

POTTSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Directors Board Meeting March 15, 2023 DHH Lengel Middle School Auditorium 7:00 PM	Present:	Mrs. Buchanan, Dr. Cardamone, Mr. Ciavarella, Mrs. Dewitt, Mr. Shields Mr. Thomas, Mr. Urban, Ms. Wytovich, Dr. Yoder, Superintendent; Mrs. Stair, Business Manager (via Zoom); Mrs. Lombel, Asst. Business Manager/Board Secretary; Atty. Avery Smith
	Absent:	Dr. Blankenhorn, Atty. Reid

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Michael Cardamone.

Dr. Cardamone - Board Statement

- A reminder to the public that the public comment period is not a question and answer period, but rather the opportunity for the public to submit comments to the Board. Public comments will follow our public comment procedures which require members of the public to identify themselves by indicating name and address. If members of the public wish to make public comments, then they must do so in person. The meeting will be available online.
- The School Board will strive to answer questions pertaining to the current agenda at the beginning of the school board meeting, in a conscious effort to maintain transparent practices. After the School Board agenda is posted online, questions may be emailed to plombel@pottsville.k12.pa.us by 2:00 PM the day of the meeting. Questions pertaining to the agenda posted online will be answered in the order received for a period not to exceed 30 minutes. If the questions are not able to be answered during the 30-minute period, the School Board will endeavor to answer the questions at the beginning of the next school board meeting. Questions pertaining to confidential personnel matters will not be addressed. Questions that require some research or further inquiry might not be answered at the current school board meeting. The question and answer period does not replace the public's current right to public comment.

Roll Call – 8 members present; 1 member absent.

There were no public comments.

Presentation on Planetarium Rehabilitation by Mr. Adrian Portland, High School Science Teacher:

- Mr. Portland presented “Keeping the Stars Shining: The History and Future of the Pottsville Area High School Motivational Science Center.”
 - 575 Public High Schools in the State of Pennsylvania
 - 25 Pennsylvania High School/Intermediate Schools have a Planetarium; four have both a planetarium and an observatory.
 - The proposed upgrade would make the Pottsville Area School District the largest and most modern School District Planetarium in the State.
 - The new Digistar comes with a wide assortment of real-time scenes on a variety of STEAM topics (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics Library).
 - Would help with Learning Loss, Attendance and Community Engagement.
 - New 452 Astronomy II course – Observational Astronomy and Astrophotography.
 - 1965-1966 Plans for a motivational science center under the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title One. Contractor is Spitz, Inc.
 - Celebrated 50th Anniversary in 2016.

Dr. Cardamone thanked Mr. Portland for his informative presentation on the Planetarium upgrade.

On motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Ciavarella, the Board dispensed with the reading of the minutes of the February 8, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes and the February 15, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes. Since all members received copies, and there being no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved. Motion carried.

On the recommendation of Mrs. Lombel, Asst. Business Manager, and on motion of Mr. Urban, seconded by Mrs. Buchanan, the Board approved the following Financial Reports for the month of February 2023:

1. Treasurer’s Report (All Funds) – General Fund Balance as of February 28, 2023- \$6,807,066.99. Cafeteria Checking Balance as of February 28, 2023 - \$460,816.36.
2. General Fund Condensed Board Summary Revenue Report
3. General Fund Condensed Board Summary Expenditure Report
4. Cafeteria Condensed Board Summary Report
5. Payment Summary – General Fund, Food Service

6. Budget Transfers

Motion carried.

Under Donations:

Thank you to the Giant Food Stores Feeding School Kids Round Up Program and our community for their generosity! We appreciate the \$2,773.47 donated to the District, which will be used for students in the District's Food Services program, including food for a PBIS activity in each school.

