

WATTSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

JANUARY 18, 2021

The Wattsburg Area School District Board of Education held their Regular Board meeting via Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform. President Andy Pushchak called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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 and Attorney Christine McClure, Solicitor also attended.

Roll Call

Mrs. Pikiewicz requested the addition of Digital Divide Study by Jeff Styborski utilizing the District's communication resources be added to the addendum. Motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve the agenda as presented and the addendum with addition of the Digital Divide Study. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Agenda and Addendum

Motion by Mr. Paris, seconded by Mrs. Pound to approve the meeting minutes of December 7, 2020 Organization/Regular Board Meeting and the January 11, 2021 Work Session and Finance Committee Meeting. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Meeting Minutes

Dr. Pushchak called upon Mr. Berlin for School Reports. Mr. Berlin shared that the principals of the buildings will give the board an overview of distance learning problems and what is being done to address these problems.

School Reports

Mr. Miller and Mr. Englert shared that the data of failure rates from previous years 2018-2019 – 3% failure rate vs. 2020-2021 17% failure rate and the Cyber (Fuel Ed) rate of 61%-81% failure. Attendance is taken by completion of assignments. They are offering academic support to students who are struggling. When we are remote, the teachers are available for a live question/answer time. The administration and guidance counselors are contacting families by phone and having meetings with families of struggling students. They are also making home visits to those students' who are not responding during remote learning. Assignments will be accepted for two weeks after the end of the semester (February 11th deadline) and will be counted toward the first semester grade. Truancy is also being filed against students who do not respond to district support efforts.

Mr. Paris and Mrs. Wehan shared that the remote learning failure during the pandemic is also up for middle school students. They are working closely with the high school and following the same procedures. The middle school has the benefit of having enrichment time built into their schedules and teachers are focusing on individual instruction for students who are struggling. They have found that students are rushing through assignments and not taking the time

to complete assignments. This is a team effort in trying to keep students engaged and focused.

Mrs. Barboni and Mr. Calabrese shared that their 80% students are completing their assignments on time and that 64 students are doing the cyber program. They have Mrs. Holland leading the cyber class and she is doing a wonderful job with it. Only a few are failing.

The Board expressed thanks to the principals, teachers and all who are working through these problems incurred by the pandemic. We are doing the best we can with what we have.

No visitors requested to address the Board.

Guest and Citizens

Mr. Berlin updated the Board with the latest Covid statistics. We are not seeing the post-holiday spike that was predicted which is good news. He also shared that the Department of Health is no longer contract tracing and have turned this duty over to the district's Covid Team. We have three employees who have completed the John Hopkins Covid Course and are handling the district Covid contact tracing.

Superintendent's Report

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Mrs. Farrell to approve the reports, payments, and invoices as presented:

Business Administrator's Report

- Revenue & Expenditure Reports
 - [General Fund](#): \$11,073,459.26
 - [YTD Budget to Actual Report](#)
 - [Capital Projects](#): \$30,301.62
 - [Cafeteria](#): \$177,276.69
 - Cafeteria Profit/Loss: [Nov](#): \$3,804.18 [Dec](#): \$5,977.07
- Checks and Invoices
 - [Exhibit A1](#) Checks Already Written: \$559,121.82
 - [Exhibit A2](#) Checks Already Written: \$17,308.48
 - [Exhibit A3](#) General Fund Bills: \$335,790.37
 - [Exhibit B1](#) Cafeteria Checks Already Written: \$27,998.11
 - [Exhibit B3](#) Cafeteria Bills: \$31,814.01
 - [Exhibit C3](#) Capital Project Fund Bills: \$20,500.00
 - [Exhibit D](#) SHS Activity Fund Report: \$73,975.23

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve 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 as outlined in [Exhibit E](#). In a recorded roll-call vote, Mr. Pushchak, Mr. Bloeser, Mrs. Farrell, Mrs. Lee, Mr. Matson, Mr. Paris, Mrs. Piekiewicz, Mrs. Pound and Dr. Pushchak voted to approve the Opt-Out Resolution. Motion carried.

