

**GOVERNOR WENTWORTH REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD HEARING
LRTC - WENTWORTH ROOM
JANUARY 31, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Widmer called the Governor Wentworth Regional School Board meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Wentworth Room of the Lakes Region Technology Center.

Members Present: Tom Bickford, Brodie Deshaies, Stefanie King, Dr. James Manning, James Pittman, Charlene Seibel, Mary Schillereff, Dana Streeter, John Widmer

Also Present: Superintendent Caroline Arakelian, Assistant Superintendent Heather Cummings, Attorney Kathleen Peale, Attorney Barbara Loughman, KRHS Principal Paul Famulari, Dr. Erik Nelson, Kristyn Bernier, members of the public.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Widmer read a prepared statement and recused himself from participating in the hearing as a School Board member.

Attorney Peale stated that the Administration agrees to conduct the hearing in public with the stipulation that there be only one official recording. Dr. Nelson also agreed to this stipulation. The School Board secretary will record the hearing on an ipad provided by the KRHS Media Center.

All parties at the table introduced themselves.

Attorney Loughman introduced herself and stated that she would run the hearing as the moderator. She explained the process that the hearing would follow and that witnesses would be sequestered until their testimony. Exhibits were distributed and the following witnesses left the room; Jack Widmer, Meredith Tuttle, Paul Famulari.

Dr. Nelson read a prepared statement, requesting a full reinstatement to his coaching position, a public apology, and accountability.

Ms. Bernier introduced herself as an advocate for Dr. Nelson. Aaron House left the room at this time. Superintendent Arakelian was sworn in under oath and answered questions as asked by Ms. Bernier regarding her position, work history, Superintendent roles and responsibilities, knowledge of NHIAA processes and regulations, GWRSD policies, and communication with GWRSD Board Chair Jack Widmer. Superintendent Arakelian also answered questions regarding the letter written by Dr. Nelson to the NHIAA, the timeline of events, the non-renewal of Dr. Nelson's coaching contract, email access, and the end of season team banquet.

Mr. House returned to the room and was sworn in under oath. Dr. Nelson asked Mr. House to describe the series of events and decisions that were made. Mr. House read a prepared statement in response. Mr. House answered questions, reading from his paper, as asked by Dr. Nelson, regarding his experience and authority as an Athletic Director, coach evaluations, coach non-renewals, end of season banquets, coach responsibilities, reasons given for the non-renewal, and the timeline of events.

**GOVERNOR WENTWORTH REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD HEARING
LRTC - WENTWORTH ROOM
JANUARY 31, 2024**

Mr. House answered questions as asked by Attorney Peale regarding the letter written by Dr. Nelson, related emails, and conversations he had regarding the letter and the non-renewal of Dr. Nelson.

The ipad recording stopped at 8:07, displaying a "Memory Full" message. (1:43:36 of recording)

Board Members asked several questions.

Mr. House left the room. The meeting recessed for a ten minute break at 8:18pm.

Mr. Famulari provided a 2nd ipad to continue recording.

At 8:27pm Mr. Widmer returned to the room and was sworn in under oath. (2:06:12 of recording) Mr. Widmer answered questions as asked by Dr. Nelson regarding his roles and responsibilities with the NHIAA, his knowledge of the Kingswood soccer program, his conversations with the Superintendent relative to his (Dr. Nelson's) non-renewal, emails related to the non-renewal, and the NHIAA letter that was written by Dr. Nelson.

Mr. Widmer answered questions asked by Attorney Peale regarding the non-renewal of Dr. Nelson.

Meredith Tuttle returned to the room and was sworn in under oath. Ms. Tuttle answered questions as asked by Dr. Nelson regarding her association with the boys' soccer program, a futsal program, a meeting with the Superintendent, and the end of season soccer banquet.

Paul Famulari returned to the room and was sworn in under oath. Mr. Famulari answered questions as asked by Dr. Nelson regarding NHIAA rules, emails submitted as exhibits, the NHIAA letter, the non-renewal of Dr. Nelson, email access, the end of season banquet, use of personal email to communicate with soccer families, the roles and responsibilities of a coach, off-season training, and communication about Dr. Nelson's reinstatement.

Dr. Nelson was sworn in under oath and answered questions asked by the School Board members regarding email and the clarification of his three grievance requests.

At 9:30pm Attorney Peale and Dr. Nelson left the room to attempt to resolve the issue of the reinstatement language of the letter outside of the meeting.

At 9:42pm Attorney Peale and Dr. Nelson returned to the room with agreed upon language meeting the satisfaction of Dr. Nelson and effectively resolving his grievance.

All audience members, hearing parties, and witnesses left the room. Only School Board members remained in the room with Attorney Loughman to deliberate.

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Motion: To approve and endorse the updated letter of reinstatement as written.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies - **Second:** Dr. Manning

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: At 10:28 pm a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Mr. Deshaies - **Second:** Dr. Manning

Vote: Mr. Bickford, yes; Mr. Deshaies, yes; Ms. King, yes; Dr. Manning, yes; Mr. Pittman, yes; Ms. Schillereff, yes; Ms. Seibel, yes; Mr. Streeter, yes

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katharine L. Hagace".

School Board Secretary
Approved by School Board: 03/11/2024