

VIRTUAL LEGISLATIVE
BOARD MEETING

The Legislative Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Cheltenham School District was held on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, at 7:08 p.m. via Zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order by President: Ms. Haywood. Those present were: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. England, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Scott, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Pender, Dr. Smith – Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Marseille – Superintendent, Mr. Roos -Solicitor, Ms. Michaels, Business Manager, and Mrs. Mance - Secretary.

The following members of the staff were present:
Mr. Barone, Director of Technology
Ms. Collins, Director of Secondary Education
Mr. Kaufman, Director of Communications
Ms. Tolbert- Jackson, Director of Human Resources
Dr. Gallagher, Director of Special Education
Dr. Cheryl Horsey, Director of Student Services
Mr. Teasdale, Director of Facilities

There 41 attendees were online for the virtual board meeting.

PLEDGE OF
ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Cheltenham Board member Mr. Scott.

SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT

Dr. Marseille shared the following with the Board and community:

- Virtual High School graduation
- Fall 2020-2021 Opening
- Social Action/Social Justice
- Upcoming Meetings

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Roos announced there were two Executive Sessions since the last board meeting:

SUNSHINE
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Educational Affairs Meeting

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Policy Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 28, 2020

Communications Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Executive Session - Labor Relations

Tuesday, June 8, 2020

Agenda Build

Immediately followed by Facilities Affairs Committee Meeting

Immediately followed by Financial Affairs Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Executive Session - Labor Relations and Safety Report

Agenda Review

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON
AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

There were no public comments on agenda items.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Pender, seconded by Mr. Fishbein, the minutes from the April 28 and May 12, 2020 Legislative Board Meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

REAPPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR

Upon motion by Mr. England seconded by Ms. Henry, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Board of School Directors the Board reappoints Kenneth Roos, Esq., of the firm Wisler Pearlstine, LLP, be reappointed as solicitor for general legal services for the school district on a retainer basis for the fiscal year 2020-2021, beginning July 1, 2020 with no change from the 2019-20 retainer as well as partner and senior education attorney hourly rates as submitted to the Board.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Board of School Directors the Board reappoints the firm of Sweets, Stevens, Katz & Williams to provide special education legal services for the school district for the fiscal year 2020-201, beginning July 1, 2020, with no change in attorney and legal assistance hourly rates.

On roll call, the following voted in the affirmative: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Scott, Mr. Pender, and Mr. England. Absent: None. Negative: None. Motion adopted.

REAPPOINTMENT OF TREASURER

Upon motion by Mr. Scott seconded by Ms. Henry, the following resolutions was adopted:

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Board of School Directors the Board reappoints Karen Washington as Treasurer for the School District for the fiscal year 2020-2021, at no additional compensation.

On roll call, the following voted in the affirmative: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Scott, Mr. Pender, and Mr. England. Absent: None. Negative: None. Motion adopted.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Upon motion of Mr. Cohen, seconded by Mr. Fishbein, the Treasurer's Report for the period ending May 2020, as presented in the financial statements to the board and as attached to the original minutes, was unanimously approved.

ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION

Upon motion by Mr. England seconded by Mr. Fishbein, the following resolutions was adopted:

RESOLVED, the Board accepts the resignation of Tyrone Scott, II from the Cheltenham Board of School Directors effective June 30, 2020.

On roll call, the following voted in the affirmative: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Scott, Mr. Pender, and Mr. England. Absent: None. Negative: None. Motion adopted.

MCIU REPORT

Mr. England reported the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Committee discussed the following agenda items at the May 20, 2020 virtual meeting: Approved the new Executive Director. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 10, 2020.

Mr. Pender left the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

EASTERN REPORT

Mr. Burdell – Williams stated the Eastern Center for Arts and Technology discussed the following agenda items at the Joint Operating Committee at the May 13, 2020 virtual meeting: May student of the month, Approved Practical nurses tuition, and Approved Treasurer.

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Mr. Schultz reported the Financial Affairs Committee discussed the following agenda items at the June 8, 2020, virtual meeting: Approval of Minutes, 2019-20 Budget Status and 2020-21 Final Budget. Mr. Schultz announced the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 4, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. via zoom virtual meeting.

- EDUCATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** Mr. Scott stated the Educational Affairs Committee discussed the following agenda item at the May 19, 2020 virtual meeting: Approval of minutes and Curriculum update. Mr. Scott announced the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. via zoom virtual meeting.
- FACILITIES COMMITTEE** Mr. Burdell - Williams reported the Facilities Committee discussed the following agenda items at the June 8, 2020, virtual meeting: Approval of minutes, COVID-19 Facilities and Maintenance Update, School District Building Maintenance Updates, Facilities Capital Improvement Plan Update, and School Dude Update. Mr. Burdell - Williams announced the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 4, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. via zoom virtual meeting.
- LIAISON GROUP** Mr. Cohen stated the Liaison Group has not met since the last board meeting and they have no current or future meetings scheduled at this time.
- POLICY COMMITTEE** Ms. Haywood stated the Policy Committee discussed the following agenda items at the May 27, 2020 virtual meeting: **Old Business** Policy and AR 215 Promotion and Retention (2013). Policy and AR 230 Student Competitions and Festivals (1997) - change to "Public Performances by Students". Policy 235 Student Rights and Responsibilities (1999) for Repeal. Policy and AR 105.1 Curriculum Review by Parents and Students (1999), changed to "Review of Curriculum and Instructional Materials by Parents/Guardians and Students". Policy and AR 105.2 Exemption from Instruction (1999), change to "Exemption from Specific Instruction and/or State Assessment". Policy and AR 108 Adoption of Textbooks (1998). Policy 108.1 Adoption of Supplemental Textbooks (1998) for Repeal. Policy and AR 319 Outside Activities (1992), Policy 419/519 Outside Activities (1992) for Repeal, Policy and AR 906 Public Complaints (1999) , change to "Formal Complaints" and **New Business** Policy 829 Equity. Ms. Haywood announced the next Policy committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 25, 2020, at 8:00 a.m. via zoom virtual meeting.

1. First Read

- a. #829 Equity

2. The following AR's are for review only:

- a. AR 215 Promotion and Retention (2013)
b. AR 230 Student Competitions and Festivals (1997) - change to "Public Performances by Students"
c. AR 105.1 Curriculum Review by Parents and Students (1999), changed to "Review of Curriculum and Instructional Materials by Parents/Guardians and Students"
d. AR 105.2 Exemption from Instruction (1999), change to "Exemption from Specific Instruction and/or State Assessment"
e. AR 108 Adoption of Textbooks (1998)
f. AR 319 Outside Activities (1992)
g. AR 906 Public Complaints (1999), change to "Formal Complaints"

Upon motion by Mr. Schultz seconded by Mr. Scott, the following resolutions was adopted:

3. Policies for Adoption

- a. #215 Promotion and Retention (2013)
b. #230 Student Competitions and Festivals (1997) - change to "Public Performances by Students"
c. #235 Student Rights and Responsibilities (1999) for Repeal
d. #105.1 Curriculum Review by Parents and Students (1999), changed to "Review of Curriculum and Instructional Materials by Parents/Guardians and Students"
e. #105.2 Exemption from Instruction (1999), change to "Exemption from Specific Instruction and/or State Assessment"
f. #108 Adoption of Textbooks (1998)

- g. #108.1 Adoption of Supplemental Textbooks (1998) for Repeal
- h. #319 Outside Activities (1992)
- i. #419/519 Outside Activities (1992) for Repeal
- j. #906 Public Complaints (1999), change to "Formal Complaints"

On roll call, the following voted in the affirmative: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Scott, and Mr. England. Absent: Mr. Pender. Negative: None. Motion adopted.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Burdell-Williams stated the Communications Committee discussed the following agenda items at the May 28, 2020 virtual meeting: Approval of Minutes, Communications Analytics, Year-end Social Media report, and Coronavirus communications and media relations. Mr. Burdell-Williams announced the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. via zoom virtual meeting.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Ms. Haywood reported the Montgomery County Legislative Committee discussed the following items at their last virtual meeting: Proposed legislation impacting public education and that LEA's will receive state funding at the 2019/20 levels.

