

SCHUYLKILL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
929 Lakeshore Drive
Leesport, PA 19533-8631

MINUTES

August 23, 2021

- 1.0 The Regular Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Board President, G. Dane Miller, in the LGI Room/Auditorium of the Schuylkill Valley Middle School.**
- 1.1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**
- 1.2 ROLL CALL**
Members Present: Paul L. Bendigo, Robert M. Dempsey, Nicoleen M. Kleffel, Linda R. Lash, George H. Mertz III, G. Dane Miller, David E. Moll, Kevin Raudenbush, Alfonso F. Rossi

Secretary: Linda R. Lash

Treasurer: Michelle Kauffman (not present)

Recording Secretary: Susan A. Christman

Administrative Staff Present: Dr. Janet Heilman, Michael Billman, Casey Blankenbiller, Robin Brightbill, Kate Costenbader, Candice Kehres, Courtney Maguire, Lacey Smey, Jason Williams
- 1.3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
Moved by Kevin Raudenbush and seconded by Paul Bendigo to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 26, 2021, and to approve the minutes of the special meeting of August 3, 2021, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.
- 1.4 EXECUTIVE SESSION**
Mr. Miller reported that the Board met in executive session on August 3, 2021, for personnel matters, on August 16, 2021, for personnel matters, and on August 23, 2021, for a special education matter.
- 2.0 REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND BOARD REPRESENTATIVES**
- 2.1 PRESIDENT – G. Dane Miller**
Mr. Miller stated that Schuylkill Valley has been able to avoid issues that other schools have had during the past year. There are many pros and cons to masking and SV has used every mitigation tool available to make informed decisions. The Board will continue to make tough decisions as the year progresses.
- 2.2 SECRETARY – Linda R. Lash**
No report.
- 2.3 BERKS COUNTY I.U. BOARD – Linda R. Lash**
Mrs. Lash reported that their last meeting was on Thursday, August 19. The BCIU has approved their Health and Safety Plan and bus drivers were hired by an outside company for the ESY

summer program. They have received a 4% increase in special education funding for the next school year. There was a \$50 million increase in this funding across the state of Pennsylvania. Pupil transportation for IU's received a 10% increase across the state.

2.4 BERKS CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER – *George H. Mertz III*

Mr. Mertz reported that they met at the beginning of August to discuss budget items and also bus drivers for the BCTC. For future budgets, as they cannot find bus drivers, they may push this responsibility back to the sixteen sending districts. When they did the math it was actually cheaper for the sending districts because the BCTC will be able to reduce their rate to the sixteen sending districts. They approved their Health and Safety Plan which requires masks at the BCTC because of their tiered system and there are too many cases.

2.5 TAX COLLECTION COMMITTEE – *David E. Moll*

Mr. Moll reported that their next quarterly meeting will be held at the end of September and he will have a report at the October meeting.

2.6 PA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION LIAISON – *Linda R. Lash*

Mrs. Lash reported that their next Zoom meeting will be held on September 21 and they will now have monthly meetings. The PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference scheduled for September 27-29, 2021 at the Kalahari Resort in the Poconos has been canceled due to lack of interest. It will now be in a virtual format on October 25-27 free of charge to all members. There will be two pre-conference events in October which are also free of charge.

3.0 PERSONS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Scott Rickert, Bern Township, stated that he wanted to know which side of history we want to be on. Are we going to be on the side of history that follows along like sheep or the side of history that leads like a shepherd? He wants to be the shepherd that has no fear, that leads the way through this chaos of lies, misleading information, false data and fake news that is used to instill fear in order to control and manipulate all of us. Making these knee jerk reactions only end up hurting our children and taking away their freedoms. The pandemic has lowered our children's self-esteem, their self-worth, and has raised the suicide rates by double digits across the board. It takes away all aspects of socialization among children which is the key to their development. Masks cause headaches, hyperventilation and fear of claustrophobia. When this all started early on, why did we go from deaths to cases and now it's all about cases. Was it to instill more fear because the numbers are higher. Don't we want cases so that everyone gets it, gets the antibodies and it's over. We are at 54% fully vaccinated in Pennsylvania, and along with the people that have had the virus, we are well over 70% and well into herd immunity. If we keep on this track, vaccines are coming next and they will push it to schools like they did in Australia. You can see from the data that you can still get it, you can still give it, and they still want you to wear a mask. You have to be asking yourself, if you got the vaccine, why did I get it as there's no difference if you didn't get it. It sure feels that way for some people that he knows that have gotten the vaccine.

Amanda Knoblauch, Bern Township, stated that she works in healthcare and was fit tested in order to treat COVID positive patients. If anyone failed the fit test, they were not allowed to treat COVID positive patients for the simple reason that it will not work unless you are securely fitted with an N95 respirator mask, otherwise it is of no protection to anyone. She realizes the Board has a hard position and she truly appreciates the job that they have to do. In regard to all of the people who want our children to wear masks, are they going to do a respirator fit test, because if not, disposable masks are not protecting anyone. For over a year healthcare workers were called heroes, but as of September 1 she could lose her job because she won't participate in the clinical trials by getting the vaccine. She is no longer one of the heroes, the heroes are being let go and fired, so who is taking care of the people getting sick. It's truly demoralizing what we're doing and scaring our kids. She wanted to address the Board as someone who works in healthcare, face to face with it, and she saw so many people beat the virus. She asked the Board to please be the hero that our kids need and do what's right.

Angela Davis, Centre Township, stated she has four children in the district with two that have graduated. She thanked the Board for making the correct decision on July 26 to make masks optional. She asked the Board to remain steadfast and confident in their decision to allow them as parents to make decisions about their children's health. On June 28 the governor lifted the state mask mandate. Even during the mandate it is not a law, but now with no state emergency declaration, school board's do not have the authority to mandate the wearing of masks by our students. In Pennsylvania, the Child Protective Services Code specifies that interfering with the breathing of a child is considered child abuse, and mandated reporters, which all of the school staff is, are required by law to report such abuses. This law has not been suspended and any mandate by the governor does not supersede this code. So by law, all school staff should have reported the masking of our children last August as child abuse. How many of you wear a mask for eight hours a day and are not allowed to remove it unless you are given a mask break or are eating. Many adults must wear them for work, but her point is that you can remove them at your own will when not around others or seated at your desk. Our children do not have that same luxury. She has heard kids say that their teachers pull down their masks when seated at their desks but they get yelled at for doing the same thing. Our children have enjoyed a normal summer playing with their friends, participating in summer sports, going on vacations mask-free and it makes no sense now that school is starting that we have to play politics and mask up again. This is pure politics and our government is trying to control us by inciting fear. Stop pretending that all experts agree about masks and social distancing. What you really mean is that the people that are allowed on TV agree with these solutions. There are countless doctors, virologists, and epidemiologists who have been speaking out against these measures for months. The psychological damage done to our children this past year and a half will not easily be reversed. Our children are being raised in fear. Fear of each other; fear of the world; fear of illness, viruses and even the air they breathe. They are being taught to fear everything. Prolonged fear is terror, and terror becomes trauma. Please stop this insanity and allow our kids to be free and to breathe free.

