

**PORTAGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 8, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Portage Area Board of School Directors was called to order. Kathy Hough, board president, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Members and others present were: Susan Berardinelli; Jason Corte; Matthew Decort; Kathy Hough; John Jubina; Christian Smith; Dennis Squillario; Todd Dishong, Superintendent of Schools; Pete Noel, Director of Special Education; Jeff Vasilko, Business Manager; Jeremy Burkett, Junior Senior High School Principal; Jennifer Pisarski, Elementary School Principal; Dennis McGlynn, Esquire and Denise Moschgat, Recording Secretary. Absent was Tina Latoche.

**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.

**PUBLIC READING OF PROPOSED POLICIES**

Second Reading - 006.1 Attendance at Meetings Via Electronic Communications  
Second Reading - 011 Principals for Governance and Leadership

Policies to be considered for board action are featured on the district website under the Administration Tab, Mission Statement and Legal Notices, District Policy.

**ROUTINE MATTERS**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

The next Committee of the Whole Meeting will be held **Wednesday, March 8, 2023**, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the elementary school auditorium, 84 Mountain Avenue, Portage, PA with the Regular Meeting immediately following.

**APPROVING THE MINUTES**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the January 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 7-0

The Board moves to approve the written agenda with any noted additions, deletions or corrections as discussed. There were no additions, deletions or corrections to the agenda.

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**REPORTS**

IU 08 Operating Committee representative **Mrs. Kathy Hough** reported that the last meeting consisted of routine matters such as financial and personnel matters.

Vo-Tech Operating Committee representative **Mr. Jason Corte** reported that three paraprofessional staff were hired and they are currently interviewing for two teaching positions. He also noted that George Kissell placed gold in Job Skill Demonstration A and Jenna Vocco placed silver in Early Childhood Education in the SkillsUSA competitions.

Superintendent **Dr. Todd Dishong** advised the board that Siarra Crum started Monday as the new Athletic Trainer/Athletic Director and welcomed her as a member of the staff. He talked about school security, MTSS, teacher evaluations, STEM in the elementary school and the upcoming in-service. He then went on to thank the board, administration and staff for the opportunity to work in the district the last seven months.

Director of Special Education **Pete Noel** reported that he will holding kindergarten transition meetings, special education compliance monitoring is completed and the district should be good for the next three to six years. He concluded that he and Jeff will meet with Ignite Education Solutions concerning AEDY programs.

High School Principal **Mr. Jeremy Burkett** thanked Dr. Dishong for his leadership noting that he learned a lot from him. He also advised that the board that Mrs. Bartoletti is planning a trip to Spain, France and Italy which will not be a school event. He briefly discussed the upcoming band trip. He noted that Lea Ferarri, Madison Gribbin and Taylor Learn will have pieces in the SAMA art show. He advised that board of recent and upcoming student events such as a tour of the votech, district band and the blood drive. In athletic, Mr. Burkett noted that CC is doing a great job right from the start and he is excited to have her here in the district. The winter teams are doing well. Rifle has one tournament left. Boys basketball conference game is Friday; junior high wrestling is this weekend and varsity is next weekend.

Elementary School Principal **Mrs. Jennifer Pisarski** thanked Dr. Dishong saying that he was a breath of fresh air to the district and wished him the best of luck. She reported that the elementary school will celebrate the 100 day of school with different activities. The Strengthening Families program will start up for the second semester tomorrow.

School Solicitor **Dennis McGlynn, Esquire** was absent.

Business Administrator **Mr. Jeff Vasilko** reported that budgets are due back to him this Friday. Governor Shapiro's budget is due in March. The recent verdict on the lawsuit wasn't great news for the district. And the football stadium project is still in the planning stage.

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

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0  
(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>\$1,493,277.43</b>
<b>Cafeteria Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$80,903.32</b>
<b>Athletic Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$25,734.77</b>
<b>Capital Reserve Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Capital Projects Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$658.20</b>
<b>Total Invoices paid</b>	<b>\$1,600,563.72</b>

**C.**

<b>Mrs. Chappell - Cassandra Boro – Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Mr. Layo - Portage Boro – Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Mrs. Chappell Portage Township – Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Berkheimer Tax Administrators PASD – EIT (Current)</b>	<b>\$43,139.55</b>
<b>Total Taxes</b>	<b>\$43,139.55</b>

**CANCELING AGREEMENT WITH CHAN SOON-SHIONG**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends canceling the district's agreement with Chan Soon-Shiong Medical Center at Windber for athletic training services effective February 8, 2023.

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**APPROVING STUDENT TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the following student teaching assignments:

Mackenzie Sarka	Mount Aloysius	Observing Mary Walls
Dylan Pessia	UPJ	Observing Josh Burkett
Evan Frye	UPJ	Observing Tyler Johnson

**ADOPTING DISTRICT POLICY**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Board moves to adopt Policy 624 Taxable Fringe Benefits.

**APPROVING 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the 2023-2024 school year calendar.

**RENEWING LETTER OF AGREEMENT WITH THE MEADOWS PSYCHIATRIC CENTER**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends renewing its Letter of Agreement with The Meadows Psychiatric Center for the 2023-2024 and the 2024-2025 school year to provide eligible students services in their facility. The district will only incur costs if a student is placed.

