

**WATTSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Work Session**

January 11, 2021

The meeting of the Board Work Session convened on January 11, 2021 at 7:00 PM via Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform.

Dr. Pushchak announced that following the Pledge and Roll Call, the Finance Committee would be completed prior to the Work Session items.

Mr. Jeremy Bloeser, Mrs. Amanda Farrell, Mrs. Nicole Lee, Mr. Shawn Matson, Mr. Josh Paris, Mrs. Julie Pikiewicz, Mrs. Tara Pound, Mr. Marty Pushchak and Dr. Andy Pushchak attended. Mr. Kenneth Berlin, Superintendent; Mrs. Rebecca Kelley, Assistant to the Superintendent; Mrs. Vicki Bendig Business Administrator also attended.

Roll Call

Mrs. Bendig reviewed the proposed Durham Transportation Agreement renewal, which would be a five-year agreement. The consensus was that Durham has provided the District with excellent service at considerable cost savings and a contract renewal should be considered.

Finance  
Committee  
Meeting  
Continuation

Mrs. Bendig presented the resolution for the Tax Collectors Compensation agreement for the years 2022-2025 in which the tax collectors requested a three percent increase each year. It was felt that the collectors have provided the district excellent and consistent service and the proposed increases are reasonable.

Mr. Berlin shared the resolution-questionnaire sent to the Erie County Technical Schools' participating districts regarding the Millcreek school district proposal to change the capital outlay formula with regards to the proposed ECTS renovation. He explained that the current Articles of Agreement funding formula is based on the tax base of each district. The greater the tax base, the greater the share of capital project contribution. He stated that Millcreek has a very large tax base compared to many of the rural districts and therefore would shoulder the greatest percentage of the proposed ECTS renovation. Millcreek is proposing a modification of the current formula that would alter the proposed \$32.5 million capital project funding. There was discussion of Millcreek School District's late proposal and its impact on school districts with smaller tax raising capability. The consensus of the board was to reject Millcreek's proposal.

Mr. Berlin went over the PennDOT resolution to purchase Erie County Technical School property to create a round-about at the busy intersection near the school. The sending districts of the Erie County Technical School would receive a settlement amount of \$60,216 for the property used for the Installation of the round-about.

Dr. Pushchak opened the floor to citizens for comments on items covered at the Finance Committee Meeting. No citizens wished to comment.

Danny Carter addressed the Board commenting on the costs of taxes, the sports complex, and the Erie County Vo-Tech resolutions. He also questioned why IEP students have not been able to attend school one day per week when ECTS students have been back to school during the past week. He then shared that if a request for a private meeting is not met, then it can be brought up at the public board meeting. Regarding Mr. Carter's last comment, Dr. Pushchak told Mr. Carter the board will seek the advice of the solicitor regarding any citizen comment directed toward an individual. Dr. Pushchak thanked Mr. Carter for his comments.

Citizens  
&  
Guests

Mr. Berlin presented the Board with an update regarding COVID-19 cases in Erie County and within the District.

Superintendent's  
Report

The Principals shared their views on going to hybrid instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Miller felt that the students need to be in-person if they are able stating that the hybrid education would essentially offer SHS students only one day per week of in-person learning and four days of remote or unguided instruction and learning would suffer. Mr. Paris shared that the teachers feel they lose students if they are not in person. because it is difficult to keep students engaged if they are not in class. Mrs. Barboni agreed that their students need to have hands-on interaction and direct instruction as long as case numbers safely permit it.

Dr. Pushchak thanked Mr. Berlin for keeping the board informed and for the continued efforts of the administration on determining the best way to educate our students during the pandemic.

Mrs. Bendig gave the Treasurer's Report General Fund: \$11,073,459.26, Capital Projects: \$30,301.62, Cafeteria: \$177,276.69, the Cafeteria Profit/Loss: Nov: \$3,804.18 Dec: \$5,977.07 and Exhibit A1 Checks Already Written: \$559,121.82, Exhibit B1 Cafeteria Checks Already Written: \$27,998.11 and Exhibit D SHS Activity Fund Report: \$73,975.23. A full report will be given at the January 18, 2021 Board Meeting. Mrs. Bendig also shared that the free breakfast/lunch and food distribution will be extended on through the end of the school year.