Sandy Brooks, Bern Township, a substitute teacher at SVSD but a parent first. She applauded the Board for making a really tough decision to keep masks optional for the 2021-22 school year. She hopes that the Board does not waiver on this plan that has already been set in place. But if that's the case, she asks that the Board consider every child. When it comes to school, we as the parents already make all the decisions for our children including participating in sports, field trips, bus travel to school, and taking necessary medications. Why should this be any different? We should decide whether our children should wear a mask or not. She has spoken to many parents on both sides of the mask debate. Some SV parents have children that feel more comfortable going to school with a mask because that makes them feel safe. Since masks are optional, these children are allowed to wear masks and their learning is not affected. Whether she agrees with masks or not she applauds those parents for doing what's best for their children by sending them to school with a mask. However, there are so many SV parents whose children do not feel comfortable wearing a mask. They get hot and sweaty, they can't breathe well, and this is a major distraction and affects their learning. With masks being optional, those parents can also do what's best for their children. Our children do not belong to the government and they do not belong to the school, they belong to us as the parents. The children are the ones affected by the decisions that we make, and whether we all agree with masks or not, she knows we as parents all have one thing in common. We all want to do what is best for our children. She prays that the Board does not change this policy, because if masks are required, then that means half the SV community of parents wouldn't be allowed to do what is best for their children and that's heartbreaking. Please remember who we are making these decisions for and please consider every child and let the parents do what they know is best.

Kathleen Murray, Ontelaunee Township, stated that her 11-year-old son will be starting 6th grade at the middle school on August 30. She wanted to thank her son's teachers and district administration and staff for the outstanding job that was done last year despite the incredibly hard circumstances of online learning. She thanked Mrs. Pisanick, Mr. Wojciechowski and all of her son's special area teachers. As an educator in another local district she knows it was far

from easy and that's putting it lightly. Her son learned an amazing amount thanks to their dedication and efforts. She is here to voice her concerns about the optional masking position the district is currently holding. According to NBC news last week, around the country, child hospitalizations for COVID-19 have increased to levels not seen since last January's surge and they are increasing. As of August 18, US hospitals were trending to an average of more than 1,200 children per day. She does not call this minor as they are on ventilators. Last year we were virtual until the second week of January and it was difficult to watch her child sometimes struggle online. However, we are back now and she would like to see us remain back. It is her belief that if we keep masks optional we are going to be put into a situation where many children will show up without masks and our cases will surge. The Delta variant has proven itself a worthy foe. We all want what's best for our children and she agrees with all of the parents that have spoken. To attend school in person, safety is the best thing for every child. At this point, this cannot be accomplished without universal mandatory masking. Her son does not turn 12 until the end of May and until he is fully vaccinated he is vulnerable. The relief they felt when he could finally return to school this past year was incredible. When asked about how he felt wearing a mask he said that was nothing compared to being in school and not being on a computer all day. Masks have been scientifically proven to provide protection against COVID. The science proves it medically over and over again. Those are the facts. Why would we risk our children's health and safety at this point right now? Please, for the sake of our children and our community, make masking mandatory until all students can be safely immunized.

Heather Yobb, Ontelaunee Township, stated that she does not like to make waves and has always taught her children to respect authority, so speaking up like this in such a public forum is not her favorite thing to do. She wants her children and all children to see what advocating looks like and how we do have the power to make change. More than anything, she is speaking because we are discussing the health and well-being of her children. She is hoping that the Board will stick with the original decision to keep masks optional within our schools. Many SV parents have already brought forth data, research and evidence that masking children does more harm than good when it comes to all four domains of development. Masking simply does not work and study after study is proving that fact. Those that are in favor of mask mandates like to state that the CDC and a few other government-supported agencies strongly recommend masking. The Academy of Pediatrics also recommends masking children in our schools and we need to ask why. She often wonders if they look at the data and the research that children are actually getting sick because of the masks. Probably not, because like everything else these days, they have succumbed to politics and money. One of the top donors to the Academy of Pediatrics is Pfizer. Is it possible that they may have another agenda? It's time to really ask questions and think critically rather than just following recommendations and even mandates. If this was really about the health and safety of our children, we would be encouraging good nutrition, proper supplementation, moving our bodies, getting good sleep, spending time with friends, family and loved ones, and getting fresh air. It seems exactly the opposite of that is happening in today's society and our children are the victims of this mess. We need to stop blaming our children for this mess that our government leaders have created. When will this end? Will it be this year; will it be next year or the year after? This is never going to end if you don't take a stand, lead and be the change for our children. We have been given an inch and now they are taking a foot. We wore masks all last year. We weren't happy about it but we figured it would cause things to stop, but it's not happening. Our children are being used and it's time to stop this madness. She is requesting the ability to parent her own children without interference. She has been given the duty of making medical decisions for them, not you or anyone else. She would never dare ask the Board to make medical decisions for her child or someone else's child. Parents on the opposite side of the argument want to try and tell her how to parent her children out of their own fear. The argument really comes down to fear. A free society is now a scared society and we are passing that on to future generations disguised as caring for others. If we are really caring for others, we need to allow parents to do what is right for their own children. She thinks it's selfish for another parent to try to tell her what is right for her children because of their fears. Nobody knows her children better than her and her

husband. Please, Board of Directors, stick to your original vote and do not allow fear to change your vote; keep masks optional.

Bethany Hoover, Bern Township, stated that many places want you to wear a mask and at some places it's even mandated. Sadly, no one is giving people including children the proper guidance on which masks actually protect you. No one is actually giving you direction on how to wear a mask, wash a mask, dispose of a mask or if they should even be reused. A majority of the masks that people are wearing right now simply do not work. Additionally, when you are touching your mask and then touching your eye, that is how you get a virus into your body. So every time a child or an adult is moving or touching their mask they have a chance of getting that virus in their body just by rubbing their nose or touching their eye. You need to do the proper hand hygiene or the outside of your mask is contaminated. Someone spoke about the hypocrisy with teachers taking their masks down or taking them off, yet her children are not allowed to and this is upsetting. It's hard for them as children, and if you as an adult need a break, so does a child. When people are reusing masks for weeks or months at a time without proper care, it can also spread these viruses and bacteria to others. Even if people are wearing masks you can still spread COVID and other viruses. Sadly, the CDC has yet to classify if COVID is airborne or droplet; they constantly keep changing their mind. If it's airborne you need a minimum of an N95 mask. Mrs. Hoover is a registered respiratory therapist working at more than one local hospital. She is the person helping the doctor to intubate patients, manage their airway and helps manage the ventilator to keep patients alive. The Delta variant is not even being tested for in this area which requires a specific test. Vaccinated people are getting COVID, and they are being hospitalized. People say follow the science but it's all too new and we're still learning. There really is no science to follow. She thanked the Board for what they do and wished them good luck in their decision.

