

Port Allegany School District

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
Special Board Meeting

July 26, 2021

Elementary School Library

7:00 p.m.

Executive Session 6:00 p.m. for teacher interviews.

Minutes

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

Board Present: Dr. Mark Carlson, Mrs. Bonna Johns, Mr. Kerry Hawver, Mr. Sean Lathrop, Mr. Jason Stake (exited at 7:43pm), Mr. Jonathan Stehle, Mr. Donald Tanner, Mr. Adam Moate and Mr. Gary Buchsen

Board Absent: Mr. Justin Fillhart

Others Present: High School Principal Mr. Marc Budd, Elementary School Principal Mr. Tracy Kio, Assistant Principal Greg Oliver, Ink Young and Matt Lawton.

Public Comment

Ink Young spoke on behalf of her two high school children and the community in addressing the Health and Safety Plan for the upcoming school year. She mentioned that she is extremely happy with the school district and what we have navigated has been challenging and we have made the best of it. The restrictions of the masks are playing a role in the decisions that parents are making. It is time to let the parents decide what they want for their children. She would like to urge the board to consider parental choice and let the parents make the decisions for their children regarding masks.

There were no comments relating to Title I or Title II.

Communication

None.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Buchsen stated that last year a Health and Safety Plan was required by the district that was 25 pages long whereas this year a condensed template was provided by the state. If the board is going to accept the stimulus package under the Biden Administration, you have to have a Health and Safety Plan in place, posted on your website, and continued to be reviewed throughout this grant period. At the start of school, students and staff will not be required to wear masks when they come into the buildings. Facial coverings would be a choice for students and staff. If the board approves the draft, we will upload it, email to parents, and make notification knowing full well that if this is not met with

support, it can always be revised. The district could come back at any time and revise it. It will need to be reviewed every 6 months and has to be shared when making changes. Should masking become mandatory, those mandates would need to be followed. In regards to transportation, the students will need to wear masks at all times to and from school and for athletic events. Mrs. Petruzzi asked if the bussing issue would be up to us or up to Muccio's? Mr. Buchsen stated that it would be a district decision. There are no attendance limitations for events at this time. Things could go back to limited attendance depending on state mandates. We want our schools to open semi-normally. Mr. Hawver asked about the change of the quarantine period when it changed from 14 days to 10 days and if it has changed in the plan. We do not know what the state will require of the district as far as contact tracing. Mrs. Petruzzi stated that if we force masks, the cyber school numbers will skyrocket. If you accept the money, you have to have a Health and Safety Plan. If they start mandating things that we have to do as a district, we can pull the plan and not take the money.

2021-2022 Instructional Time Template. Mr. Buchsen stated that this is literally the same thing we had to do last year. Should the schools be forced to close, the district would use remote instruction to count toward the required number of school hours for the year. The board would have to approve this and PDE keeps it on file.

The state budget was approved and we will see some additional funding from that. Port Allegany will receive an additional \$184,000 in state funding. These additional revenues would offset the projected deficit.

The elementary bathrooms have moved along quite nicely and with the timeline they hope to have all of the toilets and fixtures set along with the partitions. They will be fully functional at the start of the school year and any cosmetic items will be done after school hours. On the high school side, it is clearly a construction zone. The HVAC work is being completed by Mazza and they have done a tremendous job. Parts of the building are being turned over to the district so that maintenance has been able to prep the classrooms. This morning they released the back corner wing to the cafeteria. Maintenance is completing those room preparations. We are still on a timeline for full access to the building on August 16th. Monday the 23rd, all teachers will have access to their classrooms. The roof will be worked on after hours once school starts and should be done by Labor Day. We have been a little disappointed with that timeline, the material delays, and staffing issues but we have been reassured that the start of the school year is still a go. Mr. Tanner asked about the parking lot being sealed and if the work that needs cleaned up in the parking lot to do that. Mr. Buchsen stated that we will do the sealing in the fall once the roof project is completed. The back sidewalk by the football field is a mess and Jim Ferraro said that will be taken care of by them.

Mr. Buchsen stated that we received an email about 4 weeks ago providing grant funding for additional STEM curriculum in the district. Ardagh has donated the money to the district along with a donation to Smethport. Mr. Kio stated that he reached out to the third grade team and they wanted to participate with the grant. They are in the process of getting the paperwork filed. It is a Science STEM based project. All the training and materials are provided through the grant. They can begin at any point in the school year. It is a great opportunity for the kids and the teachers are trained for two days with online and in person training. After the second year, it is a nominal fee to the district and it is then offered to another grade level. The Project Lead the Way grant totals \$10,000 for this year and an additional \$10,000 for next year.

Mr. Buchsen stated that starting with this school year, districts in Pennsylvania must create a threat assessment team. There are options to do the required training online or go directly to PaTTAN to complete it in person. Mr. Budd will train the core group of the team. It is being able to identify students throughout our school buildings that are potential threats. The goal is to maintain safe schools.

