

# Seneca Valley School District



## SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION

Teleconference - 7:00 p.m.

### MINUTES

**September 14, 2020**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Mr. James Nickel, President, called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m.
  - A. **Moment of Silence** – The meeting was opened with a moment of silence.
  - B. **Pledge of Allegiance** – The Seneca Valley Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) Cadets and Seniors (pictured from left in video) Zachary Tate, Mareena Price and Aleksander Matusiak, continued the board meeting initiative, *I Led the Pledge*, by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

SVTube link for I Led the Pledge: <https://svtube.svsd.net/play/?id=ucnjrs8h3c>



- C. **Roll Call** – Roll call by Ms. Lisa Mislán, Board Secretary, showed the following members in attendance: Ms. Leslie Bredl, Mr. Eric DiTullio, Ms. Susan Harrison, Mr. Timothy Hester, Mr. Mike Jacobs, Mr. James Nickel, Mr. Frederick Peterson Jr., Ms. Kathy Whittle and Mr. Jeffrey Widdowson.

Others present included Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Matthew McKinley, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary; Dr. Sean McCarty, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary; Ms. Kyra Bobak, Human Resources Director; Ms. Lynn Burtner, Business Manager; Ms. Linda Andreassi, Director of Communications; Mr. Gerald Miller, Special Education and Gifted Director; Mr. Randy Miller, Director of Buildings and Grounds; Ms. Heather Lewis, Athletic Director; Dr. Marie Palano, Supervisor of Analytics and Federal Programs; Dr. Jeffrey Roberts, Supervisor of Gifted Education and Student Services; Mr. James Pearson, Director of Transportation; Ms. Annie Mersing, Director of Advancement; Mr. Jeffrey James, Director of Safety and Security; Mr. Matthew Hoffman, Solicitor; and a press representative.

## 2. INFORMATION REPORTS

- A. **Dates to Remember** – Ms. Andreassi announced the following dates to remember:

September 18	Rosh Hashanah Begins
September 21	School Board Meeting, Zoom Teleconference, 7:00 p.m.
September 22	Autumn Begins
September 26	SAT Testing – SHS (112 students)
September 27	Yom Kippur Begins

### B. **SV Foundation Update**

Ms. Mersing, Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) Director of Development, provided an update regarding the extra COVID-19 assistance efforts that set Seneca Valley apart from other districts. She thanked all involved and everyone who stepped up to assist the Foundation and the district with donations, discounts and words of encouragement.

#### Child Care Programs

- In response to Dr. Vitale's plea to the community for help during this time, Cranberry Municipal Center, Stepping Stones, Dutilh Church and the Cranberry YMCA have developed new school-age childcare programs for our families to utilize. More information about these programs and other childcare resources are available to the community on our website under the Community Support page. <https://www.svsd.net/Page/26329>

#### Outdoor Learning Spaces

- The Foundation Board of Trustees voted to fund large 20x40 outdoor tents for our schools which will protect students from the elements while learning outdoors. Research has proven that being outdoors is one of the best ways to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These tents were provided at a discount from two local businesses: General Rental Center and Eventioneers, both in Cranberry Township, and were set up with the help of our buildings and grounds department.

To make an online donation to the SVF, visit <https://www.svsd.net/SVFoundation> or contact Ms. Mersing at [mersingam@svsd.net](mailto:mersingam@svsd.net).

- C. **Student/Staff Recognition** – Ms. Andreassi announced the following student and staff recognitions:

1. Anne Newmyer, a first grader from Haine Elementary School, is feeling the love. The 6-year-old recently had her artwork selected from almost 600 pieces of art to be named the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV (MIUIV) Young Artist Purchase Prize Award winner for her painting simply called "Love." Miss Newmyer's artwork will be framed with a plaque and become part of the permanent collection exhibited at the MIUIV office in Grove City. In addition to the Young Artist Purchase Prize Award, Miss Newmyer's art was also chosen as the Juror's Choice Award Winner and is the student representative of this year's exhibit. Her artwork will now appear on the T- Shirt that is distributed to every student in the exhibit.



