

DANVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

January 22, 2020 Minutes Regular Board Meeting

The Danville Area School Board met at the Danville Primary School on Wednesday, January 22, 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, President.

ROLL CALL - Board Members

Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard were present.

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Ricki Boyle, Acting Superintendent; Mrs. Bobbi Ely, Business Manager; Mrs. Dawn Brookhart, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology; Mrs. Donna Christensen, Director of Special Education; Mr. Jeffrey Ryan, Director of Network Administration; Mr. Christopher Johns, Director of Student Affairs; Mr. Ken Berkich, Director of Building and Grounds; Mrs. Linda Marshall, Head Start Director; Mr. Jeremy Winn, High School Principal; Mrs. Amy Willoughby, Assistant High School Principal; Mr. David Snover, Interim Middle School Principal; Mr. Pelle Nejman, Interim Assistant Middle School Principal; Dr. John Bickhart, Primary School Principal; Mrs. Terri Faust, Board Secretary; Attorney Carl Beard, Solicitor and approximately 50 members of the staff, public and news media.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **January 8, 2020**

Motion: (To approve the minutes from the January 8, 2020 meeting)

A motion was made by Dr. Jennifer Gurski to approve the minutes from the January 8, 2020 board meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Christina Fish. The motion was approved on a voice vote: 9 -Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard; 0 – No.

I. BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE ANNOUNCEMENT

A. Reports:

- Columbia-Montour Vocational Technical School – Chris Huron
- CSIU – Yohannes Getachew
- Head Start – Derl Reichard
- Curriculum Committee – Christina Fish

Chris Huron stated that Dave Bacher has put in his resignation from Vo-Tech and they are searching for a replacement for him. There has been no progress made on the project at Vo-Tech with the resignation of Mr. Bacher.

Yohannes Getachew reported from the CSIU that they need a motion with approval from our Board so that he may participate on the Board at the CSIU which will most likely be next month.

Derl Reichard gave the Head Start Report. Head Start had the Focus 1 Federal Review in the areas of programs, design, management, education, health, family services and fiscal. Head Start passed the focus 1 Review. Mr. Reichard congratulated Head Start.

Christina Fish spoke about the first meeting of the Curriculum Committee which took place on January 14, 2020. Start and end times, graduation requirements, and schedules were discussed. The committee had 2 recommendations for the Board. The first was to reduce the time of the school day. Our school day was much longer than the other districts in the IU and the time reduction would put us in the average of the other districts. A recommendation was also made to reduce graduation requirements from 27 to 24 credits which would be comparable to the majority of districts in the IU. These recommendations would be the first step in addressing social/emotional learning for our students.

II. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Enrollment Report (Enclosure 1)
- NFHS Update

Dr. Boyle started with the enrollment report giving a summary of students in the district and also students in outside placements. She then moved on to the NFHS which is our streaming system. We have had a total of 2400 live streams this year and 953 video views. Mr. Johns explained that we have a camera in the stadium and all events held there are streamed. We also have a camera in the gym where basketball and wrestling events will be streamed. There is a fee for the service. We have had a lot of positive feedback from people from out of the area who are able to watch the events. Dr. Boyle said we had 973 views when we hosted the Pottsville vs. Jersey Shore football game which was our highest number of views.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT (Max. of 3 minutes each for agenda items only)

Leslie Yeich, 132 Robinson Road, Danville, believes that reducing the time of the school day is a step in the right direction, however, dismissing the students early may give them too much unsupervised time. She thinks that the extra 15 minutes at the end of the day would give them more time to interact with their teachers and their peers. Mrs. Fish explained that one of our safety concerns with a 7.5 hour day is that our teachers arrive and leave with our students due to the current teacher contract. The new schedule would allow for 30 minutes before and 15 minutes where there would still be adults in the building to supervise the students. Mrs. Yeich is concerned with the impact that reducing the student day would have on the time for electives in the students' schedule. Dr. Boyle explained we have taken this into consideration and it is all under discussion. Mrs. Yeich is concerned that our high learners should have time to take electives. Dr. Boyle and Mrs. Fish explained that this is just the first step and that this is all being taken into consideration. Principals and teachers are giving input into the situation. Mrs. Yeich is also concerned that our students are so concerned with class rank and AP classes which at the college level do not matter. Mr. Winn encouraged Mrs. Yeich to attend the Curriculum Committee meeting.

