

**PORTAGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
APRIL 12, 2023 - 6:30 P.M.**

The Committee of the Whole 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; Christian Smith; Dennis Squillario; Pete Noel, Superintendent of Schools; Troy Eppley, 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 were Matt Decort and Tina Latoche.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Tammy Rodgers, elementary art teacher, provided the board with dates for the SAMA show in Altoona which opens April 16 and closes April 30, 2023. Students have 25 pieces in the show. Mrs. Rodgers also noted that the CCCAC in Westmont is also showing student art work and those dates run from May 11 – 26, 2023.

Bob Koban, Amanda Horvath and Diane Zaman from Tri County Transportation will provide a transportation update. They addressed the board as a reminder that if they have any questions, concerns or issues, they are always available to discuss.

INFORMATION ONLY

1. Homelessness Education Program audit. Mr. Noel reported that a provision of the McKinney-Vento Act requires that school districts undergo regular monitoring of their homeless student plan. The district had their audit this week with no findings. Our homeless student plan is good.
2. Elementary Academic Camps for 2023. Mr. Noel stated that the elementary school will hold academic camps this summer which will be funded with ESSER grant money. The camps will be for reading and math and the dates will be June 12 through June 29, 2023. The elementary staff is gauging the number of student who will be participating. After these camps, eligible students will participate in the Extended School Year program.
3. Community Cleanup Day with Trout Run Watershed Association. Mr. Noel reported that Earth Day observance activities are back on a limited schedule for the first time since COVID with the focal point being in the community. He thanked Tri-County Transportation for the use of buses to get students to the various sites for clean up. The students will do clean up trashed as well as complete a few beautification projects in the community.
4. Summer EBT. Mr. Noel reported that Mr. Boland has submitted the required documentation to the state and that eligible parents will receive money on the P-EBT cards some time in September or October.
5. Awnings at entryways. Mr. Vasilko reported that because of safety and well being concerns, it would be a good idea to install awnings over some entrances in the buildings, which will allow the doors to remain locked and keep students out of the weather waiting for them to be opened. He had a contractor recommended by Mr. Squillario provide an estimate of the cost which was \$4,500 for the fitness center and \$7,300 for the cafeteria to cover the outside freezer. The board will can consider this at the May meeting.

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6. Elementary school sound system. Mr. Vasilko reported that a recent power outage took out the sound system in the elementary school auditorium with two amps being blown. He discussed with the board options to repair it including submitting it to insurance.
7. Per Capita tax. Mr. Vasilko reported that in talking with other business managers, there is agreement that there is not strong, reliable data base for collection and may districts are looking to either suspend or eliminate the tax. He asked the board to think about whether they want to suspend per capita which could be considered at the May meeting.
8. Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program through USDA. Mr. Noel reported that Mrs. Boland is looking into a grant that would provide fresh fruit and vegetables to the elementary. He will provide more details as the come to light.
9. Reapplication for the CEP. Mr. Noel briefly reviewed the CEP program with the board mentioning that this provides free breakfast and lunch for students. He noted that participation is good. The reapplication in progress with everyone working on it.

ROUTINE MATTERS

1. District policies – public readings of new policies. Mr. Noel noted that some of the policies are now ready to be adopted and some are on their second reading.
2. IU8 Substitute Teacher Consortium. Mr. Noel reported that the IU program can emergency certify individuals with a four year degree. It cost has remained at \$500 for several years and it is beneficial to procure substitute teachers.
3. Math series for elementary and Jr/Sr High School. Mr. Noel advised the board that these series will provide supplemental and continuing studies for elementary through 8th grade students. It will help target deficits.
4. Dual enrollment agreement with Mount Aloysius College. Mr. Noel noted that this is a routine matter which provides college credits to students.
5. IDEA Policies, Procedures and Use of Funds, Distribution and Early Intervening Services. Mr. Noel reported that this is standard practice that allows for the flow of funds through the IU to the district.
6. Revisions to the 2022-2023 school calendar. Mr. Noel reviewed the revisions with the board which were snow days. The last day of school/graduation will now be June 1.
7. Trip to Europe. Mr. Noel reviewed the field trip policy with the school noting that this is not a school sponsored trip. Therefore, he is asking the board to consider granting Mrs. Bartoletti permission to discuss the trip with students.

PERSONNEL MATTERS (Executive Session 6:48 p.m. to 7:28 p.m.)

1. Personnel matters as listed on the regular agenda.
2. Student issue.

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BOARD AGENDA REQUEST/USE OF FACILITIES

POINTS OF DISCUSSION BY THE BOARD

Time: 7:28 p.m.