

The Board Report

Monday, October 2, 2023



Disclaimer: The Board Report is a synopsis of the Hampton Township School Board meetings and is not intended as a replacement for any official Board minutes.

~ A Tradition of Excellence ~

The Hampton Township Board of School Directors

Mrs. Jill Hamlin	Board President
Mr. Matt Jarrell	Board Vice President/Student Affairs Chair
Ms. Denise Balason	Board Secretary/Facilities Chair
Mrs. Joy Midgley	Personnel Chair
Mr. Robert Shages	Treasurer/Policy & Legislative Affairs Chair
Mr. Greg Stein	Technology Chair
Mr. Larry Vasko	Finance Chair
Mrs. Trisha Webb	Educational Programs Chair
Mr. Bryant Wesley II, Esq.*	Transportation Chair

This Hampton Township School Board Meeting was held in the Hampton Middle School Library. The meeting was held in person and audio/video recorded so that community members could view it after the meeting concluded.

Members of Administration in Attendance

Dr. Michael Loughead	Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Rebecca Cunningham	Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Jackie Removcik	Assistant to the Superintendent
Mr. Jeff Kline	Director of Administrative Services
Mr. Josh Kellogg	Assistant Director of Technology

** absent*

*** attended remotely*

October 2, 2023

Work Session

A video recording of the meeting can be viewed [here](#). The time within the video that each section begins is indicated below.

Call to Order & Student Awards

(3:50)

Mrs. Hamlin called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the Work Session. Mr. Jarrell presented the Student Awards. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Jarrell congratulated seniors Tiffany Habib and LaNiya Ward on earning the National African American Recognition Award from the College Board National Recognition Program. Tiffany and LaNiya are two of 72,000 students from across the country who earned recognition for their strong performance on the College Board assessments and hard work in class.

Dr. Loughead noted how proud he is of Tiffany and LaNiya for this exceptional and unprecedented achievement at Hampton. He also expressed gratitude to their families for their support and guidance of these students.

Student Council Representatives Report

Hayden List (Student Body President) and Jake Killian (Junior Class President) presented highlights from the HHS Student Council. Jake reported that this year's Homecoming theme was "Viva Las Vegas," and that 631 tickets were sold for the Homecoming Dance. He noted that many students have reported that this year's dance was more enjoyable than last year's.

Hayden reported that Student Council is working on creating a calendar that would feature upcoming events for students' reference. The calendar will be located in the HHS cafeteria and will be updated monthly. Jake added that Student Council is planning to convert the former Busy Bean location near the auxiliary gym into a student store, which would feature Hampton apparel for sale. The store would be student-run, with hopes of eventually developing a business-related course.

Student Council is also working on a large fundraiser called the KDKA-TV Turkey Fund, which benefits families in need during the Thanksgiving season. Hayden noted that PNC will match donations, and Student Council plans to involve smaller school-run organizations to increase participation and potentially earn a section on KDKA to advertise for the annual Talbot Thon. This year, Student Council is planning to hold several smaller events prior to Talbot Thon, which will contribute towards the final donation to UPMC Children's Hospital.

In response to Board member questions about the potential student store, Jake said their goal would be for students to manage the store and gain real-world experience. Hayden added that they would want the merchandise to be affordable for all students. Dr. Loughead noted that this sounds like an exciting endeavor that would boost Talbot pride.

Regarding Talbot Thon, the students reported that the event will be held in late March, with the actual date to be announced soon. They hope to hold the smaller fundraising events during breaks between fall and winter sports, and winter and spring sports.

Mr. Vasko asked if the calendar will also be featured on the District's website. Hayden noted that the calendar will be posted in the cafeteria, and they are currently reaching out to each sport and club to gather information. Mr. Vasko suggested that the District create a community calendar on the

website to promote events and increase community involvement. Dr. Loughead noted that efforts are being made to populate the website with more community information and possibly distribute a mass mailing to assist in this effort. Mrs. Hamlin also suggested that Student Council place one of their calendars in the Hampton Community Center.

Public Comment

(16:45)

Mrs. Hamlin opened the meeting to public comment, but there were none at this time.

Student Affairs

(16:56)

Mr. Jarrell presented the following action items that will be considered for Board approval at the October 9th Voting Meeting:

- Hampton High School FBLA Field Trip to Chicago, IL, April 17, 2024 to April 21, 2024, at no cost to the District.

Dr. Cunningham said the students will miss approximately two days of school, but they will have a wonderful experience in Chicago participating in job shadowing opportunities. Students will also get to tour the city and the University of Notre Dame.

- Hampton High School Baseball Spring Training Trip to Myrtle Beach, SC, March 25, 2024 to March 30, 2024, at no cost to the District.

Dr. Cunningham said the students will miss two days of school around spring break, but the students will have an opportunity to engage in scrimmages, skills and drills, and practices, while fostering team-building.

- Middle School Dance Club.

Dr. Cunningham relayed that the Hampton High School Dance Team coach is seeking to create a middle school program for students interested in learning how to dance. There are at least 15 students who are interested, and the coach is hopeful that the students will pursue the high school dance team as well.