Dr. Boyle pointed out artwork the students made for the Board Recognition month which was displayed on the bulletin boards. The Board was presented with a certificate and a small gift.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/OUTSIDE GUESTS (Max. of 5 minutes each)

A. Middle School Art Club - National Tree Lighting Ceremony

B. GSA Club

Members of the Middle School Art Club, accompanied by their advisor Ms. Megan Heistand, were there to talk about their trip to Washington, D.C. to the National Tree Lighting ceremony. The club crafted 24 ornaments which were placed on the National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C. The students spent many hours to design special ornaments for the tree. There was a lot of positive press for the Art Club. Students focused on local and statewide themes. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for the students. The students had a great time in Washington, D.C. and even saw the President. Ms. Heistand showed pictures of the trip to the Board and thanked them for the opportunity for the students. Dr. Boyle thanked them for all of their hard work and is proud of the students.

Next to address the Board were students who would like to form a club. Emma Varano, President; Gwenneth Beiter, Secretary; Colleen Fish, Public Relations; Talia Hahn, Treasurer; explained the GSA club to the Board. GSA stands for Gay Straight Alliance or Gender Sexuality Alliance. The club's purpose is to unite people and give a sense of community to LGBT members and straight kids alike. They

would advocate for tolerance and educate teachers. They are willing to come in on professional development days if possible. They plan to be an open resource to anyone who has questions about the group. The group presented a Venn diagram which outlined some of the objectives of the club. GSA's are important because they make LGBT students feel safer resulting in a higher bullying report rate. Suicide rates are higher in LGBT students partially due to bullying. In schools with GSA's, bullying and suicide rates go down for all students. GSA's provide a safe and healthy environment to meet and discuss issues regarding gender and sexuality for members of the community and straight allies alike. The group is overall trying to advocate a safe place for LGBT and all students to meet and discuss issues in the school. The group will promote tolerance and education, possibly by having community organizations such as Geisinger to speak to the students and teachers. The GSA is planning to fundraise to attend the Pride event in the summer.

Dr. Boyle recommends approval of the club which is on the agenda.

Mrs. Edmeads made a recommendation to reorganize the agenda by moving Personnel after School Property and Supplies.

Motion (To reorganize the Board agenda by moving Personnel after School Property and Supplies)

A motion was made by Mrs. Christina Fish to move Personnel after School Property and Supplies. The motion was seconded by Dr. Jennifer Gurski.

The motion was approved on a voice vote: 9 -Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard; 0 – No.

V. SCHOOL PROPERTY & SUPPLIES

- A. The Board will take action to approve the payment of \$26.50 to Danville Borough for the Storm Water Agreement for the new maintenance building as presented. (Enclosure 2)
- B. The Board will take action to authorize Administration to put the maintenance bid project out to bid pending permits.
- C. The Board will take action to approve the purchase of Board Docs Software PRO with an annual fee of \$10,500 plus a one-time set up fee of \$1,000 and the purchase of 10 Chromebook laptop computers at an approximate cost of \$500 each. (Enclosure 8) **(Addendum Item)**

Mrs. Fish stated that she had taken the tour of the maintenance building and the proposed changes are way overdue. We need to provide the staff with a cleaner, safer, more appropriate place to do their job. Mrs. Fish stated what an asset it is for the District to have the employee that does the beautiful cabinetry work on the payroll.

Motion: (To approve School Property and Supplies Items A, B, and C)

A motion was made by Mr. Derl Reichard to approve School Property and Supplies items A, B, and C. The motion was seconded by Dr. Victor Marks.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote: 9 -Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard;
0 – No.

