



Seneca Valley School District

SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION

In Person - Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Auditorium - 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

November 2, 2020

1. **CALL TO ORDER** by Mr. James Nickel, President
 - A. **Moment of Silence** – The meeting was opened with a moment of silence.
 - B. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Demaurii Jackson, a second grader at Evans City Elementary School, continued the board meeting initiative, “I Led the Pledge” by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - 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. 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. Matt Hoffman, Solicitor; Ms. Yvonne Dobrzanski, SVSD; Mr. Ty Jackson, Mr. Dreden Anderson, Mr. Daemier Anderson, Mr. Demaurii Jackson, Ms. Laverne Washington, Mr. Andrew Teti, Mr. Richard Cervi, Ms. Kristina Tumsina, Ms. April Mavis, and a press representative

2. INFORMATION REPORTS

- A. **Student/Staff Recognition** – Ms. Linda Andreassi announced that Seneca Valley Seniors Ty Brinkley, Vincent Horvath, Jacklyn Ko, Katie Monahan, Kaitlyn Moore, Ashleigh Patterson and Brenna Wrubel have been named Commended Students in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program. A Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), which conducts the program, was presented by the principal Mr. Robert Ceh to these scholastically talented seniors. Although they will not continue in the 2021 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2021 competition.
- B. **Dates to Remember** – Ms. Andreassi announced the following dates to remember:

November 3	Election Day
November 7	SHS SAT Testing, 7:30 a.m. (115 students registered)

November 9	Report of Student Progress, Grades 7-12
November 9	School Board Meeting, 7 p.m. in/on IHS Auditorium/Zoom
November 11	Veterans Day
November 13	SVAOC End of First Trimester, Grades K-6
November 18	End of First Trimester, Grades K-6
November 20	First Day of All PIAA Winter Sports
November 25 – November 30	Thanksgiving Break: District Holiday, No school for students and staff
December 7	School Board Reorganization Meeting, 5:00 p.m., IHS Auditorium

- C. **New Aquatics Center Public Artwork** – A presentation was made by Amanda Mallin, Asst. Principal SHS; Aaron Shaffer, Art Teacher IHS; Jason Woolslare, Art Teacher SHS; and senior students, Simren Jayaraman and Brian Whitney.

The project launched about two years ago. Through collaboration of administration, teachers, students, and artists, a mosaic mural is being created that will aesthetically enhance the new Aquatic space and showcase the commitment that Seneca Valley is a place for ALL learners, and that there is value in the arts, culture and creative problem solving.

Mr. DiTullio thanked everyone for the collaboration on this effort.

Ms. Bredl asked about the size of the mural, and Mr. Woolslare confirmed it would be 8' x 16'.

Dr. Vitale noted that the presentation will be made available for viewing on the Seneca Valley website and upon request.

D. **Student Enrollment Data – October 1, 2020**

Dr. Vitale provided an update on student enrollment as of October 1, 2020 as follows. Enrollment is tracked every year at this time. This update includes all full-time cyber students as well.

Since October 1, 2019, Connoquenessing Valley Elementary enrollment is up by eight students (761 last year, 769 this year); Evans City Elementary enrollment is up by two students (552 last year, 554 this year); Haine Elementary enrollment is down by 20 students (856 last year, 836 this year); Rowan Elementary enrollment is up by two students (508 last year, 510 this year); Evans City Middle School is down by 14 students (503 last year, 489 this year); Haine Middle School is down by 56 students (630 last year, 574 this year); Ryan Gloyer Middle School is up by 26 students (1,121 last year, 1,147 this year); Intermediate High School is down by 31 students (1,181 last year, 1,150 this year); Senior High School is up by 34 students (1,162 last year, 1,196 this year); the current year to prior year total difference is down 49 students, K-12 (7,274 last year, 7,225 this year).

Some reasons for the year-over-year difference include a shift of enrollment in these areas:

- Homeschool enrollment increasing by 84 students (from 150 last year to 234 this year).
- External cyber charter and external charter enrollment total this year is 198 students, last year, total enrollment in both categories was 115:
 - External cyber charter is all online and includes any school that has a charter from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The tuition bill is paid by the

home district. Last year, cyber charter enrollment was 75 students. This year's cyber charter enrollment has gone up by 92 students to 167.

- Charter enrollment, which is brick and mortar and includes Baden, Lincoln Park and Westinghouse, is down by 9 students (from 40 to 31).
- Parochial school enrollment has decreased year over year by 58 students, from 865 last year to 807 this year.

Dr. Vitale noted that an overall decrease of 49 is not significant, but it is disappointing. Last year we were up by 29 students. She expressed concern about our upcoming budget, tuition bill and the loss of cyber school income.

