

POTTSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Directors Board Meeting January 18, 2023 DHH Lengel Middle School Auditorium 7:03 PM	Present:	Dr. Blankenhorn, Mrs. Buchanan, Dr. Cardamone, Mrs. Dewitt, Mr. Shields, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Urban, Ms. Wytovich, Dr. Yoder, Superintendent; Mrs. Stair, Business Manager; Mrs. Lombel, Asst. Business Manager/Board Secretary; Atty. Kevin Reid, Solicitor
	Absent:	Mr. Ciavarella

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM by President Michael Cardamone.

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.**

The Board of Directors Roll Call – 8 members present. 1 member absent.

There were two public comments this evening.

Mrs. Lillian Hobbs

“As I reviewed this evening’s agenda it was most encouraging to learn the district’s financial health continues to improve. I commend our board members for taking their fiduciary duty to taxpayers seriously and striving to improve educational opportunities for our students. As an active volunteer for several organizations over the years I realize that at times it can be a thankless position. Thank you for your dedication and know that it is appreciated. CLAP

Now that the financial health of the district continues to improve it is time for serious consideration of restoring the district’s library program. Why? When access to a library rich with resources is denied, student learning is compromised. Our students currently are living in a book desert. What is a book desert? It is an educational term used to describe an environment in which students don’t have access to books.

One may ask, what is the goal of reading instruction? The ultimate goal of reading instruction is comprehension, in other words, extracting meaning from text.

Why is access to books which students select based on their interests important?

The goal of independent reading as an instructional practice is to build habitual readers with conscious reading identities. In other words, allowing students to read and learn about what interests them builds life-long readers. Additionally, critical thinking skills are developed.

This evening I ask that we work together to banish the book desert our students are living in and return them to the rich environment of a fully funded school library, staffed by certified teacher librarians.

As author Matt De La Pena eloquently states, “Reading is the fuel we need to grow our hearts and our minds.”

Mrs. Judith DiObilda

“I had been the librarian at JSC for the past 14 years before the library program was disbanded in 2020. I have been furloughed since. I am a property owner in Pottsville. As teacher librarians, we believe the foundation of a good education begins with literacy, and that libraries underpin the path to reading mastery. John S. Clarke library had a state standard curriculum and has a high-quality curated age-appropriated collection. This calls for us to continue to advocate for the students of this district to have all the advantages of a high-level education by reopening this resource with a certified teacher librarian.

Last evening, I looked at the January 2023 school board agenda on the Pottsville Area School District website. It states “It is recommended that the Board approve the Single Audit for the year ending June 30, 2022.

The Pottsville Area School Board is proud of the second consecutive positive audit with significant improvements in cash flow, capital reserve, and fund balance.”

I realize it is currently budget time and all the departments have submitted their requests. Because we are now in a better place financially as a district, I am asking you to give consideration in the budget to opening at least one library. The request would be for the John S. Clarke Library to be reinstated to assist our developing readers and to provide the fundamentals of research. Please use your discretion to spend the small amount that is necessary for our emerging learners to be made whole in their Pottsville Area School District education. Thank you."

Dr. Cardamone thanked Mrs. Hobbs and Mrs. DiObilda for their comments.

On motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Dr. Blankenhorn, the Board dispensed with the reading of the minutes of the December 7, 2022 Board Meeting. Since all members received copies, and there being no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved. Motion carried.

On the recommendation of Mrs. Stair, Business Manager, and on motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mrs. Buchanan, the Board approved the following Financial Reports for the month of December 2022:

1. Treasurer's Report (All Funds) – General Fund Balance as of December 31, 2022- \$7,681,503.36; Cafeteria Checking Balance as of December 31, 2022 - \$471,942.59.
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 – There were no budget transfers.

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the Solicitor, Atty. Reid, and on motion of Ms. Wytovich, seconded by Mrs. Buchanan, the Board approve the following Discipline Waivers, effective January 19 2023: #26-1964 and #26-0582. Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, and on motion of Mr. Urban, seconded by Ms. Wytovich, 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:

Angela Altemose - 1 credit
Jennifer Brant - 3 credits
Suzanne Fredericks - 3 credits
Gregory Hoak - 9 credits

Anya Wood - 3 credits

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, and on motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Dr. Blankenhorn, 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:

Miranda Angelo - \$4,644.00 (9 credits)

Jennifer Brant - \$2,343.00

Emily Earley - \$1,548.00

Alicia Fehr - \$1614.00

Suzanne Fredericks \$300.00

Kelly Lombel - \$3,390.00 (6 credits)

Gregory Schuettler - \$1,548.00

Ashley Shappell - \$1,548.00

Anya Wood - \$3,378.00 (6 credits)

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, and on motion of Ms. Wytovich, seconded by Mrs. Buchanan, the Board approved the following salary adjustments and made retroactive to the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year:

Lloren Reichert - Master's Degree +15; Anya Wood – Bachelor's +15.

