

**PORTAGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 20, 2022**

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; Kathy Hough; John Jubina; Tina Latoche; Christian Smith; Dennis Squillario; Dr. Todd Dishong, Superintendent of Schools; Ralph J. Cecere, Jr., Junior Senior High School Principal; Jeff Vasilko, Business Manager; Dennis McGlynn, Esquire and Denise Moschgat, Recording Secretary. Absent was Matt Decort.

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.

ROUTINE MATTERS

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The Committee of the Whole Meeting will be held **Wednesday, August 10, 2022**, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the elementary school auditorium, 84 Mountain Avenue, Portage, PA with the Regular Meeting immediately following.

ADDITIONS, DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

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

Routine Matters, Line Item 6, Remove the sentence: "The final cost will be determined following Stadium Solutions preparing the final scope of work."

Routine Matters, Add Line Item 15, Approve the district ATSI plan.

Personnel Matters, Line Item 11, Volunteers, add Vivian Herman as a marching band volunteer.

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REPORTS

IU 08 Operating Committee representative **Mrs. Kathy Hough** reported that the IU has hired an assistant director who is a retired superintendent and she feels he has a very impressive background for the job.

Vo-Tech Operating Committee representative **Mr. Jason Corte** noted that the vo tech meeting will be tomorrow. There were many hires at last month's meeting. The vo tech now has almost 800 students attending.

Superintendent **Dr. Todd Dishong** updated the board on several topics that the administrative team has been working on, including: The faculty-staff survey conducted in June. Dr. Dishong reported that there was a good response from the staff and the administrators are reviewing and will share with the board; the District's comprehensive plan is due this year. He may request an extension; the administrators are working through the book *The Power of a Positive Team*, which helps to build positive relationships; he and Jeff met with Kyle Fritz from the EADS Group concerning the football stadium project; he also visited Christian Smith at the prison, which he found very interesting and challenging; Dr. Butler from the IU visited the office to get acquainted and they discussed the districts goals for the future; he met with union leadership to discuss issues including safety within the district; and he also visited the Cambria County Courthouse in order to be sworn in as superintendent of schools. Dr. Dishong, Mrs. Stivers, and Mr. Clouse met to look at the school website and how it can be refreshed to provide easier to access information. He reported on the School Safety and Security and Mental Health Grant that could be used for security/safety updates as well as SEL learning opportunities. Interviews for math, reading specialists, band and secretaries have been held with the math and reading specialists positions on the agenda. He will be working on curriculum and professional learning and opening day scheduling and planning in the upcoming weeks.

High School Principal **Mr. Ralph Cecere** reported that the Keystone test results were received and there will be some retesting and he stressed that these tests are very important for graduation. He acknowledged Nicole Hunt and Tina Lutz who also teach at the Upward Bound program as St. Francis. He noted that curriculum work is progressing. The county has received money through the Opioid settlement. He will participate in a Zoom meeting to learn more details. The money is geared to provide mental health services for the students. With the increase of students attending vo tech, scheduling especially for learning support students has to be reviewed carefully. He concluded that he had the honor of conferring diplomas to Brandon Neumer and Dawson Everhart as the graduated after the extended school year.

Elementary School Principal **Mrs. Jennifer Pisarski** reported that as of now, there are 81 students registered for kindergarten making it one of the largest classes in the district. The elementary school has modified the schedule for fourth grade which she feels will benefit the students. She will be attending training with Mrs. Shaffer and Mrs. George to implement programs in the district to help families.

School Solicitor **Dennis McGlynn, Esquire** noted that the district is off to a good start with Dr. Dishong at the helm and he has been working with him on a few things.

Business Administrator **Mr. Jeff Vasilko** reported that the state budget has been approved and there are increases to education and to special education funding, which will be a positive for the district.

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Athletic Director **Mr. Jeremy Burkett** reported that fall sports are getting started with physicals and conditioning. Football and golf will begin August first with the remaining fall sports on August 15.

GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR 2022-2023; WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR 2022-2023 AND SCHOOL ACCIDENT INSURANCE FOR 2022-2023

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

Carl DeYulis, Agent of Record, recommends the following coverage:

UPMC (Workmen's Coverage)	\$36,676.00
Utica (Package)	\$58,863.00
• Property	
• Crime	
• General Liability	
• Government Crime	
• Automobile	
• Boiler & Machinery	
• School Leaders' Legal Liability	
• Excess Liability	
• Data Security (Attack & Extortion)	
• Network Security Liability	
Goodwin & Gruber (Student Coverage)	\$17,296.00

Note: The premium amount for the workers compensation is an estimate.

APPROVING REPAIRS AT THE FOOTBALL STADIUM

Motion Smith Second Corte Vote 6-1

Voting Yes: Smith, Coret, Berardinelli, Jubina, Latoche and Hough

Voting No: Squillario

The Administration recommends approving the Stadium Solutions Budget Pricing Proposal in the amount of \$1,183,237 for renovations to the district's football stadium as described in the proposal.

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APPROVING FEE INCREASES FOR OFFICIALS AND OTHER GAME WORKERS

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

The Athletic Director recommends increasing fees for the following game workers for the 2022-2023 school year.

Officials:

Varsity	\$70 per game
JV	\$60 per game
Junior High	\$60 per game

Clock/Score Attendant:

Varsity	\$50 per game
Junior High	\$40 per game
JV Standalone	\$40 per game

Varsity Game Manager \$40 per game

RENEWING VALLEY NETWORK AGREEMENT FOR 2022-2023

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

The administration recommends renewing its agreement with Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 for “Valley Network” professional learning for the 2022-2023 school year at a cost of \$8,500.

PURCHASING A DRIVERS’ EDUCATION VEHICLE

Motion to Table Failed

Motion Squillario Second Berardinelli Vote 3-4

The administration recommends purchasing a 2022 Ford Escape from the Laurel Auto Group through the CoStars program at a cost of \$27,555. *Dr. Dishong noted that if the motion to table passes, they could provide the board with a cost analysis. Mr. Cecere then addressed the board saying that he had taught drivers ed and that most school districts are turning to private companies now. He noted that we had not giving behind the wheel instruction for a few years, due mostly to Covid. This year, there were 120 students who signed up to take it. Mrs. Hough asked who would pay for the class if it’s sourced out to a private company. Mr. Cecere replied it would be approximately \$200 to \$300. Mrs. Hough replied that that was a lot of money and would create a big issue for a lot of families financially, both in paying for the course or not paying for it and not getting the discount on their insurance. Mr. Cecere added that they could look into working with a private company and possibly paying the fees. Mr. Cecere also noted that the vehicle is used beyond drivers education; that there are times where a student is picked up from home if attendance is an issue. Mr. Squillario stated that the district should not be enabling students by*

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picking them up for school. He continued this conversation a little further. Mr. Cecere noted that this is often the last resort and that if students were not picked up, they would not be getting to school.

PURCHASING A DRIVERS' EDUCATION VEHICLE

Motion Corte Second Smith Vote 4-3

Voting Yes: Corte, Smith, Jubina and Hough

Voting No: Berardinelli, Latoche and Squillario

The administration recommends purchasing a 2022 Ford Escape from the Laurel Auto Group through the CoStars program at a cost of \$27,555.

APPROVING FUND TRANSFER

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

(Roll Call Vote)

The administration recommends transferring \$400,000 from the general unassigned fund to capital improvement fund.

APPROVING THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The administration recommends approving the district's Special Education Plan as publicly posted on the district webpage.

RENEWING AGREEMENT WITH GOODWILL SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The administration recommends renewing its Letter of Agreement with Goodwill Southern Alleghenies for Work Transition Services for the 2022-2023 school year. The district will not incur costs unless it utilizes the services.

APPROVING AGREEMENT WITH IMPACT COUNSELING SERVICES, LLC

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The administration recommends approving an agreement with Impact Counseling Services, LLC to provide out-patient drug and alcohol treatment services. The district will only incur costs if it utilizes the service.

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APPROVING AGREEMENT WITH PRESSLEY RIDGE JOHNSTOWN

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The administration recommends approving an agreement with Pressley Ridge Johnstown to provide out-patient drug and alcohol treatment services. The district will only incur costs if it utilizes the service, which would be \$15,500 per semester. If extended school year services are provided, the costs would be \$1,290 for the summer.