PERSONNEL

- Appointment of Administrators
- Appointment of Professional Employees
- Appointment of Long-Term Substitute Teachers
- Appointment of Secondary Summer School and ESY
- Approval of Salary Adjustments
- Approval of Extra Duty/Extra Pay

Upon motion by Mr. Burdell-Williams, seconded by Mr. Scott, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the appointment of James Taylor as Interim Principal at Cedarbrook Middle School, at an annual 2020-2021 salary of \$128,000 prorated, effective July 1, 2020, through date to be determined.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the appointment of Sonia Eugene, Special Education Teacher at Myers Elementary School, to be hired provisionally pending statutory requirements, effective August 25, 2020, at a salary of \$60,566 (Step 8/Masters).

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the the appointment of Nicole Adler, Special Education Teacher at Elkins Park Elementary School, to be hired provisionally pending statutory requirements, effective August 25, 2020, at a salary of \$55,834 (Step 8/Bachelors).

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the appointment of Keely Clauson as Long Term Substitute Teacher, Kindergarten Teacher at Wyncote Elementary School, at a salary of \$53,664 (Step 7/Bachelor's), to be hired provisionally pending statutory requirements, effective August 25, 2020, through the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the appointment of Mark Van Ooyen as Long Term Substitute Teacher, Health and Physical Education Teacher at Cedarbrook Middle School, at a salary of \$64,294 (Step 8/Masters+12) prorated, to be hired provisionally pending statutory requirements, effective August 25, 2020, through January 25, 2021.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the the Superintendent be authorized, but not required, to fill the following positions with qualified applicants as needed:

1. ESY teaching staff for the Summer 2020 ESY Program, at an approved rate of \$36.90 per hour;
2. ESY Paraeducators for the Summer 2020 ESY Program. The rate of pay is the same as the individual's rate during the 2019-2020 academic school year;
3. Secondary summer school teaching staff for 2020 Summer School Staffing at an approved rate of \$36.90 per hour; and
4. Temporary Registrars for the summer of the 2020 School year, effective June 22, 2020, through August 27, 2020, at \$12.00 per hour.

- 5. Nurses for Student Registration for the summer of the 2020 School year, effective June 22, 2020 through August 27, 2020, at \$ \$36.90 per hour.

Any appointments made by the Superintendent in accordance with this authorization shall be deemed to be the action of this Board. Such appointments shall be confirmed by the Board at its next regular meeting, at which time this authorization shall expire.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the horizontal salary column movement for Tawny Threats, Science Teacher at Cheltenham High School, effective August 20, 2019, inasmuch as that she has submitted official evidence of credits earned; from: Step 8 Bachelor's \$55,834 to: Step 8 Masters at \$60,566.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the following Extra Duty/Extra Pay assignments, per the attachment, at a rate of \$227.50 per unit, as listed.

On roll call, the following voted in the affirmative: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Scott, and Mr. England. Absent: Mr. Pender. Negative: None. Motion adopted.

Information Items:

1. Retirements

The Superintendent accepted the following retirements:

- a. Willie Williams, Custodian at Elkins Park School, effective August 30, 2020. Mr. Williams has been a district employee for 21 years.

2. Resignations

The Superintendent accepted the following resignations:

- a. Dr. Raymond Realdine Jr., Supervisor of Counseling and K-12 Holistic Supports at the Administration Building, effective July 31, 2020, end of workday.

3. Non-discretionary Leaves of Absence

The following non-discretionary Leaves of Absence were granted:

- a. Kristina Siwek, Grade 3 Teacher at Cheltenham Elementary School, granted an unpaid leave of absence from August 25, 2020 until November 16, 2020, under the provisions of the Family & Medical Leave policy and an unpaid childrearing leave from November 17, 2020, until January 25, 2021. Ms. Siwek's return to work date is January 26, 2021.

EDUCATION AFFAIRS
Approval of
Conferences
Approval of Educational
Settlement Agreement
Approval of Agreement
for Extended School
Year

Upon motion by Mr. Burdell-Williams, seconded by Mr. Scott, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the attendance and payment of expenses for Vernando McCoy and Rilus Craig, School Safety Officers to attend the Basic SRO Training in Wayne, Pa on the following dates, 07/20/2020 - 07/24/2020, with an estimated cost of \$495.00 each to be paid from the general fund account.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the educational service agreement between the District and parents of the student identified below by confidential student number in the form presented to the Board.

- Student # 406704

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the Agreement with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit for Extended School Year. This agreement

governs the contractual terms and conditions for placement of students when a non-traditional placement is required in order to provide the student with an appropriate program.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the Agreements for Extended School Year. This agreement governs the contractual terms and conditions for placement of students when a non-traditional placement is required in order provide the student with an appropriate program:

- Student # 231786
- Student # 409492
- Student # 405304
- Student # 408587

On roll call, the following voted in the affirmative: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Scott, and Mr. England. Absent: Mr. Pender. Negative: None. Motion adopted.

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS
 Approval of 2019-2020
 Budget Transfers
 Approval of Payments
 Authorization for
 School District
 Depositories
 Approval of the Catalog
 Fixed Discount Program
 Authorization for
 Temporary Investment
 of Funds
 Approval to Participate
 in Purchasing
 Cooperatives
 Approval of Purchasing
 Agents
 Authorization to Pay
 Bills
 Authorization to
 Execute Final Budget
 Transfers
 Approval of Non-
 Resident Tuition Rates
 for 2020-2021
 Approval of 2020-2021
 School District
 Insurance
 Approval of Contracts
 Approval of MCIU
 Intergovernmental
 Agreement

Upon motion by Mr. Cohen, seconded by Mr. Schultz, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the attached budget transfers and assignments for the 2019-20 fiscal year as required by state and mandated auditing procedures.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the bills for payment for the period of May 1, 2020, through May 31, 2020, in the following amounts in accordance with the list submitted to the board.

FUND	Check Numbers	Amount
General Fund	156510 – 156637	\$2,166,676.20
Payroll Fund	12432 – 12463	\$28,361.87
Scholarship Fund	1580 - 1626	\$35,750.00
Food Service Fund	2523 – 2524	\$50.00

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the school district depositories be maintained at the following financial institutions:

- Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust (PLIGT)
- Citizens Bank
- PNC Bank through PA School District Liquid Asset Fund – Primary Depository
- Pennsylvania Treasurer’s Investment Programs for Local Governments (INVEST)
- U.S. Bank for OPEB funds

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the Catalog Fixed Discount Program as awarded by the MCIU Joint Purchasing Board for the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the Catalog Fixed Discount Program as awarded by the LLIU Joint Purchasing Board and agreed upon by the MCIU Joint Purchasing Board for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the Business Manager and/or Assistant Business Manger be authorized to secure the best possible rates of return for the district’s funds in accordance with approved Pennsylvania school laws for the fiscal year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS
(continued)

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors gives approval to participate at no cost in the following purchasing cooperatives to purchase volume discounts:

- National Purchasing Cooperative
- PSBA Buy Board
- Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies
- PA Department of General Services
- PEPPM Technology Bidding and Purchasing Program
- Keystone Purchasing Network

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves Cara Michaels and Karen Washington as purchasing agents of the Cheltenham School District in accordance with public school code 24 P.S. § 8-807.