Preliminary General Fund Budget for 2021-2022 School Year

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Mrs. Farrell to approve the monthly budgetary transfer from the budget vs. actual report as outlined in [Exhibit F](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Budgetary Transfer

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve the budgetary amendment as outlined in [Exhibit G](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

**Budgetary
Amendment**

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve 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 Collectors commencing January 1, 2022 as outlined in [Exhibit H](#). In a recorded roll-call vote, Mr. Pushchak, Mr. Bloeser, Mrs. Farrell, Mrs. Lee, Mr. Matson, Mr. Paris, Mrs. Pikiewicz, Mrs. Pound and Dr. Pushchak voted to approve the Compensation for Tax Collectors resolution. Motion carried.

**Compensation for
Tax Collectors**

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve the IRS Mileage Rate of 56¢/mile for business travel effective January 1, 2021 as outlined in [Exhibit I](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

IRS Mileage

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve the Statement of Work Agreement between Serenic and WASD to upgrade the district's Serenic software as outlined in [attachment 1](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

**Serenic Software
Upgrade Agreement**

Motion by Mr. Bloeser, seconded by Mr. Paris approve Jacob Ciercierski, Matthew Cooper, Rebecca Haener, Paige Proctor and Erin Van Dyke as additions to the Kelly Educational Staffing Substitute List. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

**Kelly Educational
Staffing Substitute
List**

Motion by Mr. Bloeser, seconded by Mr. Pushchak to approve the tuition reimbursements as outlined in [Exhibit J](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

**Tuition
Reimbursement**

Motion by Mr. Bloeser, seconded by Mrs. Farrell to accept with regret the resignation for retirement of Donald Pearce, teacher effective January 5, 2021. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried. Dr. Pushchak added that Mr. Pearce will be greatly missed he was a great teacher, coach, and person. We wish him the best.

**Personnel
Resignation**

Motion by Mr. Bloeser, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve 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. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Personnel

Motion by Mr. Bloeser, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve the following 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.

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion approved.

Leave Requests

Motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Bloeser to approve the first reading of the following policies:

- [Executive Summary](#)
- Policy 103 Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students – [Exhibit K](#)
- Policy 203 Immunizations and Communicable Diseases – [Exhibit L](#)
- Policy 209 Health Examinations/Screenings – [Exhibit M](#)
- Policy 218.3 Discipline of Student Convicted/Adjudicated of Sexual Assault – [Exhibit N](#)
- Policy 317.1 Educator Misconduct - [Exhibit O](#)
- Policy 705 Facilities and Workplace Safety – [Exhibit P](#)
- Policy 803 School Calendar – [Exhibit Q](#)
- Policy 824 Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries – [Exhibit R](#)
- Policy 904 Public Attendance at School Events – [Exhibit S](#)
- Policy 907 School Visitors – [Exhibit T](#)

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Policies First Reading

Motion by Mrs. Pikiewicz, seconded by Mrs. Farrell to approve homebound instruction for a SHS student anticipated December 8, 2020 through February 6, 2021. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Homebound Instruction

Motion by Mrs. Pikiewicz, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve continued academic services of LearnWell for a hospitalized SHS student. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

LearnWell Instruction

Motion by Mrs. Pikiewicz, seconded by Mr. Paris to 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 as outlined in [Exhibit U](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Revised Title I Agreement

Motion by Mrs. Pikiewicz, seconded by Mr. Bloeser to approve the school calendar for the 2021-2022 and August 31 and September 1, 2021 as Act 80 days for dismissal at the start of the school year for a partial group of

2021-2022 School Calendar

Kindergarten students as outlined in [attachment 2](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with not opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Pikiewicz, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve the affiliation agreement for academic field experience between Gannon University and Wattsburg Area School District as outlined in [attachment 3](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Gannon Affiliation Agreement

Motion by Mrs. Pikiewicz, seconded by Mr. Bloeser to approve Mr. Styborski to conduct a research study on rural internet connectivity 'Digital divide as it exists in the rural county' utilizing District communications. The goal of this survey would be to use that data to seek out possible grant funding to expand the internet broadband coverage in the municipalities that make up the Wattsburg Area School District. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Rural Internet Connectivity Study

Motion by Mrs. Lee, seconded by Mr. Bloeser to approve the Durham Transportation Agreement as outlined in [attachment 4](#). In a recorded roll-call vote, Mrs. Lee, Mr. Matson, Mr. Paris, Mrs. Pikiewicz, Mrs. Pound, Mr. Pushchak, Mr. Bloeser, Mrs. Farrell, and Dr. Pushchak voted to approve the agreement. Motion carried.