Thank you to Miller's Distribution in St. Clair for donating \$250 in treats toward the Pottsville Area High School Aevium Club's Valentine Campaign! We appreciate the support and generosity of Miller's Distribution.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, and on motion of Mr. Urban, seconded by Mrs. Dewitt, the Board approved the Superintendent's preapproval of credits indicated for the following professional employee(s) be ratified in accordance with the negotiated agreement between the PASD and the PASDEA:

Gregory Hoak – 9 Credits

Christopher Kovaleski – 6 Credits

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, and on motion of Mr. Urban, seconded by Mrs. Dewitt, the Board approved the following professional employee(s) be reimbursed as indicated for the successful completion of preapproved credit courses in accordance with the negotiated agreement between the PASD and PASDEA:

Angela Altemose - \$1,480.00

Kendra Boris - \$1,614.00

Gregory Hoak - \$1,404.00

Motion carried.

Informational Item under Crimson Tide Foundation:

The Crimson Tide Foundation is proud to announce the following Venture Grants which were awarded for the 2022-2023 school year.

1. Broadcasting equipment for daily morning news submitted by Tayah Moore/Kerri Lubinsky. Amount - \$372.97
2. STEM Day at Reading Royals hockey team submitted by Lisa Holobetz and Jonathan Hughes. Amount for tickets and transportation - \$690.00
3. Maneuvering the Middle Math App for 7th grade classes submitted by Kristin Durkee - Amount for 5 apps - \$920.00.

4. Maneuvering the Middle Math App for 8th grade classes submitted by Jeff Hughes - Amount for 5 apps - \$920.00.

Thank you to the Crimson Tide Foundation and donors for the support of our students, educators and community.

On the recommendation of the **Athletics and Extra Curricular Committee**, and on motion of Mr. Shields, seconded by Mrs. Dewitt the Board approved the following items:

- approved the trip to Niagara Falls, New York (May 21-23, 2023). The Tide Tek S.T.E.M. Club will be visiting multiple educational sites near Niagara Falls. The field trip is for 8th grade club members who have remained highly active in club activities during their time at the DHH Lengel Middle School. This will include approximately 10 to 15 members of the club making the trip along with 4 chaperones (pending clearances). The trip will be funded by club fundraisers.

- approved additional volunteer Track coaches for the 2022-2023 school year: Robert Brouse and Jakub Sciora.

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the **Facilities and Grounds Committee**, and on motion of Mr. Urban, seconded by Mrs. Buchanan, the Board approved the following items:

- approved the request to advertise a bid for paving a portion of the Martz Hall parking area. The project will be paid for by RACP grant funding.

- approved a proposal from Schuylkill Masonry and Restoration Services for repairs on PAHS Retaining Wall on 16th Street Hill:

- Wall and cap repairs \$17,930.00 (Budgeted Funds)
- Replacement of drain trough located behind top of wall and slope - \$13,400.00 (Budgetary Reserve)

- approved a proposal from Miller Sports Construction for annual Screen and Coat for flooring at Martz Hall to maintain the warranty.

- awarded the Planetarium Upgrade Project Bid to Spitz Inc., Chadds Ford, PA at a cost of \$675,740. The Project will be paid with ESSER II Funds and Capital Reserve Funds and/or Budgetary Reserve Funds.

- approved proposed fees (includes District's expenses) for Post Season Contests at Martz Hall.

- approved a three (3) year service agreement with CINTAS for an Automated External Defibrillator for Martz Hall.

- approved a service agreement with CINTAS for uniform rental.
Motion carried.

On the recommendation by the **Finance Committee** and on motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Ms. Wytovich, the Board approved the following items:

- approved an agreement with The Meadows Psychiatric Center for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school year.

- approved the following Repository Sales:

- Parcel # 68-27-0357.000 10 North Third St. Pottsville City - Purchase Price \$1,323.00
- Parcel# 59-02-0370.000 0 Wood Street Port Carbon Borough - Purchase Price \$1,399.96

- approved a five (5) year agreement with R and R Auto Group as an advertiser for the new Electronic Sign outside Martz Hall at the intersection of 16th Street and Laurel Boulevard at a total cost of \$13,500.