- The affiliated organization Hampton Township Odyssey of the Mind to be recognized as a Civic and Service Association.

Dr. Cunningham noted that the Hampton Township Odyssey of the Mind can use this recognition when they are applying for a small games of chance license. She said this approval has been granted routinely for numerous affiliated organizations to help with their fundraising.

- Middle School Club name change, from “Digital Games with Friends” to “Digital Design.”

Dr. Cunningham emphasized that the intention behind the name change is to reflect the club’s primary focus on developing skills in the Maker Studios rather than playing games with friends. She noted that the club’s purpose remains unchanged, but the new name better aligns with its goals.

Mr. Shages inquired if the financial reports from the affiliated organizations have been received. Dr. Cunningham said follow-up letters have been sent to encourage these organizations to submit their reports, and several have already complied.

Facilities

(21:58)

Mrs. Balason presented the following action item that will be considered for Board approval at the October 9th Voting Meeting:

- Pennsylvania Roofing Systems, Inc. change order for the Hampton Middle School asphalt shingle roof replacement project for the deduction amount of \$18,397.36 for materials cost savings related to requiring less plywood replacement for roof decking.

Mr. Vasko inquired about the mounds of dirt outside the HMS library where the roof replacement construction took place. Mr. Kline noted that the contractor has not yet completed its punch list, while Dr. Loughead added that there used to be at least one tree in that area that had been removed. Mr. Vasko suggested that grass be planted in its place.

Educational Programs

(24:13)

Mrs. Webb presented the following action items that will be considered for Board approval at the September 11th Voting Meeting:

- Hampton Township School District Comprehensive Plan.

Mrs. Webb noted that the Board discussed the Comprehensive Plan in September. Regarding the plan, Mr. Vasko asked why job shadowing is required for students but not personal finance. In response, Dr. Removcik explained that the job shadowing requirement for students was introduced a few years ago in response to a mandate from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE required students to gain industry-based experiences or job shadowing experiences, and Hampton implemented job shadowing as a way of addressing this requirement. Regarding personal finance, Dr. Removcik mentioned that the District created a financial literacy assessment in February. The assessment was administered to students, and they are currently reviewing the data. Further discussions on personal finance will be occurring in the near future.

Finance

(26:06)

There were no action items this evening. However, Mr. Kline presented the local tax revenue update as of September 30, 2023.

He noted the following:

- The real estate tax collections are up 3.49% from the 2022-23 year. The millage rate increased by 4.1% .
- Earned income tax collections are up 8.13% from 2022-23.
- Real estate transfer taxes are down 9.8%. This continuing trend is due to higher borrowing rates. The decrease was anticipated as the budget for transfer tax collections was reduced by \$125,000 or 20.8%.
- Delinquent taxes are in line with the slightly reduced budgetary projections.

Mr. Vasko noted that there seems to be a great slowdown in real estate transfers. However, Mr. Kline said that he is encouraged since they decreased the budgeted amount by nearly 20% and that they are on track to be ahead of budget. He and Mr. Vasko both commented on the increase in mortgage rates and the housing market.

2022-23 Allegheny County School District Millage Rates

Mr. Kline reviewed the 2023-24 Allegheny County school district real estate tax millage rates. He noted that Hampton has the 14th lowest millage rate out of 42 school districts and the tax rate of 21.85 mills is favorable to the average by 2.46 mills or 10.12%.

2024-25 Act 1 Adjusted Index & History

Mr. Kline reported that PDE announced the 2024-25 Act 1 Base Index is 5.3%. The District's adjusted index is also 5.3%. He noted that the index is the highest it has been since 2007. This limits any real estate tax increase to 5.3% for the 2024-25 budget unless the District seeks additional funds via referendum. The maximum millage increase at 5.3% is 1.16 mills, which would increase the District's millage rate from 21.85 mills to 23.01 mills.

2024-25 Budget Calendar

Mr. Kline referenced the 2024-25 budget calendar and highlighted the key dates below. He also noted that this calendar is based on a 2024 PA Primary election date of April 23, 2024. If the election is moved to an earlier date, the deadline for the "Not to Exceed" decision could be as early as November 30, 2023.

- December 4, 2023 or Special Meeting prior to January 4, 2024 – The Board will need to consider the "not to exceed" resolution or approve the proposed preliminary budget.
- April 22, 2024 – Special Meeting to review the preliminary budget.
- May 6, 2024 – The Proposed Final Budget will be considered for approval at the May voting meeting.
- June 10, 2024 – The Final Budget will be considered for approval at the June Voting Meeting.

Personnel

(37:08)

Mrs. Midgley presented the following action items to be considered for Board approval at the October 9th meeting:

Resignation

- Ms. Elizabeth Vining effective September 19, 2023. [Ms. Vining was a Paraeducator (Class III) at Hampton High School.

Paraprofessionals, Paraeducators, and Administrative Assistants

- Ms. Dawn Grindland as a Paraeducator (Class III) at Hampton High School effective September 26, 2023. Hourly rate is \$18.54 for the 60-day probationary period and \$18.79 per hour thereafter. Ms. Grindland is replacing Ms. Elizabeth Vining.

