it had to be a board decision.

Dr. Lewis asked the board if anyone had trouble with them providing buses for an eventual Freedom-Liberty rematch.

Director Cann stated that she thought they would then have to provide it for both teams.

Dr. Lewis asked why, because he was busing the students from Freedom to Liberty because the game would be located at Liberty High School.

Director Amato stated that he was sure it would be held at Allentown School District.

Dr. Lewis replied that if it was offsite, he did not have an option.

Director Cann said that even if it was onsite, the Liberty students did not “live” at school and noted that they drove to the school.

Dr. Lewis responded that he did not run bus routes to pick up the Freedom students.

It was noted that the Freedom students drove to Freedom High School and then loaded the bus to go to the field at Liberty.

Dr. Lewis said that the issue was the uniforms, the team’s equipment and the band uniforms was stored for Liberty but Freedom dresses, comes over and brings their equipment and it was not the same. It was not that they were cheating Liberty and dumping transportation on Freedom.

Director Cann replied that she understood what Dr. Lewis meant but she had some concern about the safety of the Liberty students walking to their cars afterwards.

Dr. Lewis responded that they had tremendously increased security and didn’t anticipate that issue. He also noted that there would be 12,000 people there and it would be packed.

Director Cann stated that it would be tough for the Liberty students to find parking spaces.

Director Amato said that he didn’t agree with Director Dexter. If they had a number given to the district for transportation and they did something to reduce that number, if they had to come back every time they had a few extra dollars to do something else, the event might have passed. They needed to give them some parameters by which to operate the school district. He noted that Dr. Lewis had to make a decision to send the cross-country team to the PIAA Championship and did so, but then the board tabled it. He pointed out that administration’s hands were tied and they couldn’t do a thing without coming back to the board to ask permission.

Dr. Donaher stated that the district championship game would be played at the higher seeded home field. If Liberty and Freedom both won, the game would be played at the BASD Stadium. If they go beyond districts and get into state play-offs, then they had to play at a neutral site. He questioned if there was a Liberty-Hazleton match and Liberty had to travel to Hazelton, would the same be expected from the Liberty Football Booster Club that the Freedom Football Booster Club offered as far as payment for the team travel.

Dr. Lewis replied that he would not request that and thought that it was a magnanimous gesture on the part of the Patriots. If the booster club from Liberty stepped up, he said it would be welcomed, but he would not request it of them.

Director Tenaglia expressed that he wanted to be clear why he motioned to table Item 2. He noted that it was because the accounting codes presented by administration were not in agreement with the budget and rather than have a long discussion, he allowed administration to review the matter and then bring it up to them next week.

Director Follweiler commented that there was a hybrid between what Directors Dexter and Amato had stated. She pointed out that on the specific bus issue, it was brought to the board at a meeting as a budget cut that there would no longer be intra-district transportation after regular hours, which was after 6 p.m. and on weekends. It was specifically brought to the board, outside of the normal budget process and generated much discussion regarding safety issues. She agreed with Director Dexter in that when monies were found because of the rain, the change in the decision should have been brought to the board's attention. She agreed with the decision made due to security issues and thought it could have been brought to the board similar to the way the cross-country was brought forth, after the fact. She agreed that as policy, it would be brought forward because it was a specific budget cut that was then later changed. She noted that it was obviously the right decision even though they still had security problems with the buses. As alluded to by Director Cann, the number of students involved around the Freedom-Liberty Football Game, in addition to the number of cars, could have been an issue, but the proper forethought was put through. Director Follweiler recalled a situation months ago when Director McKeon had seen a bus parked outside of Freedom High School during an all-day Saturday event, which was obviously an intra-school event. She was not clear on why a BASD bus was parked outside Freedom High School on a Saturday if they did not have intra-school busing. She believed those type of changes were being alluded to by Director Dexter. Director Follweiler believed that they should have been made aware of any of those changes so that a parent didn't come to them and say that they stood up at a board meeting and stated that the students needed to be bused from Freedom to the BASD Stadium and it was clearly stated that the policy was, "No intra-school busing after 6 p.m. or on Saturdays." While she agreed with the decision, she believed that it should have been brought to the board.

President Leeson asked what they were losing if they bused the Freedom High School students. She pointed out that they were making very difficult decisions. When they did something in one area, they were taking away in another area.

