

**PORTAGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 16, 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 (6:45 p.m.); Jason Corte (6:49 p.m.); Matthew Decort; 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 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.

**ROUTINE MATTERS**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

The next Committee of the Whole Meeting will be held **Wednesday, September 13, 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 Squillario Vote 7-0

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

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

Motion Decort Second Squillario 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**

Vo-Tech Operating Committee representative **Mr. Jason Corte** reported that the vo tech meeting is tomorrow and that there are approximately 787 students enrolled.

Superintendent **Mr. Pete Noel** reported that the district is gearing up for the start of school and the buildings are looking good thanks to the custodial staff for all their work over summer. There will be training for Run, Hide, Fight during the in-service days. The stadium renovations/building projects are moving along and the board will consider the bid for the bleacher rehabilitation tonight. The Linkit! program will be expanded to make it more efficient and provide graduation pathways, student performance methods and other important tools for student success. The staff is working with the IU to finalize the curriculum update. The IU will be coming into the district to orient staff members to the new science standards. The state budget passed at 75%. What that means to the district is that most, if not all of our funding went through but there may be some concerns with school lunches. Mrs. Boland is gathering information on that issue. Mrs. Huschak discussed with him the idea of having Geocaching along the 911 trail. Mr. Noel looked into the terms of the easement the board approved in 2021 and the company will submit a letter outlining their plan for board consideration at a future meeting. Mr. Noel directed the boards attention to the new policies and advised that he withdrew the Class Rank policy for further review. Mr. Noel briefly discussed booster request adding that it is not the district's position to manage what the boosters do. He added that businesses and individuals have to make the choice as to what they donate or contribute to the different booster groups. The boosters are looking out for our students and they have good intentions. Mr. Noel concluded by adding that Mark Stankovic, Tony Panick, the sewer authority crew and the custodial staff did a remarkable job choreographing with skid steers moving the shed onto a trailer. It was impressive.

Director of Special Education **Mr. Troy Eppley** noted that special education is in good shape and ready for the beginning of the school year. They are fully staffed and he thanked Mrs. Myhers for doing a great job helping him acclimate to the position. He is looking forward to the stability starting his first school year here in the district.

High School Principal **Mr. Jeremy Burkett** fall sports practices have started and are going well. He added that it's good to see the students back on campus. He thanked the custodians for their work over the summer and getting the building and grounds ready for opening day. He advised the board of arrival and end of day times and let them know that next Thursday is meet the band and the bonfire.

Elementary School Principal **Mrs. Jennifer Pisarski** reported that her building looks fabulous and everyone is ready to go for the first day. The elementary school is also fully staffed for teachers and paraprofessionals which is awesome. She noted that she even has two AmeriCorps volunteers, one of whom is a teacher which is a benefit to the district. Kindergarten orientation went great and they are looking forward to Meet the Teacher. Mr. Fatula and Officer Sheehan will be going through the classrooms soon to familiarize themselves with the students and the layout of the building.

School Solicitor **Dennis McGlynn, Esquire** reported that it is wonderful to work with Pete and the administrative staff on issues such as was discussed during executive session and with this cooperation, every issue is resolved.

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Business Administrator **Mr. Jeff Vasilko** reported that the local auditors will begin their audit September 11. The awnings have been installed and look good at the entrance to the fitness center and the high school cafeteria. He has been searching for a 10 passenger van for the district and has been unable to find one. Reports for ESSR and IDEA are due and will be submitted on time. Barclay Electric has told him that they will have all stadium lights working before the first game. The parts for the elementary school sound system are proving hard to get. The coal bids a due and the board will need to consider whether coal is still a feasible option as prices for coal have gone up. As Mr. Noel mentioned, the budget was 75% approved with the money for the district not affected. He concluded by mentioning that the line item concerning applying for a credit card was also granted permission for Pete and him to sign the application.

