

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

OCTOBER 9, 2023

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular business meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fox Chapel Area School District was called to order by president, Marybeth Dadd, at 7 p.m. on October 9, 2023, in the LGI Room at Fox Chapel Area High School. Before tonight's public meeting, the Board met in executive session to review information related to a contractual matter and a personnel matter which if discussed in public could violate a lawful privilege or disclosure of confidential information.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ROLL-CALL**

The Board members present at roll call were Mrs. Cooper, Ms. Dadd, Mr. Frank, Mr. Goode, Mr. Hamilton, Mrs. Lynch, and Ms. Zych. Absent were Ms. Andrews and Ms. Findley. Also present were Dr. Reljac, Dr. McCommons, Mr. Giuffre, and Mrs. Anuszek. Other members of the public were present.

**GUESTS**

•Six Fox Chapel Area High School students have been designated as National Merit Semifinalists and 22 have been named Commended Students in the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program. The Semifinalists from Fox Chapel Area High School are seniors **Lucas Gravina, Chloe Kim, Shriya Krishnamurthy, Adhitya Thirumala, Abraham White, and Dylan Work**. The Commended Students from Fox Chapel Area High School are seniors **Jacob Anthikad, Annalese Bartolacci, Dylan Berman, Joshua Correnti, Amelia Costello, Nicholas Cusano, Eliza Davis, Logan Dressman, David Feder, Adam Ferris, Emmett Gillespie, Darren Jayaratnam, Clara Kelley, Henry Koloc, Rachel Milcheck, Eduardo Phelan-Vidal, Lakshanya Rajaganapathi, Emily Torbert, Gloria Wen, Isabella White, and Bridget Yun**, and 2023 graduate **Liviya Rubin**.

All of these students were selected based on their 2022 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) scores. Each year, more than 1.3 million juniors complete the PSAT/NMSQT and are automatically entered in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Approximately 16,000 advance to become Semifinalists and about 34,000 are Commended. The Semifinalists represent less than 1% of the nation's high school seniors and the Commended Students scored in the top 5%. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT or ACT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test. Semifinalists must also participate in school and community activities, demonstrate leadership abilities, and receive other awards and honors. The Commended Students are recognized for their exceptional academic promise. The Semifinalists now have the opportunity to advance to the Finalist level and compete for some 7,140 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$28 million to be offered in the spring of 2024.

•Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Safiya Stewart** has been recognized with the National African American Recognition Award. The honor is given as part of the College Board's National Recognition Programs that celebrate students' hard work in high school and showcase their strong academic performance. The criteria for eligible students include a GPA of 3.5 or higher; PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT 10 assessment scores that are within the top 10% of assessment takers in each state for each award program, or earned a score of 3 or higher on two or more AP Exams in 9th and 10th grade; and attend a school in a rural area or small town, or identify as African American/Black, Hispanic American/Latino, or Indigenous/Native.

## **FOX LEADERSHIP COUNCIL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Clara Kelley, from the Diversity Council, gave a report on the activities of the Diversity Council. Gloria Wen and Owen Levy, from the National Honor Society, gave a report on the upcoming Boo Bash.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **• High School Recertified as National Banner Unified Champion School**

Fox Chapel Area High School has been recertified as a National Banner Unified Champion School by the international headquarters of Special Olympics. Fox Chapel Area first received this designation in 2019.

The honor is bestowed upon a small number of schools that demonstrate a commitment to inclusion by meeting 10 standards of excellence, developed by a national panel of leaders from Special Olympics and the education community, that center around inclusion, acceptance, and respect.

"We are so proud of the values that are embraced every day by the Fox Chapel Area school community: inclusion, respect, understanding, and empowerment," says Matthew Aaron, president and CEO of Special Olympics Pennsylvania. "Through the uplifting culture promoted by the students and staff at Fox Chapel Area, everyone is valued. Everyone contributes meaningfully through their unique talents. And everyone is included."

"We appreciate our partnership with the Special Olympics and are humbled by the recognition," says Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac, Fox Chapel Area School District superintendent. "We appreciate the efforts of our students, staff, administrators, and school community to provide wonderful, inclusive opportunities for all of our students."

Fox Chapel Area is one of 146 high schools in the nation to be named a National Banner Unified Champion School for 2023-2024 and was one of only two schools in Pennsylvania to be recertified this year.

Of note, Fox Chapel Area is one of only 24 schools in Pennsylvania to ever receive the National Unified Champion Banner School designation and was the first school in Allegheny County to do so. Fox Chapel Area also was the first school in Allegheny County to have a Unified Track team, which was established during the 2018-2019 school year. The high school also has had a Unified Bocce team since the 2017-2018 school year. These teams include students with and without disabilities, and these athletes work side by side in both training and competition.