Purchase orders are issued and a designation of responsible individuals is required for final sign off, to ensure appropriate approvals have been granted.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors gives authorization to pay the bills necessary prior to August 11, 2020, with ratification at the August meeting.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors gives authorization to make final budget transfers and assignments for the 2019-2020 fiscal year as required by state and mandated auditing procedures prior to August 11, 2020, with ratification at the August meeting.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the non-resident student tuition rates for the 2020-2021 school year be adopted as follows:

- Grades K-6 Daily \$100.95 Annual \$18,170.43
- Grades 7-12 Daily \$100.02 Annual \$18,003.38

These rates are based on 2018-19 AFR data and calculations approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the 2020-21 school year with an increase of 9.66% for elementary and an increase of 1.82% for secondary.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves the School District Insurance for 2020-21 be approved, as listed.

<u>Coverage</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Premium Amount - \$</u>
Property	CM Regent	171,402
General Liability & Crime	CM Regent	58,978
Automobile	CM Regent	25,507
Boiler & Machinery	Hartford Steam Boiler	15,328
Umbrella	CM Regent	25,757
School Board Legal	AIG Group	80,905
Cyber	AIG Group	13,920

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves Maillie, LLC to provide auditing services for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, not to exceed the amount of \$35,000.

RESOLVED, upon recommendation of the Administration the Board of School Directors approves

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS (continued) the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Intergovernmental Agreement for Shared Student Services for the 2020-21 School year will be approval.

On roll call, the following voted in the affirmative: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. Burdell -Williams, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Scott, and Mr. England. Absent: Mr. Pender. Negative: None. Motion adopted.

RESPONSE TO PRIOR QUESTIONS There were no prior questions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS Forty-six public comments on non-agenda items were emailed to the Board. Those comments were entered into public record and can be found in the enclosed document.

MEETING ADJOURNED Upon motion by Ms. Henry, seconded by Mr. Scott and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

DocuSigned by:
Crystal Mance
A14B2151 C79541 A

Secretary

DocuSigned by:
Julie Haywood
B1AA1A4363C443

President

Non - Agenda Questions from June 9, 2020 Virtual Legislative Board Meeting

I ask that you reconsider your decision to eliminate the vocal teacher position at CBK. As a parent, community member, staff member and musician, I know first-hand of the importance of singing in school. I have always been proud of the commitment to maintain the Arts in the Cheltenham School District. I realize that this will be a very challenging year for all teachers due to COVID19 but the music must play on. I'm certain that you've seen the many virtual choirs via social media. I currently participate in one now. It can be done if the desire is there. The students have already lost so much. I ask that you don't take singing from them. Removal of singing will simply create ill prepared singers for the high school's music program in the future. As a mother of two former CSD students who flourished musically at CBK and CHS, I cannot imagine what it would have been like for them without singing. Both are now in college and are pursuing degrees in the music field. The repercussions of the removal of a vocal teacher position at CBK are numerous. It will be a huge mistake to do so.

Most sincerely,
Robbin L. Balfour-Austin

It's come to my attention via some friends in the community that you are intending to cut your middle school music programs after already having cut your elementary school music programs in recent years.

I'm not sure if you can understand the impact these programs can have on the children who get to enjoy them. These programs serve not only as extracurricular activities. They are pathways to leadership, community, lifelong relationships, and an art form that can follow these children throughout their lives. Personally, I do not know where I would be without my middle school music program. It has given me an opportunity to grow myself as a leader. It has planted the seeds that have blossomed into a lifelong love of music and singing. It has given me community after community of wonderful people and lifelong friends. All of these benefits and more will not exist for the children you are choosing to take these programs away from.

I urge you to look into your hearts and realize that when you cut these programs, you're looking into the eyes of these middle school children, looking forward to their futures as leaders and musicians, and telling these children that they can't have those opportunities.

Please reconsider. You have no idea how impactful your decision truly is.

Best,
Emily Ballentine

My name is Grace Bitterman, and I graduated from Cheltenham High School in 2018.

At Cedarbrook, I was in both choir and Wildclefs for the whole two years, and I participated in all four theatre productions during my time there. I later went on to student direct two more shows at CBK during my freshman year of high school.

I think I can speak for a lot of people (hundreds, really) when I say that the vocal and performing arts programs at Cedarbrook were the highlight of my time there, and they really were the only places I felt at home during those years. Continuing those programs is so crucial to the wellbeing and development of future Cedarbrook students. The thought that so many kids could be robbed of that experience absolutely breaks my heart. Cedarbrook needs a Vocal Arts teacher.

Thank you.

Sincerely, Grace Bitterman

I was shocked and saddened to hear of the plan to exclude a vocal arts teacher at Cedarbrook for the 2020-2021 school year. As a former Cedarbrook and CHS student, the best memories of my 8th-12th grade years were exactly that - vocal arts. I was accepted to PSU for voice and NYU for musical theatre, and that is in large part due to my voice education.

I am now 42 years old, but I can tell you that my experience singing at the ice cream festival (which sadly no longer exists) at the end of 8th Grade, still comes back to many a family member. My experience in 8th grade helped me grow and feel confident trying out for the musicals in high school.

While my child is busy in the orchestra, I know that there are plenty of kids who quite actually find their voices in 8th grade, and it's so important that we give them the opportunity to do this at school. Please reconsider reinstating this position for next year's budget.

Thank you,

Mia Blitstein

I write out of concern with reports the Board will not fill the now-vacant vocal arts position at Cedarbrook Middle School. I am alarmed at this possibility as a parent, taxpayer, and wife of a music teacher. Middle school vocal arts is a critical position to ensure the success of performing arts at the high school level. Moreover, our children have been performing together in choirs since 4th grade. To end the program for such a developmentally critical point in their lives would be devastating. Our family located to Cheltenham District for many factors, but chief among them was the performing arts programs. Our children have enthusiastically taken advantage of all that means. Denying that opportunity to children who follow would be terribly

disappointing and cause for alarm. We urge you to reconsider the position and ensure the viability of the music program for all students.

Thank you.

Stay safe,

Marissa B Bluestine

511 Boyer Rd

Cheltenham, PA 19012

It has come to my attention through some graduates of Cheltenham High School and Cedarbrook Middle School that you are intending to cut your middle school music programs, in addition to already having cut your elementary school music programs recently.

I am a graduate of Central Bucks West High School, and I was heavily involved in multiple areas of the music program there, taking part in over a dozen orchestral and choir ensembles throughout my education. These music classes and related extracurricular activities were critical in my personal growth. These ensembles were the foundation of the majority of my social life throughout school. I discovered leadership capacities in myself through those groups that I would not have possibly been able to develop in any other context. Because of these primary school experiences, I continued pursuing leadership positions in music in college as a member of OwlCappella, an a cappella group at Temple University, where I met several Cheltenham graduates, all of whom also had incredible experiences with music education that helped define them.

In many ways, I've found my music classes more useful in my adult life than my math, science, and English classes. Music helped teach me the importance of discipline, how to be in touch with my emotions, how to work with others in groups, and how to deal with failure and mistakes in a productive way.

I have no idea who I would be without music. In fact, I can say without any doubt that I am the person I am today precisely because of my experiences in music. To take away these opportunities from kids who are at crucial points in their growth as people would deny them the ability to find their power, identity, and a supportive community. Please do not remove these programs and opportunities from your students. They deserve a well-rounded education where they can explore who they are and who they want to be, and music is an immense part of that. No child should have to live a lesser life because their school did not make music a priority. I hope you feel the same.