Kelly Steinke, Bern Township, thanked the Board for their continued dedication to SV. She knows that these have been unprecedented times and no one has all the answers. She would like to reinforce that the Board made the right decision in making masking optional. To be optional means that you are giving parents back the power to make the right choices for their children. No one knows a child better than their own parents. In the past week, all over the county, school boards that were mask optional are reversing course. She's hopeful that this board has listened to parents and this will not happen in our district. Please stand strong with Brandywine, Conrad Weiser, Daniel Boone, Tulpehocken and Twin Valley in keeping masking optional. She reviewed the Health and Safety Plans that were posted to the district website today. She still disagrees that buses are public transportation but another parent will be speaking about that. She would like to know what consequences will be in place after the third infraction since this is new language to Plan A. Also new to Plan A is quarantining which came up at the last meeting. It sounds as though we do not have any systems in place to handle any type of quarantining like we did last year with our own SV teachers teaching virtually. Sending children home and denying them an education is not only illegal but very detrimental to their learning and development. Please stop contact tracing and quarantining. As far as Plan B, she's not sure how anyone can think this tiered approach is sane. There are just under 429,000 people in Berks County as of the 2020 census. Your plan is going to require masks for case counts of ten people in the whole county which is .0023% of our population. Why would .0023% of our population require our children to begin to be masked again, which is absurd. This plan also makes it seem as though we will be masking our K-6 students even if Berks County has zero cases because they're not eligible to be vaccinated. As a Board, you've given families several options to continue learning. Our students can return to school with or without a mask or use the virtual option through Educere. This virus is not going away and there are only so many precautions that can be taken. Every family in the district must make the choice that's best for them based on the options given. Please do not take away any of these options before we even get a chance to try them out. Our community is telling the Board with their actions that most are against masking. When she went to school to pick up her children's Chromebooks, she was delighted to see almost every person at the school was mask free. The same thing occurred at fifth grade locker orientation as she could count on one hand the amount of masks that she saw.

They've been asking since May for the district to send out a survey to ask about their stance in masking their children and she's still patiently waiting for that survey. She suspects that the reason that they have not seen a survey is because you already know the results. If changes are made to the Health and Safety Plan tonight, we will be bending to a few and sacrificing many. What are we teaching our children? If you fall to the peer pressure of other surrounding districts and cannot stand strong and be a leader, how do you expect our children to do the same? 160,000 children have already been pulled from public schools in Pennsylvania. At the last meeting we were concerned about 40 families that may decide to pull their children if we didn't have our SV teachers as a virtual option. We have several Board members that were educators, so you know that children need to see facial expressions to learn. Teachers need to see children's facial expressions to make sure they're following along. Why would we want to implement something that would put our children further behind after the last year and a half that they've suffered. Why create something that's going to continue to distract from the learning environment that brought all of us to SV. Why are all of these burdens being placed on the shoulders of our children. Do not go back on your word. It was stated several times by several members of the Board that as long as there were not mask mandates, and they were just recommendations, that masking would remain optional. Please hold to your word.

Lynn DeJesus, Centre Township, concerned parent and nurse that has been serving the community for over 27 years. For over 20 years she has worked in a local privately-owned medical office for a board certified internist and geriatric specialist. In March of 2020, when COVID-19 first hit our area, the three providers in her practice used hydroxychloroquine, zithromax and steroids to treat patients with known or suspected COVID. When testing first became available here in Berks County, they were on an approximate 14-day turn-around time for test results, but the providers she works for chose to start immediate treatment based on patient symptoms rather than wait the two weeks to receive diagnosis confirmation. When studies started coming out showing that ivermectin had positive results in the treatment of COVID, they then changed to prescribing this as first line drug of choice. In December 2020, Reading Hospital began administering the IV monoclonal antibody treatment and her providers again changed course and began prescribing this for their high-risk patients. Since December, not one patient in their practice that was prescribed this treatment progressed to serious disease. This is nine months of prescribing this IV treatment. Vitamin D, Vitamin C, Zinc and Melatonin are also recommended to their patients. She has witnessed over the last seventeen months that with early intervention, this virus is extremely treatable, and for most of their patients (even those who did not receive treatment), they have very mild to moderate symptoms which could be compared to someone with the flu. She is speaking tonight about these experiences in response to the letter that was written and signed by some local physicians in our area and has been circulating through our county and was given to our school board members last week. The first thing that concerns her about this letter is how it is being presented in some hidden message that is not being made as a public statement and thus undermining the parents of these children in schools to which they are speaking. The second concern she has as a person who has worked in the medical field for over 27 years, is why are these physicians not using their time and resources to educate the community and speak out about what they actually trained in which is prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease. They are not trained in knowing what is the best decision for her child regarding wearing a mask to keep them in school. The only thing they are promoting is continued fear and quite frankly more mistrust in the medical community. Think of the difference that could be made if the public was aware of the importance of healthy living and most importantly, early detection and treatment. Unfortunately, one of the problems we face with early detection is that many people don't want to go get tested, thus delaying treatment. Why? Because a positive test is used against us all to continue to lock us down and mask up our children. Many people are still not even educated in the treatments available. With all due respect to these physicians, she is ashamed of a lack of transparency to parents and the community they serve. She asked why after 17 months of dealing with COVID, are they continuing to promote fear instead of actually educating the community on early detection and available treatments of COVID-19 which can actually save a life. Children have a 99.98% survival rate from COVID, one that is equal to the flu. We have never masked our

children based on the transmission rates and community cases of the flu which in our community would include 25 assisted living and nursing homes in Berks County. In all her years of nursing she could not even begin to count the number of times our hospitals have been over max capacity during a bad flu season. We have never quarantined our healthy children who are exposed to the flu nor those who did not get their flu shot. These decisions are not based on science. We have more treatments available for COVID-19 than we currently do for the flu, and yes, people die from the flu, yet we continue to make knee-jerk decisions all in the name of safety. She has stated in the past her stance on masking as it relates to our school board Policy 806 under child abuse, Pennsylvania state law and basic common sense and human decency. She never imagined that in this great country that she lives that she would have to stand up in front of a school board and fight for the right for her children to walk these halls without a restraint on their face, or be able to stay in school for being completely healthy. It is time to ask ourselves, what are we doing to our children and for what purpose. Our children should not be shouldering the burden of protecting adults. The decision currently lies at the local level with our Board. She asked that the Board continue to stand up for the Health and Safety Plan that was voted on unanimously only a few short weeks ago which allows for optional masking.

Jarrad Jacobs, Bern Township, stated that for him, this is an issue about vaccination. We have 800 kids in the elementary school and none of them can get vaccinated. How many times did we close last year because of COVID? He's already received an email this year about COVID in the high school. How many days are we going to lose to kids being home?

