

Seneca Valley School District



SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION

Seneca Valley Senior High School Auditorium - 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

February 6, 2023

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Ms. Kathy Whittle, President, called the meeting to order at 7:23 p.m.
 - A. **Moment of Silence** – The meeting was opened with a moment of silence.
 - B. **Pledge of Allegiance** - Jadhelys Perez-Hartling, a third grader at Ehrman Crest Elementary School, continued the board initiative, “I Led the Pledge” by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - C. **Roll Call** – by Ms. Julia Benson, School Board Secretary, showed the following members in attendance: Ms. Leslie Bredl, Mr. Eric DiTullio, Ms. Susan Harrison, Mr. Tim Hester, Mr. Mike Jacobs, Mr. Fred Peterson and Ms. Kathy Whittle. Mr. James Nickel and Mr. Jeff Widdowson were not in attendance.

2. **INFORMATION REPORTS**
 - A. **Student/Staff Recognition** – Ms. Linda Andreassi announced the following student/staff recognitions:
 1. Four Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) students earned top recognition at the CyberPatriot’s National Youth Cyber Defense Competition, the world’s largest cybersecurity challenge. The T-Rollers team of RGMS eighth graders earned the most points of any middle school in Pennsylvania over the first two rounds. They advanced to the state round of the competition placing second overall. The team was also the only middle school in the state to qualify for the National Semifinal Round after scoring in the top third of the nation. The students competed in the Semifinal Round on January 21 and finished the season in 200th place at the nationwide Middle School Competition. The T-Rollers team, comprised of Albert Pimenov, Sidney Newton, Parker Budney and Nolan Minder, had a successful inaugural season under the direction of Greg Smolinski, an RGMS gifted support teacher and team adviser.

2. Congratulations to the Seneca Valley vocational-technical student participants in this year's SkillsUSA District 10 Competition. Four Seneca Valley students placed at the competition, a program that is offered through the Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School. Over 400 high school students participated in 61 skill and leadership contests taking place at the New Castle School of Trades (NCST) and Lawrence County Career and Technical Center. Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School SkillsUSA Competitors from Seneca Valley who placed include:
- Advertising Design - Viktoriya Semenenko - 1st place
 - First Aid/CPR - Carly Pelletier - 3rd place
 - Automotive Maintenance & Light Repair - Ayden Wood - 2nd place
 - Commercial Baking - Ronny Royhab - 2nd place
- Skills USA is a partnership of students, teachers and industries working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce.

- B. **Dates to Remember** - Ms. Linda Andreassi announced the following dates to remember:

February	National Black History Month
February 6-10	National School Counseling Week
February 12	Ticket sales begin for the SV All-School Musical "Mary Poppins"
February 13	School Board Meeting, 7 p.m., SHS Auditorium
February 14	2023-24 SV Kindergarten registration opens
February 17	Inclement Weather Makeup Day for January 25 closure
February 20	Presidents' Day – Staff-In Service Day – No School for Students
February 22	Ash Wednesday
February 24	End of Second Trimester for SVAOC Classes, Grades K-6
March 1	End of Second Trimester for Grades K-6
March 2-5	All-School Musical, "Mary Poppins"

- C. **Jackson Township Residential Developments** – Mr. John Demkowicz, Director of Transportation, reported that Jackson Township has shared with SVSD that there are five residential developments currently under construction (313 single family and 109 townhomes). In addition, beginning this Spring, Frydrych Apartments and Phase 3 of the Creekside Manor developments are scheduled to begin (288 units). Seneca Hills (76 townhomes) and Woodland Reserve (24 single family and 100 units) received final approval with their start time yet to be determined. Last of all, there are an additional two developments that are still in the tentative approval process (182 single family and 77 townhomes).

Dr. Vitale reminded the board that we have known about the possibility of substantial growth in the district because of the reports that the demographer shared with us last year. We are being deliberant with our planning and have been prepping for this growth that is expected to bring our student population to over 8,000 in the next 5-8 years. The next building to renovate is the IHS and further in the future will be the elementary schools.

Mr. Peterson asked for an update on the traffic flow at Ehrman Crest and for an update on the position of drivers. Mr. Demkowicz responded that they have utilized ways to condense the traffic and that all buses are off the property by 3:45 p.m. For the question regarding drivers, Mr. Demkowicz shared that routes are being covered and that if more than one driver calls off, they are communicating to parents. Both ABC and Valley are both doing what they can to recruit additional drivers. Mr. Peterson commended Mr. Demkowicz for all that has been done.

