

# Seneca Valley School District



## SCHOOL BOARD ACTION MEETING

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

### MINUTES

**October 12, 2020**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Mr. Eric DiTullio, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 7:14 p.m.
  - A. **Moment of Silence** – The meeting was opened with a moment of silence.
  - B. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Sean Boston, a third grader at Haine Elementary School, continued the board meeting initiative, “I Led the Pledge.” His recording of the Pledge of Allegiance was played. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XI24vBFweR8>
  - 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. Christopher Voltz, Solicitor.

## 2. INFORMATION REPORTS

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

October	National Principals Month and Breast Cancer Awareness Month
October 17	SHS PSAT Testing
October 23	SVAOC Cyber End of First Nine Weeks, Grades 7-12
October 28	End of First Nine Weeks, Grades 7-12
October 31	Halloween
November 1	Daylight Savings Time Ends
November 3	Election Day

Mr. Peterson thanked the principals for all their hard work during National Principals Month.

B. **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. Tax Collections
7. Capital Projects Funds

C. **Federal Program Allocation Spending Plan** – Dr. Marie Palano

Dr. Palano provided an overview of Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV, including the allocated spending plan, as follows:

- **Seneca Valley Title I Part A Program Description (\$293,739)**
  - **Title I Reading Schoolwide Program:** Evans City Elementary and Haine Elementary schools are designated Title I schoolwide schools. In a schoolwide program, all students can receive additional services and students identified as most at risk are given additional assistance. The goal of each intervention is to accelerate learning so that children are at the average of their classmates by the time they successfully complete the intervention. Universal screening assessments, as well as formal and informal assessments, will determine growth and proficiency throughout the year.
  - **Title I Math Schoolwide Program:** Evans City Middle School is a designated Title I Schoolwide school. In a schoolwide program, all students can receive additional services and students identified as most at risk are given additional assistance. The Math interventionist focuses on grade level standards and effective instructional strategies for closing the achievement gap in math. Currently, the math interventionist will co-teach with the classroom teacher as well as pull out small groups for research-based interventions in mathematics. The goal of each intervention is to accelerate learning so that children are at the average of their classmates by the time they successfully complete grade level standards.
- **Federal Title II Part A Program Description:** Title II is a federally funded supplemental educational program that provides financial assistance to improve the skills of teachers and the quality of instruction. Title II also provides the opportunity for class size reduction at the elementary level.
- **Seneca Valley Title II Part A Program Description (\$112,373):** The district will target class size reduction in grades K-6 to support research that indicates the benefits of smaller class sizes, especially in elementary school.
- **Federal Title III Program Description:** Title III is a Federally funded supplemental educational program designed to help English learners develop English language proficiency.
- **Seneca Valley Title III Program Description (\$17,029):** Eligible students receive instruction in the district’s Language Instruction Educational Program. Students participate in a pull-out specialized instructional program while attending school.

- **Federal Title IV Program Description** Title IV is a federally funded supplemental educational program intended to improve students' academic achievement by providing all students with access to a well-rounded education.
- **Seneca Valley Title IV Program Description (\$26,097):** Title IV funds are allocated to Title I programs within the district to offset the cost of Title I staff and intervention programming.

*\* Local funds are used to cover the unfunded costs to maintain the integrity of Title I, Title II and Title III programming within the district.*

*\* After consulting with participating nonpublic (private/parochial) schools in the District that serve low income children, it is not unusual for the nonpublic schools to have carryover funds from year-to-year.*

#### **Overview of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund)**

- ESSER funds are one-time funds to help schools respond to COVID-19 impacts. Funds will be distributed to the state and to schools based on Title I A funding formula from 2019.
- Seneca Valley ESSER Fund (\$282,630): ESSER funds are allocated by prioritizing investments for vulnerable students and mitigating the spread of COVID-19.
  - Early Literacy Programming - Funds will be used to maintain the integrity and availability of elementary intervention programs staffed with interventionists to provide needed and timely interventions to students who lost skills and are at risk of not meeting end-of-year learning targets based on data.
  - Early Literacy Training and Resources –Additional training and resources (reading and math) will be purchased to address achievement and opportunity gaps that students have presented with because of the pandemic and school closures during the spring.
  - Funds will be used to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in schools during in-person instruction. The district purchased additional contracted services (janitorial), equipment (misters) and the consumable disinfectant (Vital Oxide) to be used for daily disinfecting of all classrooms, group instruction rooms, bathrooms, cafeterias, offices and common spaces.