Kasia Azzolina, Ontelaunee Township, attended the meeting as a concerned parent. She asked the Board to vote 'yes' to Option B. She is here to ask how the Board came to make their decision. As you know, for the past several weeks the CDC has been unequivocally recommending that students and teachers wear masks. This is not mandated but she believes the Board can understand the bigger picture that the United States is a large country and there may be places where the mandate is not necessary. Berks County is currently not one of those places where we can step back and ease all of our restrictions. Numbers have been going up and as of yesterday, Berks County has 56 new cases and a seven-day average of 75 cases. Six weeks ago that number was 3 new cases a day and the seven-day average was 4. We still do not know much about the long-term effects of COVID on children. We do know that children are more affected by the Delta variant than they were previously. You as the Board are not responsible for these kids just for the next few months, but for their long-term health. To those concerned about your kids' socialization, she's sure that the kids will have plenty of opportunities to see their friends outside of school as we are not on lockdown. The first and foremost goal should be to keep the kids in school. According to the CDC, if a student is sick they still have to quarantine, so what is the point of not wearing masks, having kids get sick and being sent home. If infections rise, and they will without the masks, kids will be going back to virtual learning or quarantine within a matter of weeks. To those that say that masks don't work, then it's okay that your surgeon does not need to wear one next time you have surgery. She thinks the majority understand that masks primarily protect others when the sick party wears the mask. She appreciates people saying that sometimes masks are not easy. Her daughter hates her seat belt when she is tired and the majority of the time she will get home safely without it. But she is not about to let her unbuckle it. She's had the pleasure of speaking to teachers who have stated that kids have adapted to wearing masks and they have had no issues in the classroom. It is frustrating to her that she was here speaking for others as not everyone can be at the meeting and not everyone feels comfortable speaking, and not everyone feels comfortable reading the comments on the parent groups. She herself does not feel entirely safe coming to the meeting to speak herself. If the Board votes for Option A, she would like to know what goes into the Board's consideration when making these decisions. Have the teachers been polled and is it clear and evident that masks are detrimental to the majority of the students. She is not aware of any comprehensive survey to properly gauge parents' opinions, or is it just a matter of who's the loudest. She is hoping that the Board will follow the CDC recommendations and this is the time to make the change and require masks. Other districts have been brave enough to withstand the criticism and so should you; you are not the first and you are not alone.

Cheryl Moody, Leesport, stated that two of her children graduated from Schuylkill Valley. She is currently a nurse educator and has practiced nursing for over 40 years. Throughout the last school year, she wore a mask and also a shield to care for patients day in and day out in the clinical area, which is not easy, especially wearing readers and dealing with the fogging. She asked the Board to please support masking. Over 600,000 people have died in this country and she believes that through community health we can work as a team and beat this illness. Teamwork is important to Schuylkill Valley and is one of the reasons why she and her husband moved to this district. In the past she has seen the sports teams work with the music program in order to get things accomplished. There was a swim meet that was actually moved in order to accommodate a concert. She urged the Board to work as a team and protect the most vulnerable. Currently there is a former student of hers who is struggling with the effects of COVID and it is not likely that she will survive. This individual has cared for members in this community. These children expose other individuals in the community and we need to keep our community safe. They can wear masks, as her students who are 20 years old have worn masks and gotten through this. She urged the Board to make masks mandatory.

John Newton, Ontelaunee Township, thanked the Board for all the time they have put into the district, and all of the parents and residents attending the meeting as well, because no matter what side of each issue that you're on, the fact that you're taking time out of your lives for our kids' futures says a lot about everyone. He also thanked Mr. Miller for his actions during the August 16 meeting regarding a resident that was using incorrect statistics. The fact that he was immediately prepared to point out these inaccuracies was a breath of fresh air and is greatly appreciated. Since Mr. Newton is new to the area, he waited to register his daughter for school until after the district distributed the Health and Safety Plan which was effective July 27, 2021 and last reviewed on July 26, 2021. There are two items that Mr. Newton pointed out from the original plan. First is that the headline of the entire document states the Schuylkill Valley Board of School Directors will revisit this plan if the state or federal authorities issue directives or mandates about COVID restrictions. On the last page it states that this plan was approved by a vote of 9-0. There have been zero updated state or federal directives or mandates about mask restrictions and everyone in this room has seen that both the state and federal government has no problem mandating at a moment's notice, so he really wonders why we are here again. We've all heard about the other districts in the county changing their policies. He's always taught both his kids as well as his team members that when challenged with difficult situations, you can be a leader or you can be a follower. A leader shows character and stands by their word. The Board approved the Health and Safety Plan 9-0 and talked about the time and effort they put into getting this plan right. You should show them that you stand behind your word and that you are leaders with character. He quoted Governor Wolf as saying, "if the CDC won't mandate masks in school, neither will he." He also quoted Dr. Anthony Fauci as saying, "there's really no reason to be walking around with a mask. When you're in the middle of an outbreak, wearing a mask might make people feel a little bit better, and it might even block a droplet, but it's not providing the perfect protection that people think that it is. Often there are unintended consequences as people keep fiddling with the masks and then touching their face." As the majority of the Board sits up there without masks on, he implored the Board to show that they have character or we will replace the Board with leaders who do.

Tom Egan, Bern Township, stated that the Board flip-flopped after they said they would not change the Health and Safety Plan unless there was a mandate. Another thing is the lack of transparency as last time it took two meetings to get the Health and Safety Plan passed, and now this is just sprung on us with little notice. It seems it would change a lot of peoples answers to the last questionnaire about whether they want their kids to go to school as they were agreeing to the last Health and Safety Plan at that time. He would also like to see a simple survey with majority rule to see which Health and Safety Plan would be chosen. There are surveys sent from the school all the time. If you drill into the PA COVID-19 Dashboard at health.pa.gov, there are no children under the age of 10 that have died of COVID across the 17-month period, and under the age of 20 there were 17 deaths. It seems to him that Plan B is written backwards, so you're more likely to die of COVID not as a younger person but over 20.

There are 3.26 million Pennsylvanians under 20 years old, with 17 deaths in that group that amounts to .0052%. There is another study from the CDC showing 3% of the population have a peanut allergy. That means you're 5,700 times more likely to be affected by peanuts than you are to die of COVID. If it's truly a civil rights issue, then you'll ban peanut butter cups next. Currently the 7-day rolling cases in Berks County includes zero deaths. There is no correlation currently between deaths and tests being done because there are so many tests being done. Every pharmacy is doing tests and they are not truly tracking hospitalizations now. Currently in the Reading Hospital ICU there are three patients. With the current COVID rate, if Plan B passes this evening, we'll have to turn around and put masks on because we're currently in the high rating.