We already do this as a district but it is not as formalized. It is nothing new to the schools or the community. It just reheightens our awareness of it. Mrs. Petruzzi stated that mental health skyrocketed during the past year with the pandemic. Mrs. Johns asked if this just formalizes what we already have in place and Mr. Budd stated that it does formalize what we already have in place but does not mandate it.

Personnel

Filled the following supplemental position for the 2021-2022 school year with salaries set in accordance with Schedule B1 of the Professional Agreement: assistant volleyball coach - Josh Nelson - \$1,818 and assistant volleyball coach - Kate Johnson - \$ 1,548. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: D. Tanner. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approved Kelly Johnson as a volunteer Jr. High Volleyball coach pending paper the 2021-2022 season. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: K. Hawver. The motion was carried unanimously.

Accepted the resignation of Ms. Lexi Callander as an elementary school teacher effective June 3, 2021. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: S. Lathrop. The motion was carried unanimously.

Accepted the resignation of Mrs. Tammy Schenfield as an elementary school teacher effective June 30, 2021. Motion: D. Tanner; Second: S. Lathrop. The motion was carried unanimously.

Accepted the resignation of Mrs. Samantha Wight as an elementary school teacher effective June 3, 2021. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: D. Tanner. The motion was carried unanimously.

Accepted the resignation of Ms. Lindsay Bower as a high school reading teacher effective July 19, 2021. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: S. Lathrop. The motion was carried unanimously.

Hired Heather Boswell as a professional employee assigned as an elementary teacher beginning the 2021-2022 school year at a salary of \$56,401 (BS, Step 11) and fringe benefits set in accordance with the Professional Agreement and district policy. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: E. Petruzzi. The motion was carried unanimously.

Hired Holly Chilson as a temporary professional employee assigned as an elementary teacher beginning the 2021-2022 school year at a salary of \$45,678 (BS, Step 2) and fringe benefits set in accordance with the Professional Agreement and district policy. Motion: S. Lathrop; Second: K. Hawver. The motion was carried unanimously.

Hired Melissa Orner as a temporary professional employee assigned as an elementary teacher beginning the 2021-2022 school year at a salary of \$47,401 (M, Step 1) and fringe benefits set in accordance with the Professional Agreement and district policy. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: B. Johns. The motion was carried unanimously.

Hired Renee Johnson as a temporary professional employee assigned as an elementary teacher beginning the 2021-2022 school year at a salary of \$44,486 (BS, Step 1) and fringe benefits set in accordance with the Professional Agreement and district policy. Motion: D. Tanner; Second: E. Petruzzi. The motion was carried unanimously.

Hired Vanessa O'Shea as a professional employee assigned as an elementary teacher beginning the 2021-2022 school year at a salary of \$72,955 (MS+30, Step 20) and fringe benefits set in accordance with the Professional Agreement and district policy. Motion: S. Lathrop; Second: B. Johns. The motion was

carried unanimously.

Finance

Reimbursed Mr. Ben Palmer for mileage, meals, and lodging to complete the PDE Safety & Driver Education Teacher Certification Assessment (PSDETCA) on Thursday, July 29, 2021 at the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network Office in Harrisburg. Total cost not to exceed \$500.00. Motion: S. Lathrop; Second: D. Tanner. The motion was carried unanimously.

Board

Approved the health and safety plan for the 2021-2022 school year. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: D. Tanner. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approved the instructional time template for the 2021-2022 school year. Motion: E. Petruzzi ; Second: B. Johns. The motion was carried unanimously.

PSBA Policy Updates - first reading at this point: 218.1 Weapons (This is a mandated policy.), 218.3 Terroristic Threats (Recommended for legal liability purposes.), 236.1 Threat Assessment (This is a new policy recommended for legal liability purposes.), 246 Wellness (Required review every 3 years.), 247 Hazing (This is a mandated policy.), 249 Bullying/Cyberbullying (This is a mandated policy.), 252 Dating Violence (This is an optional policy.), 805 Emergency Preparedness and Response and Safe2Say Something Procedures (Recommended for legal liability purposes.) and 808 Food Services (Required review.)

Mrs. Johns approached the board with some information regarding staffing and programming. Given some of the comments during the pandemic and informal interviews of some of the teachers exiting via email and wanted to summarize them in a document to see if there are areas of opportunity that we have within the school district. It is really important that we continue improving the positive culture throughout the district. What are some things that worked and what didn't work? Mrs. Petruzzi and Mrs. Johns have been planning a social for all teachers to get together to interact on a personal level. The suggestion that she wanted feedback on is can we put together a committee to have a post pandemic plan and what has transpired over the past year and what we have going forward. Mr. Buchsen stated that the board has two structural opportunities to adopt a comprehensive plan next spring. Mrs. Petruzzi said that a lot of teachers stated that they did the best they could but...we do not want to see the new hires leave and the ones that are here now, to stay.

Executive Session

The board moved to executive session for personnel matters at 8:27 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion: S. Lathrop; Second: J. Stake. The motion was carried unanimously. Doctor Carlson adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA VEILLEUX
Secretary to the Board of School Directors