



Board of School Directors Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 10, 2018

Generated by Renai Cardillo on Thursday, October 18, 2018

Members present: Janet Flisak, Matt Holliday, Ken Keith, Stephen Nelson, Donna Scheuren

Members absent: Nicholas Braccio, William Brong, Scott Jelinski, Tom Kwiatkowski

Others present: Frank Ball, Lisa Ball, Ian Burley, Phil Cerami, Christopher Hey, Frank T. Gallagher, Raymond Kase, Katie Kennedy-Reilly, Josh Klimovich, Mike Olenick, Tom Overberger, William Stone, Sam Varano, Kim Wilson, and Megan Zweiback. Students: Brydon Bateman, Jacob Golden, Sarah McCormick and Jenny Nguyen.

1. Education-Personnel Committee

1.1 Public Review of Draft Comprehensive Plan for 28 Days

Mr. Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

Dr. Gallagher introduced the Comprehensive Plan explaining that it is a PA Department of Education requirement for all Local Educational Agencies, completed every three years.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly explained that the Comprehensive Plan was developed under her direction and by a formal steering committee that engaged stakeholders from various positions in our school community. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that the Comprehensive Plan is a reflection of the work that is at the core of everything we do to educate the whole child.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed a slide presentation that highlighted the mission of the school district and the core foundations of curriculum, instruction, assessment, resources, professional education and special education.

A detailed timeline outlining the development of the Plan was reviewed.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed the framework of the Plan which is comprised of the two goals that the Steering Committee deemed most important. Those two goal areas include a healthy and safe school environment and ensuring that learning opportunities are engaging, supportive and challenging. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed the first goal of Safe Schools curriculum and program including the implementation of A.L.I.C.E. training, bullying prevention, mental health and behavioral supports, digital citizenship and communication. The second goal area of learning opportunities includes data informed decisions, exploring full-day kindergarten and using data to support English Language Learners. Additional components are instructional practices that are student-centered and student driven and ensuring equitable access to learning tools.

Mr. Keith asked about the biggest change within the plan and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that the goal to ensure learning opportunities that are supportive and challenging is actually in response to requests from teachers. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly also noted that the implementation of MAP will offer new information and afford new opportunities for growth. Another big change is the emphasis on school safety, reinforced by the implementation of A.L.I.C.E. training.

Mrs. Scheuren asked about the Special Ed Advisory Council and Mrs. Zweiback responded that it was an idea conceived last year and will be introduced during this school year. Dr. Gallagher added that it is a tool to facilitate a collaborative environment for parents and administrators. Mrs. Scheuren expressed concerns of financial discussions that could arise within a parent council and Dr. Gallagher noted that those would remain confidential.

Mrs. Flisak responded positively on the possibilities of full day kindergarten but noted concerns of increases staffing and associated costs.

Mr. Nelson commented on the tag line "make the main thing the main thing".

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1.2 First Reading of Proposed Changes to the High School Program of Studies for the 2019-2020 school year

Dr. Varano noted that these are small changes that allow us to move forward in educating our students. Dr. Varano noted that some of the courses are driven by educator interests.

Mr. Overberger explained the addition of the dual enrollment course for Culinary Arts, which would add to the already existing dual enrollment courses being offered in partnership with Montgomery County Community College. Mr. Overberger noted that the dual enrollment offering makes it possible for students who may be interested in the culinary arts pathway, but are not committed, or whose schedule does not permit them to attend North Montco Technical Career Center as a Culinary Arts student.

Dr. Varano elaborated on the addition of an Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar. He said that this course would support students who participate in Academic Decathlon and offer intensive learning across several levels of disciplines. A student need not participate in the Academic Decathlon team to elect to take the course nor is it a requirement to join Academic Decathlon.

Dr. Varano noted the revision to the current Technology Education course changing the title from Visual Basic I to Introduction to Computer Programming. High School Tech Ed teacher Mr. Olenick commented that the course will give students more comprehensive programming instruction using JavaScript as the coding language. Also discussed was the addition of Web Programming which is the natural progression from Introduction to Computer Programming to AP Computer Science.

Dr. Varano noted that due to a reduction in enrollment, the World Language Department would be phasing out German and would be adding Mandarin I in 2020-2021. Dr. Varano also noted that Transition English 12 would be eliminated as students may choose from English Language Arts electives instead and Theater Arts III would be discontinued because of low enrollment.

Dr. Varano noted the specific title changes to existing Math courses which more accurately reflect course content. Mr. Keith inquired about the course name changes as they relate to college course requirements and Mr. Overberger responded that the revised names are widely accepted.

Mr. Nelson asked about the integration of Computer Science skills into existing Science classes and Dr. Varano replied that those opportunities will begin to exist as teachers collaborate. Mrs. Scheuren inquired about the video gaming class enrollment and Mr. Olenick noted that students may initially elect to take the course because of their own recreational interest, only to find themselves learning to read and write code.

She also asked about the time commitment of the Honors Seminar course and Mr. Cerami noted that it will actually afford students more opportunity to learn and participate.