Custodial/Maintenance

- Change in status for Mr. Patrick Myers moving from a 10 month/8 hour custodian at Hampton High School to a 12 month/8 hour Night Lead custodian at Hampton High School, effective September 18, 2023. Hourly rate is \$25.26. Mr. Myers is replacing Mr. Zachary Ridenour.
- Change in status for Mr. Brezart (Ben) Ushtelenca moving from a 10 month/6 hour custodian to a 10 month/5 hour custodian at Hampton High School, effective September 18, 2023. There is no change in hourly rate. Mr. Ushtelenca is replacing Ms. Laurie Rodgers.
- Mr. Noah Stankay as a day-to-day custodial substitute effective September 20, 2023. Hourly rate is \$14.00 per hour for the first 20 days and \$14.50 per hour thereafter.

Other

- Club Sponsors for the Elementary Schools, the Middle School, and the High School for the 2023-2024 School Year.

Technology

(37:39)

There were no action items this evening.

Dr. Loughead commended the HTSD Technology Department for their dedicated and effective work in replacing teacher display panels. He also expressed gratitude to the Board for supporting this replacement project, with the expectation that all the teacher display panels will be replaced by the end of the month. Dr. Loughead said that teachers and students have been very grateful and have benefited from the upgraded displays, noting that the ones that were replaced were end of life.

Policy and Legislative Affairs

(38:54)

Mr. Shages presented the following items to be considered for Board approval at the October 9th meeting:

- Second Reading of Policy #216.1: Supplemental Discipline Records.
- First Reading of Policy #830: Security of Computerized Personal Information/Breach Notification.

Dr. Cunningham explained that Policy #830 is a new PSBA-templated policy that governs the importance of keeping the District's computerized data safe. It also outlines how the District will respond to unauthorized access and data breaches that compromise the security and confidentiality of personal information. The policy introduces new definitions and provides a list of what constitutes personal information, while also recommending responsibilities in the event of a breach. Dr. Cunningham said the Technology Department and GRB Law have reviewed the policy draft and found it acceptable.

- First Reading of Policy #830.1: Data Governance - Storage/Security.

Dr. Cunningham explained that this policy draft has also been reviewed by the Technology Department and GRB Law. This policy addresses the District's responsibility to collect, create, store, and manage data and information while ensuring legality and confidentiality. The draft of this new policy includes definitions for confidential data and information, and outlines what data governance entails. It also specifies what constitutes personal information and mentions the District's Records

Management Plan and Retention Schedule, which align with legal requirements. Additionally, the policy emphasizes that service providers must adhere to these guidelines and procedures, ensuring that protections of confidential or critical data is well-defined in their policies as well.

On the subject of privacy, Mr. Vasko mentioned how A.W. Beattie does not require public commenters at board meetings to publicly state their home address; they are only required to write their address when signing in. He suggested that HTSD adopt a similar policy in which their residency in Hampton Township could be verified without their having to publicly state an address. Dr. Loughead noted that this is an idea worth exploring and the discretion understandable. However, he emphasized that they would want to ensure all public commenters are Hampton Township residents.

Mr. Vasko also mentioned that there is discussion in Harrisburg regarding PlanCon, a process initiated when a school district undertakes a major school construction project and seeks reimbursement from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Dr. Loughead confirmed that there are discussions about new PlanCon funding.

Mr. Shages mentioned that administrators from the eastern part of the state are highlighting the critical condition of their school buildings, with many being old or containing asbestos. He said his guess is that PlanCon-type projects or funding will likely prioritize school districts that are in critical need. However, Dr. Loughead suggested that the funding could be allocated for both the Hampton High School project and projects like the ones Mr. Shages mentioned. While there is no significant progress at the moment, Dr. Loughead said he will continue to advocate for funding with the District's local legislators, especially in light of the ongoing high school project.

Additionally, Mr. Shages mentioned that the AIU's Head Start and Early Head Start Programs are facing challenges with hiring teachers and assistants, amid ongoing resignations. He said the \$21 million program supported nearly 1,200 children last year, and great strides have been made in their social and emotional skills, cognitive skills, literacy, and mathematics. He encouraged anyone who knows someone interested in working with young children to consider this opportunity. Mr. Vasko suggested A.W. Beattie's early childhood development program as a possible source of student teachers or assistants.

Transportation

(52:29)

There were no action items; however, Mr. Kline reported that the District has secured a "shuttle bus" service to provide interim/temporary busing to Shadyside High School, Middle School, and the elementary school. The shuttle picks up and drops off students at Hampton High School. Unfortunately, the District has not been able to secure a better arrangement due to the shortage of bus drivers with ABC Transit and its other providers. HTSD is looking at adding an additional one or two shuttle stops to the route to reduce the burden of driving for the families, possibly at Poff or Central Elementary School. The shuttle bus cannot pick up students on the street due to the lack of safety lights and other measures. The only suitable locations for pickup and drop-off are parking lots.

Adjournment

(56:38)

Mrs. Hamlin moved to adjourn the meeting, and the Board held a brief Executive Session to discuss legal and personnel matters.