Best,

Audrey Bristol-Evans

We just learned of the Cedarbrook decision last evening. In response we quickly drafted the attached letter. In less than a day it has more than 200 signatures from parents, students, alumni and community members. We will continue to collect signatures in preparation for next

Tuesday's budget meeting, but want you to have letter and roster of signatures to date in time for this evening's school board meeting.

We ask that the attached letter and names be included in the record.

CHS Vocal Arts Boosters (Letter is enclosed)

My name is Gregory Davis, an alumni of the Cheltenham School District (C/O 2017) currently attending Temple University. Recently it has been brought to my attention that there are plans to cut the vocal music/choir position at Cedarbrook Middle School and I am urging you to please reconsider that decision.

Personally, the opportunity to express myself emotionally was not often granted growing up, which impacted my mental health and behavior at a young age. When I entered middle school, the first place I was able to begin my refinement was the Cedarbrook vocal music program. I gained not only tools for healthy emotional expression but also discipline, emotional regulation, accountability, built a foundation musically for myself, and found a home. Without the vocal music program at Cedarbrook, many kids will lose that opportunity and the HS program will suffer, as it is meant to build on the foundations you learn in 7th and 8th grade. If not for the music program at Cedarbrook, I would never have continued to sing in high school or college. Singing got me where I am today, a senior in college, who was recently recognized as a top leader on campus and now is Music Director of one of the best collegiate singing groups in the country, OwlCappella. In fact, as many as 38 of my friends that I started singing with in 7th grade continue to sing today, almost a decade later. Some have even gone on to study vocal music in college with hopes to land an internship with the CSD's middle & high school vocal programs because your programs are highly valued amongst local music colleges.

As stated before, I am begging the school board to reconsider their decision to cut the vocal music program. It would rob many future students of the opportunity to build a foundation that will propel them forward in life. Age can easily limit a lot of things, like athleticism or the ability to play an instrument, but singing and the lessons that come with it will stick for lifetime.

Best,
Greg Davis

Dear Members of the Cheltenham School Board of Directors and Administration,

I am writing to express my disapproval and non-support for the decision to eliminate the vocal music/choir director position at Cedarbrook.

We have lived in Cheltenham School District since 2005 and I have two children who have attended Cheltenham schools since kindergarten. My daughter will be a 6th grader at Elkins Park next year and plays cello in the orchestra under the wonderful direction of Ms. Harvey. Due to her positive experience in orchestra so far, she plans to continue with orchestra at Cedarbrook and CHS.

My son will be a senior at CHS next year. He sang in VE5 and VE6 at Elkins Park. However, it was Mr. Mallitz and singing in choir and WildClefs at Cedarbrook that really jump-started my son's passion for choral music. After Cedarbrook, he joined the Keystone State Boy choir and continued to participate in all of the vocal arts programs at CHS (Urinetown musical, Men's choir, Select Choir, Sons of Pitch, took Advanced Choral Studies as an elective and is registered to take AP Music Theory next year). This past year, he qualified for the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District, Regional and All-State Chorus (thanks in large part to Ms. Hutton's support). He said that qualifying for All-State Chorus was one of his proudest achievements so far.

The abundance and continuity of music/choral opportunities and culmination of all of my son's vocal arts experiences at Cheltenham also resulted in his decision to pursue Music Education in college (voice focus).

One of the things I've always loved and promoted about Cheltenham is its strong focus on and support of the arts. My children are above average students, but not overly focused on academics. Neither of them play any sports in school. The only school programs they are really interested in are the arts programs. In addition to orchestra, my daughter will also take all of the art classes she can for the rest of her time at Cheltenham and wants to pursue something related to art as a career. The vocal arts program has been the one aspect of Cheltenham where my son has really thrived. It would be a terrible loss to cut the vocal music/choir director position at Cedarbrook and remove the great opportunity that my son had for kids like him. Were it not for his experience with Mr. Mallitz at Cedarbrook, my son may have had a poorer experience in school and be an entirely different person today.

Please reconsider this decision that will have a lasting negative impact on the opportunities and culture at Cheltenham.

Sincerely,
Heather Donahue (parent)

Both my children, Lilo and Isaac Blank, gained valuable skills from the Cedarbrook music program that they could not have received with a watered-down substitute. I respect your effort to create a fiscally responsible budget, but music and the arts have decades of empirical research proving that they enhance the development of all academic pursuits. Writing, reading, social skills, and emotional IQ, are nourished as well as the important math skills so vital to success in our ever-changing culture. There are times when curriculum change makes sense and is prudent, but as the old saying goes, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. Keep the wonderful music program staffing as is.

With sincerest regards,

Dr. Marlene Eisenberg
1110 Melrose Avenue
Elkins Park, PA 19027

Hello, members of the Cheltenham School Board of Directors and Administration.

As a CHS musical program alumnus, I have firsthand experienced the benefits of the music programs in the Cheltenham school district. It is extremely important to keep these programs high in the budget and maintain a base of good music teachers.

If requested, I can provide examples of the benefits, but it is very concerning if they are not already clear to you.

Please consider the concerns detailed in the following letter to you:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EmHmuEKOkSmkC5GulzmmcTEG711uWMIQuUPxzNhoOz4/mobilebasic?fbclid=IwAR2U8fKfSmsgsj0-3xxiRKzTsozh7D0xlmEonj00bTeZRZeegmchXCYRmng>

Sincerely,
David Geron-Neubauer
CHS Class of 2014

We understand this has been a challenging year on many levels. We, the CHS Band Parents Association, met with some members of the administration this past fall to share our extreme challenges and voice our concern over continuity of support for arts programs overall from early education through to the high school level. Those meetings went very well and we felt reassured in the district's continued support of arts programs, which has served as a cornerstone of pride for Cheltenham for many years. Now that we come to the end of this challenging year, well beyond the uncertainty of school in the age of COVID-19, we are still left with many open questions regarding our program's future. Now, we've also just learned that the district will not be replacing the vocal music/choir director position at Cedarbrook and has also reconfigured the music classes overall at Cedarbrook. We are deeply concerned by these actions and are asking to you to answer to, and plan for, actually strengthening and rebuilding administrative support for arts in the schools rather than weakening it. Some districts even have a director of arts position similar to our Supervisor of STEM. We would like to see some type of planning at the administrative level to help support growth and participation in elective programs, namely the arts, from the elementary years through to high school. Each school level has had a wonderful program, but that now seems to be weakening, while bridges need to be built from level to level to carry students through to involvement at the highest level, in order to fully realize each student's growth and potential beyond basic required core subjects.

Respectfully,
Judith Goldberg
President, CHS Band Parents Association

I'm a Temple University student who grew up in Central Bucks School District. While there I had the privilege to access an incredible music program that has shaped my life considerably, despite studying science and pursuing science as a career. Music gave me my closest friends in

middle school/high school and college and allowed me to develop social skills amongst like-minded individuals with a passion for the arts. Some of the best moments of my entire life thus far come from music experience and my strong background in music gifted to me by my middle/high school teachers set the groundwork for my love and appreciation of music.

To hear that the vocal program is being cut is heart-breaking. I can't imagine who I'd be without music, and I'm sure some of these students in your district can't either. Too often the importance of music is understated in public schools. A creative outlet that allows one to use their voice is powerful. It can be a cathartic release for someone in pain, as it was for me so many times. It can be a bonding agent to establish lifelong friendships, as it was for me so many times. Vocal music can be a great teacher about beauties and atrocities in the world that we may not hear about in history class. Most importantly, a musical creative outlet can save a life. Many times when I've been down, music has lifted me. I'm not sure where I'd be without my middle school choir director, and these kids deserve the same.