- D. **Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School Proposed Budget** - Dr. Regina Hiler presented the 2023-24 proposed Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School (BCAVTS) operating budget. Ballots were given to each school board member to cast their vote. The ballots are due back to the BCAVTS by April 6.

Dr. Hiler went through the budget page-by-page. The budget shows an increase of \$207,925 from last year with the Seneca Valley School District's portion rising by \$68,787.

Mr. DiTullio commented that since 2009-2010, we have seen a 60% average daily membership (ADM) increase due to so many SV students attending the Vo-Tech. Mr. DiTullio thanked Dr. Hiler for all she is doing.

Mr. Peterson shared that he enjoys getting to see all of the outstanding students and that they are always saying that they want more hands-on time.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Dr. Hiler and commented that SV will be paying approximately \$70,000 more next year (approximately \$20,000 to rising costs and approximately \$50,000 to an increase in the number of students attending).

Ms. Whittle thanked Dr. Hiler and shared that she is proud to hear that more SV students are attending Vo-Tech.

- E. **Agency Reports**

1. Vo-Tech - Mr. Fred Peterson, Jr./Mr. Michael Jacobs – Mr. Jacobs shared about two students that recently were hired because of the skills that they have learned from Vo-Tech. One of the students is studying Graphic Design and the other Collision Repair.

Ms. Whittle shared that what the students are learning at Vo-Tech is a win for everyone.

2. I.U. IV - Mr. Eric DiTullio reported that the I.U. IV had the Fact-Finding Hearing on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, and the report was sent to the board on January 31, 2023. The February meeting has been rescheduled for February 8, 2023, to discuss and vote on the Fact Finder Report.

- F. **Legislative** - Mr. Eric DiTullio reported and reminded those in attendance that Mark Rozzi was elected as Speaker of the House. Mr. Rozzi, a Democrat, had agreed to change his party affiliation to “Independent” and not caucus with either party as part of a deal with the House Republican Leadership. Since Mr. Rozzi was elected speaker in January, he has not done this and has recessed the House until February 27, 2023.

The Republican controlled State Senate, also remains in recess until February 27, 2023, causing no work to be accomplished without the house in session.

In addition, Mr. DiTullio reported on the Pennsylvania School Employee’s Retirement System (PSERS) sharing that they had a meeting on January 20, 2023. Chris Santa Maria was re-elected as the chair, Sue Lemo was elected as the Interim Vice Chair, Treasurer, Stacy Garrity was elected as Vice Chair of the Investment Committee and Mr. DiTullio was elected as Vice Chair of the Benefits and Appeal Committee.

PSERS third quarter return was -4.5% outperforming the benchmark by 0.4%. As of September 30, 2022, PSERS total fund investment assets totaled \$66.1 billion, a decrease of approximately \$3.7 billion. PSERS has outperformed its benchmarks in the quarter, year to date, fiscal year to date, one year, three years, five years, 15 years and 30 years. During this time, the PSERS fund has been in the lowest risk compared to peer public pension plans. PSERS was in the top 1% of peer public pension plans for the three quarters, ending September 2022.

G. **Financial Reports**

1. Operations
2. Senior High Activities
3. Intermediate High Activities
4. Middle School Activities
5. Athletics
6. Food Service
7. Tax Collections
8. Capital Projects Funds

3. **ACTION AGENDA**

- A. **Public Comment** – There was no public comment.
- B. **Personnel** – Approved the following personnel items that were discussed in executive session held prior to the meeting:
1. **Appointments** – *Professional Substitutes* – Brandi Ruiz, Laura Gutasukas, Nicole Driscoll, Christina Brown, Elianna Marsh, Julia Leech, Elizabeth Krumm, Carmryn Camp, *Classified* – Theodore Lindgren, Madalyn Jamison, Richard Duff, Kristie Moran, *Classified Substitutes* – Nicole Driscoll

2. **Leaves** – *Administrator* – Megan Lizewski, Nannette Farmar, *Professional* – Katherine Langley, Leah Vogel, Lauren McClain, Elana Kriess, Melanie Wingerstahn, Andrea DeFabbo, Rachel Johnson, *Classified* – ISG Angelo Lettiere, Nila Lynch, Rhonda Schwartz, Brenda Mazinski
3. **Stipends** – Bridget Miller, Lauri Pendred, Tim Eiler
4. **Retirements** – *Director* – Lynn Burtner, *Professional* – Mark Uhrinek, Ronald Butschle, Jeffrey Hanlon, Herbert McCracken, Valerie Danner, *Classified* – Patricia Ruggiero, Diana McCauley