Daniel Yobb, Ontelaunee Township, stated that whether you're for masking or against masking, everyone has spoken at this meeting about fear. What is fear? Fear is one of the most powerful human emotions. While highly useful in situations where threat of immediate harm exists, it is the most debilitating and dangerous of emotions. Fear is one of the greatest tools to control people. Fear has been used to encourage people to do things they wouldn't normally do. Fear changes the way we respond to a situation and can make us act in a way that is completely opposite of what we would normally do. For example, fear would lead a respected doctor to go before a local school board and speak of frightening COVID numbers that would later be found to be completely false. Fear will lead a local citizen of Schuylkill Valley to warn this Board of impending doom of increasing COVID numbers that contradict the actual numbers. Fear causes people to ignore their own common sense and believe whatever information is given to them regardless of where it comes from, who it comes from, or whether it makes any sense at all. Fear causes people to lash out and shame those that are not following the given narrative. It causes people to completely ignore actual science and facts. Numbers don't lie but some choose to ignore them for the comfort of the cause. Mr. Yobb stated he had actual CDC numbers through a Bloomberg study. Up to age 14, you are more likely to die from the flu or pneumonia. Up to any age, you are more likely to die from heart disease. Up to age 34, you're more likely to die from a land transport accident. Up to age 14, your odds are more or equal to die from drowning in a swimming pool. As of last night, Reading Hospital has 19 COVID patients, only three of which are in the ICU and zero deaths. With a population of approximately 420,000 in Berks County, 19 people equates to 0.00009% of the population. How is this a raging pandemic? In a rare moment of honesty, Dr. Fauci said, "I hope that masking children will not have any long term effects on child development." We actually do know the answer to that. His wife has spoken to the Board on several occasions. Her 18 years in the field of child development, whether in child care or as a teacher of early childhood education, and her years of schooling including a master's degree, has given her the expertise to speak on this subject. We know that masking children will be a long term detriment to the physical, mental and social development of our children. The last number he shared can be prevented if we choose not to isolate our children with lockdowns and masking. According to the CDC, at age 5 up to the age of 34, you are more likely to die from self-harm or suicide and we know from the news that this number is increasing with the fear and isolation that is being caused by this pandemic. Please stay strong and do not so easily give into the fear that some have spread for their own emotional protection. Don't give into the fear because it makes us feel good. Don't let fear allow for the isolation and anxiety that masks cause in our children. Let our children breathe free and see each other as they were born to be seen. There are some that are truly frightened whether it's for the sick family member or for their own health. He speaks with no malice in his heart, but he disagrees. He believes the majority of parents and children don't want masks. Don't push your fears on his family. If you are fearful of getting someone sick, then you have the option of virtual learning.

Marie Perry, Centre Township, parent of four SV students, stated that on July 19 she spoke against the district's mask mandate on school buses. She shared supporting information and documentation that the classification by the CDC of school buses as public transportation is in direct opposition to Pennsylvania state law. Other parents shared the same concerns and were told that the bus company is a private company and that they couldn't make their own guidelines

without the Board agreeing with them, and that they are beholden to the guidelines by the CDC. You also mentioned that the Board was in contact with Senator Argall about this. After that meeting, she contacted the senator and received a somewhat canned response about masks that failed to address masking on buses at all. On August 10, she contacted Mr. Greg Eshelman, who quickly replied that it was his understanding that school buses were being grouped under mass transit rulings. He further stated that he had a call with the district the following week and he would get back to me. On August 11, she sent him the CDC guidelines and the definition of public transportation according to Pennsylvania state law. On August 19 she became aware of the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators Education Update from earlier this month containing the following statement regarding *Clarification on School Buses, Masks and Enforcement*. They stated, "with regards to the TSA order for buses that have associated fines for noncompliance, please know that school buses are not part of the order. There is no finance or penalty associated with noncompliance with the TSA or CDC orders." She emailed a copy of that as well to Mr. Eshelman and on August 20 she forwarded the email to the Board. That same day she received her children's bus info via email from Stacy Wentzel, SV Transportation. Although it never mentions anything about masking, she replied to Ms. Wentzel asking if she knew whether the masking order would be rescinded due to the school bus exemption and attached the document. She replied that "SV will be requiring all students and drivers to wear masks while on the school bus." This was the only response she received. It sounds like a decision that came from this Board and not the CDC. We were told last month that the bus company is a private company, and that they are beholden to the CDC. It would seem to her that if the CDC released the bus companies, and that the only thing holding them back now is this Board. Many have answered the call to get involved on local levels by attending school board meetings and to share concerns for future policy. No doubt lately, we've all seen our share of videos of parents speaking at school board meetings. But it seems regardless of the research and factual data presented respectfully, we are continually told by the Board that nothing can be done because it all comes from the state, and you have no authority but to follow regulations. Yet there are schools that go against the mandates to make changes, even some the next town over, with similar demographics. When we ask why we can't do the same, we're told again that nothing can be done here because all the power comes from the state and you only have the authority to follow guidelines. Would you accept that as an answer if you were in her place? Many people would, but she can promise there are more that will not. If this Board is going for transparency and trying to build trust, she can tell you that you're failing. With all due respect, as she digs deeper and uncovers the nature of the relationship between the PDE, the teachers' unions and the school boards, it's a struggle not to become disheartened, embittered and distrustful. So let's be honest about it all so we can move on. Go on record now and say that the decisions the Board is making are solely what the state tells you to do, regardless of the taxpaying parents, regardless of the data, and regardless of what is moral and right. Just be honest, because she would much prefer to invest her time and efforts to focus more on school board elections and making the necessary decisions and preparations to find alternatives to public school, than to come here and plead with the Board for nothing. She thanked the Board for their time and efforts, whether or not she agrees with the Board's decisions individually or collectively.

4.0 BOARD

Ratification of Action Taken

- 4.1 The Board is requested to recommend ratification of all action taken by the Board at the Board meeting held virtually on August 3, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by Kevin Raudenbush to approve ratification of all action taken by the Board at the Board meeting held virtually on August 3, 2021.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

Settlement Agreement and Release

- 4.2 The Board is requested to consider and approve the Settlement Agreement and Release between the parents, individually on their own behalf and on behalf of their minor child, Student #3613, as proposed, and further, authorizes the Board President and Board Secretary to execute the Settlement Agreement and Release on behalf of the District.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by David Moll to approve the Settlement Agreement and Release between the parents, individually on their own behalf and on behalf of their minor child, Student #3613, as proposed, and further, authorizes the Board President and Board Secretary to execute the Settlement Agreement and Release on behalf of the District.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

PSBA Officer Elections

- 4.3 The Board is requested to consider and recommend the election of officers for the Pennsylvania School Boards Association for the following positions:

- President-Elect
- Vice President
- East Zone Representative
- PSBA Insurance Trust Trustees – choose up to three candidates for a 3-year term

Board Action: Moved by Robert Dempsey and seconded by Paul Bendigo to elect David Schaap, President-Elect; Allison Mathis, Vice President; Edward Brown, East Zone Representative; and Richard Frerichs, William LaCoff and Nathan Mains, PSBA Insurance Trust Trustees.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

Revised Emergency Instructional Time Template

- 4.4 The Board is requested to consider and approve the revised 2021-2022 Emergency Instructional Time Template, as presented.