I don't remember most of the math, science and history I learned but my girlfriend and I still sing the songs we learned in middle and high school and laugh, reflect and connect over them. I understand there are state standards and budget cuts are a real problem and you can't cut the math department. But removing an outlet for these kids is immoral and wildly upsetting to me as a man whose entire life has been so shaped by the music I participated in as a youth.

I hope you reconsider and find a more creative and agreeable choice for budget cuts. You're taking away what is to many students, their favorite part of school.

Best,
Nick Goodyear

I am writing to urge you to reconsider cutting the vocal arts position at Cedarbrook. The vocal music program at the high school is a VERY strong one and it NEEDS its lead-in program at Cedarbrook to prepare upcoming students for the high school's rigorous requirements and demands. Teachers trained in instrumental music may not have the experience/skills needed to instruct vocal arts students. That is one of the reasons our District has ALWAYS had separate instructors for vocal and instrumental - and why our vocal arts programs in particular have been some of the most outstanding in the Philadelphia area for over 50 years.

I've been in your shoes and know how hard it is to bring in a reasonable budget (CSD School Board member from 1989-2005). Please try to find ways that do NOT directly impact student learning and ongoing successful programs in a negative way.

Sincerely,
Emily Brecker Greenberg
CHS 1965

PS My husband and I continue to live in Cheltenham as empty nesters, despite our high taxes. We are committed to paying our share to keep the School District as an excellent as possible.

Last evening I became aware that the school district does not plan to replace the vocal arts teacher at CBK.

This news is very concerning on a lot of levels. I ask the school board at your meeting this evening to give a detailed and thorough rationale as to why you feel this position can be eliminated and what steps you are taking to make sure that vocal arts is still supported at CBK.

I personally do not see how that can be done without a vocal arts instructor dedicated to this purpose. I urge you to reinstate this position in the school district budget immediately.

Thank you.

Gloria Guldager, parent

I was just made aware of the elimination of the position previously held by Noah Mallitz at Cedarbrook as the Choral/Choir teacher. I respectfully ask that his position be replaced with a teacher who is fully trained in teaching vocal performance for the 2020-2021 school year and beyond. All three of my children were students of Noah's and the impact his choir and music classes had on each of them was substantial. Middle school is a time where many children are struggling with self-confidence. A dedicated, talented, educated music teacher offering an opportunity for these kids to try out something they'd otherwise have no opportunity to, is essential and part of what makes Cheltenham such a special school district.

I fully understand that budgets are tight, but I do not want to see the music or arts programs decline.

Please make every effort to add this role back into the budget and that CBK headcount for 2020-2021 and beyond.

Respectfully,

Lisa Haasz, Parent

I went to Cheltenham High School from 2010 to 2014. During that time, I participated in the CHS freshman choir, concert choir, select choir, and Sons of Pitch a cappella group. I, along with a number of other male Cheltenham singers, participated in the Keystone State Boychoir. The vocal music experiences I had during this time were integral to my development as a person.

Someone posted on the Sons of Pitch alumni page recently that a position central vocal music education in the Cheltenham system was at risk of being cut. I urge the Board to consider the importance of these programs in creating positive, healthy spaces for singers and musicians to learn and grow (both as musicians and as people). The vocal music experiences I had at Cheltenham taught me about maturity, professionalism, and self-expression. I am still good friends with several people that I sang with. I cannot underscore the value of these experiences enough.

As I finish my undergraduate studies and prepare for law school, I use tools and skills that I learned through vocal music on a daily basis. I know that Cheltenham is a vibrant, diverse community with solid core values and I hope that that continues such that it continues thrive as a school district and place of living. I argue, based on personal experience as a Cheltenham resident, student, and singer, that vocal music education is integral to the achievement of these objectives.

"We ask that the position previously held by Mr. Mallitz at Cedarbrook be added back to the budget and that an additional music teacher, with training in vocal performance, be hired for the 2020-2021 school year." Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration of this statement.

Sincerely,
Josiah Harmar

Add the choral teacher position at Cedarbrook back to the budget before you run our school district into the ground; and hire an additional teacher to help foster vocal performance for the 2021-22 school year and beyond. There is no more room in this world for disappointment, especially, when it comes to our children.

Regards,
Rahsaan Kerns
Cheltenham Alum

Hello School Board, There should not be any choir cuts because it is wrong and many students enjoy and take choir very seriously. It is a big part of the Musical Arts Program and it would be just straight up wrong to cut it.

Thank You,
Amelia Kopp

I was disappointed to learn that the position of Cedarbrook vocal instructor may not be filled for the 2020-2021 school year. For all the reasons outlined in the recent petition, I ask that all district vocal instructor positions be funded and filled for the coming school year and beyond.

The voice is the only musical instrument with one at all times and **equally available to all regardless of economic status**. Improper vocal training, particularly for teen/developing voices, can cause serious damage. The training of student voices should be in the hands of professionals knowledgeable in the unique needs of those young voices.

Thank you,
Julie Mann

I am writing as a concerned Cheltenham parent to express my dismay at the decision not to replace Noah Mallitz at Cedarbrook, which compounds the concern I already had about not replacing Mr. Kwas at EP. I have two children who have gone through the Cheltenham School

District and both benefitted tremendously from the music education they received at all levels. I have proudly boosted the school district and touted its commitment to the arts. I am seriously concerned that this decision undermines that commitment and degrades the high quality of arts education our district has previously provided.

I am not going to repeat the excellent explanation in the letter from members of the Vocal Performing Arts Boosters that has been circulated, but I wholeheartedly endorse it. The failure to replace Noah Mallitz hurts the district's reputation and, more importantly, hurts our students. The vocal arts program is a lifeline to so many students, keeping them connected to the school and invested in their education. Degrading the quality of instruction at the elementary and middle school level will make it impossible for the high school to maintain the quality program it currently has. This shortsighted decision will have broader ramifications that will negatively affect students and diminish their opportunities through high school.

I urge you to reconsider.

Sincerely,
Ellie Margolis

My name is Joshua McHugh, and I have the pleasure of spending all of my grade school years, from K - 12, in the Cheltenham School District. I am a member of the CHS Class of 2008, and spent much of my tenure in the school district involved with the music program. Off the top my head, I participated in:

- 5th & 6th Grade Band
- 7th and 8th Grade Band
- 7th and 8th Grade General and Select choir, and the musicals Big and 42nd Street with Andy Monath
- 9th Grade Band under Larry Daroff, 12th Grade Symphonic Band and Adv. Wind ensemble under Glenn Cowan
- Freshman and Honors Choirs, Touring Ensemble, the musicals Aida, Beauty and the Beast, and A Chorus Line, the a cappella group Sons of Pitch, and opportunities for PMEA District 11 and Region 6 choirs under Bob Goltz.

I am sure I am leaving things out. Suffice to say, Cheltenham Music has had a huge impact on my life, and is the main reason I went to Temple University for Music Education, and why even though I no longer teach, I keep involved in music today.