Dr. Vitale noted that we have about 1,200 in the Seneca Valley Academy of Choice (SVAOC) Cyber Program taught by our Seneca Valley teachers. It is also important to point out that we were able to quickly move this year because we have our own internal cyber program.

E. **Agency Reports**

1. Vo-Tech – Mr. Nickel and Mr. Fred Peterson, Jr. reported that there will be a meeting this Thursday, November 5, and an update will be provided at the November 9 meeting.
2. I.U. IV – Mr. Eric DiTullio reported that at last Wednesday's meeting, Dr. Killmyer's contract was renewed through June 30, 2025. Mr. DiTullio also added that a telepresence robot is being used in the Brookville School District, who contracts technology services with IU IV. The robot can be controlled by homebound students which helps them more actively participate in the school day. Lastly, Mr. DiTullio noted that the Intermediate Unit will soon be looking for HVAC system engineering and construction quotes. More information to come.

- F. **Legislative** – Mr. Peterson reported that there is talk about enhancing broadband to rural parts of the state.

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

H. **COVID-19 Update** – Dr. Vitale

Dr. Vitale provided an update as follows:

The first data source includes a Seneca Valley COVID dashboard, which is updated daily, now available on the Seneca Valley home webpage. This dashboard will report on known cases only. We will try to update this page by 3 p.m. daily. Ms. Elizabeth Williams, Nurse Administrator, works on contact tracing every day. The dashboard will report on active and inactive cases throughout the

district. Cases may span across several buildings or departments and cases would be attributed to a person's home building.

Active student cases in the district as of today (11-2-2020) totals nine. Active means they are within the 14-day period of knowing they have COVID. There are currently four inactive cases in the district. These are cases who have been out for 14 days and/or cleared by a doctor to return to school.

Active staff cases in the district as of today totals six. There are three inactive staff cases. Total active cases in entire district is 15. Inactive cases total seven.

Senior High School:

- One active student case
- No active staff cases

Intermediate High School:

- One active student case
- No active staff cases

Ryan Gloyer Middle School:

- Three active student cases
- Five active staff cases

Evans City Middle School, Evans City Elementary School, Haine Elementary School, Rowan Elementary School:

- No active student cases
- No active staff cases

Haine Middle School:

- One active student case
- No active staff cases

CVE Elementary School:

- Three active student cases
- No active staff cases

SVAOC:

- No active student cases
- One active staff case

Central Office:

- 0 active staff cases
- 1 inactive staff case

The bottom of the dashboard includes the following about contact tracing:

The Seneca Valley School District takes part in contact tracing with our full-time nurse administrator. All individuals in our schools who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 are contacted and interviewed by the nurse administrator, which allows us to develop comprehensive lists for potential close contacts. Anyone identified as a potential close contact (defined as an individual who was within 6 feet of an infectious person for at least 15 minutes or who was directly exposed to respiratory secretions [e.g., cough or sneeze]), will be contacted by a representative of the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) who will provide further information and instructions.

A second data source that we watch is the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) website. <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx>

Today, the Butler county 14-day rolling average is 32.3 new cases per day. From Oct. 31 to Nov. 1, 70 new COVID cases were reported out of a population of about 200,000 in Butler county.

Within the seven Seneca Valley School District zip codes, an additional 47 cases were reported; notably in Cranberry Township and Mars (Seven Fields is a Mars zip code).

Incident rate in our zip codes per 100,000 has gone from 41 cases to 105 across seven days.

Dr. Vitale talked about the COVID React Team, commissioned out of the Governor's office, that has been assigned to Butler county to complete an analysis and report back to officials. They are paying attention to Slippery Rock University and a congregate care home in Chicora. The off-campus housing at SRU counts in the Butler county COVID case totals.

The third data source we utilize is the COVID Early Warning Monitoring System for Schools. This is a dashboard from the PADOH and PDE:

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Monitoring-Dashboard.aspx>

Butler county saw 56 new cases in the last seven days (Oct. 23 – Oct. 29). The incident rate per 100,000 is 88.4. The Percent Positivity Rate (PCR) when we first opened school ranged between 1.5 – 2.5%. It is now at 6%. If we get to 10%, the county will be moved to “substantial” and the Board will need to make a decision about our learning model if this happens.

The fourth data source is a press release from the PADOH on infection rate based on age. There are over two million individuals who have tested negative to date. Of those who tested positive, the age breakdown is as follows:

- 1% are ages 0-4
- 2% are ages 5-12
- 5% are ages 13-18

All the dashboards we reference are good resources, but we do not have context such as household contact. We also have students and teachers who may not be sure how they contracted COVID.

A 14-day closure puts us at the last known COVID-positive case who would be recovered and would disrupt the transmission. If people are contracting outside of school, however, transmission cannot be controlled. The decision to close RGMS last week was made very early in the morning because information about cases was still coming in at that time. The parents and families have been very flexible and understanding.