Fox Chapel Area High School will receive its Unified Champion School national banner later this school year.

### **• Student Named Among Top 300 in National Science Competition**

Dorseyville Middle School seventh-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy** was named one of the Top 300 Junior Innovators in the inaugural Thermo Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators Challenge (Thermo Fisher JIC). Thermo Fisher JIC is the nation's premier science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) competition for middle school students. The Thermo Fisher JIC, a program of Society for Science, seeks to inspire young scientists, engineers, and innovators to solve the grand challenges of the 21st century.

The Top 300 Junior Innovators (including 15 from Pennsylvania) were selected from nearly 2,000 students from 49 states, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico who applied to compete in the Thermo Fisher JIC. Students who are named in the top 10% of their local science fair are eligible to enter the contest. Rishabh was chosen based on his project "Modeling the Detection of Pathogens in Sewage Sheds," for which he was awarded a first place in the Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair in March 2023.

"Congratulations to these exceptional middle school students," said Maya Ajmera, president and CEO of Society for Science and executive publisher of Science News. "Middle school is a pivotal time in the lives of young people – when many make decisions about engaging in STEM fields. I call on each of these young

people to continue down this path, where they have an opportunity to make an impact on our world’s most pressing scientific and engineering challenges.”

“We are awed and inspired by this inaugural class of Top 300 Junior Innovators, whose research and innovations reflect a rich diversity of academic and personal experiences,” said Dr. Karen Nelson, chief scientific officer of Thermo Fisher Scientific. “As a global life sciences leader with a mission to enable our customers to make the world healthier, cleaner, and safer; we especially admire these students’ shared passion for using science, technology, engineering, and math to solve problems in their communities and make the world a better place.”

Each of the Top 300 Junior Innovators received a \$125 award from Department of Defense (DoD) STEM, as well as a special prize package.

Thermo Fisher was named the title sponsor of the Society’s middle school competition in August 2022. It was previously sponsored by the Broadcom Foundation.

### **SOLICITOR’S REPORT**

There was no report.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Dadd asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the combined agenda study session and regular business meeting dated September 11, 2023. On motion by Mr. Frank and seconded by Mrs. Lynch, the minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

### **FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

There was one comment.

1. Emily Glick, district resident, commented on the Fox Chapel Area School District Comprehensive Plan.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The superintendent recommended that action be taken on the following items of business:

### **FACILITIES/TRANSPORTATION**

#### **A. Facilities/Transportation**

On motion by Mrs. Lynch and seconded by Mrs. Cooper, and after a discussion, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Facilities/Transportation item:

#### **1. Additional School Bus Drivers – 2023-2024 School Year**

Ratify hiring the additional ABC Transit, Inc., drivers effective for the 2023-2024 school year. All required licensing, clearances, and all other essential employment requirements for school bus operators under the laws of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania have been verified.

**FINANCE**

**B. Finance**

On motion by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mr. Frank, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Finance items:

**1. Disbursements (Fund 10) – September 2023**

General fund disbursements (Fund 10) in the amount of \$12,376,918.26 from September 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023, are approved.

**2. Finance Report – August 2023**

The finance report for August 2023 is acknowledged and filed for audit.

**3. Budget Transfers**

The budget transfers for 2023-2024 are approved.

**4. PowerSchool Group LLC Agreement – eFinancePlus Software**

Approve the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and PowerSchool Group LLC for eFinancePlus software for the period January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, at a cost of \$81,631.79. **This is a renewal of services.**

**5. 403(b) Adoption Agreement**

Approve the 403(b) Adoption Agreement, amending the Fox Chapel School District 403(b) plan administered by U.S. OMNI & TSACG Compliance Services, to permit Roth contributions, effective October 10, 2023. **This amendment complies with federal regulations in accordance with Secure Act 2.0.**

**INSTRUCTION**

**C. Instruction**

On motion by Mrs. Cooper and seconded by Ms. Zych, and after a discussion, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Instruction items:

**1. Fox Chapel Area School District Comprehensive Plan**

Approve the required Fox Chapel Area School District Comprehensive Plan.

**2. Wesley Family Services – Agreement**

Ratify the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and Wesley Family Services for child/adolescent Partial Hospital Program (PHP) services for the 2023-2024 school year, effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. **This is a renewal of services.**

**3. Stipulated Adjudications**

Approve the stipulated adjudications as presented.

**LEGISLATION/POLICY**

**D. Legislation/Policy**

There was no business.

**PERSONNEL**

**E. Personnel**

*Candidates for employment under this section are approved subject to verification of the results of physical and drug screening examinations, required clearances, and all other essential employment requirements under Policy and Administrative Regulations 304-AR and 304-AR-4.*

On motion by Ms. Zych and seconded by Mr. Frank, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Personnel items 1 – 4 :

**1. Resignations**

**a. Professional**

- (1) The resignation of Jamie M. Glogowski, school nurse at Fox Chapel Area High School, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective November 6, 2023.

