

Mr. Rasmus called the Millville Area School District Co-Curricular Committee Meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Those present in the library were Joseph Rasmus and Chelsea Rosenberger. Present via Zoom were William Berger, Michael Farrell, Bonnie Gregory, Deb Price, Sue Farr, and Whitney Holloway.

HOMECOMING

- Mr. Rasmus reviewed the upcoming Homecoming events, highlighting the pep rally on Friday, October 7, 2022. He was encouraged by seeing faculty, staff and students getting in the spirit and participating in the dress up days and decorating both buildings.

ATHLETIC COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND TRANSPORTATION

- Mr. Rasmus began by reviewing the cooperative agreements that Millville has with other schools for athletic participation.
 - Committee member Mr. William Berger asked if the field hockey team, which is currently a cooperative team with Benton, would return to being hosted by Millville, citing that the majority of the team are Millville athletes.
 - In response, Mr. Rasmus said that another staff member had asked that earlier in the day and that the district would need to look into the cooperative agreements.
 - Mr. Berger shared his belief that we should consider hosting the team again because Millville Area School District has better facilities as well as the majority of the players on the team.
- Mr. Rasmus shared with the Committee that for some of these smaller cooperative teams, the student-athletes and/or their parents/guardians were providing their own transportation to participate in the sport.
- He went on to share a few concerns with this. In the past, there seems to have been an unspoken rule that for these co-ops, students were able to transport themselves. However, this is a liability issue for the district. Past school practice has been for parents to turn in a note from both parents for students to go home with other students/families. However, it has not been handled consistently.
- Recently, the district had created a transportation waiver allowing athletes, garnering all appropriate permission, the privilege of transporting themselves to athletic events. Unfortunately, Mr. Rasmus shared that a student who had this waiver signed broke the contract and transported another student from an athletic event.
- To garner feedback and clarity on how transportation should be provided, Mr. Rasmus shared that he had reached out to the solicitor and PIAA. He was given the guidance that the decision would be left up to the local choice by the district. An issue has been that certain cooperative teams had students taking themselves and others to athletic events, regardless of the waiver or any other district knowledge. Additionally, transportation has not been made available consistently or equitably for all of the cooperative teams across the board. When investigating this issue, Mr. Rasmus noted that the district seems to have predominantly transported male teams, citing Title IX concerns with this practice.
 - In response, Committee member Mrs. Sue Farr asked how many students participate in these cooperative teams.
 - Ms. Chelsea Rosenberger answered that we currently have 3 students participating in bowling and approximately 10-15 wrestlers.
 - Mr. Rasmus reiterated his concern with the inconsistency of this practice.
 - Mrs. Farr added that in the past, parents had to take care of their own transportation, mentioning that her children had to have notes consistently to go home with parents from athletic events.
 - Mr. Berger then asked if the students have to have notes signed by parents, to which Mr. Rasmus answered that the notes would need to be signed by a parent.

- Mrs. Bonnie Gregory, high school principal, added that this practice has been an issue with our cooperative field hockey team for team practices at Benton, because per PIAA, teams MUST ride district transportation to games.
- Mr. Berger affirmed his concern with this practice as well as his desire to see it rectified. He then asked about the track and field team whether the district would need to provide transportation for them.
- Mr. Rasmus answered that if the district decides to provide transportation for cooperative teams across the board, then yes, the district would need to offer payment to parents providing their own transportation.
- To this, Mr. Berger questioned how the district would manage track and field, being that it is done independently while still playing for Millville.
- Mr. Rasmus answered that the district could put together a schedule and have parents submit their “mileage” for reimbursement just as with staff in the district. The submissions would have to be corroborated with the athletic schedule to verify that information.
- Mrs. Farr then added that she did not agree with paying anyone for transportation as a result of their participation in the cooperative teams, going on to say that participation is really a parental choice, and it should be up to the parents to provide transportation. She stated that the district should not be responsible for that.
- Mr. Berger added that this issue could create quite a rabbit hole and open the district up to a myriad of other issues.
- Mr. Rasmus mentioned that he would need to look at the cooperative agreements, but when the district enters into the co-operative agreements, the team becomes part of our athletics.
- Mr. Berger then said he believed that the district could stipulate payment for the cooperative agreements only.
- Mr. Rasmus countered that if the district decides to do away with all transportation for cooperative agreements, it would have to be done across the board. At present, the district is not consistently offering to all teams.
- Mrs. Farr answered that perhaps the district needs to remove transportation across the board.
- Mr. Berger answered with his belief that a decision like that would need to come to the full board as only two board members were currently present in the meeting.
- Mr. Rasmus agreed and mentioned that it could be discussed in an Executive Session soon, possibly along with the principal selection process.
- Mrs. Gregory then asked if the board could look at this present issue as well as the work on the transportation waiver.
- In response, Mr. Rasmus shared with the Committee the need to get this situated with the board so that guidance can be given to Mrs. Gregory and Ms. Verstraeten as how to move forward with the Athletic Handbook. The plan was to have the transportation issue amended before having a parent meeting prior to the onset of the winter sports season. Mr. Rasmus closed this discussion by mentioning he would take this to the full board for consideration.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

- Mr. Rasmus shared with the Committee the goal to have the Athletic Handbook updated for board consideration by the end of October.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

- Mr. Rasmus explained to the Committee about a recent meeting including himself, Mrs. Gregory; Mrs. Davis, Director of Student Services; Mrs. Longacre, School Psychologist; Mrs. Scerbo, School Nurse; Mr. Brian Craven, Athletic Trainer; and Ms. Verstraeten, Athletic Director to discuss concussion protocols in the district. He stated that with the turnover in some of these positions, the district was not responding to instances of concussion consistently. Mr. Rasmus reviewed the current district policy for concussion management, mentioning that he had been in contact with PIAA and the solicitor to gain feedback on this policy. He shared that the district policy may need to be reviewed by the Policy Committee because we want to make sure we are doing what is most safe for students.

- Mr. Rasmus shared that the garnered information was that the decision how to respond is ultimately the responsibility of the principal to determine whether the student can return to athletics and classes. He explained that the nurse reviews students with concussions for symptoms and records how many remaining symptoms students have. The Athletic Trainer can diagnose concussions, but not nurses. So, the district is looking at the return to play protocols. Ultimately, it would be up to the principal while gathering information from the medical professionals and paperwork on the student.
- Mr. Rasmus mentioned that the catalyst for this consideration was that the high school had three students with concussions in a short amount of time as well as clarification for the new Athletic Trainer. In the meeting, it was mentioned that the trainer did not believe the district needed to do baseline testing at the onset of the season being that it has not been the practice at Geisinger. However, it is part of Millville's policy. So, for winter sports, the students will go to a secure room and have those baseline tests done.
- Mr. Rasmus closed the discussion by mentioning that moving forward, Mrs. Longacre will be part of the concussion management team. She along with Mrs. Scerbo will be undergoing training on concussion management.

At this point, Mr. Rasmus opened the meeting to other concerns or questions of the Committee.

- Mrs. Farr asked how many Homecoming t-shirts were sold.
- Ms. Rosenberger answered that about 80 were sold, with the extra shirts bought to be sold at the Homecoming games.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Rasmus adjourned the meeting at 7:21 pm.

Chelsea Rosenberger
Assistant Board Secretary