3. ACTION AGENDA

- A. **Public Comment** – Public comment was made by Mr. Rich Cervi regarding COVID spread affecting households. Dr. Vitale noted that we will check with the building principals and encouraged Mr. Cervi to also call the building principal and nurse. Dr. Vitale added that temperature checks are done with the use of thermal temperature scanners every morning in our buildings. Temperatures are not a universal symptom, however.

- B. **Personnel Action** – Personnel items were discussed in an executive session held prior to this meeting, as follows.
1. **Resignations:** *Classified* – Jennifer Byers; *Supplemental* – Nicole Duncan
 2. **Appointments:** *Administration* – Dr. Jenny Leach; *Professional Substitutes* – Melissa Cipollonem John Patrus; *Classified* - Karen Zaphyr, Darlene Howley, Jessica Hufnagel, Kimberly Capozzi; *Classified Substitutes* – Denyse Bruni, Melanie Killian; *Supplementals* – Gary Brooks, Grant McCarthy, Susan Moury, Ethan Bannon, Alex Osman, Trevor Weigand, Justin Rickard
 3. **Leaves:** *Administration* – Robert Raso; *Professional* – Chris Clutter, Claire Barker, Michelle Huffman, Ciara Was; *Classified* – Jerry Chuhra, Kimberly Martin, Patricia Scherz, Kendra Bertoti, Susan Brinker
 4. **Retirement:** *Classified* – Carla Mantick
- C. **Transportation Contracts** – Approved the following transportation contracts for the 2020-21 school year.
1. Two families to transport their children to D.T. Watson
 2. One family to transport their child to Butler Catholic

Mr. Nickel motioned, seconded by Mr. DiTullio, to approve the personnel action and transportation contracts as listed above. 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** – October 5, 2020
 - B. **Regular Meeting** – October 12, 2020
5. **TREASURER’S REPORT** – Approve the treasurer’s report.
6. **GENERAL FUND BILLS** – Approve the general fund bills.
Grand Total: \$1,477,617.35
7. **CONSTRUCTION FUND BILLS** – Approve the construction fund bills.
Grand Total: \$2,481,124.24
8. **ADMINISTRATION ACTION** – Approve the following board policies:
 - A. **Board Policies** – Approve the following board policies:
 1. Policy 902 – Publications Program, revised, first reading – Ms. Andreassi
 2. Policy 903 – Public Participation in Board Meetings, revised, first reading – Ms. Andreassi
 3. Policy 907 – School Visitors, revised, first reading – Ms. Andreassi

Policies to be retired:

 4. Policy 248 – Sexual Harassment Students, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Kyra Bobak

5. Policy 348 – Sexual Harassment Administrative Employees, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Bobak
6. Policy 448 – Sexual Harassment Professional Employees, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Bobak
7. Policy 548 – Sexual Harassment Classified Employees, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Bobak
8. Policy 248.1 – Unlawful Harassment Students, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Kyra Bobak
9. Policy 348.1 – Unlawful Harassment Administrative Employees, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Bobak
10. Policy 448.1 – Unlawful Harassment Professional Employees, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Bobak
11. Policy 548.1 – Unlawful Harassment Classified Employees, retire, first and final reading – Ms. Bobak

- B. **Resolution to Sue JUUL Labs, Inc.** – Approve the commencement of a civil suit, as part of a multidistrict litigation, against Juul Labs, Inc. and other distributors and marketers of vaping products arising from the design, marketing and advertising of vaping products targeting minors and, for such purpose, approve the contingent fee agreement with Frantz Law Group, APLC, Dillon McCandless King Coulter & Graham, LLP and Tucker Arensberg, P.C.

Dr. Vitale discussed the JUUL lawsuit. JUUL Labs, Inc. is marketing children with appealing flavors such as cotton candy and Skittles. Some think that vaping is better than a cigarette, but research has shown that not to be true. We are learning more about how bad the coil and metal inside the vape is to children. Tonight, we recommend joining the national lawsuit against JUUL Labs, Inc.

Mr. Hoffman stated that there are a number of school systems across the country that have initiated litigation against the vaping device and product manufacturers and distributors. This litigation has been consolidated out of an action in San Francisco. If Seneca Valley votes to join the effort, a complaint would be filed in a Pittsburgh federal court. This case would join with the national litigation. The resolution engages the lead council in the national litigation to represent the district. Retention of the national and two local law firms would be based on a contingent fee agreement. There would be no financial investment for the district to participate. The investment would be limited to gathering and providing data specific to Seneca Valley. Our goal is to hold JUUL responsible for targeted marketing to the youth.

Mr. Peterson stated that he is highly in favor of this effort and noted that the nicotine content can be even higher than in cigarettes.