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by George Mertz to approve the revised 2021-2022 Emergency Instructional Time Template, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

Revised Health and Safety Plan Dated August 23, 2021

- 4.5 The Board is requested to consider and approve the revised Schuylkill Valley School District Health and Safety Plan Version A revised, or Version B, dated August 23, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by George Mertz and seconded by Paul Bendigo to approve the revised Schuylkill Valley School District Health and Safety Plan Version A revised, or Version B, dated August 23, 2021.

Mrs. Lash noted that Brandywine Heights School District has a tiered masking plan.

Mr. Bendigo stated that he has read everything he could find on these topics and he trusts the parents to do what they feel is best for their children and also their family.

Mr. Miller stated a wild card was thrown into the mix last week with what President Biden took as far as his action with the civil rights act. Brian J. Boland, Kozloff Stoudt, explained that there was a presidential memorandum dated August 18, 2021, that discussed a directive and an order for the Secretary of Education to use an investigation of the civil rights act and the stated purpose was for governors and for states that were prohibiting masking mandates. Two examples would be Texas and Florida where the governors had said that any school district who creates a mask mandate will have some type of funding that will be revoked. So what they're doing is investigating this as some type of civil rights act violation with part of the argument being do parents of vulnerable children essentially have free, appropriate access to public education (FAPE). If you have a child who has a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or under the ADA, then we (in the most general sense) have a responsibility to accommodate them. So if a parent with a child that has a disability and vulnerability and says that their child cannot come to school unless there are certain safety precautions, specifically that people are wearing masks, then the question being are we denying that child free access to public education and violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA. Where this will fall out and how the Biden Administration or the Secretary of Education intend to enforce this, we don't know, but what he can tell you as to how it relates to Schuylkill Valley, for the Secretary of Education, the stated purpose for this memorandum and this order is to target governor's that are prohibiting mask mandates. We don't have this in Pennsylvania and Schuylkill Valley isn't enacting some affirmative decision to prohibit mask mandates as of right now and whatever it is going forward, you are just allowing masks to be optional. Mr. Boland doesn't believe Schuylkill Valley School District is going to be on the Secretary of Education's radar as it relates to that stated goal, but as we have said before and we've discussed this, it ultimately is an open question as to whether we face additional liability under the potential FAPE claims for Section 504 and the ADA. Additionally, when they talked about why they wanted to do this, he talked about the governors that were prohibiting masking mandates, but in the text of the order, it includes that the purpose is for governors and other officials. So there is an argument that even though it's not a part of the stated purpose, it's likely that other officials could include the school board. Essentially the purpose and effect problem is here where the effect is that the school board could be under the framework of the same legal argument that they're making for the stated purpose of going after governors and states and pulling funding. It's unlikely that this language is accidental. The legal drafting of this language was specific and Mr. Boland doesn't think it's accidental that other officials are included in this and it isn't just governors. While governors are the specified target of those investigations now, it is left open that there could be liability under the same framework for school districts. Mr. Miller stated that the reason he believes we need a full hearing of everything involved in this case is that our job is to protect the school district and the students and staff who are in this district. So when we're looking at an outside influence, political or otherwise, who is now saying we're giving ammunition to somebody to go after you, this is something you certainly have to consider. Mr. Bendigo added that some people mentioned how the Board had just approved the Health and Safety Plan a month ago, however depending on how this turns out, the Board may be back next week again with the way things have been changing and going back and forth. The Board is ensuring that whatever the Board does is going to come back before this Board again in a public meeting.

Roll Call Vote

Mertz – A; Miller – A; Moll – B; Raudenbush – B; Rossi – B; Bendigo – A; Dempsey – B; Kleffel – A; Lash – B

Motion carried 5-4 to approve Version B of the Health and Safety Plan dated August 23, 2021.

5.0 SUPERINTENDENT

Monthly Reports

5.1 *The following monthly reports have been provided to the Board:

- 5.1.1 Enrollment Year-To-Date
- 5.1.2 Principals' Report
- 5.1.3 Dropout Report

*These reports will be provided again beginning with the September 27 Board meeting agenda.

Superintendent's Update

5.2 Dr. Heilman stated that there are many things happening in an effort to prepare for back to school. It is our hope that the 2021-22 school year will be safe and positive, full of many lessons and memories. To continue to ensure safety, our team has been planning for and implementing many safety protocols and we've created a parent communication that will detail these efforts. Look for that to be posted on our website on August 24. Our school-based team is working to plan for live virtual options for parents. While this will not be exactly like it was last year, it will provide instruction for our students. Principals and other building representatives will be working with the families to prepare individual students for their plans for this instruction. Today she met with the district's incoming new teachers. It was her pleasure to detail our induction plan with them. Ms. Brightbill and Mr. Billman provided support to our new teachers and Mr. Witman gave them a glimpse into the methods and practices for technology instruction. The SVEA offered a warm welcome to our newest Panthers. On August 24 they will introduce inductees to our Administrative Team and allow them time to work with their mentors. She is looking forward to officially welcoming back our faculty and staff on August 25 and our students on August 30. Plans and preparations are in full swing. Our faculty and administration continues to champion the ongoing challenges and changes that have been swiftly occurring over the past several weeks. She is grateful to work with some amazing, out-of-the-box thinkers and dedicated educators. Together we are all planning for a safe return for our students and a positive 2021-22.

6.0 POLICY, PERSONNEL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Summary of Committee Deliberations – George H. Mertz III

The Policy, Personnel and Public Relations Committee met at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 16, 2021, in the Schuylkill Valley High School LeRoy K. Seip Memorial Meeting Room. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, September 20, 2021.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

6.1 Accepts, with regret and best wishes for the future, the following resignations:

- 6.1.1 Ms. Ashleigh Augustine, Part-Time Special Education Paraprofessional at the Elementary school, effective June 8, 2021, due to job abandonment.
- 6.1.2 Mrs. Victoria Bowman, Part-Time Special Education Paraprofessional at the Elementary school, effective June 8, 2021.
- 6.1.3 Mrs. Lisa Dietrich, Payroll & Taxes Secretary, effective August 6, 2021.
- 6.1.4 Ms. Michelle Fulmer, Part-Time Lunchroom Aide at the Elementary school, effective June 4, 2021, due to job abandonment.

6.1.5 Ms. Barbara Good, Part-Time Lunchroom Aide at the Elementary school, effective June 4, 2021.

6.1.6 Ms. Susan Hendricks, Part-Time Food Services Worker, effective June 4, 2021.

6.1.7 Mrs. Rebecca Veety, Part-Time Reading Paraprofessional at the Elementary school, effective June 8, 2021.

6.1.8 Mrs. Changming Wang, Business Manager, effective August 27, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by George Mertz to approve the resignations in Items 6.1.1 through and including 6.1.8, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.1.9 Miss Lauren Yoder, Special Education Teacher at the Middle School, effective date to be determined.