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, and on motion of Mrs. Dewitt, seconded by Mr. Thomas, the Board approved the following Principle Internship placement: Gregory Schuettler (DHH Lengel Middle School Dean of Students) of Kutztown University with Dr. Caitlin Mohl, Principal of DHH Lengel Middle School.
Motion carried.

Informational Item under Crimson Tide Foundation

The Crimson Tide Foundation recently awarded Venture Grants in the amount of \$3,653.69. Thank you to the Crimson Tide Foundation and donors for the support of our students, educators and community.

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

- approved to advertise for an RFP on the High School Planetarium project. This project will be paid with ESSER II, ARP ESSER and/or Capital Reserve funds.

- approved to advertise for an ESCO HVAC project for the District. This project will be paid for by ESSER funds, Capital Reserve and/or Budgetary Reserve as necessary.

- approved the Honeywell Service Agreement received for Corrective Maintenance. Cost for Yearly maintenance \$10,050.
Motion carried.

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

- approved a repository sale for Parcel No # 68-27-0357.000 located at 10 North Third Street at a purchase price of \$1,273.00.

- approved the movement of \$4,545,238 from Unassigned Fund Balance to Assigned Fund Balance, retroactive to October 27, 2022, for the purposes of Charter/Cyber Charter tuition, unexpected maintenance and capital projects, increase in health care benefit costs, increase in PSERS, and increase in utility/fuel cost for heating/transportation.

- approved the rates of compensation to tax collectors in the respective political subdivisions for the 2023 duplicates:

- \$3.00 per bill collected/paid to the District and \$1.00 per bill mailed:
Port Carbon Borough
Mechanicsville Borough
Mount Carbon Borough
Palo Alto Borough
Norwegian Township
- 4% Increase - City of Pottsville

- approved the IDEA B agreement between the Pottsville Area School District as a sub-recipient and Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29, effective July 1, 2021. Allocation for the Pottsville Area School District is \$457,590.00.

- approved the sub-grant agreement for implementation of Individuals Act- IDEA Section 619 between the Pottsville Area School District and Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29 for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Allocation for the Pottsville Area School District is \$9,198.00.

- approved the Loan Payoff from Mid Penn Bank; estimated loan payoff is \$218,030.25, effective January 20, 2023. The loan was for the roof project at Schuylkill Technology Center in the amount of \$315,000.00. Loan Date was June 22, 2018; Maturity Date is June 22, 2033 at an interest rate of 3.9%.

- approved the Single Audit for the year ending June 30, 2022.

The Pottsville Area School Board is proud of the second consecutive positive audit with significant improvements in cash flow, capital reserve, and fund balance. We appreciate the dedication of our faculty, staff, and administration.

As we move into the budgeting season for the 2023-2024 school year, we will remain vigilant to plan for and mitigate increases in facilities, health care, transportation, both cyber and brick & mortar charter school costs, and general operations. The District is actively building relationships with families who move into our District with students who are already enrolled in cyber charter schools to offer them virtual and/or in-person instruction with the PASD. We encourage the community to visit our website to review the audit by Jones & Co and contact us with any questions.

Motion carried.

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

- accepted Julie Saunder's letter of resignation as DHH Lengel Middle School Special Education Lead Teacher and PAHS Special Education Lead Teacher, effective December 31, 2022.

- approved Erin Tranquillo as the PAHS Special Education Lead Teacher, effective January 1, 2023 at the stipend (prorated) indicated for the 2022-2023 school year in accordance with the negotiated agreement between PASD and the PASDEA.

- approved Kimberly Edling as the DHH Lengel Middle School Special Education Lead Teacher, effective January 1, 2023 at the stipend (prorated) indicated for the 2022-2023 school year in accordance with the negotiated agreement between PASD and the PASDEA.

- accepted Leandra Maley's letter of resignation as the Assistant Director of Dramatics (Choreographer), effective December 31, 2022.

- approved Andrea Cooper as the Assistant Director of Dramatics (Choreographer), effective January 1, 2023 at the stipend (prorated) indicated for the 2022-2023 school year in accordance with the negotiated agreement between the PASD and the PASDEA. (Pending required clearances on file)

- approved Mr. Michael Brennan as Graduation Coach at Pottsville Area High School for the 2022-2023 School Year – Step 15 – Bachelor’s + 15 - \$74,605, pending release from current employer. Benefits (Medical, Dental, Prescription, Hospitalization, and Vision) are not extended to Mr. Brennan nor his family. It is further recommended that the Board approve Mr. Brennan as the Point of Contact for Act 1 of 2022.