2. Officials of National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) recently announced Seneca Valley Seniors David Choi, Zachary Garcia, Simren Jayaraman, Parker Logue, Ananya Rao, Avani Salunkhe, Anoop Savio and Dorabella White, as Semifinalists in the 66<sup>th</sup> annual Merit Scholarship Program. As Semifinalists, these eight seniors will have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$30 million that will be offered next spring.
3. Seneca Valley Senior Sarah Widenhofer appeared in the bright lights of Broadway this past Saturday, Sept. 12. The Cranberry Township teen was excited to be a part of the National Down Syndrome Society's (NDSS) annual Times Square Video presentation that featured photographs highlighting children, teens, and adults with Down syndrome - and reminds the world in a very big way about the contributions and milestones of people with Down syndrome. The photo of Sarah was selected as one of 500 photographs that appeared in the video, which streamed on NDSS social media from the heart of Times Square. This event kicks off Down Syndrome Awareness Month, which begins in October.

#### D. Agency Reports

1. **Vo-Tech** – Mr. Peterson provided a Vo-Tech update noting that a grant in the amount of \$91,853 was received for the Continuity of Education for Career and Technical Centers and will go toward an online learning coach, a health and student support employee and a COVID-19 custodian. Mr. Peterson added that of the 941 students at the Vo-Tech, 112 are from Seneca Valley. The most popular programs for Seneca Valley students attending include graphic design, heavy equipment repair, welding, cosmetology, culinary arts and health assistant.
2. **I.U. IV** – Mr. DiTullio provided an update from the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV (MIUIV) noting that the September meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. The MIUIV has become a central point for the Rapid Response Center developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and Pennsylvania Department of Health (PDoH) to deliver news and information regarding COVID-19 to the schools. Information will be filtered first through the IUs. The MIUIV serves three counties, including some remote areas that may not have as much support.

- E. **Legislative** – Mr. Peterson provided a higher-level legislative update below, noting that if anyone has any more specific questions, he may be contacted at [fredvp8@gmail.com](mailto:fredvp8@gmail.com):

Mr. Peterson reported that the Federal House and Senate are back in session after the August recess. They will recess again from October 12 to November 6, 2020, coinciding with the election. He added that 435 of 435 House members are up for re-election and 35 of 100 Senators are on the ballots. Senator Toomey will not run again until 2023 and Senator Casey in 2025.

Secretary DeVos attempted to divert millions of COVID-19 dollars to private and charter schools. It was ruled by a federal judge that such an action would overstep her authority, so those dollars will remain in the pool for all public schools.

Pennsylvania state legislation focused on COVID-19 activities regarding school sports and providing web access and broadband to rural areas to support distance learning. Senate Bill 539 has support to remove any student convicted of sexual assault against another student to be removed from the school that the victim attends.

F. **Financial Reports** – The following reports were provided in the backup materials.

1. Operations
2. Senior High Activities
3. Intermediate High Activities
4. Middle School Activities
5. Athletics
6. Food Services
7. Tax Collection Reports
8. Capital Project Funds

G. **Real Estate Transactions July 2020 “Butler County Matters”**

Mr. Peterson noted that Mr. Jerry Andre has announced his retirement, effective January 2021.

### 3. ACTION AGENDA

- A. **Public Comment** – Public comment was heard by Mr. Rich Cashdollar regarding concern with Cohort learning model.
- B. **Personnel Action** – Approved resignations, appointments, contracted services, leaves and retirements as follows:

**Resignations:** *Professional* – Abigail Stasenکو, Jamie Douglas; *Supplemental* – Allyson Calvert

**Appointments:** *Professional* – Christopher Titus; *Professional Substitutes* – Christopher Eden, Kathleen Hippert, Jill Schulties, Anissa Tekelenburg, Frederick Wood; *Classified* – Nicholas Ranayhossaini, Michelle Parsons, Laurie Melberg, Stephanie Bush, Madeline Nowak; *Supplementals* – A.J. May, Eric Abbott, Tricia Straw, Megan Wise, Maggie Kelly, Mark DeIDuca, Pamela McCarthy, Herbert McCracken, Todd Winter, Nina Grinnell, Tammie Limmer, Kalene Ireland, Brian Carson, John Fetchko, Steven Miller; *Internship* – Torrie LaMantia