- approved a five (5) year agreement with Schuylkill County Mental Health, Developmental Services, and Drug & Alcohol Programs as an advertiser for the new Electronic Sign outside Martz Hall at the intersection of 16th Street and Laurel Boulevard at a total cost of \$13,500.

- approved an agreement with the Crimson Academy for Health and Wellness classes, \$150 per class - up to semimonthly for PASD employees, effective March 16, 2023 through June 30, 2024, pending solicitor review. Funded by ARP ESSER and/or ARP ESSER Set-Aside funds.

- approved an agreement with Yoga-B-Yoga for Health and Wellness classes, \$200 per class - up to semimonthly for PASD employees, effective March 16, 2023 through June 30, 2023, pending solicitor review. Funded by ARP ESSER and/or ARP ESSER Set-Aside funds.

Motion carried.

On the recommendation by the **Personnel Committee** and on motion of Mrs. Dewitt, seconded by Mr. Urban, the Board approved/accepted the following items:

- approved Lynsey Shappell as a part-time cafeteria aide (\$9.10/hr.) and substitute cafeteria worker (\$11.25/hr) retroactive to February 27, 2023. All required clearances are on file.

- accepted the letter of resignation from Mrs. Rachael Damiter, Speech Therapist, at the JSC Elementary Center, letter dated February 10, 2023. We wish her well in her new endeavors.

- approved an Intermittent FMLA for employee #1437, retroactive to February 22, 2023.

- approved an extension of leave, as per the PASDEA contract, for employee #872.

- approved the following Leave Without Pay as per School Board Policy(s): 339, 439, 539:

- Employee #1483 - cafeteria aide - February 21-24, 2023
- Employee #124 - cafeteria employee - March 1 to March 6, 2023
- Employee #1515 - cafeteria aide - February 3, 2023 to TBD
- Employee #114 - library aide - March 9 through March 24, 2023
- Employee #1493 - paraprofessional - April 11 through April 14, 2023
- Employee #1398 - paraprofessional - April 3 through April 14, 2023

- accepted the letter of resignation for retirement from Mrs. Laurie Reiley, Title I Teacher at the DHH Lengel Middle School, effective last day of the 2022-2023 school year. Mrs. Reiley has been with the District for 20 years. We are grateful for Mrs. Reiley's dedication and commitment to the students, families and community and wish her well in retirement.

- approved permission to advertise for the following anticipated positions for the 2023-2024 school year: Full Time Special Education (JSC), Full Time Assistant Principal (all levels), Full Time Physical Education (DHHL - Focus on Aquatics), Full Time Music (PAHS), Part Time Library Media Specialist (JSC), and Full Time Elementary Education (JSC and/or DHHL).

- accepted the resignation of Nicole Guldin, full-time custodian at the DHH Lengel Middle School, effective March 31, 2023.

- approved Angel Geiger as a part-time paraprofessional for the Pottsville Area School District, at an hourly rate of \$11.25, effective March 16, 2023.

- accepted the resignation of Joseph Zelinsky, full-time custodian at the John S. Clarke Elementary Center. Mr. Zelinsky's last day of employment is March 17, 2023. We wish him well in his new endeavors.

Motion carried.

Under **Promotion, Public Relations and Social Media**, Ms. Wytovich read the following:

1. Congratulations to the DHHL musicians who were selected for and participated in the Junior County Band Festival on Saturday at Tri-Valley Jr/Sr High School.

- Kennedee Siegfried – Flute
- Ryan Beltz – Saxophone
- Spencer Prestileo – Saxophone
- Saul Sanchez – Trumpet
- Alejandro Gunoskey – Trombone
- Jake Powers – Baritone
- Colin Kline – Percussion

2. Congratulations to STC students who participated in the SkillsUSA District competition. The following PAHS students placed and/or are moving on to the State Competition in April.