- accepted the letter of resignation from Alexa Heffernan, School (Guidance) Counselor at the JSC Elementary Center, letter dated December 12, 2022. We wish her well in her new endeavors.

- approved Mr. John Pettit as School (Guidance) Counselor at JSC Elementary for the 2022-2023 School Year – Step 1 – Bachelor’s + 15 - \$47,600 with a start date of January 25, 2023, contingent upon receipt of completed paperwork. Mrs. Mickey Gunoskey will serve as a mentor for Mr. Pettit.

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

- Employee #25 - cafeteria aide - December 5, 8, 2022
- Employee #70 - paraprofessional - December 9, 2022, January 6, 2023
- Employee # 1398 - paraprofessional - November 21, 2022 through January 9, 2023.
- Employee#1483 - cafeteria aide - January 17, 18, 2023
- Employee #1127 - cafeteria aide - December 19, 23, 2022
- Employee #124 - cafeteria aide - January 12, 13, 2023
- Employee #1300 - cafeteria aide - January 9, 2023

- accepted the letter of resignation for retirement from Jody Klein, retroactive to December 12, 2022. We wish her well in her retirement.

- accepted the letter of resignation from Katilyn Chervinski, paraprofessional at the DHH Lengel Middle School, retroactive to December 7, 2022. We wish her well in her new endeavors.

- accepted the letter of resignation from Diana DePauli, paraprofessional at the DHH Lengel Middle School, retroactive to January 3, 2023. We wish her well in her new endeavors.

- approved Emilee Rose as a part-time paraprofessional at DHH Lengel Middle School at an hourly rate of \$11.25, retroactive to January 3, 2023.

- accepted the letter of resignation for retirement from Rosemarie Bradley, cafeteria aide at the John S. Clarke Elementary Center, retroactive to December 31, 2022. We wish her well in her retirement.

- accepted the letter of resignation from Mrs. Paula Jones, ELA Teacher at the DHH Lengel Middle School, retroactive to December 31, 2022. We wish her well in her new endeavors.

- approved Ms. Rachelle Price as an ELA Teacher at DHHL Middle School for the 2022-2023 School Year – Step 2 – Bachelor’s + 15 - \$48,100, pending release from current employer.

- accepted the resignation of Amber Kramer, part-time paraprofessional at Pottsville Area High School, retroactive to December 23, 2022. We wish her well in her new endeavors.

- approved the Memorandum of Understanding between the Pottsville Area School District Education Association and the Pottsville Area School District to provide clarification to credits earned beyond a Bachelor's degree, pending solicitor's review.

- accepted the letter of resignation from Yesenia Rivera, full-time paraprofessional at the DHH Lengel Middle School, retroactive to January 5, 2023. We wish her well in new endeavors.

- approved a Family Medical Leave (FMLA) for employee #1090, effective February 20, 2023.

- approved Emma Libby as an after school tutor at PAHS for the 2022-2023 school year.

- accepted the letter of resignation for retirement from Nancy Schaeffer-Muldowney, IT Support Specialist for the Pottsville Area School District. Ms. Schaeffer-Muldowney's last day will be March 10, 2023. We wish her well in her retirement.

- approved Mr. Hinkle to work up to 20 hours per week at his current hourly rate, effective January 19, 2023. Mr. Hinkle is currently a Technology Intern with the Pottsville Area School District from Penn State Schuylkill Campus. It is further recommended that the Board approve Mr. Brent Hinkle as Full-Time IT Support Specialist at an annual salary of \$35,000 with a start date of May 8, 2023.

- accepted the letter of resignation from John Zelwalk, van driver for the Pottsville Area School District, retroactive to January 13, 2023. We wish him well in his new endeavors.

Motion carried.

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

1. Congratulations to PAHS students who were selected as STC Students of the Month!
Lashiah Dumas- Early Childhood Care & Education
Jorel Powell- Diesel
Lily Kreiser- Emerging Health Professionals

Luke Matz- Masonry
James Bosefski- Social Studies
Miale Monroy- Collision Repair

2. Thank you to JSC PTO for organizing a successful Breakfast with Santa December 17, 2022. Over 110 people attended the event.

