

# Parsippany-Troy Hills Township Schools

---

## Board of Education Meeting

### Questions and Answers

**October 10, 2013**

---

Question:

I am emailing you my question regarding the future status of the Reading and Writing (“R&W”) curriculum within the Parsippany Township school system, grades K through 12. I am deeply concerned about rumored changes in the R&W program. I would like to know what review has been performed by the Board of Education (“BOE”) and administrative staff and what changes have been discussed, recommended or tabled until a future date regarding the R&W program.

There must be a basis from which the R&W reduction or removal rumor was created. Any reduction to this program will not provide improved quality or enhanced education to the children in the school system. Reading & writing are the core foundations of education and must be the first and foremost education tool in the educational process. Reading comprehension is the basis from which we gain our ability to learn and understand. If we cannot comprehend what we read, we gain nothing. Writing is essential in that it is a form of communication and is the way teachers and evaluators of students determine an achievement of performance. If we do not focus on these 2 areas as the foundation for education, all other areas will suffer.

- **Since I have arrived, I have raised questions about the nine 40 minute schedule at the middle schools and the eight 44 minute schedule at the high schools. For example, given the contractual seven hour day, teachers at the middle school spend the least amount of time engaged in teaching. In addition, the scheduled classes are fixed rather than rotate, and there are multiple lunch waves, four at the high schools and three at the middle, resulting a great deal of student movement throughout the day.**

**Thus, how the school day is scheduled and how time, a critical resource, is allocated must be periodically evaluated. To ensure we allocate maximum instructional time to the core curriculum, we need to examine current practice and explore scheduling options that will result in increased instructional time for all students. I have said that we need to assess the middle school schedule and how time is distributed across the program of studies offered. To that end, the Board of Education approved the 2013-2014 District Goals which included the following: “Explore revising secondary schedules to include extending class time, rotating classes, fewer class meetings, and a unit lunch (one lunch period for all).” The exploration is designed to address goal**

**2) “Increase Student Achievement.” Now that the Goals have been approved, we will be forming a Steering Committee of teachers, administrators, and parents to explore and investigate middle and high school schedules that include the above features.**

**The status of all programs remain intact. If and when there are recommendations to change the current secondary schedules, and approved by the Board of Education, I should hope it results in improved allocation of time for all curriculum areas and most importantly “Increased Student Achievement.”**

Question:

I fail to understand how the Board reconvened, without all members present (missing Mancuso & Calabria), and reversed its decision?

- **The Board of Education made a motion to go into Closed Session for the purpose of Personnel Issues stating that there may or may not be action taken upon the conclusion of the Closed Session. Dr. Calabria and Mr. Mancuso did not attend the Closed Session.**

**Upon the conclusion of the Closed Session the Board did reconvene which is allowable as long as they have a quorum. There were 7 members present which did constitute a quorum.**