VI. PERSONNEL

- A. The Board will take action upon the recommendation of the acting Superintendent to approve the 2019-2020 substitute list as presented pending all required documentation. (Enclosure 6)
- B. The Board will take action to approve the retirement of Courtney Hugo as an English teacher and Librarian at Danville High School effective February 5, 2020 as presented. (Enclosure 7)
- C. The Board will take action to approve Jeff Lynch as a mentor for Katie Kelley. The stipend would be paid ½ for Mentor Teacher in Spring 2020 and ½ for Mentor Teacher in Fall 2020.
- C. The Board will take action to approve the employment of Michael Brennan as Personalized Learning Teacher at the High School at a starting salary of ~~\$72,311~~ (BS, Step 15) with the starting date to be determined. (Enclosure 11) **(Addendum)**
(Salary corrected to \$71,022)

Motion: (To approve the Personnel Items A through D)

A motion was made by Mr. Kyle Gordon to approve Personnel items A through D. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Christina Fish.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote: 9 -Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard;
0 – No.

Dr. Boyle commented on Courtney Hugo's retirement. She has been a great asset and we will miss her greatly.

Mr. Brennan was introduced to the public. He is very excited to be here and thanked the Board.

VII. ATHLETICS/ACTIVITIES

- A. The Board will take action to approve the 8th Grade Ski Club members to attend the out-of-state ski trip to Killington, Vermont, which was approved by the Board for the High School Ski Club at the November 13, 2019 Board meeting. 8th grade members would not be permitted to attend without a parent. (Enclosure 3)
- B. The Board will take action to approve establishing the GSA Club at the High School.
- D. The Board will take action to approve Michael Brennan as Head Football Coach for the fall 2020-2021 season. The stipend will be consistent with the matrix at year 22, 12-week season, and will be paid at the end of the fall season. **(Addendum Item)**

Motion: (To approve Athletics/Activities items A, B, and C)

A motion was made by Dr. Yohannes Getachew to approve items Athletics/Activities items A, B, and C. The motion was seconded by Dr. Victor Marks.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote: 9 -Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard;
0 – No.

VIII. CURRICULUM AND MANAGEMENT REPORT

- A. The Board will take action to approve the length of the student school day to consist of no more than 6 hours and 45 minutes effective the 2020-2021 school year.
- B. The Board will take action to approve students in Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 complete a minimum of 24 credits to graduate effective the 2020-2021 school year.

Motion: (To approve Curriculum and Management Report items A and B)

A motion was made by Dr. Yohannes Getachew to approve Curriculum and Management Report items A and B. The motion was seconded by Dr. Victor Marks.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote: 9 -Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard;
0 – No.

IX. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

X. FINANCE

- A. Head Start (Enclosure 4)
- B. Bills for Payment - November 26, 2019 through January 16, 2020 (Enclosure 5)
- C. The Board will take action to approve the proposal for services from Real Estate Appraisal & Marketing Associates in the amount of \$5,000. The appraisal is for Tax Parcel Numbers 3-25-58 and 3-25-28.01. (Enclosure 9) **(Addendum Item)**
- D. The Board will take action to approve a budget transfer for the 2019-2020 school year as presented. (Enclosure 10) **(Addendum Item)**

Motion: (To approve Finance Items A, C, and D)

A motion was made by Dr. Victor Marks to approve Finance items A, C, and D. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Christina Fish.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote: 9 -Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Dr. Jennifer Gurski, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch, Dr. Victor Marks and Mr. Derl Reichard; 0 – No.

Motion: (To approve item Finance item B)

A motion was made by Dr. Victor Marks to approve Finance item B. The motion was seconded by Mr. Chris Huron.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote: 7 – Yes – Mrs. Bonnie Edmeads, Mrs. Christina Fish, Dr. Yohannes Getachew, Mr. Kyle Gordon, Mr. Chris Huron, Mr. Castan Kiersch and Dr. Victor Marks; 2 – Abstain – Dr. Jennifer Gurski and Mr. Derl Reichard; 0 – No.