3. Congratulations to PAHS Wrestlers, Connor Demcher and Dalton Monger, on their 100 win achievements.

4. Congratulations to the following STC Students for placing in the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) held at LCCC on December 14, 2022:
AJ Serrano – Sports and Entertainment Marketing – 1st Place and Cecelia Larkin – Principles of Marketing – 4th Place

5. Congratulations to PAHS Rotary Students of the Month, Madison Wright and Livia Hable.

6. Congratulations to PAHS Artist of the Month for January, Brendan Melochick.

7. Congratulations to PAHS Female Scholar Athlete, Maya Golden.

8. Congratulations to DHHL Student Ambassadors and Advisor Mrs. Holobetz for being featured on WNEP for their service to the school and community.
<https://www.wnep.com/article/news/local/schuylkill-county/middle-schoolers-serve-pottsville-community/523-f078aec8-a96a-44d1-8125-dc3237fd6284>

9. Congratulations to retired Pottsville Area School District faculty member Sherrill Silberling for her recent book "Stepping Stones," which is a follow up to "River of Gifts". Ms. Silberling reports the book is the product of four former Pottsville Area teachers and a childhood best friend. Further congratulations to additional retired PASD faculty members for assisting: Don Schneider for formatting and technology, JoAnne Doyle for illustrating and Kathy Zwiebel for helping to prepare the manuscript.
https://www.republicanherald.com/news/author-takes-inspiration-from-family-for-new-book-stepping-stones-set-in-schuylkill-county/article_03cab3b5-423e-5c16-af4d-2e6978b23008.html

10. Congratulations to JSC Students of the Month for January.

K John Gately
1 Brayden Strencosky
2 Kellan O'Neil
3 Rosman Ballard
4 Noah Quirin

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

- accepted the award from Emergency Connectivity Funds (ECF) in the amount of \$924,843.65 for 2,447 iPads for students and teachers/paraprofessionals.

- approved the purchase from Dell Technologies 50 Dell Laptops (budgeted funds) at a cost of \$33,233.50. COSTARS #003-E22-603.

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 the quote from Steve Weiss Music for new percussion instruments at a cost of \$15,181.45. Funding for the new instruments will be paid through Title IV grant money. Three (3) quotes were received.

- approved the Health and Safety Plan revisions as a requirement by the ESSER grant. There was only one revision on page 8 of 10 which will remove "**Families will continue to be informed of daily cases based on school building through a dashboard on its website**".

Motion carried.

On the recommendation of the **St. Clair Committee**, and on motion by Mr. Shields, seconded by Dr. Blankenhorn, the Board approved the following:

- approved a one-year extension to the Pottsville Area School District and Saint Clair Area School District Agreement through the 2026-2027 school year. The Pottsville Area School District is grateful for this relationship with the Saint Clair Area School District since 1990. The District looks forward to additional collaboration beyond the previous and current shared activities including Junior High Athletics, Professional Development, PBIS Reward events and more to continue to cultivate our partnership.

Motion carried by roll call: Dr. Blankenhorn, Mrs. Buchanan, Dr. Cardamone, Mrs. Dewitt, Mr. Shields and Mr. Thomas, aye; Mr. Urban, Ms. Wytovich, nay; Mr. Ciavarella, absent.

Under New Business:

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

January 13, 2023 - End of 2nd Marking Period
January 13, 2023 - 90th Day of School
January 16, 2023 - School Closed (Teachers' In-Service)
January 23, 2023 - JSC PTO Meeting
January 28, 2023 - Blood Drive at Life Center Foursquare Church sponsored by PAHS Students

Under **Gillingham Charter School**, Dr. Cardamone read the following:

Gillingham Charter School has decided not to use the building located at 315 Howard Avenue in Pottsville for Physical Education class and Extra-curricular activities until it has had a chance to review and respond to the letter the Pottsville Area School District sent them on January 11, 2023 with regard to safety concerns.

On the recommendation of Mrs. Lombel, and on motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Dr. Buchanan, the Board approved the Use of Facilities Calendar for January 2023.
-High School Auditorium – Great Pottsville Winter Carnival –various dates in January and February 2023
-Girls Bym/classroom – EMT Clinic – various dates from January through May 2023.

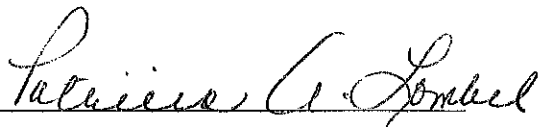
Meeting Dates for February 2023:

Committee of the Whole Meeting - Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 6:00 pm in the DHH Lengel Middle School Auditorium.

Board Meeting - Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the DHH Lengel Middle School Auditorium.

An Executive Session was held from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm to discuss personnel matters.

There being no further new business, on motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Dr. Blankenhorn, the meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.



Patricia A. Lombel (Date) 2/15/23
Board Secretary