

October 12, 2020

The board meeting of the Berwick Area School Board was held on Monday, October 12, 2020, via virtual zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by President, Mrs. Susy Wiegand.

PRESENT: Mrs. Susy Wiegand, Mr. Keith Hess, Ms. Carol Bodwalk (via phone), Mr. Joseph DeMelfi, Mrs. Maryann Kovalewski, Mr. Jon Morell, Mrs. Brenda Post, Mr. Ronald Robsock, Mrs. Sandra Slavick

ABSENT: None

Also **PRESENT:** Mrs. Wendy Kupsy, Attorney Bull, Mrs. Renee Jilinski, Mrs. Janet Kovach, Mr. Steven Christian, Mr. Robert Croop, Mr. Benton Culver, Mrs. Wendy Daily, Mrs. Pamela Hegland, Mrs. Jennifer McHale, Mr. Gregory Michael, Mr. Joseph Bo Orlando, Mr. Trevor Palmatier, Mr. Randy Peters, Mr. David Robbins, Ms. Jill Shipman, Mr. William Phillips, Ms. Emily Scranton, Mrs. Tanya Cleaver, Mrs. Kristy Marshman, Ms. Angela Davis, Ms. Chanelle Patel, Mrs. Karen Finucan, Ms. Roslyn Crawford, Ms. Danielle Derr, Ms. Susan Zarrett, Ms. Brandy Switzer, Ms. Nicole Kozma, tax payers, teachers

Moment of Silence

Flag Salute

Reading of the Minutes:

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Keith Hess, we dispense with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting on September 14, 2020 as everyone had received copies prior to the meeting. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - none and no abstentions.

Financial Report:

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell, we approve the treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Budgetary Transfers:

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell, we approve the budgetary transfers on pages 24-40. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Presentation of the Bills:

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Brenda Post, we pay the bills as listed.

ROLL CALL VOTE: "Ayes" – Maryann Kovalewski, Joseph DeMelfi, Ronald Robsock, Brenda Post, Keith Hess, Jon Morell, Carol Bodwalk, Sandra Slavick, Susy Wiegand

"Nays" – None

“Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

Superintendent’s Report: Wendy Kupsky

- Update on Senate Bill 1216 - It passed the House of Representatives in September and is now back before of the Senate where the additional version was passed unanimously.
- The use of Keystone Exams at the State/Local graduation requirement would be suspended until the 2022-2023 school year.
- PSSA’s and Keystones – About opting in or opting out because of religious reasons.
- Secretary of Education would be authorized to seek a waiver of all ESSA’s testing requirements.
- Schools would not be permitted to use Keystone exams as criteria for passing.
- Public schools that transported their students prior to March 13, 2020 will be required to transport nonpublic during the 2020-2021 school year.
- The State and Local Departments of Health would be required to notify school entities of any private or positive case of COVID in an employee contact, student or volunteer assigned working in the school building within 24 hours of receipt of the notice.
- Compliance with the twenty hours training requirement for the para-professionals in Special Education would be waved until June 30, 2021.
- Teacher prep programs continue to prepare students who are enrolled prior to December 2021 for age specific Special Education certification, effectively extending the period for Special Ed. (Pre K - 8 and Special Education 7-12 certification).
- The legislation would also allow the Secretary to wave temporarily the Praxis exams for level 1 and level 2 certification if candidates are unable to access the testing sites during the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 school year.

Spectators at events - Gate layout of Crispin Field

- The game has been moved from Friday night to Saturday.
- Most of the athletic directors have agreed to alter their schedules to having games on Tuesday’s and Saturday’s.
- Home game will be Saturday at 7:00 p.m. It will also be our senior night.

Ben Culver - We met this morning. We will have signs at the gates for the fans. We will have portable gates in the stadium to keep the fans separated. Each student participant football, band and cheerleader will get two tickets. Each senior participant will get four tickets, and all members of the senior class will get one ticket, which can be picked up in the front office.

Trevor Palmatier - Senior night will be before the game. They will report at 5:00 p.m. Senior night will start at 5:15 p.m. We are going to put stickers on the bleachers so the seniors will know where to sit.

Maryann Kovalewski - Are we having Homecoming?

Trevor Palmatier - The end of October at a home football game. October 30th I think.

Bo Orlando - They are wearing their masks inside at the volleyball games.

Change to the calendar –Wendy Kupsky

- Request from BAEA (teachers union) concerns
- Newspaper article of what other school districts are doing.

Mandated training was to be completed in Google Classroom, Google Meeting and the Kami app. The teachers had from April to June 1st to complete it. That training was provided by Mrs. Marina Davenport.

Right now, elementary teachers are teaching five days a week. They will be using technology when we have closures. All devices for the elementary are expected to be received by October 13 and be distributed the following week to all students in grades K-2. All cyber and virtual students are being handled by other teachers. Secondary teachers are doing hybrid. Students come two days a week and on Friday virtually.