#### **Overview of the Special Education COVID-19 Impact and Mitigation Grant**

- The Special Education COVID-19 Impact and Mitigation Grant offers one-time funds to offset the costs associated with the development and implementation of enhanced instruction to address student needs as well as skill deficits and/or lack of progress that resulted from the difficulties related to delivering a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Seneca Valley Special Education COVID-19 Impact and Mitigation Grant (\$73,533): Funds are allocated based on evidence of lost skills.
  - Summer remediation programs will be developed and offered to qualifying students both in-person and/or remotely prior to the start of the 2021-22 school year. Funds are allocated to cover the unfunded costs associated with the salaries of professional and support staff.
  - Learning tools and materials (physical and electronic) will be purchased to enhance the delivery of instruction and address skill deficits.
  - Professional Development funds will be used to enhance the delivery of remediation programming offered in remote/online learning environments.

Dr. Palano will provide a summary of each Title and make them available to the board.

Mr. DiTullio noted that Title I programs are offered through all Seneca Valley schools.

D. COVID-19 Update – Dr. Vitale

- PA DOH (Pennsylvania Department of Health) COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System Dashboard (sort for Butler county)  
<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Monitoring-Dashboard.aspx>
- Recommendations for Pre-K to 12 Schools Following Identification of a Case(s) of COVID-19 <https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/SchoolReopeningGuidance/ReopeningPreKto12/PublicHealthGuidance/Pages/SchoolClosureRecommendations.aspx>

Dr. Vitale provided COVID-19 updates as follows:

In July, we had very few guidelines for schools, but we needed to begin planning for bringing children back to school in August. Dr. Michael Osterholm, internationally known epidemiologist, worked closely with the Department of Health in Minnesota to give schools early indicators of community transmission. In late June/early July, his work indicated that schools should watch community transmission numbers and he was in favor of local control.

In July, Dr. Osterholm noted that if community transmission could stay below nine new cases a day, it would be fairly safe to return to school. Seneca Valley followed this guideline.

Seneca Valley utilizes the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) and Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) websites for resources. The PADOH COVID-19 early warning monitoring system dashboard is one that is frequently sourced and can be sorted by county. The number of new daily cases for the week of Aug 18 – Aug 31, just prior to teachers returning, was 4.6. This is a 14-day rolling average for the county. Our most recent 14-day rolling average, from Sept 28 – Oct 11 in the county is now 15.6.

Dr. Vitale also receives daily updates from the Chief Executive Officer of Butler County Health System. As of today, there is one person hospitalized due to COVID-19 and no one in the intensive care unit.

Additionally, on the PADOH website, we track by zip codes within the school district. The zip codes we look at include Callery, Cranberry Township, Evans City, Harmony, Mars (recognizing that not all positive cases in 16046 are associated with Seneca Valley – only Seven Fields residents), Renfrew, Zelienople. When we first started tracking on Aug 28, the total of positive cases was 294 since March. Between Aug 28 and Aug 30, six new cases were reported. As of today, there were three new cases.

The PADOH tracks the most recent seven-day period as compared to the previous seven-day period. The difference in confirmed cases from Sept 25 to Oct 1 vs. Sept 18 – Sept 24 was 21 new cases. When we look at that same data today, we see 28 cases.

**Incidence Rate**

- According to the most recent data, the incident rate per 100,000 residents from Sept 25 through Oct 1 is 49.5.

**Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Positivity Rate**

- At last Monday’s meeting we were at 3.1% in the county and we are now at 3.8%.

In the dashboard, we are seeing a slight uptick in Butler county and an increase in positivity rate from 34.6% to 49.5% in the most recent seven-day period per 100,000 residents in the county. There are approximately 200,000 residents in Butler county. Walmart Cranberry Township testing site has closed due to lack of demand which could impact positivity and testing data.