- Luci Ames (Esthetics – 1st – Moving on to States)
- McKayla Cassel (Human Services – Bye to States)
- Lily Kreiser (Medical Technology – 3rd)
- Aidan Miller (Electrical Construction Wiring – 3rd)
- Seth Ney (Motorcycle Service Technology – Bye to States)
- Dominic Steidle (Precision Machining – 4th)
- Jordon Steidle (Crime Scene Investigation – 1st place – Moving on to States)

3. The Schuylkill County Band gave an exceptional performance at the Festival held at PAHS on March 4, 2023. The Band was under the direction of PAHS Band Director Mrs. Katelyn Reichard (Festival Host) and Guest Conductor Mr. Richard D. Fries, retired PAHS Band Director and current Conductor of Pottsville's Third Brigade Band. Congratulations to senior clarinet player Emily Lucas for being the recipient for this year's Schuylkill County Band Festival Scholarship as she plans to continue her education at the collegiate level in the music field. Congratulations to Mr. Craig Shoener, retired PAHS Band Director, for being selected as the inductee for the Schuylkill County Band Directors Hall of Fame for 2023. Congratulations to the following PAHS musicians who participated:

- Madison Eroh
- Autumn Fermaintt
- Jillian Horvath
- Nicholas Horvath
- Emily Lucas
- Angelina Madonna
- Xaviere Phillip-Johnson
- Michael Prestileo
- Tyler Sibbett

5. Congratulations to JSC Students of the Month:

K - Kaltrina Sylaj

1 - Gavin Gorey

2 - Camilo Leonardo

3 - Joshua Tamin

4 - Melany Valdez Espinal

6. Congratulations to PAHS Artist of the Month, Felix Blasser.

7. Congratulations to PAHS Rotary Students of the Month, Katie Painter and Maddie Strauss.

8. Congratulations 8th grader Avery Zeroual for winning 2nd place in the Republican Herald Spelling Bee at Penn State Schuylkill! Congratulations also to 6th grader Najlaa Belkhoutout for tying for 6th place! We are thankful for Spelling Bee Coach Ms. Wasilewski and Mrs. Ferdoucha for serving as the official record keeper.

9. Congratulations to 8th grader Lyla Serrian from the Crimson Academy for being accepted into a summer program with the world-renowned Joffrey Ballet School in New York City!

On the recommendation of the **Technology Committee**, and on motion by Mr. Urban, seconded by Ms. Wytovich, the Board approved the following:

- approved the bid from Comcast as the Internet Service Provider for a term of 36 months. Cost to district after 80% E-Rate discount is \$291.00/month.

- approved the purchase of six (6) Environmental (Vape) Sensors and licenses from Dauphin DataCom through PEPPM. This purchase is funded through Title IV at a cost of \$7,678.80.

- approved the one-time purchase of equipment with Apple Inc. in the amount of \$924,843.65. This purchase is being funded by the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF).

- approved the three (3) year lease agreement for equipment with Apple Inc. in the amount of \$662,485.93 at a 0% interest rate.

- approved the SecondLifeMac agreement to facilitate the buyback of end-of-life technology devices.

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the **Curriculum Committee**, and on motion by Mrs. Dewitt, seconded by Mr. Urban, the Board approved the following:

- approved Maria Larish to attend the PAFPC Conference, April 16-19, 2023. The conference is paid for by Title I funds.

- approved the Dual Credit Affiliation Agreement with the Pennsylvania State University (Commonwealth Campuses).

- approved the renewal of the Reading Plus contract for the 2023-2024 school year at a cost of \$7,998.00.

Motion carried.