I was made aware, through concerned students and fellow alumni, that the staff position previously held by the formidable Noah Mallitz is not being preserved at Cedarbrook for the coming school year, leaving Cedarbrook short a music teacher (which increases load on the other teachers) and without a quality, qualified vocal music professional specifically dedicated to your choir students at Cedarbrook. This greatly troubles me, and I have 1st hand experience in the Cheltenham School District of the aftermath of an understaffed music department, or an unqualified leader, in the Middle School sphere:

Andy Monath was my choir director in Cedarbrook. His employment was terminated by the time I reached 9th grade, and a woefully unqualified long-term sub was put in his place. The failure of the Cedarbrook choir program at that time directly impacted the High School program, as the lack of solid leadership and pedagogical experience at a *crucial* time of vocal development, especially for teenage boys, kneecapped the program going upwards. The quality and experience for everyone suffers when such a critical lynchpin is removed, and it took until my Senior Year for the effects to be mostly recovered from, which was in no small way thanks to Noah Mallitz being hired and turning things around.

Had I gone through Cedarbrook choir with someone less qualified and skilled as Monath or Mallitz, I may have never stuck with choir. Instead, I fell in love, and found purpose. Removing that position and/or staffing it with someone underqualified is a grave disservice to your students who need choir as their space to thrive.

The arts are important. Not everyone finds meaning in the Three R's of Reading/'Riting/'Rithmetic. Not everyone will want to or get to play school sports. And the Arts, visual or performative, should never be treated as the first stop when looking to cut a program. You must do right by these kids and give them a space where they can explore their passion at an important stage in their development as people.

It has always been a point of pride to tell people I was a member of the CSD music community. We were quality and we had the credentials to back that up. I implore you, fully fund the district's music programs, and make sure there is funding for a quality, trained music professional to teach your students at Cedarbrook in the coming school year, or else the legacy of the CSD music program could be better called a History.

I hope you are all well in these challenging, interesting times, and that you will do what you can to preserve something that has been the crown jewel of the CSD - our music.

Thank you for your time,
Joshua McHugh

Our wonderful Cheltenham School District music programs are at risk in the current budget. The new budget does not include a replacement for Mr. Mallitz's former position at Cedarbrook. This isn't only an issue for Cedarbrook, it has implications for music throughout the district – especially vocal arts.

What has happened?

Previously there were three music teachers at Cedarbrook with five classes per day and one teacher with three classes (Mr. Hoy, who splits time with CHS). Each teacher had trained for and has studied for their particular concentration in college:

- Steve Cairns - Band director/Jazz Band
- Ken Harmer - General Music
- Matt Hoy - Orchestra/Chamber Orchestra at Cedarbrook and CHS

- Noah Mallitz - Choir director/WildClefs (this past year the position was filled by Claire Schneider who was highly qualified in vocal pedagogy and choral music education).

The current budget/plan does not have a vocal music/choir director position at Cedarbrook.

And the changes are not just about staffing. They are about how kids choose their music program.

Before 2019-2020 choir students signed-up for the music program they wanted in two ways. First, as 6th graders, they'd be given a letter to take home regarding the Cedarbrook Music Department and for which class to sign-up. Essentially, unless the parents signed off on the student quitting, band, choir, and orchestra students who were in their ensembles in 6th grade would automatically continue in 7th grade.

Students who were not involved in any ensemble would choose between choir or general music (with a heavy emphasis on trying choir). Students were also given the option to start band or orchestra, but they had to demonstrate they were taking lessons (or something similar). Alternatively, if a Cedarbrook student wanted to switch into choir at any point during the school year (except right before a concert) or going into his/her/their 8th grade year, that student would be allowed to do so (for the most part).

In the 2019-2020 school year the Cedarbrook admin decided to open choir up to anyone with a hole in their schedule due to the elimination of a 2nd art teacher and just placed students in the choir class. The choir classes were filled with students who had no desire to sing or be a part of the ensemble. Additionally, parents and students were told the concerts were not required.

Successful Choir/Vocal Arts programs require a dedicated teacher who specializes in vocal pedagogy.

While the current Cedarbrook music teachers are incredible, wonderful, talented and skilled, they do not have the unique qualifications necessary to manage choir/vocal arts. Although all the teachers are certified in K-12 music no one is equally trained in all of the concentrations (band, voice, orchestra, etc.). They each went to school to train specifically in their area of expertise. For example Mr. Mallitz went to school for choral/vocal music. He devoted the majority of his ongoing professional development, including experiences in performance, choral conducting, and vocal pedagogy, to vocal music, as well.

Why does that matter?

- From basic warm-up procedures to how to properly assess students, it's necessary to have someone in the job who is comfortable with the process and also his/her/their instrument- including voice.
- In addition, not having a trained vocal arts teacher can be dangerous. The remaining teachers do not have knowledge of the vocal apparatus. From the muscles in/around the voice box to breathing to various tonal placement, there are specific technical aspects that only vocal specialists know best.

- Additionally, a huge part of the job in Cedarbrook is the changing young adolescent male voice, and there are warm-ups and other vocal activities to be done to ease that change and strengthen those muscles. In addition, there are nuances between choral conducting and instrumental. Finally, choral specialists have expertise in selecting music that is appropriate for changing voices; 7th and 8th grade choral music must be carefully tailored to support developing voices.

This is unacceptable and we must act to ensure that we support all the music options for our kids.

Until now, the philosophy of the vocal arts programs throughout the district was that each were a step towards a much longer musical journey. And Cedarbrook has been the turning point for many kids on that journey – getting students passionate about singing in a group and wanting to continue that at CHS. A flourishing vocal arts program at Cedarbrook, with a dedicated teacher who can create a robust and active vocal arts program, is essential to creating a foundation for students' success as singers at CHS. It's a domino effect that could have serious repercussions at the high school level.

And with this change, the time the band, orchestra and general music teachers taking over these classes now have to devote to choir and vocal arts will take time away from the work on those important programs/ensembles. In addition, it is unclear if Wildclefs will even continue under this new model.

This change will cause class sizes to increase dramatically.

Reducing music staff from 4 to 3 teachers who serve the same number of students means that class sizes will increase dramatically. Because general music class sizes are limited by computer lab stations, it is the choir, band, and orchestra classes that will see class sizes double or nearly double.

In our instrumental classes students are still learning basic technique and several different instruments are being taught in a classroom at one time. Now imagine, in that situation, the change from teaching 18 instrumentalists to 32 instrumentalists at one time. Middle school instrumental instruction would be seriously weakened and teachers would be stretched thin in the instruction they can provide.

We understand budgetary constraints and looking to save where they can, but the cost of an experienced and trained teacher should easily be worth the result - a program of artists and musicians who appreciate their culture, other cultures, and who celebrate each other, grow with each other, and who truly embody what Cheltenham continually strives to be. **We ask that the position held by Mr. Mallitz at Cedarbrook be added back to the budget and that an additional music teacher, with training in vocal performance, be hired for the 2020-2021 school year.**

I am asking you to reconsider your decision to not rehire in Mr. Mallitz's place at Cedarbrook. You did not replace Mr. Kwas at EP, Ms. Ohrt is retiring this year and Ms. Hutton is on sabbatical leave. This is a terrible time to make the claim that a budget cut here is an answer to our budget issue.

Our music program is one of the top 2 reasons that folks gravitate to us. I've admired how hard you work to continue to strengthen our school district. Please remember how important the Arts are to a curriculum; how important the Arts are to our scholars. I have three children who have benefited greatly from our music programs including concerts, choirs, musicals, touring ensemble, and a Capella. It has allowed them to feel like they are a true part of our wonderful schools, helped them to keep an interest in their own education while giving them agency and pride. Please do not cut this position.

Sincerely,
Erika Miller

The power of music to influence how young minds view the world should not be underestimated. We de-fund music programs at our own peril. More than anything else the choral programs at Cheltenham taught my son leadership and empathy. At times like this we should be adding choral staff positions at Cedarbrook, not taking them away.