**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>\$2,310,559.58</b>
<b>Cafeteria Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$57,650.43</b>
<b>Athletic Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$31,262.37</b>
<b>Capital Reserve Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Capital Projects Fund Invoices</b>	<b>\$30,604.05</b>
<b>Total Invoices paid</b>	<b>\$2,430,076.43</b>

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<b>C.</b>	
<b>Mrs. Molnar - Cassandra Boro –</b>	
<b>Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$7,176.90</b>
<b>Mr. Layo - Portage Boro –</b>	
<b>Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$162,170.49</b>
<b>Mrs. Molnar Portage Township –</b>	
<b>Property, Per Capita, Occupation</b>	<b>\$313,867.69</b>
<b>Berkheimer Tax Administrators</b>	
<b>PASD – EIT (Current)</b>	<b>\$40,834.68</b>
<b>Total Taxes</b>	<b>\$524,049.76</b>

**APPROVING ISSUE OF NOTICE OF AWARD**

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

The administration recommends approving the Issue of Notice of Award to the low bidder on the bleacher rehabilitation project. The low bidder is Allegheny Restoration Inc. in the amount of \$415,540.

**APPROVING BOND AMOUNTS**

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

The Administration recommends approving bonds in the following amounts:

Business Manager	\$150,000
Administrative Assistant to the Business Manager	\$150,000
Superintendent of Schools	\$50,000
Board Secretary	\$20,000
Activities Fund Custodians	\$10,000

**APPROVING MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving a Memorandum of Agreement with the Cambria County Drug & Alcohol Program and Cambria County Behavioral Health/Intellectual Disabilities and Early Intervention Programs for the 2023-2024 school year. The county will provide liaisons and assessments where appropriate.

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**APPROVING SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS AND VEHICLES**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving school bus drivers and vehicles for the 2023-2024 school year as provided.

**APPROVING SCHOOL BUS RUNS**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving school bus runs for the 2023-2024 school year as provided.

**APPROVING STUDENT HANDBOOKS FOR THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the student handbooks for the 2023-2024 school year.

**APPROVING VALLEY NETWORK AGREEMENT**

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

The administration recommends approving the Valley Network Proposal for Joint Professional Learning for the 2023-2024 school year. The district's cost for the school year is \$6,000.

**APPROVING STUDENT TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the following student teaching assignments:

<u>Student Teacher</u>	<u>Supervising Teacher</u>	<u>College</u>
Joe Courtney	Josh Burkett	UPJ
Amber Hearn	Tammy Rodgers	IUP
Courtney Harbaugh	Heidi Washko	Point Park

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**ADOPTING DISTRICT POLICIES**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends adopting the following polices:

- 137.2 Participation in Cocurricular Activities and Academic Courses by Home Education Students
- 137.3 Participation in Career and Technical Education Programs by Home Education Students
- 830.1 Data Governance – Storage/Security
- 201 Admission of Students
- 202 Eligibility of Nonresident Students
- 203.1 HIV Infection
- 205 Postgraduate Students
- 207 Confidential Communications of Students
- 208 Withdrawal from School
- 214 Promotion and Retention
- 235.1 Surveys

**APPROVING BOARD AFFIRMATION STATEMENT**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving the Board Affirmation Statement for the Junior-Senior High School ATSI-non-Title 1 plan.

**RENEWING AGREEMENT WITH EFD, LLC FOR CONSULTING SERVICES**

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

The Administration recommends renewing its agreement with EFD, LLC to provide consulting services to the administration at a rate of \$50 per hour and not to exceed \$5,000.

**APPROVING STAFFING AGREEMENT WITH WORKLINK**

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

The Administration recommends approving a Staffing Agreement with WorkLink staffing to provide custodians for the district. If the district chooses to utilize this service, the rate would be \$18.81 per hour; there is no fee unless the district uses the service.

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**REQUESTING PERMISSION TO APPLY FOR CREDIT CARD**

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

The Administration requests permission to apply for a credit card through 1<sup>st</sup> Summit bank with a limit of \$40,000 and to authorize Pete Noel and Jeff Vasilko to execute documents on behalf of the district.

**APPROVING AGREEMENT WITH SOUTHWOOD PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving an agreement with Southwood Psychiatric Hospital to provide services to students placed in their facility during the 2023-2024 school year. The district would only incur costs if a student is placed in the facility.