Board Action: Moved by George Mertz and seconded by Paul Bendigo to approve the resignation in Item 6.1.9, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.1.10 Miss Isabelle Heffernan, Part-Time Reading Paraprofessional at the elementary school, effective June 8, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by George Mertz to approve the resignation in Item 6.1.10, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.2 Approves the employment of the following (all elections are contingent upon receipt and district approval of all necessary pre-employment forms, certification, state-mandated physical examinations, clearances, etc.):

6.2.1 Appointment of Dr. Janet C. Heilman as School Safety and Security Coordinator as per Act 44 of 2018, effective September 1, 2021. The School Safety and Security Coordinator is tasked with reviewing the school entity's policies and procedures, coordinating training, and resources for students and staff, coordinating school safety and security assessments, making reports to the Board of School Directors on current safety and security practices of the school, and serving as the liaison to the School Safety and Security Committee, PDE, law enforcement and other organizations on matters of school safety and security. Details on these duties can be found in Section 1309-B of Act 44.

Board Action: Moved by George Mertz and seconded by Paul Bendigo to approve the appointment of Dr. Janet C. Heilman as School Safety and Security Coordinator as per Act 44 of 2018, effective September 1, 2021, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.2.2** Ms. Courtney Smith, Long-Term Substitute Kindergarten Teacher at the Elementary School, Bachelor's, Step 1, \$50,803 (prorated for actual days worked), to fill the new position created due to increased need, effective for the 2021-22 school year.

Board Action: Item 6.2.2 was tabled by Mr. Dane Miller.

- 6.2.3** Mrs. Stephanie Good, Long-Term Substitute Special Education Teacher at the Middle School, Bachelor's, Step 1, \$50,803 (prorated for actual days worked), to fill the vacancy created by the leave of absence of Mrs. Jessica Dowd, effective for the 2021-22 school year.
- 6.2.4** Ms. Kirsten Noll, Long-Term Substitute 3rd Grade Teacher at the Elementary School, Bachelor's, Step 1, \$50,803 (prorated for actual days worked), to fill the vacancy created by the leave of absence of Mrs. Julia Cherry, effective with the start of 2021-22 school year through approximately November 24, 2021.
- 6.2.5** Mrs. Holly Giffin, Full-Time Guidance Secretary at the High School, at an hourly rate of \$15.66, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mrs. Michelle Reed, effective August 9, 2021.
- 6.2.6** Ms. Brittany Hamm, Full-Time Custodian, at an hourly rate of \$14.00, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. David Barnett, effective August 16, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by Kevin Raudenbush and seconded by David Moll to approve the employment in Items 6.2.3 through and including 6.2.6, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.2.7** Mrs. Nicole Kelly, Part-Time Lunchroom Aide at the Elementary School, 4 hours per day at an hourly rate of \$11.00, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ms. Michelle Fulmer, effective August 25, 2021.
- 6.2.8** Ms. Rachel Chaveas, Part-Time Special Education Paraprofessional at the Elementary School, 6 hours per day at an hourly rate of \$13.41, to fill the vacancy created by the transfer of Ms. Kathleen Kunkle to a Part-Time Reading Paraprofessional position, effective August 25, 2021.
- 6.2.9** Mr. Robert Krishock, Part-Time Special Education Paraprofessional at the Elementary School, 6 hours per day at an hourly rate of \$12.91, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mrs. Victoria Bowman, effective August 25, 2021.
- 6.2.10** Mrs. Lisa Lawson, Part-Time Food Services Worker 6 hours per day at the Elementary School, to Part-Time Food Services Worker, 4 hours per day at the Middle School, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ms. Cherie Heffner, effective August 25, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by Kevin Raudenbush and seconded by George Mertz to approve the employment in Items 6.2.7 through and including 6.2.10, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.2.11 Mentors for the 2021-22 school year at a stipend of \$1,175.00 for full year mentors and \$587.50 for half year mentors.

6.2.12 Substitutes for the 2021-22 school year.

6.2.13 Volunteers for the 2021-22 school year.

Board Action: Moved by George Mertz and seconded by David Moll to approve the employment in Items 6.2.11 through and including 6.2.13, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.2.14 Mrs. Juliana Fernandes Andrade, Full-Time ELL Paraprofessional at all buildings, 6.5 hours per day at an hourly rate of \$12.64, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Ms. Erica Angstadt, effective August 25, 2021.

6.2.15 Ms. Claudia Schadler-Duong, Full-Time 12-Month Payroll & Taxes Secretary at an hourly rate of \$21.50, to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mrs. Lisa Dietrich, effective August 23, 2021.

6.2.16 Fall coaches for the 2021-22 school year.

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by Kevin Raudenbush to approve the employment in Items 6.2.14 through and including 6.2.16, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.2.17 Bus drivers utilized by Eshelman Transportation and the bus routes established for the 2021-22 school year.

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by George Mertz to approve the employment in Item 6.2.17, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Rossi

Abstain: Raudenbush

Motion carried.

6.3 Approves the following requests for unpaid days:

6.3.1 Mrs. Lisa Krockner, School Psychologist at the Elementary School, for 3 consecutive unpaid days, January 12 - January 14, 2022.

6.3.2 Ms. Deborah Mair, Full-Time Special Education Paraprofessional at the Middle School, for 5 consecutive unpaid days, September 20 - September 24, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by George Mertz and seconded by David Moll to approve the requests for unpaid days in Items 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.4 Memorandums of Understanding

6.4.1 Approves the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of School Directors of the Schuylkill Valley School District and the Schuylkill Valley Education Association relating to childbearing/childrearing leave.

6.4.2 Approves the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of School Directors of the Schuylkill Valley School District and the Schuylkill Valley Education Association relating to insurance benefits for long-term substitute teachers.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by Kevin Raudenbush to approve the Memorandums of Understanding in Items 6.4.1 and 6.4.2, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

6.5 Approves the following childrearing leave of absence for the 2021-2022 school year:

Mrs. Jessica Dowd, Special Education Teacher at the Middle School. This is a one-month extension of the 12-month limitation as noted in the Collective Bargaining Agreement dated March 26, 2019, and covering the school years 2019-20 through 2022-23, by and between the Board of School Directors and the Schuylkill Valley Education Association.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by George Mertz to approve the childrearing leave of absence in Item 6.5 for Mrs. Jessica Dowd for the 2021-2022 school year, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

7.0 **CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY**

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Kevin Raudenbush

The Curriculum and Technology Committee met at 7:08 p.m. on Monday, August 16, 2021, in the Schuylkill Valley High School LeRoy K. Seip Memorial Meeting Room. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, September 20, 2021.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

7.1 Approves the quote from Amplify for a one-year subscription to mCLASS DIBELS, for the online program and materials, grades K-4, at a cost of \$18,820.38.

7.2 Approves the quote from Voyager Sopris Learning for the manuals for LETRS Training at the elementary school, at a cost of \$2,008.55.

7.3 Approves the quote from Lexia Learning Systems LLC for the one-year renewal of the Lexia Core5 Reading Student Subscription, Option 3 only - online program for interventions, at a cost of \$1,800.00.

