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# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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**MINUTES OF MARCH 18, 2014 6:00 P.M.  
BERKSHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**JOINT BORD MEETING WITH NEWBBURY  
NEWBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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\* The Board of Education recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

*In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public participation at every public meeting of the Board and publish rules to govern such participation. These rules are available at each Board meeting. Anyone desiring to speak is asked to make this request in advance. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer. Comments shall be directed to the presiding officer; not to Board members individually. Board Bylaw 0169.1*



## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**Roll Call:** Mr. Koster, Mrs. Brown, Mr. Miller, Mr. Honkala-present, Mr. Manfredi-absent

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mrs. Brown to approve the current agenda.

Roll Call: All Ayes

Motion Carried.

Entered work session with the Newbury Board of Education at 6:04 p.m.

Mr. Sanders, Newbury Board member, welcomed everyone and introduces Mrs. Arnold to present PowerPoint which will be located on both school districts websites.

Mr. Munn, Newbury Board member, mentioned that the combined districts have seen a 13 percent decrease from 2000 to 2010 throughout school age children. He said this is normal for every school district.

Mr. Manfredi entered joint work session at 6:28 p.m.

Mr. Wagner addressed the issue of not knowing what the funding of a combined district will be. Once the state board receives the financials, they will decide on the funding.

Mr. Munn mentioned that there is a bill Mr. Matt Lynch submitted regarding a \$10,000,000 loan that could be used to build a new facility for the combined district but it has not passed at this time.

Mr. DeLong talked about him meeting with the Ohio School Facilities commission. They came out to look at the buildings. Berkshire has 60 acres of land in which could be used to build a K-12 building for the combined district with a cost of \$40-45 million dollars.

Newbury Board members made a motion to open the meeting up to public comments and questions.

Mr. DeLong started off by saying this is all about the kids. More students in a combined district will offer more classes to choose from, sports, etc. The consolidation is simply a financial issue.

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Greg Welch, a Newbury community member, is in favor of the consolidation. He questioned if the consolidation will be enough for the next ten years. Mr. Munn replied by saying that it is hard to say but other changes will most likely need to be made down the road. Mr. Sanders also made comment by saying Cardinal and West Geauga were also considered for consolidation but neither of those districts were interested.

Glen Quigley, a Newbury resident, questioned the 25% decrease in school enrollment. Mr. Wagner corrected him by saying the decrease was about 3% per school district each year, over the past 10 years.

Community member asked how many students were open enrolled from Berkshire to Newbury and from Newbury to Berkshire. Mr. DeLong informed her that 20 students are open enrolled at Berkshire from Newbury and 2 students are open enrolled from Berkshire to Newbury.

Cindy Haycox Wellman questioned a slide from the PowerPoint which said that Newbury had no homes less than \$50,000. She stated she did some research on her own and there are in fact homes in the school district valued at less than \$50,000. Newbury Board used information from the last census (4 years ago) to compile that slide.

Community member asked how consolidation affects property value of the consolidated district. This was answered by another community by saying the stronger the school, the better the value.

Don Hornak, a Berkshire resident, stated that the possible consolidation is moving too quick and is not giving much time before it is going to vote. He wanted to know if there is documentation on if there are true financial savings for consolidating and if it is really worth it. Mr. Munn answered by saying the treasurer's at both districts are working on forecasts for a combined district. Mr. Sanders added that community members will be able to vote on the consolidation.

John Gingerich, Berkshire graduate and current Newbury Board member, expresses the realization that this is needed for both districts. The schools are so close and already share a lot.

Don Hornak added Newbury is the district that has immediate financial issues, not Berkshire. He is concerned that more Newbury voters will go out and vote yes and it will pass. He does not want Berkshire to lose their identity.

Chip Hess, Newbury community member, states the boards are making the right decision and to stay on the path of consolidation.

Mark Rhoades is not in favor of the consolidation. He felt as though there has been no public participation regarding the consolidation besides the first public meeting at Kent State Geauga Campus.

Mr. Sanders added again, the consolidation is something the residents get to vote on. No one is trying to do anything behind anyone's back. It will all come down to a community vote.

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Mark Rhoades noted that he went to the Newbury Board 7 years ago to discuss a consolidation and nothing was done. Now Newbury is in need and so things are moving quickly because of their financial situation.

Jerry Hiscox, a Berkshire resident, asked why the county school board is not involved. Mr. DeLong answered by saying the county superintendent brought Berkshire, Cardinal, Ledgesmont and Newbury to discuss consolidation. Berkshire and Newbury were the only districts interested.

Carolyn Squire, a Berkshire resident, wants to see enrollment numbers from Berkshire and Newbury separate instead of combined. She believes it is not fair to see them combined. Mr. Wagner stated the decline in enrollment is about the same in both districts, about 3% each year. Mr. DeLong also added that the numbers needed to be combined to see how many children would make up a new district.

A community member stated they have read about the possibility of consolidation for the past year or so. They wanted to know what determines the state funding per pupil. Mr. Wagner answered by saying that it is very confusing. The said it is based on the wealth of the district. Berkshire receives 11% and Newbury receives 5.5%. It is calculated by the number of students divided by the property value.

Linda Stone, a Berkshire resident, wanted to know if there was a place where info could be available. Mr. Manfredi said that information will be updated on the websites and local businesses in Burton. He also mentioned that anyone is welcome to call any of the board members with questions or concerns.

A lady in the audience wanted to remind everyone that the boards are doing what is best for the children and that Berkshire and Newbury residents are neighbors.

Mrs. Arnold thanked everyone for coming. Mr. Koster also thanked everyone for their time and voicing their opinions.

## **Adjournment**

Motion made by Mr. Koster, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Roll Call: All Ayes

Motion Carried.

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Mr. John Manfredi      President

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Mrs. Beth McCaffrey      Recorder of Proceedings