

Seneca Valley School District



SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION

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

MINUTES

November 4, 2019

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mr. James Nickel, President, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
 - A. **Moment of Silence** – The meeting was opened with a moment of silence.
 - B. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Mitchell Everly, a third-grader at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School, continued the board meeting initiative, *I Led the Pledge*, by reciting “the Pledge of Allegiance. “
 - C. **Roll Call** – Roll call by Ms. Annie Mersing, Board Secretary, showed the following members in attendance: Ms. Leslie Bredl, Mr. Eric DiTullio, Ms. Susan Harrison, Mr. Timothy Hester, Rev. Reid Moon, Mr. James Nickel, Mr. Frederick Peterson, Jr., Ms. Kathy Whittle and Mr. Jeff 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, Communications Director; Mr. Randy Miller, Buildings and Grounds Director; Ms. Heather Lewis, Athletics Director; Ms. DeeAnn Graham, Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School Principal; Ms. Julie Blackburn, Third Grade Teacher at CVE; Ms. Maralee Walter, Second Grade Teacher at CVE; Ms. Patricia DeVito, Paraprofessional at CVE; Attorney Matthew Hoffman, Solicitor; and a press representative.

2. INFORMATION REPORTS

- A. **Student/Staff Recognition** – Ms. Linda Andreassi announced that Junior, David Choi, earned the highest possible ACT composite score of 36. Only around two-tenths of 1% of students who take the ACT earn a top score. The ACT consists of tests in English, mathematics, reading and science, each scored on a scale of 1–36. A student's composite score is the average of the four test scores.

Mr. Nickel, on behalf of the entire board, congratulated Mr. Choi on this tremendous accomplishment. Mr. Choi stated that he spent approximately one month preparing for this exam. He feels he is a “natural” test taker and therefore was hesitant to attribute his success to any specific type of preparation. When asked what, if anything, could add value to our District, Mr. Choi replied that the addition of a Math Club would be desirable and beneficial. Dr. Vitale also congratulated Mr. Choi

and wished him much success in his intended plans of pursuing a degree in artificial intelligence at Carnegie Mellon University.

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

November 5	Election Day
November 11	Veterans Day/Act-80 Day, No School for Students (No Board Meeting)
November 13	Human Trafficking Awareness Presentation, 6:30 p.m., IHS Auditorium
November 18	School Board Meeting, IHS Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.
November 27 – December 2	Thanksgiving Break: District Holiday, No school for students and staff
December 3	School Board Reorganization Meeting, 5:00 p.m., IHS Auditorium

C. **Real Estate Transaction Report – Butler County Business Matters, November 2019** – Dr. Vitale shared the Real Estate Transaction Report from the November 2019 issue of *Butler County Business Matters* which shows a steady sale of real estate in municipalities within our district. Dr. Vitale indicated that administration is actively tracking the new developments and mapping the anticipated enrollment needs. Dr. McCarty will present a detailed report at the beginning of the calendar year.

D. **Bond Refinancing Presentation** – Ms. Alisha Reesh Henry of PNC Capital Markets, LLC presented a bond refinancing update. Ms. Henry stated that because of its foresight and exceptionally timed projects, the district holds a Moody's investment rating of Aa2 and excels above other districts in relation to its financial status. She commended the district's operations in creating one of the most technologically advanced institutions in the area while requiring relatively short debt service. Mr. Nickel thanked Ms. Henry for her hard work and dedication to the District. Dr. Vitale also thanked Ms. Henry not only her superior financial guidance, but also for taking an active role in welcoming our ACE students to tour the architecture and design of the PNC Building in Downtown Pittsburgh.

E. **Agency Reports**

1. Vo-Tech – Mr. Nickel and Mr. Fred Peterson, Jr. stated there was nothing new to report regarding the vocational-technical school.
2. I.U. IV – Mr. Eric DiTullio had no new information about the I.U.IV and would provide an update following the next board meeting.

F. **Legislative** – Mr. Peterson reported on several legislative developments including an increase in conversations regarding additional funding for special needs students.

At the state level, the following bills have been passed by the senate and sent to the house for a vote:

1. Senate Bill 836 of 2019 – Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) Prevention Act will require information to be provided to student athletes about SCA, specifically electrocardiogram testing, and the student athletes be notified of the option to request the administration of an electrocardiogram in addition to the standard physical examination.