Dr. Lewis replied that as he said earlier, the Patriot Club stepped up for the Hazleton game and that was what he and Dr. Donaher looked at as the offset, when they met today. He said they were paying for an expense that the district would have had in transportation, regarding the possibility of district and state competition.

President Leeson suggested that another alternative would be to allocate the Lafayette Field for the students and then have a police escort walk them down to the stadium, which could have included quite a bit of fanfare and fun. She noted that it would have saved them the cost of the buses and provided the safety for the students.

Dr. Lewis commented about having several police present at the hourly rate. He said they were not going to just send one policeman.

President Leeson said that it was the same as walking the students out to the buses.

Dr. Lewis replied that they did not all arrive at the same time.

President Leeson suggested that they all walk down at a specific time.

Director Haytmanek commented that have been discussing the matter for 45 minutes. He noted that it was not board material and not the kind of thing that the board needed to get involved with and with respect to everyone involved, the administration could handle it. He didn't think there was a need to come back to the board to report that they saved money in one area and then have to request permission to use it in another area. He recommended that Dr. Lewis and the administration handle the busing. He thought it was time to move on.

Director Dexter responded that some expenditures could be handled in that way by administration, but this was not one, as she outlined a few minutes ago. The budget was absolutely a board function and she did not think that it was a good idea for them to defer it to the administration. She pointed out that they had an overspent budget and a deficit, which they must reconcile. While the amount of the particular item might seem somewhat miniscule compared to some of their expenditures, the policy behind it, and the reason she was raising the issue, was so they set the pace and made consistent decisions. If something was cut from the budget, whether it was \$1,500, \$15,000, or \$150,000; it was not the prerogative of the administration to reinstate it, if they thought they found the money in another line. Director Dexter expressed that they went through all of that already and it did not work out in that style. She reviewed Policy #006, Section 1-u – *“To allow ample time for full consideration before Board meetings, any new proposals by Board members at meetings shall be laid on the table or deferred until the next regular or special meeting unless it is clearly shown that immediate action on the proposal is essential.”*

Director Dexter expressed that in this case, she did not make a motion, but rather made a statement. She knew that Dr. Lewis had asked for the will of the board. She suggested that if it was going to be an issue for discussion and voted upon, they lay it on the table and have it decided upon at the next meeting, which was in one week.

Dr. Lewis stated that he still wanted to ask the chairperson if it could be indicated whether the board was okay with providing transportation for the Freedom High School Cheerleaders and Band Members, in the event that the teams were to meet. He did not think it was a difficult situation where they had to obtain stakeholder input and thought it to be common sense. It was a safety issue and he was befuddled as to why it was an issue.

Director Tenaglia replied that they were also, because he changed the policy on them.

Dr. Lewis responded that he did not change the policy.

Director Tenaglia disagreed.

Dr. Lewis stated that he made a decision relative to safety. He was now asking for permission.

Director Tenaglia made a motion that the superintendent be given latitude to provide busing for the Freedom High School Cheerleaders and Band Members, if in his opinion, it is a safety issue and the entire matter be addressed with the board at the conclusion of the football season. Director Dexter seconded the motion.

DIRECTOR
TENAGLIA –
MOTION TO GIVE
SUPERINTENDENT
LATITUDE WITH
REGARD TO
TRANSPORTATION

President Leeson asked if there was any discussion on the motion.

Director Dexter moved to table the matter for the next meeting, as she previously stated with regard to board policy. She reviewed that the policy of the board was not to take a vote on an issue that was a new matter. Director McKeon seconded the motion.

DIRECTOR DEXTER –
MOTION TO TABLE

The question was called with roll call as follows: Yea, Directors Follweiler, Haytmanek (absent), McKeon, Tenaglia, Cann, Dexter and Leeson – 6. Nay- Amato – 1.

The motion passed 6 – 1.

President Leeson offered courtesy of the floor to visitors. No one wished to address the Board of School Directors.

COURTESY
OF THE
FLOOR TO
VISITORS

NOVEMBER 10, 2008

President Leeson requested a motion for adjournment. Directors Follweiler and McKeon moved to adjourn the meeting, which carried by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 p.m. ADJOURNMENT

Attest,

Stanley J. Majewski, Jr.
Board Secretary

:dw