**Contracted Services:** *Artist in Residence* – Timothy Baurle

**Leaves:** *Professional* – Brian Carson, Nicole Duncan, Lora Nickel, Deborah Wunsche; *Classified* – Nichol Mignanelli, Robin Sedlak, Susan Greco, Nicole Parson, Michelle Tresky, Kristen

Verlihay, Kimberly Martin, Tanya Rubright, Elizabeth Marthens, Alesia Oechslein, Erica Sicilia, Christine Zacherl

Retirements: Classified – Patricia Smith, Patricia DiVito, Jacalyn Sokoloski, Deborah Schettler, Max Gandy

Mr. Nickel motioned, seconded by Mr. DiTullio to approve resignations, appointments, contracted services, leaves and retirements. The motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

- C. **Competition Phase Spectator Protocols** – Approved the competition phase spectator protocols addendum to the revised health and safety plan for return to sport/activity.

Ms. Harrison motioned, seconded by Ms. Bredl to approve the competition phase spectator protocols addendum to the revised health and safety plan for return to sport/activity. The motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

Ms. Lewis noted that the protocols as part of House Bill 2787 are currently on the Governor's desk

and should come into law in the next two weeks. The protocols establish responsible ways we can allow spectators. They are established by venue and by sport. For example, protocols for an outdoor cross-country event would be different than volleyball in a gymnasium. Spectator capacity will be established accordingly. As in previous years, there will be an admittance charge to varsity football, varsity soccer and varsity volleyball.

Mr. DiTullio stated that we will be charging a little more to cover the additional costs of cleaning and sanitizing. We are again asking for parent and community cooperation and understanding of the limitations so we can move forward in a positive way.

Ms. Whittle stated that the safety of students and athletes are priority. Allowing them to compete brings normalcy to the children and that we won't be able to do this without full cooperation.

- D. **PSBA 2020 Slate of Candidates Discussion and Election of Officers** – Elected the Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA) officers.

Mr. Nickel motioned, seconded by Mr. DiTullio, to elect the slate of candidates for PSBA officers as detailed in the backup with the stipulation to elect Mr. Daniel O'Keefe as Vice President. The motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Approve the following meeting minutes:

- A. **Work Session** – August 3, 2020  
 B. **Regular Meeting** – August 10, 2020  
 C. **Special Meeting** – August 31, 2020

5. **TREASURER'S REPORT** – Ms. Lynn Burtner

6. **GENERAL FUND BILLS** – Ms. Burtner  
 Grand Total: \$3,630,639.72

7. **CONSTRUCTION FUND BILLS** – Ms. Burtner  
 Grand Total: \$2,520,683.67

8. **ADMINISTRATION ACTION** – Mr. Eric DiTullio

A. **Board Policies** – Approved the following board policies.

1. #103 – Nondiscrimination in School and Classroom Practices – revised, second and final reading.
2. #104 – Nondiscrimination in Employment/Contract Practices – revised, second and final reading.
3. #138 – Language Instruction Educational Program – revised, second and final reading.
4. #309.1 – Telework – revised, first and final reading.

Mr. DiTullio motioned, seconded by Mr. Hester to approve policy 104, 108, and 309.1 as listed above.

Policy 103 was also approved with Mr. Peterson’s suggested modification to add “mental and emotional” in all instances where the policy reads, “threat to physical health”.