**APPROVING AGREEMENT WITH MOVE THIS WORLD**

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

The Administration recommends renewing its Agreement with Move this World to provide Social Emotional Learning exercises for grades K-12 for the 2023-2024 school year. The cost remains at \$8,091.26 and will be paid from ESSR grant money.

**INCREASING RATES FOR EVENT STAFF**

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

The Administration recommends increasing the rates for event staff as listed below:

<u>Event</u>	<u>Previous Rate</u>	<u>New Rate</u>
Football (Varsity)	\$50	\$55
Other Sports (multiple games)	\$60	\$65
Other Sports (single game)	\$35	\$40
Other Events	\$40	\$45

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**PERSONNEL MATTERS**

**HIRING SUPERVISOR OF GROUNDS AND MAINTENANCE**

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

The Administration recommends hiring Erik Thrower as the Supervisor of Grounds and Maintenance with a start date of as soon as may be possible. Compensation will be \$52,500, with benefits, with a middle management compensation plan.

**HIRING MENTOR TEACHERS**

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

The Administration recommends hiring the following mentor teachers for the 2023-2024 school year. Compensation will be based on the current contract between the district and the PAEA for extra and co-curricular activities.

Tobi Burkett  
Annette Lutz

Laura Gressick (Special Education ES)  
Kara Jarvie (Long-term sub ES)

**HIRING EVENT STAFF**

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

The Administration recommends hiring the following individuals as event staff. Compensation is paid on a per event basis.

Fred Galosi (all clearances submitted)  
Micah Wanko (will provide clearances prior to working)

**APPROVING REQUEST FOR FMLA**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving a staff member's request for a Family and Medical Leave of Absence for an approximate four-week period beginning September 5, 2023



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**RESCINDING REQUEST FOR FMLA**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends rescinding the staff members request for a Family and Medical Leave of Absence for the period July 24 to August 11, 2023.

**APPROVING REQUEST FOR DAYS OFF WITHOUT PAY**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving a staff member's request for August 28, 29, 30 and 31, 2023 as days off without pay for medical reasons.

**APPROVING REQUEST FOR FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends approving a staff member's request for a Family and Medical Leave of Absence for the period September 1 to November 27, 2023.

**ACCEPTING RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

Motion Decort Second Jubina Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends accepting, with regret, the resignation of Jude Decort as the elementary computer (BCIT) teacher and as an assistant baseball coach. The administration further requests permission to advertise.

**ADDING VOLUNTEER COACHES**

Motion Decort Second Squillario Vote 7-0

The Administration recommends adding the following volunteer coaches for the 2023-2024 school year.

Jeremy Burkett	Football
Kelly Mignogna	Golf
Kendall Claar	Cheer

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**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>
Troy Eppley, Krystal Smith and Jennifer Pisarski	Pennsylvania Visible Learning+ Institute Seven Springs, PA	September 13, 2023	\$822	Yes
Pete Noel	2023 Annual Superintendent Retreat Hershey PA	September 20-22, 2023	\$1068.75	Yes
Pete Noel	New Superintendents Academy	September 26-28 November 15-17 January 10-12	\$2,150.57	Yes
Molly Harrington	STEELS Network Training, GJCTC, Johnstown	October 19, 2023	\$126.25	Yes
Troy Eppley	PA Association for Gifted Education Conference Harrisburg, PA	November 2, 2023	\$793.12	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>
Fourth Grade	Field Trip to the Flight 93 National Memorial, Shanksville, PA	October 3, 2023	\$244.30*	N/A

\*If the grant is awarded, this trip will be free.

Requests for Use of Facilities:

<b>Requester</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Facility</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Rental Fee/ Amount</b>
Christina Franey	Practices for 1 <sup>st</sup> grade girls basketball team	Elementary Gymnasium	August – October (Any day, after 5:00 p.m.)	No Charge
Amanda Kreutzberger	Practices for K-2 Basketball	Elementary Gymnasium	August – October (Mondays, 6 – 7:00 p.m.)	No Charge
Hannah Shaffer, Varsity Cheer Coach	Corn Hole Tournament	High School Parking Lot	August 20, 2023	No Charge

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**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: 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew R. Decort, Board Secretary

Denise Moschgat, Recording Secretary