XI. POLICY & INSURANCE

XII. TRANSPORTATION

XIII. BOARD CONCERNS & ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Leslie Yeich commented at this time on the Band and her time with the Band. Our Band is accomplished well beyond the marching field. We have 14 kids seated for PME. She explained to the Board how hard our students work with the various projects, including our musical production. Our teachers also work very hard. Comparable surrounding Districts have as many as 3 more teachers than Danville. We need more music teachers. Mrs. Fish encouraged Mrs. Yeich to come to the Curriculum Committee meeting.

Kelly Michaels, 12 Fairview Drive, Danville had 2 questions for the Board. She asked where we are with the soccer position. Mr. Johns said the interviews are set up. Mrs. Michaels is concerned because soccer season is coming up quickly, and it has been put on the back burner. Her next question was concerning the committee meetings. She is concerned because they had not been posted in the past. Mrs. Michaels wanted everyone to know that committee meetings are open to everyone. Dr. Boyle explained that at this time the meetings are being posted.

Heather Hackenberg, 811 C Street, Danville, was the next to speak. Mrs. Hackenberg believes that in the past the Board has not communicated with the public. She was concerned that some of the items voted on at the meeting were not made available to the public. She said this position is a huge hit to the budget and no one knows exactly what the position is. Dr. Boyle explained the position was approved at the January 8th meeting where the principals did a presentation to explain the need for such a position. Mrs. Hackenberg did not see it in the minutes which were not posted yet because they were approved this evening. Dr. Boyle then went through the time-line before the position was approved. There were PCCD grants which focused on social emotional learning and the needs of students. We looked into our needs, combined with safe-schools reporting and put together the personalized learning position and applied for the grant. We met with principals as an administrative team to address what we could do at the High School at this time. This process started in October at a grant meeting at the CSIU. The administrative team determined that this is an urgent situation based on student surveys. We have about 35% of students dealing with anxiety, stress, depression, possible drug and alcohol problems. The teacher job description is the same for all teachers hired in the district and does not change by position. Dr. Gurski explained that at the last Board meeting every principal showed the need to address issues in the District. She feels good as a Board member to put something in place to help students. Mr. Gordon explained the process of filling the position. Mrs. Hackenberg would like the addendum to be made public and have some notice of what is going on. Mr. Kiersch explained that the interview for the position happened yesterday and that is why the addendum is there. Mrs. Fish acknowledged the public's concern and stated they will do everything to give more notice in the future.

Dave Fortunato thanked the Board for recognizing that teachers coming and leaving at the same time as students is not a good thing and also the stress levels in the schools. He is happy to see the Board is moving in the right direction. This is the best Board he has dealt with in 10 years. Our district is moving in the right direction with this Board and Dr. Boyle's leadership.

Scott Shultz, 357 Reed Road, questioned if the addendum could have been made available to the public immediately. Mrs. Ely explained that these items were added to the agenda in the afternoon. Mrs. Edmeads explained that these are items which sometimes just come up after the original agenda is presented. Carl Beard, Solicitor, explained that legally we do not have to post the agenda, but we do as best as we can. Some districts do not post the agenda at all and just put out hard copies at the

meetings. This is nothing out of the ordinary. Mrs. Fish commented that the public should have a voice and that our new system, Board Docs will provide better communication with the public. Dr. Gurski also thinks we are moving in the right direction to improve communication, and Board docs will play a big part in improving communication. We will post when Board Docs is available to the public. Mr. Shultz commended the Board and believes that Dr. Boyle is a good candidate for superintendent. Mrs. Edmeads said the superintendent search is going very well. We are hopeful to settle a contract for a new superintendent soon.

Marcie Kitka, 379 West Mahoning Street, thanked the Board for approving the 8th graders to participate in the ski trip to Killington.

Scott Shultz asked about the teacher contract. Mrs. Edmeads thinks negotiations are going well. Attorney Beard believes we are extremely close to settling the contract. Mr. Fortunato agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:04 pm a motion was made by Dr. Jennifer Gurski and seconded by Mr. Chris Huron to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was approved by voice vote.

Terri Faust
Board Secretary