Mr. Hoffman had no concerns regarding Mr. Peterson’s suggested modification and the motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

- B. **Care Unlimited, Inc. dba Aveanna Healthcare Provider Agreement** – Approve the Care Unlimited, Inc. dba Aveanna Healthcare provider agreement to provide healthcare services to students through June 30, 2021.
- C. **Epic Health Services, Inc. dba Aveanna Healthcare Provider Agreement** – Approve the Epic Health Services, Inc. dba Aveanna Healthcare provider agreement to provide healthcare services to students through June 30, 2021.
- D. **School Bus Drivers** – Approve the list of new bus drivers for ABC Transit and Valley Lines.

Mr. Hoffman confirmed for Mr. Nickel that it is regulation that the board approve the list of bus drivers.

9. **INSTRUCTION ACTION** – Ms. Sue Harrison

- A. **MHY Family Services Agreement** – Approve the agreement with MHY Family Services for services during the 2020-21 school year.

10. **BUSINESS/FINANCES ACTION** – Mr. Mike Jacobs

- A. **Amcom (formerly ComDoc)** – Approve a document printer/copier lease renewal with Amcom (formerly ComDoc) for a 60-month term in the amount of \$14,570 per month.

11. **PERSONNEL ACTION** – Mr. Jeff Widdowson – (Executive Session)

12. **COMMUNICATION** – Communication was received from the following:

- A. Mr. Matt DeMarco – Note of thanks
- B. Ms. Stephanie Lane – Bus driver masking
- C. Mr. Mark Bidoli – Request for August 10, 2020 Minutes
- D. Ms. Jill Manns – Preference for five days of in-person instruction
- E. Ms. Keri Elms – Return to sports for smaller sports teams
- F. Ms. Ashley Bauer – Preference for five days of in-person instruction
- G. Ms. Alison Irvin – Preference for five days of in-person instruction
- H. Mr. Luke Marsh – Preference for five days of in-person instruction
- I. Ms. Samantha Cramm – Request for Seniors to stay in brick and mortar
- J. Ms. Natalie Heisey – Diversity education
- K. Mr. Walter Regal – Virtual learning and internet access
- L. Ms. Andrea Tucker – Preference for staying in Cohort Phase
- M. Ms. Katherine Listwak – 9/11
- N. Ms. Candace Kantz – Preference for five days of in-person instruction

Dr. Vitale talked about the start of the school year stating that she is very pleased that all the planning has paid off. We have started slowly and are reaping the benefits. She noted that while not required, some teachers did implement live streaming. Teachers were asked to focus more on getting children on and off the buses, to the correct classrooms, greeting the students and building relationships. Teachers will now begin live streaming more often. Dr. Vitale cautions comparing Seneca Valley with other districts. Dr. Vitale also stated that our focus is on authentic learning.

Dr. Vitale asks that if parents are not pleased with what their children are learning, to first reach out to the teachers and keep in mind that every district has experienced technical difficulties. Our goal is still to go five days in person beginning October 5. We are following the PDE and PaDOH dashboard and tracking Butler County COVID-19 cases on a rolling 14-day schedule as well as by each zip code served by Seneca Valley. Currently, there are no known cases with students or teachers within the district, but it is too soon to tell what these numbers will look like as we move forward. Dr. Vitale is confident that we are doing all that we can to mitigate the spread at school. Dr. McCarty agreed that having the teachers and students in the buildings are what we needed and the optimism is contagious. Dr. McKinley thanked the staff for the many months of strenuous planning.

Mr. Peterson asked Dr. Vitale and Ms. Burtner about the off-budget purchases. Ms. Burtner noted that we have had to procure significant amounts of unexpected product that we would not be purchasing in a normal school year, including safety equipment, technology and outdoor learning spaces. We have been fortunate that we have received grant money from several streams of COVID-19--specific funding and the generosity of the SV Foundation.

Mr. Jacobs added his gratitude to the staff and administration for going above and beyond their job descriptions to support the children at this time.

Mr. Nickel noted that his cell number is now posted on the website.

13. **ADJOURNMENT** – With nothing further to come before the board, Mr. DiTullio motioned, seconded by Ms. Whittle, to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. 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 and other items.

Mr. James Nickel, President



Ms. Lisa Mislán, Board Secretary