

Port Allegany School District

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
Committee of the Whole Meeting

January 10, 2022
High School Library
7:00 o'clock p.m.

Minutes

President Petruzzi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the high school library with a moment of silence and the flag salute. Mrs. Veilleux called the roll.

Board Present: Mr. Nathan Burgett, Mr. Eric Button, Mr. Justin Fillhart, Mrs. Bonna Johns, Mr. Sean Lathrop, Mrs. Erica Petruzzi, Mr. Jason Stake, Mrs. Elizabeth Stauffer, Mr. Donald Tanner, Mr. Adam Moate and Mr. Gary Buchsen.

Others Present: High School Principal Marc Budd, Elementary School Principal Tracy Kio, Assistant Principal Greg Oliver, Steve Woodruff, Terri Woodruff, Deborah Kio, Dr. Mark Carlson, Brielle Budd, Joyce Stehle, Brad Stewart, Ink Young, Kathy Errick, Dr. Daniel Schott, Elizabeth Long

Public Comment

Mr. Lawton began by thanking the board for their service and appreciation for representing our kids. He spoke about the mitigation efforts at hand. He spoke about the education and sports experiences for his children and the community. Mitigation efforts are there to protect the vulnerable in our community. The school is the best place for kids to be. Please keep the vulnerable people in mind when thinking about our last mitigation efforts.

Student Elizabeth Long came forward speaking about mask mandates and not being able to see her friends' faces. She spoke on behalf of the rights to choose to wear masks or not.

Ink Young discussed the district's exclusion data from the beginning of the school year. Most of the children that are getting sick are exposed at home and not in school. The only place we see mitigation efforts are in school. Let's get back to normal and let our children get back to normal.

Kathy Errick spoke about the exclusion of healthy children. We all suffer when this happens (parents, children and teachers). We are monitoring our children 24/7/365. They are exposed to COVID every day. When the school sends them home when they are in close contact, we are now taking on health concerns and education takes a back burner. The morale of the children immediately goes down, education suffers, and they miss out.

Dr. Daniel Schott spoke regarding the board having to set policies and he does not envy them. Large community events may mask for that one day or some sort of mitigation for one large super spreader event. Try to break the chain, exposing one person to the next person and he is going to be that link. Dr. Schott some sort of mitigation efforts for this school year.

Adam Hamilton spoke in regards to the Health and Safety plan needing updated. Kids are playing constant catch up when they are off due to exclusion. If we can figure out a way to do something different, we need change. If a student is healthy, let them stay and if they show signs or symptoms, send them home. We can not get those educational days back.

There were no comments on Title I or Title II.

Committee Reports

Board President - Committee Appointments for 2022. Mrs. Petruzzi asked that the new members coming in be updated on their committee appointments.

Intermediate Unit Nine Board of Directors - Eric Button - Mrs. Johns will brief him on the process.

Seneca Highlands CTC General Advisory Board - Nate Burgett - Mr. Tanner stated that there is nothing to report.

PSBA Legislative Representative - Justin Fillhart - Reminder to the new board members that they need 5 hours of required training. All returning members will also need training.

Superintendent's Report

The board will need to adopt the tentative 2022-2023 school calendar at the January meeting. Mr. Buchsen stated that our calendar is driven by the CTC calendar. If it meets with the board's approval, we will bring it to the January regular meeting.

Mr. Buchsen asked Mr. Oliver to review the special education program audit. Mr. Oliver stated that the state audit team will be here on January 24th. We had to submit a self assessment where the state audit team will review the policies and procedures. Mr. Fillhart asked Mr. Oliver if he had any concerns and Mr. Oliver stated that he is confident that we are doing what we need to do and are compliant with state requirements.

Health and Safety Plan Review - the board health and safety committee met prior to Christmas break and has recommendations for the board to consider. Mr. Buchsen stated that they are at the board's discretion. Mrs. Petruzzi asked who does the contact tracing at the buildings. Mr. Kio stated that he and Mrs. Fillhart will get the list and then go from there. Mr. Budd stated that we utilize the counselors as well as the nurse and himself when contact tracing. Mrs. Petruzzi stated that the committee met in December and talked about the health and safety plan. Mr. Stake recommended quarantining symptomatic students. Mr. Buchsen would like to add to the plan the testing of the teachers and staff if they would like to if they are not feeling well and are unsure. It is completely voluntary. Mr. Lathrop asked if any of the local districts are offering it to the staff. Mr. Buchsen stated that most of them are using "Test to Stay" or changing their quarantine process. The board then discussed their concerns regarding the health and safety plan.

Act 91 of 2021 Review - steps taken to assist school districts in addressing staffing shortages. Mr. Buchsen stated that the single largest problem that schools will face in the future will be staffing shortages. Act 91 allows trained paraprofessionals to serve as classroom monitors to help with the substitute teacher shortage.

Personnel

Approved Garrett Smith and Jacob Kallenborn as volunteer wrestling coaches for the 2021-2022 season. Motion: J. Stake; Second: S. Lathrop. The motion was carried unanimously.

Added Mr. Gary Leschner to the support staff substitute list effective December 10, 2021. Motion: S. Lathrop; Second: B. Johns. The motion was carried unanimously.

Added Ms. Kalie Cowburn (early childhood certification) to the substitute teaching list effective December 12, 2021. Motion: J. Stake; Second: E. Stauffer. The motion was carried unanimously.

Accepted the resignation of Corine Bosworth as an elementary cafeteria worker effective December 22, 2021. Motion: D. Tanner; Second: N. Burgett. The motion was carried unanimously.

Accepted the resignation of Danielle Anthony as co-cheerleading advisor effective December 6, 2021. Motion: E. Stauffer; Second: S. Lathrop. The motion was carried unanimously.

Added Mr. Gregory Falk to the bus/van driver's list. Motion: B. Johns; Second: E. Stauffer. The motion was carried unanimously.

Finance

The district has received the balance of the ESSERs I funding of \$208,163.80. It is recommended by the administration to transfer this amount back into the capital reserve.

Curriculum

The administration will be recommending approval of a high school elective proposal by Mr. Palmer on film studies. With the board's approval next week, this course would be available to students beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Mr. Budd stated that this would be a great addition to the electives that the high school offers.

Board

Mr. Buchsen gave an overview of the following policy updates - first reading: Policy 610 Purchases Subject to Bid/Quotation (Recommended for audit purposes) and Policy 611 Purchases Budgeted (Recommended for audit purposes).

Recommended by the Board of Health & Safety Committee to amend the district health and safety plan as follows:

"The Port Allegany School District will exclude from school any student or staff who are showing symptoms of COVID-19, who have tested positive for COVID-19, or who have been a close contact through an in-home setting.

The district will continue to complete contact tracing and notification of all close contacts within the school setting or during school activities.

Effective January 11, 2022, asymptomatic students and staff who were determined to be a close contact not from a home setting, will not be excluded from school. If parents/guardians,

upon notice of exposure, decide to exclude their student, absences for the dates of exclusion will be legal/excused."

Roll call vote. The motion was carried unanimously 9-0.

Recommended to offer at no cost to the school district, state provided Ginkgo Bioworks rapid antigen test to individual district employees on a voluntary basis. Motion: S. Lathrop; Second: D. Tanner. The motion was carried unanimously.

Executive Session

The board moved to executive session to discuss personnel and a legal matter.

Adjournment

Motion: J. Stake; Second: E. Stauffer. The motion was carried unanimously. Mrs. Petruzzi adjourned the meeting at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

MELISSA VEILLEUX
Secretary to the Board of School Director