DANVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

January18, 2018 Minutes
Special Board Meeting

The Danville Area School Board held a special meeting in the Community Room at DES Building on Tuesday, January 18, 2018.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Randy Keister, President, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL - Board Members

Mr. Wayne Brookhart, Mr. Kevin Brouse, Mrs. Dawn Gill, Mrs. Heather Hackenberg, Mr. Randy Keister, Dr. Joel Klena, Mr. Derl Reichard, Mrs. Erin Ross, and Mr. Joshua Seidel were present.

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Jason Bendle, Superintendent; Mrs. Bobbi Ely, Business Manager; Mr. Chris Johns, High School Principal; Mr. Jeremy Winn, High School Assistant Principal; Mr. David Snover, Middle School Assistant Principal; Mrs. Jillann Shupp, Director of Special Education; Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Board Secretary; and 150 members of the staff, public, and news media.

I. BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Keister said the board prepared a statement, regarding the football coaching staff, which Dr. Klena will read. Public comment is limited to 1 minute so that anyone who has something to say has a chance to speak due to the amount of people in attendance this evening. Please keep it professional and refrain from name calling.

Dr. Bendle said public comment regarding this matter can be made during public comment time at the end of the meeting.

At this time Dr. Klena read the following statement:

After numerous complaints were filed regarding the culture and atmosphere surrounding our school's football program, the high school administration conducted a preliminary investigation into the complaints. The administration was then directed by the school board to discuss the findings with the head football coach, including the possibilities of opening the position for new applicants.

Following a full board review, a decision has been made to not proceed with opening the position at this time. The precedent established in the district has been to attempt remediation of coaches in order to address identified problems. As such, the plan will be to proceed with remediation through a performance improvement plan. The plan will be approved by the board and implemented by the Athletics Director and the high school administration. Failure to complete or comply with the performance improvement by any coach will result in opening that position.

Several important points are to be made and understood going forward. The complaints received were not from an individual parent or an individual team member, as seems to have been misrepresented on social media. Rather, several parents and players have come forward to both the administration and individual board members. These complaints center on a culture of negativity surrounding the program. We as a board and as an administration believe that these complaints have merit and present an opportunity to improve the experience of our student athletes.

As such, there will be no vote this evening to open the position of head or assistant football coaches and the current staff will be retained. The board takes further action to recommend hosting an open forum between the coaching staff, the players and the parents. This will provide an opportunity to discuss any concerns as well as the future direction of the program.

II. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

IV. SCHOOL PROPERTY & SUPPLIES

V. ATHLETICS/ACTIVITIES

A. The Board will take action to approve the winter coaches' salaries as presented.

Dr. Klena spoke about how the athletic committee put together the matrix for paying coaches for the 2017-2018 sports season. The coaches went between 7 and 8 years with no increase in pay. Mr. Keister said the purpose was to try and bring the upper level and lower level salaries closer together. Dr. Klena said the salaries are up with others districts in the local area.

Motion: (To approve item A under Athletics/Activities)
A motion was made by Mrs. Ross to approve item A. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hackenberg.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote 9 yes – Mr. Wayne Brookhart, Mr. Kevin Brouse, Mrs. Dawn Gill, Mrs. Heather Hackenberg, Mr. Randy Keister, Dr. Joel Klena, Mr. Derl Reichard, Mrs. Erin Ross, and Mr. Joshua Seidel; 0 – No

VI. CURRICULUM AND MANAGEMENT REPORT

VII. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

A. The Board will take action to approve Nate Mattis, Bucknell University student, to do a field placement experience with Mr. Tom Humbert at the High School. All paperwork and clearances are on file.

Motion: (To approve item A under School/Community Relations)
A motion was made by Mrs. Gill to approve item A. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ross.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote 9 yes – Mr. Wayne Brookhart, Mr. Kevin Brouse, Mrs. Dawn Gill, Mrs. Heather Hackenberg, Mr. Randy Keister, Dr. Joel Klena, Mr. Derl Reichard, Mrs. Erin Ross, and Mr. Joshua Seidel; 0 – No

VIII. FINANCE

IX. PERSONNEL

X. POLICY & INSURANCE

XI. TRANSPORTATION

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Buehner – Carlene Drive – Robert said he was a substantial taxpayer and a proud Danville graduate who sponsors substantial scholarships, and has been attending Danville football games for 60 years. Mr. Buehner feels “Jim Keiser” is one of the finest coaches he has seen in 60 years. He builds character.

Patricia Kitchen – Welliver Road – Patricia said Mr. Keiser is a wonderful person. Kitchen said Keiser is involved with his family of players and his family of coaches. He builds character and teaches good work ethics in the students.

Eric Vitunic – Erin Drive – Eric said we have world class coaches. He referenced when his son Alex was in a bad car accident – how the coaches were with Alex and his family through rough times. Eric said Keiser is awesome.

Jeff Brouse – Simply stated “Don’t make another mistake”.

Derien Yeager, a student said it has been a privilege to be with these coaches. They changed his life – through many ups and downs. They made him a better person.

Julie Dunkle – Blue Hill Drive – Julie asked “How did this get started”. Julie said Keiser taught her two boys respect and hard work.

Diane Henry – Grand Street – Diane demanded to know how many complaints were filed against the coaches. Dr. Bendle said he could not specify how many or the nature of the complaints.

Carlene Klena – Mayberry Road – Carlene spoke as a fellow coach. She said she is available if Keiser would like to talk about ways to improve the program. She said if your boat is taking on water ask for help. She also feels if the AD had addressed these problems early on we would not be where we are tonight.

Jeff Swartz – Race Street - Jeff said he coached with Keiser in t-railer football. Jeff said Keiser does a great job.

Ken Cooper, student – Ken said he agrees with what Yeager, his teammate said.

Jim Keiser, coach, said Ken Cooper will be playing in the Blue-Grey Game on Monday at the Dallas Football stadium. It will be televised on Wednesday night.

Harry Wonderland – Cherokee Road - Harry’s two sons played football before Keiser was coach. He said good leaders have a good share of cheerleaders and coaches. You can tell your leaders by the quality of what they produce.

Lisa Tolen – Honeymoon Street – Lisa said her husband coached with t-railer football. She said Keiser worked closely with coaches to make sure it is family oriented. Please remember parents are brutal. Keiser is doing a good job.

Carla Raup – Frosty Hill Drive – Carla said her son is a former player, who currently is living in Hawaii but sent a letter. Carla shared some of the letter – he wrote – If you think we learn in the halls of Danville High School you are mistaken, we learn on the football team from Jim Keiser and his staff. They have made me a successful member of society.

Donna Heath – Tower Drive – Donna’s son wrote a letter which she share with the Superintendent. Donna said her son became a great man which she contributes to the football coaches. Donna said the AD needs to do a better job to help prevent situations such as this.

XIII. BOARD CONCERNS & ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA

Mr. Keister thanked everyone for coming out this evening. The board will be putting a plan in place for the coaches to follow.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:10 pm a motion was made by Mrs. Gill and seconded by Mr. Seidel to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was approved by voice vote.

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Bonnie A. Edmeads
Board Secretary