**Recommendations for Pre-K to 12 Following Identification of a Case(s) of COVID-19**

- Butler County is considered as a county with moderate transmission.
- Under the moderate level of community transmission within the county, if we have one student or one staff member that tests positive, we do not need to close.
- Since we have opened school, we have had one elementary student and one 12-month employee who are known to have tested positive. In both cases, there was no other impact to our schools.

The following are the recommendations for schools following identification of a cases(s) of COVID-19 as issued by the PADOH.

Level of Community Transmission in the County	Number of Cases of COVID-19 Within a 14-day period:	Number of Cases of COVID-19 Within a 14-day period:	Number of Cases of COVID-19 Within a 14-day period:
	1 student or 1 staff	2-4 students/staff in same school building <b>OR</b> <5% of total number of students/staff in a school building are cases <b>OR</b> Multiple school buildings with individual cases who are not household contacts	5+ students/staff in same school building <b>OR</b> ≥5% of total number of students/ staff in a school building are cases <b>OR</b> Multiple school buildings with 2-4 cases who are not household contacts
<b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School does not need to close</li> <li>• Clean area(s) where case spent time</li> <li>• Public health staff will direct close contacts to quarantine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close school(s) for 3-5 days*</li> <li>• Clean area(s) where cases spent time</li> <li>• Public health staff will direct close contacts to quarantine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close school(s) for 14 days*</li> <li>• Clean entire school(s)</li> <li>• Public health staff will direct close contacts to quarantine</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School does not need to close</li> <li>• Clean area(s) where case spent time</li> <li>• Public health staff will direct close contacts to quarantine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close school(s) for 5-7 days*</li> <li>• Clean area(s) where cases spent time</li> <li>• Public health staff will direct close contacts to quarantine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close school(s) for 14 days*</li> <li>• Clean entire school(s)</li> <li>• Public health staff will direct close contacts to quarantine</li> </ul>
<b>Substantial</b>	DOH and PDE recommend a Full Remote Learning Model for all schools in counties with substantial level of community transmission	DOH and PDE recommend a Full Remote Learning Model for all schools in counties with substantial level of community transmission	DOH and PDE recommend a Full Remote Learning Model for all schools in counties with substantial level of community transmission

- It is community transmission that will be brought into the schools. Schools are doing a good job of following all protocol to mitigate the spread. Seneca Valley has purchased and installed various configurations of plexiglass in many areas throughout our buildings as an extra barrier when distancing is difficult, such as when eating. Students are making use of outside picnic tables and gymnasium bleachers to spread out during lunch.
- Community transmission is occurring at funerals, weddings, and family gatherings. An increase in cases could impact our schools so we must be cautious and make smart decisions (i.e., small groups, spend time outside).

Dr. Vitale is pleased after our first full week of school but cautions that we must stay home when we are not feeling well and self-monitor daily. She is also very pleased with the diligence of our teachers.

Mr. Peterson talked about the important differences between incidence and prevalence.

- **Incidence** is “today’s snapshot,” how many new cases do we have today.
- **Prevalence** refers to the number of cases existing in a population. A person who has had COVID for weeks is counted multiple times in prevalence statistics.

Mr. Hester thanked Dr. Vitale for the comprehensive report and added that we want to be as transparent as possible.

Mr. DiTullio stated that in absence of social distancing, the plexiglass is most helpful as an additional barrier. Dr. Vitale added that in cafeterias and classrooms, plexiglass is utilized when students cannot be six feet apart.

Dr. Vitale also stated that it is not one mitigation strategy that works. It is a combination of knowledge, monitoring community transmission, educating people, masking, distancing, hygiene and cleaning.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – There was no public comment.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Approved the following meeting minutes:
  - A. **Work Session** – September 14, 2020
  - B. **Regular Meeting** – September 21, 2020
5. **TREASURER’S REPORT** – Approved the treasurer’s report
6. **GENERAL FUND BILLS** – Approved the general fund bills  
Grand Total: \$4,674,039.85
7. **CONSTRUCTION FUND BILLS** – Approved the construction fund bills  
Grand Total: \$2,676,789.06

Mr. Widdowson motioned, seconded by Ms. Bredl, to approve the minutes, treasurer’s report, general fund bills and construction fund bills. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

## 8. ADMINISTRATION ACTION

- A. **Charter School Funding Reform Resolution** – Dr. Vitale – Approved the resolution calling for charter school funding reform.
- B. **School Board Meeting Dates** – Approved school board meeting dates January through June 2021.