I wanted students to come Monday, Wednesday and Friday's, then Tuesday and Thursday and then switch. The committee with teachers and administration wanted the current schedule. September 28th started virtual synchronous. We shut down September 29th. First full week of virtual synchronous instruction completed last week October 9th. Virtual Friday allows for additional planning time for teachers 7:30 a.m. - 8:11 a.m. (home room) 41 minutes student free. Teachers have a duty period - 42 minute period student free (few have a cyber-prep and principals have agreed to work to get sub coverage to get those teachers the extra time) 2:35-3:00 There is another 25 minutes student free time as well. Total of 108 minutes of additional free time plus the 42 minute contractual planning time. Mrs. Davenport said she would do some mini classes in the morning on Fridays for secondary teachers. In-service day was on September 25th and it provided some training to be able to go synchronous on September 28th. We closed a ½ day on September 29th and we came back on October 7th. We allowed teachers to work from home during that time. This was not a recommendation from DOH but we allowed them to work from home and then we asked them to come in Monday and Tuesday. Other districts did not provide that when they had to shut down. Elementary teachers did not have students but they were preparing their packets. Third and fourth grade teachers were then starting to teach students on how to log on to their google classroom and they were setting them up and doing live meets. Special education teachers - those students are afforded the opportunity to be able to come in five days a week because they have a federal document. We have to provide compensatory education for those students. Surface Pros are starting to fail. That order is in for replacements.

Proposal for moving forward:

October 23rd (early dismissal ½ day) {Time for teachers to work on grades}

In-service moved from May 28, 2021 to November 6, 2020. {Elementary teachers will receive instruction on elementary virtual instruction} {Secondary teachers will be given surveys again for additional instruction} Mr. Croop will try to fit in some Heggerty for the elementary teachers.

That is part of the reading program.

I am proposing to eliminate parent/teacher conferences because of the information that I am hearing from teachers which is that there is a lot of communication with the parents. We can't have the parents in anyway.

Even though we have technology and we have devices, that doesn't mean that everyone gets 24 hour access. You need to stick to your teaching days. There has to be an on and off switch.

Students will have early dismissal November 25th, day before Thanksgiving break. The teachers can use that time in the classroom to work.

Students will be dismissed early on December 23rd, day before holiday break. Teachers can use that time. Both days teachers can use time for requested planning, grading and training:

Elementary hours will be 944 hours. You need to have 900 hours.

Secondary hours will be 1052. You need to have 990 hours.

Last day of school May 28, 2021.

Maryann Kovalewski – Would it be possible to do a brown bag lunch series for some additional IT topics for teachers? Maybe something for the community.

Wendy Kupsky - Mr. Culver addressed the cleaning issues. He met with his staff. Mr. Culver will evaluate and see if he needs additional staff.

Renee Jilinski - We received notification from the State on Thursday of last week that we are going to be receiving quite a short fall in our subsidies regarding the Homestead Farmstead allocation. It's about \$354,000 that we will be short. We were notified from PDE that the US Department of Treasury disallowed the use of \$300 million in CARES Act funding to fill the void in gaming revenue that was basically allocated for the Homestead Farmstead allocation. They are telling us to not be concerned yet however, I can say I am concerned because this is the second short fall. The first short fall with the Social Security short fall which is from the third quarter fiscal year 2020 (January to March time frame). We were short just shy of \$65,000. Generally, every year that is paid in the fourth quarter payment, which did not happen this year when we received our subsidies in August. The additional funding is not included in the 2020-2021 State Budget. Altogether, it's about \$420,000 that we are short from the State.

Wendy Kupsky - We currently have 53 students attending outside cyber programs from K-5 and we have 91 students attending other cyber schools from 6-12

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski, we add the addendum. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - none and no abstentions.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

William Phillips - We are asking for more time for preparation, training and grading time. Attended a meeting with local presidents and PSEA representatives. Spoke with Central Columbia. They were approved every Friday until Christmas for planning, the kids are not in school and the teachers are not teaching. After Christmas they were approved every Monday as a day off of school. They are working four day weeks the entire year. We are using that time in the morning before we start teaching. Teachers are tired. Thank you for considering more time for us. The students are overwhelmed.

Chanelle Patel - Information on cyber programs. Issues with Accelerated Education.

Emily Scranton - Needing a break.

Maryann Kovalewski - Form a committee.

Wendy Kupsky - I don't want to take more time away from the teachers.

Tanya Cleaver - Is Synchronous learning successful?

Kristy Marshman - Goggle Classroom is for posting not a ready-made curriculum. Need additional time to post things for the students.

Angela Davis - Concerned about students not having access to Title 1 Staff.

Wendy Kupsky - Title 1 was changed to School wide Title 1.

Karen Floryshak - Not sure if training in the half days will help.

Roslyn Crawford - October 23rd and November 6th are not breaks for teachers. We don't have off.

Joseph DeMelfi - We understand the pressure for everyone. We want the teachers to have some time. We will revisit it in November/December.

Sandra Slavick - A lot of those school districts that are having all the Act 80 days, they are also videotaping their lessons.