APPROVING ASTI NON-TITLE I PLAN

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the ASTI non-Title 1 School Plan for the 2022-2023 school year.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

HIRING A MATH TEACHER

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

The administration recommends hiring Jade Zatek as a permanent, full time math teacher beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Salary will be Step 1, with benefits based on the current contract between the district and the PAEA.

HIRING A READING SPECIALIST TEACHER

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

The administration recommends hiring Carrie L. Garlesky as a permanent, full time reading specialist teacher beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Salary will be Step 1, with benefits, based on the current contract between the district and the PAEA.

HIRING A READING SPECIALIST TEACHER

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

The administration recommends hiring Cara Harbaugh as a permanent, full time reading specialist teacher beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Salary will be Step 1, with benefits, based on the current contract between the district and the PAEA.

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ADVERTISING FOR A FULL TIME MUSTIC TEACHER

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

The Board moves to advertise for a full-time music teacher for the 2022-2023 school year.

HIRING AN ELEMENTARY STUDENT COUNCIL ADVISOR

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

The Administration recommends hiring Annette Lutz, as an elementary student council advisor beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Salary is based on the current contract between the district and the PAEA for extra-curricular activities.

HIRING A FOURTH GRADE DISCIPLINE CHAIR

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

The Administration recommends hiring Sara Richardson as the fourth-grade discipline chair beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Salary is based on the current contract between the district and the PAEA for extra-curricular activities.

ACCEPTING LETTER OF RESIGNATION

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends accepting, with regret, Alexander Swackhamer's resignation as a half time music teacher effective July 13, 2022. The district further requests permission to re-advertise this position.

ACCEPTING LETTER OF RESIGNATION

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends accepting, with regret, Erin Paul's resignation as a reading specialist effective July 13, 2022. The district further requests permission to advertise this position.

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ACCEPTING LETTER OF RESIGNATION

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends accepting, with regret, Denise Moschgat’s resignation as drama advisor effective July 13, 2022. Mrs. Moschgat will fill in until an advisor is hired. The district further requests permission to advertise this position.

APPROVING A DAY OFF WITHOUT PAY

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving a staff member’s request to have June 23, 2022 as a day off without pay.

APPROVING VOLUNTEERS

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

The Athletic Director recommends adding the following volunteers for the 2022-2023 school year.

Craig Castel	Football
Mathew Hill	Football
Louis Kordish	Football
Vivian Herman	Marching Band
Lane Macy	Cross Country Track (clearances pending)

BOARD REQUESTS / USE OF FACILITIES

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

Request for Approved Field Trip:

Requester	Destination	Date(s)	Approximate Cost	Budgeted Y/N
Mary Ann George	Cambria County College Fair at Penn Highlands	September 20, 2022 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	\$205.24 (Transportation)	Yes
Addison Holyfield	Take students to the football stadium for marching band pictures	August 5, 2022 8:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	\$205.36	Yes
Josh Burkett	Take the junior class to the Cambria County Courthouse and prison	September 22, 2022 8:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.	\$545.36 (Substitutes)	Yes
Addison Holyfield	Take marching band students to march in the Summerfest Parade	August 13, 2022	\$0.00	N/A

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Requests for Use of Facilities:

Requester	Purpose	Facility	Date(s)	Rental Fee/ Amount
Brienne M. Irvin, Stallion Cheerleading	Cheer practice	As can be scheduled	Tuesdays July – September 6:00 – 7:15 p.m.	No Charge
John Bednarski/Stallion Football	Practice/home game	Football stadium, track and/or any field that can be scheduled.	August -October Times as can be scheduled	No Charge

Prior to adjournment, Dr. Dishong stated that we don't always know what's happening with our students and within their families and that we need to be more aware that there are often circumstances beyond our knowledge and control. As a district, we are invested in our students and that means we may go beyond educating them to provide for their needs. The district is here to empower our students, not enable them.

MOTION TO MAKE THE AGENDA PART OF THE MINUTES

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

MOTION SHOULD BE MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

Motion Squillario Second Corte Vote 7-0

Time: 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew R. Decort, Board Secretary

Denise Moschgat, Recording Secretary