Treasurer's  
Report

The Board discussed the Accelerated Budget Opt-Out Resolution certifying that the tax rate will remain within the inflation index and no need to comply with the Act 1 Accelerated Budget Procedures for the 2021-2022 General Fund Budget. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Preliminary  
General Fund  
Budget for  
2021-2022

The Board discussed the monthly budgetary transfer from the budget vs. actual report. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Budget vs. Actual  
Transfer

The Board discussed the budgetary amendment. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Budgetary  
Amendment

The Board discussed the resolution to set the compensation rate for the collection of real estate taxes levied by the District as per Section 36.1 of the Local Tax Collection Law to be effective during the term of the office for the elected Tax

Compensation  
for Tax Collectors

Collectors commencing January 1, 2022. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

The Board discussed the IRS Mileage Rate of 56¢/mile for business travel effective January 1, 2021. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

IRS Mileage Rate

The Board discussed the additions to the Kelly Educational Staffing Substitute List. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Kelly Educational Staffing

The Board discussed the tuition reimbursements. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Tuition Reimbursement

The Board discussed the resignation for the purpose of retirement of Donald Pearce effective January 5, 2021. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda. Board members expressed their thanks and best wishes to Don. He was a great teacher and will be greatly missed.

Personnel Resignation

The Board discussed the appointments of Michael Rimdzius as a long-term substitute for Seneca High School anticipated January 16 through June 14, 2021 at Masters, Step 1 and Amanda Werner as Support Aide, Class C, 3 hours/day, 180 days/year effective January 11, 2021. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Personnel Appointments

The Board discussed the following leave requests:

Leave Requests

- Extended Disability Leave of Absence as per the WEA Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement for Todd Talbot commencing January 29, 2021.
- Leave of Absence for Brittany Smiley utilizing sick/personal days and Family Medical Leave of Absence anticipated April 14, 2021 through June 14, 2021.
- Leave of Absence for James Caspar utilizing sick/personal days and Family Medical Leave of Absence beginning February 10, 2021.

This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

The Board discussed the first reading of the following polices:

First Reading of Policies

- Policy 103 Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students
- Policy 203 Immunizations and Communicable Diseases
- Policy 209 Health Examinations/Screenings
- Policy 218.3 Discipline of Student Convicted/Adjudicated of Sexual Assault
- Policy 317.1 Educator Misconduct
- Policy 705 Facilities and Workplace Safety
- Policy 803 School Calendar
- Policy 824 Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries
- Policy 904 Public Attendance at School Events
- Policy 907 School Visitors

This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

The Board discussed the homebound instruction of a SHS student anticipated December 3, 2020 through February 6, 2021. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Homebound  
Instruction

The Board discussed the continue academic services of LearnWell for a hospitalized SHS student. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

LearnWell  
Agreement

The Board discussed the approve the revised Preliminary Contract for Title I Services between Erie City School District and Wattsburg Area School District for the 2020-2021 school year. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Revised  
Preliminary  
Contract Title I

The Board discussed the addition of Ryan Derner to the Game Help List for the 2020-2021 school year. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Game Help List

The Board discussed the resignations of Ryan Murphy, First Assistant Football Coach effective January 6, 2021, Derek Peterman, Other Assistant Football Coach effective January 6, 2021 and Kym Braine, Second Assistant Girls' Soccer effective January 7, 2021. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Athletic  
Resignation

The Board discussed the Surplus Items. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Surplus Items

The Board discussed the Millcreek Township School District Modification of Erie County Technical School Resolution-Questionnaire. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

Millcreek  
Modification to  
Erie Co Technical  
School Resolution

The Board discussed the resolution for PennDOT's Installation of Round-About on Erie County Technical School property. This item to be placed on the January 18, 2021 agenda.

PennDOT  
Resolution for  
ECTS

Mr. Berlin was asked the reason we are still in-person learning when the state is at a substantial Covid phase. This is due to the low numbers of cases in our district. The Admin Team recommends that we stay full instruction until the numbers dictate we must change our mode of instruction. This is ultimately the Board's decision.

There was discussion of Cyber Charter Schools and the amounts that are paid to them by public-school districts. This continues to be a struggle for districts and there is nothing that can be done about it. If a district refuses to pay, the Department of Education deducts from our Basic Education Funding. Dr. Pushchak reminded those attending that we spend roughly a million dollars to cyber charter each year and we have no say what-so-ever about it. Contact your legislators and let them know you are dissatisfied with this amount of money that goes right out of our district.

Dr. Pushchak thanked those attending the meeting for allowing the continuation of the Finance Committee meeting.

There being no further business, upon motion by Mr. Paris seconded by Mrs. Lee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Adjournment

Signature on File  
Vicki Bendig  
Board Secretary