2. Senate Bill 751 of 2019 amends the Public School Code “rating system” including increasing the weight of classroom evaluations to 70% of a teacher’s overall rating.
3. Senate Bill 1897 of 2019 – School District Cyber Education Law will provide opportunities for students to participate in high-quality, full-time cyber education programs that are accountable and transparent to local communities and students.
4. Senate Bill 334 of 2019 will further restrict taxing districts in the appeals of underassessed properties.
5. Senate Bill 530 of 2019 will require the separation of victim and perpetrator when a student is convicted of sexual assault against another student in the same school. The bill ensures the convicted student is not educated in the same school building, transported in the same school vehicle or allowed to participate in the same school-sponsored activities as the victim.

Act 76 of 2019 was signed into law and will expand access to career and technical education and workforce development opportunities. It also takes the important step of changing the name of “vocational-technical schools” to “career and technical schools.”

Mr. Peterson provided a follow-up to last month’s legislative report confirming that the vaping legislation recently passed will prohibit not only the use, but also possession of, tobacco and vaping products by anyone under the age of 21.

At the federal level, a recent study showed two out of three children do not meet the standards for reading proficiency set by the National Assessment of Educational Progress and indicates a student achievement crisis.

Mr. DiTullio commented on House Bill 1960 which proposes to consolidate the investment offices of the State Employees’ Retirement System (SERS) and the Public School Employees’ Retirement System (PSERS) and establish an oversight mechanism composed of highly experienced and qualified investment experts. Mr. DiTullio stated the proposal is said to show a cost savings; however, there is no evidence to support this claim. The bill has been tabled in the house but remains active in the senate.

Mr. Nickel reminded everyone that election day is November 5, 2019.

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. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Approve the following meeting minutes:
 - A. **Work Session** – October 7, 2019
 - B. **Regular Meeting** – October 21, 2019

4. **TREASURER’S REPORT** – Approve the treasurer’s reports.

5. **GENERAL FUND BILLS** – Approve the general fund bills.
Grand Total: \$3,374,541.18

6. **CONSTRUCTION FUND BILLS** – Approve the construction fund bills.
Grand Total: \$472,238.06

7. **ADMINISTRATION ACTION**
 - A. **Board Policies** – Approve the following board policies:
 1. #705 – Safety, revised, second reading – Mr. Jeff James
 2. #805 – Emergency Evacuation of Schools, revised, second reading – Mr. James
 3. #905 – Citizen Advisory Committee, revised, first reading – Ms. Andreassi
 4. #908 – Parent and Family Engagement; revised first reading and adoption (no changes – annual update per Federal mandate.) – Ms. Maria Palano
 5. #910 – Community Relations, revised, first reading – Ms. Andreassi
 6. #912 – Relations with Educational Institutions, revised, first reading – Ms. Andreassi

 - B. **2020 School Board Meeting Dates** – Approve the 2020 school board meeting dates.

8. **INSTRUCTION ACTION**
 - A. **Conferences** – Approve conference requests.

 - B. **Club Status** – Approve club status for the following:
 1. Seneca Valley “Z” Club (SHS) at no cost to the District and under the supervision of Intermediate High teachers Jeanne Probst, Christina Hollowood, Katie Wolford and Marie McLachlan.
 2. Seneca Valley Slavic Languages Club at no cost to the District and under the supervision of Senior High Teacher Ms. Amy Seelbaugh.

 - C. **Grant Disbursement** – Grant permission to apply for and disburse, if approved, the following grants:
 1. Using Gene Technology to Determine the Population of Environmentally Sensitive Freshwater Clams Grant funded by Spectroscopy Society of Pittsburgh in the amount of \$2,000. Funds obtained would be used to purchase a dual beam spectrophotometer which would aid in future DNA research. Requested by Mr. Tom Lavelle in the Intermediate High School.
 2. Schools on the Move Grant funded by the University of Pittsburgh in an amount up to \$2,500 to support innovative school-based health, physical activity, wellness and well-being initiatives. Requested by Mr. Michael Pelloni, Rowan Elementary.

9. **BUSINESS/FINANCE ACTION**

- A. **Budget Transfers** – Approve budget transfers.
- B. **December Bills** – Authorize administration to pay December bills.
- C. **Amendment to Professional Services Agreement** – Approve Cannon Design’s Amendment to the Professional Services Agreement for HRG to design the Roundabout at the intersection of Ehrman Road and the entrance road to the new K-6 Elementary & Middle School.
- D. **Supplies and Equipment Bids** – Authorize administration to seek bids for supplies and equipment for 2020-21.

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

11. **COMMUNICATION** – There was no communication received.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – There was no public comment.

13. **ADJOURNMENT** – With nothing further to come before the board, Mr. DiTullio motioned, seconded by Mr. Widdowson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. The motion carried on a voice vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

James Nickel, School Board President



Annie Mersing, School Board Secretary