- 7.4 Approves the proposal from Sapphire Software, not to exceed \$900.00, for the professional services to provide Student Services - Teacher and Case Manager training.
- 7.5 Approves ratification of the agreement with the Wilson School District, to provide Student #1586 educational services for the 2021-22 school year, at the rate of \$68,950.00.

Board Action: Moved by Kevin Raudenbush and seconded by Robert Dempsey to approve the actions in Items 7.1 and 7.5, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 7.6 Approves ratification of the agreement with Berks County Intermediate Unit to provide online educational services through Berks Online Learning (BOL), from August 3, 2021 through June 30, 2022, at the rates provided.
- 7.7 Approves the contract with River Rock Academy to provide alternative educational services for the 2021-2022 school year, at the rates provided.

Board Action: Moved by Linda Lash and seconded by George Mertz to approve the actions in Items 7.6 and 7.7, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

8.0 BUDGET AND FINANCE

Summary of Committee Deliberations – David E. Moll

The Budget and Finance Committee met at 7:47 p.m. on Monday, August 16, 2021, in the Schuylkill Valley High School LeRoy K. Seip Memorial Meeting Room. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, September 20, 2021.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

- 8.1 Approves/ratifies the payment of bills in the following amounts from July 16, 2021, to August 24, 2021, as presented.

GENERAL FUND	\$1,079,710.61
CAFETERIA FUND	\$10,649.86
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FUND	\$1,254.99
GRAND TOTAL	\$1,091,615.46

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by George Mertz to approve/ratify the payment of bills in Item 8.1 from July 16, 2021, to August 24, 2021, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 8.2 Approves the activities of the Schuylkill Valley Parent Teacher Organization at the elementary school and middle school, as listed for insurance purposes.

- 8.3 Approves accepting the donation from the Schuylkill Valley Board of School Directors, in the form of a \$250.00 Amazon gift card, to be used for the purchase of supplies for the district's employee recognition program.
- 8.4 Approves accepting a donation from Steve Moyer Subaru, in the amount of \$5,000.00, to be used for classroom needs in conjunction with Adopt-A-Classroom.

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by George Mertz to approve the activities of the Schuylkill Valley Parent Teacher Organization at the elementary school and middle school, as listed for insurance purposes; and to approve accepting the donation from the Schuylkill Valley Board of School Directors, in the form of a \$250.00 Amazon gift card, to be used for the purchase of supplies for the district's employee recognition program; and to approve accepting a donation from Steve Moyer Subaru, in the amount of \$5,000.00, to be used for classroom needs in conjunction with Adopt-A-Classroom.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 8.5 Approves ratification of the agreement with the Berks County Intermediate Unit to administer the district's Title I, Title II and Title IV grants for services for non-public students from August 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022.

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by Kevin Raudenbush to approve ratification of the agreement with the Berks County Intermediate Unit to administer the district's Title I, Title II and Title IV grants for services for non-public students from August 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 8.6 Approves changing signatures from the Business Manager to the Acting Superintendent for checks in the following funds: general, capital projects, capital improvement projects, food service, payroll, technology reserve, scholarship, and trust funds. (Note: Currently the Board President and Secretary are already authorized and three signatures will still remain on all checks.)

Board Action: Moved by David Moll and seconded by George Mertz to approve changing signatures from the Business Manager to the Acting Superintendent for checks for the funds listed in Item 8.6, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

9.0 BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Alfonso F. Rossi

The Buildings and Grounds Committee met at 7:58 p.m. on Monday, August 16, 2021, in the Schuylkill Valley High School LeRoy K. Seip Memorial Meeting Room. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, September 20, 2021.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

- 9.1 Approves the elementary school roof repair by Bertolet Construction, to make the necessary repairs due to storm damage, at a cost of \$52,760. Note: There is a \$25,000 insurance deductible with the remainder being covered by our insurance carrier.

Board Action: Moved by Paul Bendigo and seconded by George Mertz to approve the elementary school roof repair by Bertolet Construction, to make the necessary repairs due to storm damage, at a cost of \$52,760. Note: There is a \$25,000 insurance deductible with the remainder being covered by our insurance carrier.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 9.2 Approves Spotts, Stevens and McCoy to perform engineering services for the HVAC upgrades at the elementary school and high school, at a cost of \$195,900.00, to be paid from the Capital Improvement Projects Fund.

Board Action: Moved by George Mertz and seconded by Alfonso Rossi to approve Spotts, Stevens and McCoy to perform engineering services for the HVAC upgrades at the elementary school and high school, at a cost of \$195,900.00, to be paid from the Capital Improvement Projects Fund.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 9.3 Approves the change order for the high school roof restoration authorizing Weatherproofing Technologies, Inc. to issue a credit for removal of the new curb installation and flashing from the scope of work, and to add additional flashing work on the wall at the base of roof Q due to unforeseen conditions, resulting in a total deduction of \$20,363.15, per the change order request dated August 12, 2021.

Board Action: Moved by Alfonso Rossi and seconded by George Mertz to approve the change order from Weatherproofing Technologies, Inc. for the high school roof restoration in Item 9.3, as presented.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

10.0 EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Summary of Committee Deliberations – Nicoleen M. Kleffel

The Extracurricular Activities Committee met at 8:06 p.m. on Monday, August 16, 2021, in the Schuylkill Valley High School LeRoy K. Seip Memorial Meeting Room. The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, September 20, 2021.

Committee Recommendations for Board Consideration

Be It Resolved, That the Board of School Directors:

- 10.1 Approves a trial basis for a new high school club, Mental Health Matters Project, whose goal is to spread positivity to the school community and awareness to students struggling with mental health.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by George Mertz to approve a trial basis for a new high school club, Mental Health Matters Project, whose goal is to spread positivity to the school community and awareness to students struggling with mental health.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 10.2 Approves the cooperative sponsorship sport agreement between the Schuylkill Valley School District and The King's Academy, effective with the fall season of the current 2021-2022 school year. The agreement will remain effective through the 2021-2022 school year after which it will be subject to review by both school districts and the PIAA. The agreement shall not extend beyond June 30, 2022, unless extended in writing signed by both parties.

Board Action: Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by David Moll to approve the cooperative sponsorship sport agreement between the Schuylkill Valley School District and The King's Academy, effective with the fall season of the current 2021-2022 school year. The agreement will remain effective through the 2021-2022 school year after which it will be subject to review by both school districts and the PIAA. The agreement shall not extend beyond June 30, 2022, unless extended in writing signed by both parties.

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

- 11.0 OTHER BUSINESS/GOOD OF THE ORDER

- 12.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Miller called for an executive session at 8:58 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. Mr. Miller reconvened the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

- 13.0 ADJOURNMENT

Moved by George Mertz and seconded by David Moll, there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned

Yeas: Bendigo, Dempsey, Kleffel, Lash, Mertz, Miller, Moll, Raudenbush, Rossi

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.


Linda R. Lash, Secretary
Board of School Directors