Mr. Holliday praised the course design and development. Mr. Nelson praised the teachers and administration for the energy and commitment.

A member of the public, Mr. Souchet of Souderton, inquired about the Comprehensive Plan. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly briefly explained the process involved with the creation of the Plan and the timeline for approval. Mr. Souchet asked some additional questions, and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly and Mr. Keith offered to meet with Mr. Souchet to answer his specific questions at a later date.

Mr. Nelson adjourned the Education-Personnel meeting at 7:27 P.M.

2. Operations Committee

2.1 SAHS Greenhouse Project Proposal

Mr. Keith called the Operations Committee Meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

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Dr. Gallagher introduced the proposed greenhouse project as a partnership between the Indian Valley Education Foundation and the school district.

Mrs. Potter, Executive Director of the IVEF, gave a brief overview of the generous donation from a former Lower Salford Elementary School teacher that is making the greenhouse project possible.

Mr. Haines, High School Assistant Principal, spoke about the specifics of the greenhouse project including the goal to design and build a facility that accommodates an aquaponics system. The project will provide a variety of cross-curricular opportunities for hands on learning, STEM related science, and community collaboration. Mr. Haines elaborated on the curricular impact the greenhouse project will have on Biology, Botany, AP Biology and Genetics courses currently being offered at the high school.

Mr. Haines highlighted the construction phase of the project including township approvals, materials acquisition and actual construction by contractors and SASD tradesmen. High School Environmental Science teacher Mr. Burley discussed the curriculum possibilities that the project will encourage along with the involvement of the S.A.V.E. (Students Against Violating the Earth) organization who will assist in the sustainability of the greenhouse. Several S.A.V.E. officers spoke in support of the project. Mr. Burley and the S.A.V.E. students reiterated their proven track record of fundraising which will assist in the sustainability of the project.

Dr. Gallagher noted the relationship between the greenhouse project and a pathway lens toward the agriculture industry. Mr. Haines also noted the new opportunities that will exist for F.B.L.A. students, S.T.A.R.R. program members and workshops for middle and elementary school students.

Mr. Keith sought clarification that the goal of the evening was seeking Board approval to move forward with the project. Mr. Keith also inquired to the proposed location of the greenhouse and Mr. Haines responded that the proposal has designated a space adjacent to the high school "Little Red Schoolhouse" classroom. He noted that the particular space already has existing drainage and utilities.

Other questions regarding sustainability and summer oversight were discussed. Mr. Burley discussed possible summer camps or workshops which would provide care and oversight when students are not in session.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Keith expressed interest and enthusiasm for the greenhouse and asked for additional costs and the long term viability as the project moves forward.

Mr. Keith adjourned the Operations Committee meeting at 8:09 P.M.

3. Finance Committee

3.1 2019-20 Budget Development Timeline

Mrs. Scheuren called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 8:13 P.M.

Mr. Stone reviewed a presentation that reflected budget results from the FY 2017-2018. Items of note included the General Fund's \$500K operating deficit and the Medical Fund, which had better than expected performance and ended with a \$2.6M surplus. The Food Service Fund also reported an operating profit of \$17K.

Dr. Gallagher commented on the 2019-2020 budget process focusing on aligning the budget to the priorities of the district which include changes to the middle school scheduling, the possibility of expanding full day kindergarten, and exploring later start times for high school students. Other priorities include sustaining technology, supporting teaching and learning and providing safe schools.

Mr. Stone presented the options for developing the budget which included an Administrative recommendation to preserve the ability to apply for Act 1 exceptions, allowing for a tax increase in excess of the Act 1 index (2.3%).

Mr. Stone reviewed the required actions by the Board.

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Mr. Stone reviewed the differences between the Preliminary Budget and the Opt-Out Resolution options.

Mr. Stone presented an overview of the 2019-2020 budget landscape. He highlighted that the largest expenditure (salaries) will almost equal the amount of any new revenue that can be generated by a maximum tax increase. He also noted that this will likely result in a budget deficit to begin the budget preparation process.

A brief discussion of the budget process including questions on special education costs, student enrollment, staffing and PSERS. Mr. Keith expressed concerns about the "wild card" budget items.

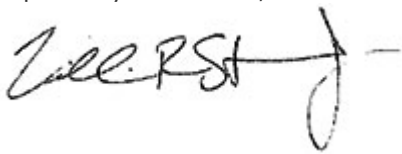
Dr. Gallagher reported that he met with State Representatives Reese and Toepel to discuss our ideas to revise the current Charter School Law. Both representatives were open to our suggestions for revising Charter School funding, which is a large component of our budget. Mr. Keith reiterated the unique situation of our school district.

Mr. Nelson inquired about the medical fund and suggested extending an invitation to Independence Administrators and their actuary to discuss claims and costs. Mrs. Flisak also expressed concerns on the medical fund and future claims costs.

Two community members asked questions about the Act 1 index and IDEA funds.

Mrs. Scheuren adjourned the Finance Committee Meeting adjourned at 9:01 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W.R. Stone", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William R. Stone
Board Secretary