Mr. Hester motioned, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to approve the charter school funding reform resolution and school board meeting dates. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

## 9. INSTRUCTION ACTION

- A. **Conferences** – Approved conferences.

Ms. Harrison motioned, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to approve the conferences. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

## 10. BUSINESS/FINANCE ACTION

- A. **Bond Issue** – Approved the appointment of PNC Capital Markets, LLC, as financial advisor and Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP, as bond counsel related to both outstanding and anticipated debt financings in connection with the school district's proposed and developing plans for capital improvements and facilities.

Mr. Peterson asked why the agreement with PNC was open-ended. Ms. Burtner noted this is a recurring action item, only when necessary.

Mr. Jacobs motioned, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to approve the bond issue. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

## 11. PERSONNEL ACTION – Approved the personnel items as follows:

**Resignations:** *Classified* – Erin Rigsby, Jennifer Davis

**Appointments:** *Professional* – Rachel Kamicker; *Professional Substitute* – Barbara Cook; *Classified* – Madeline Nowak, Irene Young; *Supplementals* – Kevin Trost, Joe Frank, Justin McCauley, David Fuhrman, Steve Campos, Eric Semega, Rob Naylor, Michael Henry, Dorothea Epps, Samantha Marak, Krystal Epps, Ray Peaco, Megan Meeder, Jane Leo, Maria Cass, Brian Blackwell, Jeff Gavin, Lisa Wilson, Nancy Laslavic, Jonatha Simoes, Michael Caccamo, Kevin Wildrick, Theodore Calvin, Joe Montalbano, Grant McCabe, Ezekiel Stroupe, Drew Smith, Aaron Shafer, Mark Gartner, Alex Fischer, Michael Stebbins, Jason Woolslare, Cheri Mihalik, Joe Logsdon, Sarah Deeds, Megan Kelly, Keith Chrestay, Bobi-Jean Alexander, Amanda Armor, Claire Barker, Courtney Strieby, Kalene Ireland

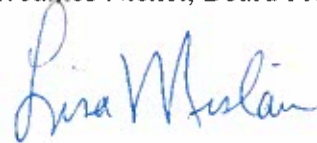
**Leaves:** *Professional* – Corrin DoVidio, Dayna Gulish; *Classified* – Irma Martinez

**Sabbatical:** Judi Spinelli

Mr. Widdowson motioned, seconded by Mr. Nickel, to approve the resignations, appointments, leaves and sabbatical as listed above. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

12. **COMMUNICATION** – Communication was received from the following:
- A. Ms. Kristin Wharton – Parents attending athletic events
  - B. Ms. Kristie Long – Questions about COVID protocols
  - C. Ms. Julie Jones – Remote learning concerns
  - D. Ms. Kelly Ryan (North Hills School District parent) – Cost per ticket to athletic events
  - E. Ms. Lisa Dabruzzo – Return to school concerns
  - F. Ms. Melissa Schneider – Homecoming for Seniors
  - G. Ms. Stephanie Lane – Masking effects on children and teachers
  - H. Ms. Jennifer Livorse – Livestreaming, note of thanks
  - I. Ms. Jennifer Edwards – Student and teacher mask wearing concerns
13. **MISCELLANEOUS** – Mr. DiTullio received notification that his Pennsylvania Public School Employees’ Retirement System (PSERS) board petition was accepted but he is still awaiting timing of the ballots. Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) has, for the first time, endorsed one of the two candidates. Mr. DiTullio will be submitting a form asking the PSBA for endorsements and asks for family and friends in other school districts to re-elect him to the board. The board will be looking at the long-term growth and stability of the pension fund for the teachers of our Commonwealth.
14. **ADJOURNMENT** – With nothing further to come before the board, Mr. Widdowson motioned, seconded by Ms. Harrison, to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m. The motion carried on a voice vote in the affirmative.
15. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – An executive session was held prior to this meeting to discuss personnel and other items.

Mr. James Nickel, Board President



Ms. Lisa Mislan, Board Secretary