**RENEWING COLLECTION AGREEMENT WITH STATEWIDE TAX RECOVERY, LLC**

Motion Decort Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends renewing a Collection Agreement with Statewide Tax Recovery, LLC for the collection of per capita taxes. Statewide will receive a commission on taxes collected.

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**PERSONNEL MATTERS**

**ACCEPTING RESIGNATION OF SUPERINTENDENT**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Board moves to accept, with regret, the resignation of Dr. Todd Dishong as Superintendent of Schools effective February 17, 2023.

**HIRING A SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The Board moves to hire Patrick J. Noel as the Superintendent of Schools to a five year contract beginning February 8, 2023 and ending June 30, 2028. Salary will be \$107,000 per the terms of the Superintendent's Contract.

**ACCEPTING RESIGNATION OF DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Board moves to accept, with regret, the resignation of Patrick J. Noel as Director of Special Education effective February 8, 2023. The Administration further requests permission to advertise this position if it is deemed necessary.

**HIRING A MENTOR TEACHER**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

The administration recommends hiring Tina Lutz as a mentor teacher for Emily Facci for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year and the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year. Salary will be based on the current contract between the district and the PAEA.

**APPROVING DAYS OFF WITHOUT PAY**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the following staff members requests for days off without pay:

- Staff member request for February 20, 2023 (one day)
- Staff member request for May 16 and 17, 2023 (two days)
- Staff member request for January 24, 2023 (one day)
- Staff member request for February 1, 2 & 3, 2023 (three days)

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Staff member request for March 7, 2023 (one day)  
Staff member request for December 15, 2022 and January 6, 2023 (two days)

**ACCEPTING LETTER OF RESIGNATION**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends accepting, with regret, the resignation of Jeremy Burkett, as a paid assistant varsity football coach. He will remain on staff as a volunteer when time permits.

**ADDING A VOLUNTEER COACH**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends adding Matthew Bilchak as a volunteer football coach for the 2023-2024 school year. Mr. Bilchak will provide clearances prior to attending any practices.

**BOARD REQUESTS / USE OF FACILITIES**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0  
(Roll Call Vote)

Request for Approved Travel:

<b>Requester</b>	<b>Destination</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>	<b>Budgeted Y/N</b>
Jeremy Burkett, Jennifer Pisarski, Krystal Smith and Kelly Mignogna	Attend IU8 2023 Principals Forum Conference, Bedford, PA	June 20-21, 2023	\$1,196.00	Yes

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 the marching band to participate in the Meyersdale Maple Festival	April 29, 2023	\$287.87	Yes
Nicole Hunt	Take students to Forensics Regional at St. Francis University	March 13-14, 2023	\$210.00	Yes
Addison Holyfield	Senior band trip to see Dear Evan Hansen at the Benedum Center in Pittsburgh	May 5, 2023	\$0.00 (Use of Vehicle)	N/A
Addison Holyfield	Jazz band to play at Germantown Winery*	May 6, 2023 2:00 p.m.	\$0.00 (Use of Vehicle)	N/A
Addison Holyfield	Jazz band to play at Holy Family Church, Portage	May 7, 2023 12:00 p.m.	\$0.00 (Use of Vehicle)	N/A

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Addison Holyfield	Jazz band to play at Crichton McCormick Park for Jazz in the Park	May 21, 2023 1:00 p.m.	\$0.00 (Use of Vehicle)	N/A
Kristine Bartoletti	Spanish Club Field Trip – Spanish Dinner Cruise on the Gateway Clipper	May 23, 2022	\$0.00 (Paid by club and students)	N/A
Kristen Gribbin	Field trip to Saint Francis for Business Day	March 31, 2023 8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	\$319.80	Yes
Addison Holyfield	Attend PMEA Band Fest at Central Cambria	March 31, 2023 7:50 a.m. to ?	\$180	Yes

\*No alcohol to be served during the performance.

Requests for Use of Facilities:

Requester	Purpose	Facility	Date(s)	Rental Fee/ Amount
Mary Ann George	Career Fair	Len Chappell Gymnasium	March 8, 2023 7:30 – 11:30 a.m.	No Charge
PTO	Mother/Son Event	Elementary café, auditorium and gym	March 18, 2023	No Charge
Addison Holyfield	Music Banquet	HS Cafeteria	May 26, 2023 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	No Charge
Portage Area Regional Planning Commission	Roundtable discussion	HS Cafeteria	May 6, 2023 9:00 am to 12:00 pm	No Charge
Hannah Shaffer – Cheer Coach	Junior Cheer Clinic	Elementary Gym	February 11, 2023	No Charge
John Morgan – PAYA	Summer Baseball League	JV Baseball Field	Various dates	No Charge

*Mrs. Hough noted that the Jazz in the Park event is a good idea.*

**MOTION TO MAKE THE AGENDA PART OF THE MINUTES**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

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

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

Time: 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew R. Decort, Board Secretary

Denise Moschgat, Recording Secretary