Informational item:

Update on the Gillingham Charter School renewal process: The Pottsville Area School Board anticipates scheduling to vote on the 5-year Gillingham Charter renewal during the May 24, 2023 Board meeting at the earliest. The Gillingham Charter School status has been pending since June 30, 2022. The District has requested information about Gillingham's Charter Goals, Finance, Facilities, Curriculum/Assessment, Student Achievement, Special Education, Student Enrollment/Retention Rate, Student Attendance, Discipline/Safety, Teacher Certification, Teacher Turnover Rate, and more. The Student Retention Rate, calculated as the percent of students enrolled for a full year who return for the following school year (excluding graduates), was an average of 48% during the four (4) school years in the review. More specificity of the concerns in each of these areas will be publicly available in a future meeting.

Due to insufficient results, insufficient data and information provided by Gillingham Charter School to Pottsville Area School District's request during the review process, the District has attempted to negotiate targeted terms into the charter throughout the 2022-2023 school year before bringing the proposed charter to a vote. The District has been attempting to negotiate the charter renewal without going through the court system and/or the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to reduce the burden on taxpayers.

Particular concerns that continue to be issues and are trending downward are Gillingham Charter School's facilities, insufficient staffing, special education, and the number of students withdrawing from Gillingham Charter School. Due to safety concerns since January, Gillingham Charter School has continued to not use the building located at 315 Howard Avenue for Physical Education class and Extra-curricular activities because of the concerns brought to the attention of Gillingham Charter School by the Pottsville Area School District during its visit to the facility and affirmed by the City of Pottsville's inspection. More information will be provided in a future Board meeting.

On the recommendation by the **Policy and Procedure Committee** and on motion of Ms. Wytovich and seconded by Mr. Urban, the Board approved the following policies:

- Policy 247 - Hazing
- Policy 250 - Student Recruitment

Motion carried.

On the recommendation by the **Policy and Procedure Committee** and on motion of Ms. Wytovich and seconded by Mr. Urban, the Board retired the following policy:

- Policy 248 - Unlawful Harassment

Motion carried.

Under **Legislation**, Mrs. Buchanan read the following:

On March 7th, Governor Josh Shapiro gave his first budget address which included the following:

- An increase of \$567.4 million for basic education funding
- An increase of \$103.8 million for special education funding
- \$38.5 million for universal free breakfast
- \$100 million for school safety and security grants

The budget address marks the first step on the long road to a final, enacted budget so these numbers are considered a starting point for negotiations. The deadline for the state budget is June 30th.

Under New Business:

Upcoming Events, Jr. Board Member Angela Madonna read the following:

March 28, 2023 - Title I Parent Meeting/Spring Book Fair/Kindergarten Talk at JSC

March 28, 2023 - End of 3rd Quarter

March 31 - April 2, 2023 - Guys and Dolls Spring Musical at PAHS

April 4, 2023 - Tentative Report Cards (Upload to Skyward)

April 5, 2023 - JSC PBIS East Egg Hunt

April 6, 2023 - Holiday Early Dismissal

April 7, 2023 - School Closed/Easter Recess

April 10, 2023 - School Closed/Easter Recess

April 17, 2023 - JSC PTO Meeting

On the recommendation of Mrs. Lombel, and on motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Urban, the Board approved the **Use of Facilities** Calendar for March 2023.

- Middle School Auditorium – Schuylkill Choral Irish Celebration (March 16, 2023 Rehearsal and March 19, 2023 Recital)
- Middle School Auditorium – Joseph F. McCloskey School of Nursing Graduation (June 7, 2023 Rehearsal and June 8, 2023 Graduation)

Motion carried.

Meeting Dates for March 2023:

Committee of the Whole Meeting - Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 6:00 pm in the DHH Lengel Middle School Auditorium.

Board Meeting - Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the DHH Lengel Middle School Auditorium.

An Executive Session was held from **6:40 pm to 7:53 pm** to discuss personnel matters. Please note that incorrect time was stated at the Board Meeting.

There being no further new business, on motion of Mr. Urban, seconded by Mr. Thomas, the meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.

 *Patricia A. Lombel 4-19-23*

Patricia A. Lombel (Date)
Board Secretary