

**PORTAGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 10, 2024**

The Regular Meeting of the Portage Area Board of School Directors was called to order. Members and others present were: Susan Berardinelli; Jason Corte; Matthew Decort; Kathy Hough; John Jubina; Jacob Myers; Nancy Sherbine; Brian Shope; Pete Noel, Superintendent of Schools; Jeff Vasilko, Business Manager; Troy Eppley, Director of Special Education; Jeremy Burkett, Junior Senior High School Principal; Jennifer Pisarski, Elementary School Principal; Dennis McGlynn, Esquire and Denise Moschgat, Recording Secretary. Absent was Christian Smith.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

There were no visitors who wished to speak.

**NOTICE TO PERSONNEL**

There may be reductions and/or reassignments of personnel due to fiscal circumstances.

**DISTRICT POLICIES**

First Reading:  
Policy 254 Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Third Reading:  
Policy 306 Employment of Summer School Staff  
Policy 307 Student Teachers/Interns  
Policy 317.1 Educator Misconduct  
Policy 325 Dress and Grooming – Third Reading  
Policy 805.3 Use of Force – Third Reading

**ROUTINE MATTERS**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

The Committee of the Whole Meeting will be held **February 14, 2024**, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the elementary school auditorium, 84 Mountain Avenue, Portage, PA with the Regular Meeting immediately following.

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**APPROVING THE MINUTES**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

The Administration recommends approving the December meeting minutes. A copy of the minutes was distributed with the advance agenda.

**ADDITIONS, DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

The Board moves to approve the written agenda with any noted additions, deletions or corrections as discussed.

- Routine Matters, Line Item 5, add amounts to financial reports
- Routine Matters, Line Item 8, add amounts to fund transfers
- Routine Matters, Line Item 15, remove Policy 823
- Personnel Matters, add Line Item 4, approving student teaching

**REPORTS**

Vo-Tech Operating Committee representative **Mr. Jason Corte** reported that currently the vo tech is hosting tours for the consortium high schools and the SkillsUSA competitions will be happening at the Blair County Convention Center.

Superintendent **Mr. Pete Noel** reported that the PDE has made changes to the days/hours mandatory for the school year. They changed the language from 180 days AND 900/990 hours to 180 days OR 900/990 hours, which is monumental for school districts. The specifics of this are still being sorted out. He has learned that the district will not be exited from the ASTI plan as of right now. The district went into this category based on attendance, academics and drop out rates. He and the administrators are gathering information on mental health grants and will submit applications shortly. Because of the teacher shortage, the Commonwealth is loosening requirements for out of state teachers to teach in Pennsylvania. The Mustang Family Christmas was able to provide packages for 75 families in the district. Mr. Noel thanked everyone involved and hoped that it provided some joy to everyone who participated.

Director of Special Education **Mr. Troy Eppley** reported that the special education plan is done and is now in review. Right now he and Mrs. Myhers are working on the gifted plan.

High School Principal **Mr. Jeremy Burkett** noted that students have participated in district band, jazz and chorus recently and that the end of the second marking period will be Friday. Students

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have been visiting the vo tech to learn about their programs as well. Winter sports are halfway through their seasons. About 22 students have signed up for esports. Lance Hudak is on the eve of win 300. He also thanked Craig Castel for helping out in athletics and has done a great job.

Elementary School Principal **Mrs. Jennifer Pisarski** reported that it was a great end of the year in the elementary school. Students are looking forward to a Curve assembly and the law enforcement lunch. Testing is soon approaching and the staff is preparing for it. Victim Services will be in the building to provide important and appropriate information to the students. The Bible2School program will be starting up to any student whose parents enrolled them and the Mustang Math Academy is going strong.

School Solicitor **Dennis McGlynn, Esquire** had nothing to add to the agenda.

Business Administrator **Mr. Jeff Vasilko** reported that the 2024-2024 budget process has begun.