Wendy Kupsky - Some do a delayed day and all of their teachers are required to record their lessons and then post them. Some teachers are choosing to record the lessons for instructional reference for their students. They are doing that on their own.

Danielle Derr - Half day a month will not alleviate the amount of time we need per week to grade, plan, etc.

Agenda

General:

G-1 Approval of the Radiological Emergency Response Plan. (Copy available for review.)

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski, we approve the Radiological Emergency Response Plan. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Academic Affairs:

AA-1 Acknowledgment of the Berwick Area School District Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) plan. The Berwick Area High School and Middle School will work within the district's Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan and the district's Continuity of Education Plan to implement supports for student subgroups identified for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI).

Acknowledgment was given for Item AA-1.

Transportation:

Approve Items T-1 through T-2 With One Motion

T-1 Approval of Nicole Hummel as school van driver for Ralph Wintersteen for the 2020-2021 school term.

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Jon Morell, we approve Nicole Hummel as school van driver for Ralph Wintersteen for the 2020-2021 school term. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

T-2 Approval of Milton Delgado as school van driver for Fishing Creek Transportation for the 2020-2021 school term.

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell, we approve Milton Delgado as

school van driver for Fishing Creek Transportation for the 2020-2021 school term. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye” except Ronald Robsock. “Nay” Ronald Robsock and no abstentions.

Personnel:

Approve Items P-1 through P-9 With One Motion

- P-1 Approval to add Beverly Bull to the substitute teacher list for the 2020-2021 school year, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$15.71 per hour.**
- P-2 Approval of Michael Bennett as High School Dean of Students.**
- P-3 Approval to hire Ashley DeLieto as part-time paraeducator, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$12.96 per hour.**
- P-4 Approval for employee #2888 to take Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act from September 28, 2020 through October 9, 2020. (enc.)**
- P-5 Approval for employee #419 to take Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act from September 29, 2020 through October 12, 2020.**
- P-6 Approval for employee #2886 to take Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act on October 1, 2020, October 5, 2020 and October 6, 2020.**
- P-7 Approval for employee #1720 to take Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act from September 21, 2020 through October 2, 2020.**
- P-8 Approval of the resignation of Kelly Kishbaugh as part-time physical therapist, effective November 7, 2020. (enc.)**
- P-9 Approval to accept the resignation of Chelsea Spring as a day to day substitute teacher. (enc.)**

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve Items P-1 through P-9 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Addendum

Approve Items P-10 through P-13 With One Motion

- P-10 Approval to accept the resignation of Alexis DegBrina as exclusive district substitute teacher, effective October 10, 2020. (enc.)**
- P-11 Approval to accept the resignation of Claudia Anderson as a day to day substitute teacher. (enc.)**
- P-12 Approval for employee #2734 to take Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act from October 1, 2020 to October 14, 2020. (enc.)**
- P-13 Approval to change the status of Corinne Hock from day to day substitute teacher to exclusive district substitute teacher, effective October 13, 2020. Compensation will be at the rate of \$20.00 per hour.**

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve Items P-10 through P-13 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

G-2 Approval of the following proposal:

- **October 23, 2020 being ½ day.**
- **In-service day moved from May 28, 2021 to November 6, 2020.**
- **Students would have early dismissal November 25, 2020 (day before Thanksgiving) and early dismissal December 23, 2020 (day before holiday break). Teachers would work full days. Parent/teacher days would be removed because teachers are currently interacting with parents.**
- **Last day of school would be May 28, 2021.**

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski, we add item G-2 to the agenda. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve Item G-2 as stated above. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Reports:

Committee Reports:

Susy Wiegand - We met as a Committee as a Whole on October 5, 2020.

Academic Affairs – Robert Croop

- TSI at the middle school and high school. We talked about our plan moving forward.
- Attendance with the hybrid modals and synchronous.

Athletic Committee – Joseph Orlando

- Spectators at sporting events.
- Senior night for soccer.
- Volleyball.
- Attendance limits at football games.

Budget – Renee Jilinski

- Closing out the financials with the auditor. AFR is due October 31, 2020.
- Preparing a three year forecast which will be presented at the November 2nd meeting.

Buildings and Grounds Committee – Benton Culver

- Hillyard CCAP program – Will discuss Wednesday or Thursday to discuss that.
- Waiting for the proposal for the middle school /high school HVAC upgrade.
- High school roof wet areas.
- Radiological Plan.

CSIU – Susy Wiegand

- Head Start classroom had positive cases and needed to shut down for a short time.

Vo-tech – Keith Hess

- Adapting to the 50/50 model.
- Formed a new committee called the steering committee.
- Senior certification requirements for graduation.

Old Business:

Brandy Switzer - Teachers are working all hours and weekends and I don't see two half days helping. Technology problems.

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Summarization of Executive Session: Susy Wiegand

- One personnel item.

Future meetings:

- Committee of the Whole – November 2, 2020
- November Board Meeting – November 9, 2020

On a motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Keith Hess we adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye.” “Nay”- none and no abstentions.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Janet K. Kovach, Secretary to the Board