Mr. Jacobs asked Mr. Hoffman if Seneca Valley would subsequently review our complaint in Pennsylvania. Mr. Hoffman confirmed and stated that he could get materials to the board for review. The complaint is basically a template.

Mr. Nickel stated that he is also in favor of joining the suit.

- C. **Vo-Tech JOC Representatives and Alternate** – Appoint Mr. Frederick Peterson, Jr. and Mr. Michael Jacobs as Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School Joint Operating Committee (BCAVTS JOC) representatives and Mr. James Nickel as BCAVTS JOC alternate.

- D. **Agreement for Slippery Rock Transition Achievement Program** – Approve the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education agreement for Slippery Rock Transition Achievement Program.

Ms. Whittle thanked Mr. Nickel and Mr. Peterson for their work and involvement to the Vo-tech, and thanked Mr. Jacobs for stepping into the role.

Mr. DiTullio also thanked Mr. Nickel for his work over the years. He also asked about the policies being retired as listed above. Ms. Bobak confirmed that the adoption of policies 103 and 104, which address Title IX requirements as well as other discrimination laws, now take the place of those being retired.

9. **INSTRUCTION** – Ms. Susan Harrison

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

10. **BUSINESS/FINANCE ACTION**

- A. **December Bills** – Authorize administration to pay December bills.
- B. **Supplies and Equipment Bids** – Authorize administration to seek bids for supplies and equipment for the 2021-22 school year.
- C. **Joint Purchasing Agreement MIU IV** – Approve the Joint Purchasing Agreement with the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV for 2021.
- D. **Budget Transfers** – Approve budget transfers.
- E. **Artificial Turf Contract Award** – Approve FieldTurf USA, Inc. through Keystone Purchasing Network (KPN) vendor agreement for the installation of artificial turf at the upper middle school practice field in the amount of \$795,065.22. Solicitor has reviewed and approved the final agreement.

Mr. Peterson asked about the artificial turf contract award and what the field would be used for. Mr. Miller stated it is the construction staging area of the Aquatic Facility, to the south of RGMS dock. The contract calls for the area to be restored back to a practice field. It is used for track and field, middle school football, and physical education.

Ms. Lewis added that it would be lined for football and soccer. With the new elementary construction, we will lose the middle school field at the current Evans City School site. With approval of this turf contract, we can bring the middle school team on campus where the field will be used every day. It will be laid out in a way that track discus throwing events can be held as well.

Mr. Nickel noted that we authorized seeking bids earlier this year. Ms. Burtner confirmed it was approved as a capital expenditure.

11. **PERSONNEL ACTION** – Mr. Jeff Widdowson – (Executive Session)
12. **COMMUNICATION** – Communication was received from the following:
 - A. School closure recommendations
 1. Ms. Karli Szweda
 - B. Communication of COVID information
 1. Ms. Susan Weber
 - C. Notes of thanks
 1. Mr. John Saras
 2. Mr. and Mrs. Dan Dieteman
 3. Ms. Jodie Freedman
 4. Ms. Mary Beth Keally
 5. Ms. Cori Dunn
 6. Ms. Shannon Tharnish
 - D. Social distancing/class size concerns
 1. Mr. and Mrs. Sean Pieszak
 2. Ms. Kelly Pyle
 3. Ms. Marilyn Fleishman
 4. Ms. Rachel Petelin
 5. Dr. Peter Sylves
 6. Ms. Shannon Petsch
 7. Ms. Kristen Sansonetti
 - E. Concerns about cleaners and false positives – Ms. Stephanie Lane
 - F. Dashboard tracker for SV website
 1. Ms. Kari Zimmer
 2. Ms. Laura Krumenacker
 - G. Support of five day, in-person instruction – Ms. Megan Rippin
 - H. Concern about five day, in-person instruction
 1. Ms. Jennifer Forsyth
 2. Ms. Catherine Vandermer
 - I. School closures – Ms. Julie Bloom
 - J. Suggestions for limiting COVID exposures – Mr. Bertram Forsyth
 - K. Ms. Barbara Hutchinson, President Scenic Ridge – Bus stop
 - L. Concern with remote learning – Ms. Sarah Cordosi
 - M. Support for in person learning – Mr. Dave Steed
 - N. Cyber physical education concerns – Ms. Faith Solomon

13. **MISCELLANEOUS** – Mr. DiTullio provided a PSERS update stating that the ballot is being designed and should be sent out in the coming weeks.
14. **ADJOURNMENT** – With nothing further to come before the Board, Mr. DiTullio motioned, seconded by Ms. Harrison to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. The motion carried on a voice vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

Mr. James Nickel, Board President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Mislán". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ms. Lisa Mislán, Board Secretary