**b. Custodial/Maintenance**

- (1) The resignation of John F. Morrison, 12-month, 8-hour per day custodian at Fox Chapel Area High School, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective October 9, 2023.

**c. Supplemental Contracts – Athletic**

- (1) The resignation of John Anderson, intramurals basketball – boys Fairview, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective September 19, 2023.
- (2) The resignation of Eric Baker, volleyball, boys, MS assistant (partial), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective September 19, 2023.
- (3) The resignation of Allison McGrath, basketball – girls, program development assistant, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective November 17, 2023.
- (4) The resignation of Mannix McKaveney, volleyball, boys, MS assistant (partial), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective September 19, 2023.
- (5) The resignation of Rachel Ranii, basketball – girls, MS assistant, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective November 17, 2023.

**d. Supplemental Contracts – Non-Athletic**

- (1) The resignation of Kathleen S. Fischerkeller, spring musical choreographer at the high school, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective September 11, 2023.
- (2) The resignation of Stanley S. Strzempek, Jr., student government – Kerr sponsor (33%), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective September 11, 2023.

**2. Appointments**

**a. Supplemental Contracts – Athletic**

- (1) The following athletic supplemental contracts are approved, effective November 17, 2023:

Allison McGrath	Basketball – Girls, HS 1st Assistant	\$6,342
Rachel Ranii	Basketball – Girls, Program Development Asst.	\$3,903

**b. Supplemental Contract – Non-Athletic**

- (1) The following non-athletic supplemental contract is ratified, effective September 19, 2023:

Nicolas Luciano                      Overnight Camp Counselor                      \$1,545

**3. Leaves**

**a. Professional**

- (1) Kristy A. Ferragonio, educational support teacher at O’Hara Elementary School, is approved for childrearing /adoption leave, under Article Eleven (D) of the Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective November 2, 2023, with return scheduled for April 1, 2024.
- (2) Heather D. Flynn, educational support teacher at Hartwood Elementary School, is approved for a medical sabbatical, effective January 22, 2024, with return scheduled for the first day of the 2024-2025 school year.
- (3) Mackenzie M. Seymour, art teacher at Dorseyville Middle School, is approved for childrearing /adoption leave, under Article Eleven (D) of the Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective November 13, 2023, with return scheduled for March 22, 2024.
- (4) Amy J. Zottola, elementary teacher at Hartwood Elementary School, is approved for an additional educational sabbatical, effective January 22, 2024, with return scheduled for the first day of the 2024-2025 school year.

**4. Leave Replacement**

**a. Professional**

- (1) Yaryna Korenovska is approved as a second-semester leave replacement elementary teacher at Hartwood Elementary School. This position is available due to the additional educational sabbatical of Amy Zottola.

Certification: Instructional I  
Education: B.S., Duquesne University, 2021  
Experience: ½ Year, Fox Chapel Area School District  
Effective: January 22, 2024, through the day after the last day for students for the 2023-2024 school year  
Salary: \$58,198 (prorated) based on Step 1, B+0  
Fringe Benefits: As Per Collective Bargaining Agreement

**Personnel Information Item:**

**5. Tenure – Information**

- a. The following employee has completed three years of satisfactory professional employment and is eligible for a Professional Employee’s Contract (tenure) effective August 14, 2023:

Johnna Regan

**OPERATIONS/COOPERATIVE SERVICES**

**F. Operations/Cooperative Services**

On motion by Mr. Goode and seconded by Mr. Hamilton, and after a discussion, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Operations/Cooperative Services items:

**1. Fox Chapel Area School District Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) Plan**

Approve the district’s Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) Plan. This multi-hazard plan replaces the basic emergency plan, and is in compliance with state and federal emergency guidelines under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA). This plan must be approved annually.

**2. Permission to Advertise – Districtwide Landscaping Services**

Authorize the advertisement of bids for districtwide landscaping services.

**3. Hartwood Elementary School HVAC Project – Engineering Services Agreement**

Approve the agreement with H.F. Lenz Co. for engineering services related to the Hartwood Elementary School HVAC project at a fee of \$312,000, plus reimbursable expenses not to exceed \$5,000.

**SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

There were no comments.

**FOX CHAPEL EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE**

Rachel Machen, Fox Chapel Educators Association president, gave her report.

**BOARD COMMENTS**

There were five comments. Ms. Dadd, Ms. Zych, Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Lynch, and Mr. Frank commented.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was unanimously resolved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m.



Kathleen Anuszek  
Board Secretary