Durham Transportation Agreement

Motion by Mr. Matson, seconded by Mrs. Pikiewicz to approve the addition of Ryan Derner to the Game Help List for the 2020-2021 school year. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Game Help

Motion by Mr. Matson, seconded by Mrs. Lee to accept the following resignations:

Athletic Resignations

- Ryan Murphy, First Assistant Football Coach effective January 6, 2021.
- Derek Peterman, Other Assistant Football Coach effective January 6, 2021.
- Kym Braine, Second Assistant Girls' Soccer effective January 7, 2021.
- Kyle Forte, Second Assistant 7 & 8 Grade Jumping effective January 14, 2021.
- Alyssa Forte, Second Assistant 7 & 8 Grade Sprints and Hurdles effective January 15, 2021.

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Pikiewicz, seconded by Mr. Paris to declare items as surplus as outlined in [Exhibit V](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Surplus Items

Motion by Mrs. Lee, seconded by Mr. Bloeser to approve the Millcreek Township School District Modification of Erie County Technical School Resolution-Questionnaire as outlined in [Exhibit W](#). In a recorded roll-call vote, Mrs. Lee, Mr. Matson, Mr. Paris, Mrs. Pikiewicz, Mrs. Pound, Mr. Pushchak, Mr. Bloeser, Mrs. Farrell, and Dr. Pushchak voted against the resolution. Motion failed.

Millcreek School District Modification of Erie County Technical School Resolution

Motion by Mrs. Lee, seconded by Mr. Bloeser to approve the resolution for PennDOT's Installation of Round-About on Erie County Technical School property as outlined in [Exhibit X](#). In a recorded roll-call vote, Mrs. Lee, Mr. Matson, Mr. Paris, Mrs. Pikiwicz, Mrs. Pound, Mr. Pushchak, Mr. Bloeser, Mrs. Farrell, and Dr. Pushchak voted to approve the resolution. Motion carried.

**PennDOT
Installation of
Round-About
Resolution**

Dr. Pushchak reported that Northwest Tri-County IU5 is leading the effort to coordinate getting the Covid Vaccine for schools. They are to hear about something on it soon. Dr. Pushchak has been appointed Lead Negotiator for IU Board for contracts – working on agreements for Aides and Interpreters. The next meeting IU Board meeting will be January 27th.

Mr. Berlin added an update on the vaccine situation. Last week school districts were surveyed with regards to who would be willing to get the vaccine. They are pushing to have educators moved to the front of the list over the next few weeks. Board will be updated accordingly.

During Board Correspondence Dr. Pushchak thanked Board for their service as January is School Board Recognition Month. He recognized his board colleagues for the service and dedication to the students, their families, and the community of our school district. Thank you for all the hard work. You are great group to work with and we are doing great things for our students, families, and communities.

Mr. Bloeser questioned finances challenges as there continue to be costs that cannot be controlled by the districts, such as cyber school tuition and retirement/health care cost, are there any efforts in Erie County at looking at lobbying for the districts?

Dr. Pushchak shared that Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA) is a large lobby advocate for schools. They continue to keep charter school cost/funding at the top of their agenda. They are a state-level group who have more presence than local groups would have.

Mr. Berlin also shared that the local superintendents have been meeting with Representative Curt Sonney (House of Representatives Education Committee Chairperson) once a week. He has drafted several bills to reorganize how charter school are funded and continues to represent public schools in Washington, D.C. which is a very positive benefit to the districts.

There being no further business before the Board, upon motion by Mr. Paris, seconded by Mrs. Pikiwicz, meeting was adjourned at 8:31 P.M.

Adjournment

Signature on File
Vicki Bendig
School Board Secretary