Sincerely,
Ed Provost (parent of 2012 and 2017 grads)

My name is Jess Shapiro and I am an alumna of CSD and I would like to share my concern regarding the lack of a vocal music teacher replacement for Mr. Noah Mallitz at Cedarbrook Middle School.

The importance of music arts at the middle school level cannot be stressed enough. As a singer who went through the choir program and a member of WildClefs, I learned more than just how to read music or use my voice as an instrument. I learned how to work in a team so much so that our voices worked in tandem like a well-oiled machine - a choir is not just a group of individual singers but a collective of voices working as one. I learned to be confident in myself and my abilities. I learned to challenge myself through hard work and dedication to achieve things I never would have imagined doing otherwise. None of these valuable experiences could have taken place anywhere other than in choir rehearsal.

I have two short anecdotes I would like to share about my experiences in choir and why it is so vital to the Cedarbrook curriculum:

First, as a seventh-grader I underwent emergency brain and abdominal surgery. I returned to school more quickly than was perhaps appropriate and I was in a lot of pain. I sat out of gym class and had to have a friend help carry my belongings from class to class. I felt isolated and afraid. When I arrived in my choir class, Mr. Mallitz immediately knew something was wrong and had me sit in my usual chair. My fellow choir members gathered around me and sang. It

was a more healing and welcoming experience than I could have ever had in any other classroom at that school at the time. I do not think my experience is entirely unique. Because of the nature of choir, it creates a unit of students who lift each other up in a multitude of ways, and use their voices to express emotions that they are just learning to deal with. Especially at the middle school level, it is important to feel like a part of a group to be able to express yourself in a constructive and creative way.

Second, as a middle schooler I struggled with my confidence (as most tweens and early teens do). I was afraid to audition for the school plays or to go out for competitive clubs, but in choir, I learned to trust my abilities. It was because of my participation in choir that I ended up auditioning for the school musical. For many students, this then jump-starts them into a musical career at the high school. For me, it actually jump-started my experience as a Student Director of the Cedarbrook Musicals for the following 4 years and 6 plays. Through this experience I learned valuable leadership and organizational skills, and discovered my passion for working with teens, which is now my career path. Though I gained all of these experiences from the musicals, it would not have been possible if I had not had that initial training and encouragement from the choir program. Many middle schoolers really need that encouragement to bolster their burgeoning confidence in themselves and their abilities, and for me and my friends, that took place in the choir room.

I honestly cannot believe I am writing this email to the school board I grew up in and love. I am shocked at the disregard for the importance of the vocal arts. Shame on you for even considering it. I can honestly say on behalf of myself and many of my friends, that we would not be who we are today if it were not for the Cedarbrook choir program. I hope my voice and the voices of other choir alumni are heard by the school board.

I have attached a photo of WildClefs circa 2010. It was a pleasure and an honor to be a member and I am saddened by the prospect that next year's incoming students will not have the opportunity to join such an amazing group.

Jess Shapiro

Cheltenham High School Class of 2014

Cedarbrook Middle School Class of 2010

I would like to add my voice to the letter you will receive from Lisa Angelettie, Melissa Archer, Erika Miller, and Lorie Slass regarding the need to replace Noah Mallitz with a new vocal/choir teacher. They have ably expressed the reasons this is so crucial. What I would like to add is the following. . . I have just graduated my second child from CHS. An essential element of both of my sons' wonderful Cheltenham education was the vocal arts program. It is such a huge part of what makes Cheltenham excel, it would be terrible to lose this.

Beginning in elementary school (where they had the good fortune to study with the amazing Susan Ohrt), they were taught a love of singing, voice, and vocal music. At Cedarbrook, studying with Noah Mallitz, this was cemented. My older son went on to not only join the Glee Club at

his college, but to become its president. And as my second son sets off for college, he has chosen a university with a noted music school so that he can continue his studies.

Music, specifically vocal arts, is a huge part of who they both are, and this is because of what they were exposed to by teachers like Noah Mallitz, Susan Ohrt, Jenny Hutton, and more. What a terrible loss it would be for Cheltenham to give this up. And losing this connection at Cedarbrook in the 6th and 7th grade would weaken the outstanding high school program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Lynn Rosen

It came to my attention that the school board is not replacing the Cedarbrook vocal arts teacher in the upcoming year. I ask and urge you to reconsider.

My children are not yet at Cedarbrook; but I personally know how important choral and instrumental music education can be to a young impressionable student. My mother is, and my father was a music teacher. The importance of music education cannot be stressed enough. As a middle school student, I sang in a competitive audition choral group, and the impression it left on me still fills my soul today. The importance of a teacher with a focus on the choral arts is crucial. Adding more stress to the remaining instrumental music teachers is unfair.

The arts is a difficult class to “measure”. But its mark on our soul is forever. Please reconsider your budget cut. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Catherine Sampson

My name is Annie Scozzare and my child attends Cheltenham Elementary School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

I am also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community. Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

Thank you,
Annie Scozzare

I would like to request that the position in the music department at Cedarbrook, formerly held by Mr. Mallitz be added back to the budget, and that an additional music teacher with vocal training be hired for the 2020-2021 school year.

Please consider the value of these special programs that are a big part of who we are as a district. We celebrate these performances, achievements, all the time through our social media, email updates, etc. Why would we now want to cut back on such things that touch our souls as human beings?! We need it now more than ever! I think it would be a big mistake to make cuts to the Arts in this way. We want to see CSD thrive & grow. Vocal performance is one big part of allowing scholars to express themselves, and bring a voice to their learning experience at Cedarbrook. Choir at Cedarbrook also impacts vocal performance at the high school level.

I don't want to see CSD continue to make steps backward. I want us to be achieving an excellent, well rounded, diverse educational environment. Please do this for our school. Please restore our faith in what Cheltenham is, what it has the potential to be.

Thank you for your time,
Susan Lee
Parent of 3 children in the district

My name is Elizabeth Bieryla and my children attend Cheltenham Elementary School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

I am also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community.

Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community. Now is the time to stand together with and support our community.

Thank you
Elizabeth Bieryla

My name is Kellyann Campbell and my child attends Cheltenham Elementary School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

I am also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community.

Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

Thank you
Kellyann Campbell

We are Kenneth & Tyheshia Carmichael and our child attends Cheltenham Elementary School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

We are also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community.

Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

Thank you
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Carmichael

Some of you may know me from my 25 years as an active CSD parent volunteer. My oldest started first grade in 1988. My youngest child graduated in 2013. My four children received an excellent education in our district. All four graduated from college. My oldest recently completed a mid-career Masters in Public Administration from Harvard.

They are the wonderful young adults they are today in large part due to the dedicated staff and the many wonderful extra-curricular activities offered at all our schools. They were involved in everything from student government to athletics, from the music programs to Problem Solving.

I am also a twenty-year CSD employee, currently working as the Library Assistant at Elkins Park. In this capacity I have volunteered for the last five years with the EP After School Program. The ASP offers great classes including sports, Scrabble, newspaper and robotics. I run the After-School Reading Club. We talk about Reading Olympic and other books, take AR quizzes or just quietly read. Transportation home has always been a part of these programs.