C. **Student Adjudications** – Approved the following Student Adjudications:

1. #2022-23-21
2. #2022-23-22
3. #2022-23-23
4. #2022-23-24
5. #2022-23-25
6. #2022-23-26
7. #2022-23-27
8. #2022-23-28

Mr. Hester motioned, seconded by Ms. Bredl, to approve personnel and student adjudications. The motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. **Work Session** – January 9, 2023
- B. **Action Meeting** – January 17, 2023

5. **TREASURER’S REPORT**

6. **GENERAL FUND BILLS**

Grand Total: \$4,157,830.38

7. **CONSTRUCTION FUND BILLS**

Grand Total: \$363,125.74

8. **ADMINISTRATION**

- A. **2023-24 School Calendar** – Approve the 2023-24 school calendar.
- B. **Local District Holidays** – Approve the resolution regarding local district holidays for the 2023-24 school year.
- C. **Kennywood Picnic** – Approve Friday, June 23, 2023, as Kennywood picnic date for 2023.

D. **Board Policies** – Approve the following board policies:

1. Policy 204 – Attendance, second and final reading.
2. Policy 233 – Suspension and Expulsion, second and final reading.

Dr. Vitale shared that we are currently on the fifth draft of the 2023-24 school year calendar after getting feedback from individuals on our Leadership Team and Teacher Union Leaders.

Dr. Vitale shared that about eight-to-nine years ago, SVSD was one of the first in the area to utilize Flexible Instruction Days (FIDs) in the event of inclement weather or other school cancellations. At that time, the parents in the district were surveyed to see which model they preferred when it would come to an inclement weather closure. At that time, parents preferred to have two snow days and then three FID days built into the school calendar.

Since the first snow day this year, a survey was sent out to parents in the district asking how they would like to see the calendar for next school year. At this time, nearly 70% of those who have responded, have said that they want to keep the calendar the way that is has been with a mix of snow days and FID days. The survey will close on February 7, 2023, and any changes needing to be made to the draft calendar will be made at that time.

9. INSTRUCTION

A. **Conferences** – Approve the conference requests.

B. **Student Trips** – Approve the following student trips:

1. Mr. Varden Armstrong, Sr high School Music Department Chair, to take students to Slippery Rock High School for the PMEA District Band Concert, February 9, 2023. Students will miss one day instruction.
2. Ms. Claire Barker, IHS Choral Teacher and Ms. Chessa Crum, RGMS Choral Teacher, to take students to Rochester, NY for the All-Eastern Choir, April 13-16, 2023. Students will miss two days of instruction.

C. **Grant Disbursements** - Grant permission to apply for and disburse, if approved, the following grants:

1. TranformedED Teacher Innovation Fellowship mini-grant funded through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and in association with the Western PA AASA consortium in the amount of \$1,496.20 requested by Ms. Rebecca Whitney, third-grade teacher at Ehrman Crest Elementary School. Funds will be used to purchase a Hydroponic Indoor Garden System for the newly created Ehrman Crest Community Garden where students will learn about plant growth and development.
2. KidsGardening.org grant in the amount of \$500 requested by Ms. Rebecca Whitney to purchase a raised garden bed for the Ehrman Crest Community Garden.

10. **BUSINESS/FINANCE**

- A. **Field Renovations/Improvements on Leased Property** - Approve the field renovations/improvements on the Seneca Valley School District (SVSD) property that is leased by Zelianople Borough. The renovations/improvements to the property will be at no cost to the district.
- B. **Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School (BCAVTS) 2023-24 Budget** - Approve the BCAVTS proposed budget for the 2023-24 school year in the amount of \$6,513,809.00.
- C. **Change Orders** – Approve the construction change orders for Ehrman Crest.

11. **PERSONNEL**

12. **LETTERS SENT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD** – The following constituents communicated through the SVSD school board email account after posting the January 17, 2023, public agenda:

- a. Lauren Ridge
- b. Seneca Valley Hockey Association
- c. Julia Desantes on behalf of Stephenie Scialabba
- d. Md Rumi
- e. Jill Easterling
- f. Michelle Tresky
- g. Tiffany Bucci

13. **ADJOURNMENT** – With nothing further to come before the board, Ms. Harrison motioned, seconded by Mr. DiTullio to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. The motion carried on a voice vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – An executive session was held prior to this meeting to discuss personnel items.

Ms. Kathy Whittle, President

Ms. Julia Benson, School Board Secretary