**REPORTS: A. FINANCIAL, B. INVOICES (GENERAL FUND, CAFETERIA FUND AND ATHLETIC FUND), C. TAX COLLECTORS**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

**A. Treasurers' Reports**

A. General Fund	Page 2
B. Cafeteria Report	Page 3
D. Elementary School Activity Fund	Page 5
E. Junior / Senior High School Activity Fund	Page 6
H. Athletics	Page 9
I. General Fund	Page 10
J. Capital Reserve Fund	Page 10.1
K. Capital Projects Fund	Page 10.2
L. Investments/Pledged Collateral Report	Page 11

**B.**

<b>General Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$1,132,764.21</b>
<b>Cafeteria Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$64,024.21</b>
<b>Capital Reserve Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Capital Projects Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Total Invoices paid</b>	<b>\$1,196,788.42</b>

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<b>C.</b>	
<b>Mrs. Molnar - Cassandra Boro –</b>	
<b>Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$465.07</b>
<b>Mr. Layo - Portage Boro –</b>	
<b>Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$42,825.97</b>
<b>Mrs. Molnar Portage Township –</b>	
<b>Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$19,602.30</b>
<b>Berkheimer Tax Administrators</b>	
<b>PASD – EIT (Current)</b>	<b>\$39,170.03</b>
<b>Total Taxes</b>	<b>\$102,063.37</b>

**APPROVING IDEA-B FEDERAL AWARDS**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends approving IDEA- B grant awards for the period July 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024 by Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 in the amounts of \$183,315.97 and \$1,854.

**APPROVING THE SINGLE AUDIT FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends approving the Single Audit Review of the 2022-2023 school year as presented by the auditors of Wessel & Company.

**APPROVING FUND TRANSFERS**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends transferring \$400,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance to the Capital Projects Fund and \$1,165,511 into the Assigned Fund Balance. This action is required due to fund balance limitations implemented by the PDE which require that the balance can only be 10.5% of expenses.

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**APPROVING PURCHASE OF VAN**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends the purchase of two 2024 Kia Carnival 8 passenger vans in the amount of \$38,423.50 each for a total amount of \$76,847 from Team Kia.

**MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO THE PORTAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends contributing \$1,200 to the Portage Public Library for the 2023 Annual Appeal. In previous years, the district has contributed \$1,200.

**APPROVING PROPOSAL FOR STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends approving the Implementation Proposal from the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit to provide and implement the PowerSchool student information system including licenses, training and support and backup services for a total first year cost of \$28,919.80. Year two/annual costs will be approximately \$11,000 thereafter.

**APPROVING PROPOSAL FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE COORDINATION**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends partnering with Care Solace to provide coordination of mental care experts to connect students, staff and their families with verified mental health providers and substance use treatment options matched to their needs regardless of circumstance. The cost for services will be \$3,4,37.50 for the period January 15, 2024 to June 30, 2024. The renewal term would be \$7,500 for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 if the district wishes to renew.

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**APPROVING THE K-12 GUIDANCE PLAN**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends approving the K-12 Guidance plan for the 2023-24 through 2027-2028 school years (five years) which has been aligned with the PA Department of Education.

**APPROVING ACTIVITIES CLUBS AND ADVISORS**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

The Administration recommends approving the following activities fund club advisors for the 2022-2023 school year:

Junior-Senior High School

Sr. High Band – Addison Holyfield  
Forensics – Nicole Hunt  
SADD – Dennis Link  
Senior Class – Tina Lutz  
Junior Class – Vivian Herman/Kris Bartoletti  
Sophomore Class – Gayle Price  
School Publications – Kristen Gribbin  
Science – Mary Kenny  
Color guard/Majorette – Arielle Miller  
Cheerleading – Kristi Kargo  
The Fitness Club – Marty Slanoc  
Golf – Scott Burda

Thespian – Denise Moschgat  
Student Council – Mary Ann George  
Art - Tara Williams  
Incentive – Jeremy Burkett  
Spanish – Kris Bartoletti  
Environmental – Mary Kenny  
Interact –Kris Bartoletti  
Choral – Addison Holyfield  
Ski Club – Wendy Zock  
Library – Vivian Herman  
JH Science Olympiad – Phillip Miller  
Esports – Michael Shuss\*

\*New account

Elementary School

Ski Club – Wendy Zock  
Primary Discipline – Annette Lutz  
Music Club – Floyd Rousell III  
Student Council – Annette Lutz  
Zero Demerit – Christa Miko, Lisa Stivers, Heidi Washko and Sara Richardson

Chorus – Floyd Rousell, III  
Yearbook – Heidi Washko and Kayla Fisher  
Elementary Art – Tammy Rodgers

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**RETIRING DISTRICT POLICIES**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

The Administration recommends retiring the following policies:

- 808.1 Free/Reduced Price Meals and Free Milk
- 810.1 Drug/Alcohol Testing – Covered Drivers
- 825 State Mandate Waivers

**APPROVING DISTRICT POLICY REVISIONS**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

The Administration recommends approving revisions to the following district policies:

- 200 Enrollment of Students
- 202 Eligibility of Nonresident Students
- 217 Graduation
- 707 Use of School Facilities Attachment
- 804 School Day
- 805 Emergency Preparedness and Response
- 805.2 School Security Personnel
- 806 Child Abuse
- 808 Food Services
- 810 Transportation
- 810.1 School Bus Drivers and School Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers
- 810.2 Transportation Video/Audio Recording
- 811 Bonding
- 812 Property Insurance
- 813 Other Insurance
- 814 Copyright Material
- 815 Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources
- 818 Contracted Services Personnel
- 819 Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response

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**PERSONNEL MATTERS**

**HIRING ATHLETIC DIRECTOR**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends hiring Craig Castel as the district's Athletic Director with a stipend of \$8,000.

**HIRING LONG TERM SUBSTITUTE**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Administration recommends hiring Courtney Harbaugh as a long-term substitute teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year. Salary will be Step 1, with benefits per the current contract with the PAEA.

**ADDING VOLUNTEERS COACHES/ADVISORS**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

The Administration recommends adding the following volunteers:

Koby Kargo	Baseball	Clearances on file
Doug Stephens	Band	Clearances provided

**APPROVING STUDENT TEACHING ASSIGNMENT**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

The Administration recommends approving Nicole Crum for a student teaching assignment for the second semester of the 2023-2024 school year under the supervision of Sara Erzal. Mrs. Crum attends St. Francis University.



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**BOARD REQUESTS / USE OF FACILITIES**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

Request for Approved Field Trip:

<b>Requester</b>	<b>Destination</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>	<b>Budgeted Y/N</b>
Addison Holyfield	Take two students to PMEA District Band at Johnstown HS	January 10-12, 2024	\$530	Yes
Addison Holyfield	Take one student to PMEA District Jazz at Tussey Mountain HS	January 18-19, 2024	\$210	Yes
Addison Holyfield	Take one student to PMEA District Chorus at Westmont Hilltop HS	January 24-26, 2024	\$277	Yes
Mary Ann George	Take the ninth-grade students to Admiral Peary Vo Tech	January 26, 2024	\$0.00 (paid by vo tech)	N/A
Addison Holyfield	Jazz Band to perform at Germantown Winery*	May 19, 2024	\$0.00 (use of vehicle)	N/A
Addison Holyfield	Jazz Band to perform at Crichton McCormick Park for Jazz in the Park	May 5, 2024	\$0.00 (use of vehicle)	N/A

Requests for Use of Facilities:

<b>Requester</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Facility</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Rental Fee/ Amount</b>
Hannah Shaffer, Cheer Coach	Jr. Cheer Camp	Elementary Gymnasium	January 20, 2024	No Charge
Friends of the Band/Addison Holyfield	Death by Chocolate fundraiser	HS Cafeteria	February 17, 2024	No Charge
Friends of the Band/Addison Holyfield	End of Year Banquet	HS Cafeteria	May 3, 2024	No Charge
Bradly Walker	Basketball skills practice	Len Chappell Gymnasium	Dates as can be arranged through athletics	\$10/hour
One Good Turn Dance Company	Dance Rehearsal	HS Auditorium and Cafeteria	February 1, 2024 5:00 p.m.	\$20/hour
PAHS Student Council	Red Cross Blood Drive	Len Chappell Gymnasium	February 16, 2024 7:30 am – 2:00 pm	No Charge
One Good Turn Dance Company	Dance Recital	HS Auditorium and Cafeteria	May 16-17, 2024 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.	\$20/hour
Jen Thomas, PTO	PTO Meetings	ES Room 305	Feb, 6, Mar 5, Apr 9 and May 7, 2024 6:30 p.m.	No Charge

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Matthew Hill, Elementary Wrestling	Home Wrestling Meets	Elementary School Gymnasium and wrestling room	Jan 19, Feb 9, Feb 16, Feb 23, 2024	No Charge
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**MOTION TO MAKE THE AGENDA PART OF THE MINUTES**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

**MOTION SHOULD BE MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 8-0

Time: 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew R. Decort, Board Secretary

Denise Moschgat, Recording Secretary