Please DO NOT cut the funding for these after school buses. If I read the budget correctly, the total is less than \$35,000. This is a tiny fraction of the overall budget. Multiple studies have indicated that the most dangerous hours for tweens are between 3:00PM and 6:00PM. The EP After School Program gives students a safe, constructive, fun place to be. There is much talk these days in CSD about equity. Cutting the transportation home from this program will directly and disproportionately impact our students of color.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Sincerely,
Kathleen Fitzgerald Camp**

I am writing to ask that you reconsider your plans to outsource both the CLASP and second shift Custodians. I have lived in the Cheltenham School District for 31 years. Both of my daughters are graduates of Cheltenham High School. Currently, one of my grandsons is in ninth grade at the high school and another is in sixth grade at Elkins Park School. My daughter works as a Paraeducator at Cheltenham Elementary School. My family has seen first-hand how important the CLASP workers and custodians are to the Cheltenham School District family.

The CLASP workers are the employees who many of the students see first thing in the morning and also at the end of their day. They care for our children and grandchildren outside of the official school day while parents are working. Throughout the day, many of these CLASP workers also work throughout the schools in other capacities. Some of these workers are residents of the township. All have formed relationships with our children. They are the familiar faces who know our children. They also work alongside teachers and other staff members to help support our children in many ways.

The second shift Custodians are the employees who begin their day in the afternoon while our children are still in the buildings. Our children recognize their faces and know them by name. They are the workers who set up and work during events in the evenings or weekends. Again, they are residents of Cheltenham Township. They may see our children in the neighborhood and have formed a relationship with staff and students alike. There is a sense of pride and accountability, they know what is expected and they rise to the occasion each time.

Outsourcing these positions would have a negative impact on our school community. While it may look like a good idea on paper as far as finances, in the long run it will most likely end up costing the school district more money and also be detrimental to the schools, staff and students in more ways than we can imagine.

All of these employees work very hard for our children, for our schools. They are part of our community. They are invested in the Cheltenham School District because they are the Cheltenham School District.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Regards,
Judith Harvey
Glenside Resident from Xfinity Connect App
Cheltenham Township**

My name is Nicole Hoch and my children attend Cheltenham Elementary School and Elkins Park School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

We are also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community.

Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

Thank you
Nicole and Mike Hoch

As a longtime resident and employee of the Cheltenham School District, I am strongly against the idea of subcontracting custodial and CLASP positions. These jobs should not be outsourced to private contractors.

It seems to me that a number of years ago the district ended up having problems when another department was out sourced. The district hired back its workers. Much more recently, an outside group was hired to do window washing at EP and it there was a problem involving computer theft.

That aside, I don't feel that people from an agency would be as loyal to the district as our current employees, many who have been with the district for a number of years. The amount of money you will save by sub-contracting CLASP and custodial employees will hardly make a difference in this district's rather large budget deficit. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Paula Witherspoon
Elkins Park
Long Time Resident and Para-educator

My name is Raymond Porreca. My wife and I send our son to Cheltenham Elementary and CLASP. We send him to CLASP because we know that while we are unable to be home with him immediately after school, we trust that he will be safe, and that he will be well taken care of by people who know his name.

We are well-aware that our schools are being taken care of, again, by people accountable to the community that they serve and many live in. The statement made previously, that these decisions were made before COVID-19 changed everything, does not apply. That does not give

you a way out here and that is not an excuse to treat the custodial and CLASP workers as if they are disposable.

At the meeting in March, the board received notice from members of the community that we did not agree with our tax dollars being given to people from outside of the Cheltenham community in order to save a few dollars. The board's responses were unsatisfactory. It came across as if you had already made your decision and thought that this would easily pass by without notice. We noticed.

I want my child to be with people who are vetted, who are members of the community and who are accountable to the community and taxpayers which they serve. You, as a board, were asked to handle our tax dollars in a responsible way. Instead, you are taking bids from outside agencies, again, as I said in my previous letter, following the failed economic playbook that has led this country into a spiral of wage depression, and top down economic power.

I hope that you consider the past consequences of these decisions. Listen to your neighbors when they complain about the costs associated with Aqua's control of our water systems. Remember what happened when the groundskeeping was given to an outside agency. What was the cost? I would ask in person, but again, this meeting is being held without your having to face your constituents.

People in the community are asking that our custodial workers and CLASP employees remain where they belong. Taking care of our children.

Regards,
Raymond Porreca

As a longtime resident and longtime educator in the Cheltenham schools, I implore you to keep our family intact. I remember when Cheltenham first created CLASP. It was lauded as innovative, cost saving, and grew our community. The employees of CLASP share our school's space and our children. I have often consulted with them to compare behaviors during their program and the school day program. We have worked together to try to resolve issues with students. They have provided insight into families as their contact with them is often daily. The employees are often members of our community and share their love for our students. As school employees we know them, and that in turn makes the building safer for everyone.

I also recall when the board decided to go with an outside contractor for cleaning services. New faces were in the building frequently. A primary function of our job is to keep students safe and having strangers in the building threatened our feelings of security. That was many years ago when our society and schools were not frequently targeted with harm. We were constantly asking for identification. There was often a language barrier. In addition to the safety issue our classroom needs were not being met. If we left a note of something that needed to be done, often it was not. There was no real accountability. That left additional, unplanned work for first shift custodians who already have a full plate. The custodians in our buildings have a vested interest in the school district and the community. Case in point, a second shift custodian who

spoke fluent Spanish and English translated information for a teacher so she could communicate with parents of a new student. He did this on his own time out of concern for our school community. There are countless examples of going above and beyond from our custodial staff.

Some much has already been done to our schools to eliminate that feeling of community we once held so dear. Please do not make another backward move. There are so many areas of waste in this district. Our CLASP and second shift custodians are NOT one of them.

Respectfully,
Randa Gordon
Librarian (Myers Elementary) and longtime resident

Our names are Jessika Rivera & Mark Rivera and our child, Jameson attends Cheltenham Elementary School. We are asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

We are also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community.

Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

Thank you
Jessika Rivera & Mark Rivera

As you have probably seen there are a number of parents, alumni and students concerned about the decision to not fill the vocal arts instructor position at Cedarbrook. As a parent of a recent graduate I can say the vocal arts program in district is an important for many students. And CBK needs a trained vocal instructor - someone who's professional development has focused in this area. You can't just put the band teacher or the general music teacher in this position. It is not only dangerous for the vocal development of our kids to have someone who doesn't have the expertise, it will diminish the quality of the program. And by reducing the music staff across the board, you will see the band and instrumental programs suffer because they will have to have larger class sizes to accommodate taking on the choir classes.

Take a look at this 2019 performance at the Hershey Coral presentation. Cedarbrook received the highest marks. You cannot perform an advanced acapella chorale piece without a proper vocal teacher. Our current crop of music teacher, while excellent in their domains, are not vocal instructors. Would you swap an art teacher with a biology teacher? Or a French teacher with a German teacher if they weren't trained in those languages?

I appreciate and understand the many budget challenges you face. But cutting the arts is not the answer.

Lorie Slass

My name is Jennifer Thomason and my child attends Cheltenham Elementary School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

I/we am also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community.

Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

**Thank you
Jennifer Thomason**

My name is Ryan Thomason and my child attends Cheltenham Elementary School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community.

I am also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community.

Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

**Thank you
Ryan Thomason**

My name is Hannah Venit and my child attends Cheltenham Elementary School. I am asking you to consider the implications of terminating our district custodians and CLASP workers. At this time, we are asking a lot of our custodians, but balancing the budget on their backs is not fair and goes against everything we stand for as a community. These valued staff members make the school a safe place for our children and they contribute to our community in ways that may not seem obvious by helping with events planned by the PTO outside of school hours.

I am also asking you to ensure that when our children return to school, that they see the familiar faces who have welcomed them in the CLASP program since they have been attending. The CLASP workers are accountable and well-respected by our school community. Now is not the time to force changes which will have long-reaching implications for our community.

**Thank you,
Hannah Venit**

