

**BURRELL SCHOOL DISTRICT
AGENDA MEETING MINUTES
October 8, 2024**

Call to Order

The Burrell School District Board of Directors Agenda Meeting was held in the High School Board Room and was called to order at 7:17 PM by President Pam Key.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Key asked all present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Mrs. Gretchen V. Beveridge, Mr. Timothy J. Vinkovich, Ms. Tricia Shank, Mrs. Nikki Watson, Mrs. LeeAnn S. Guido, Mr. Rick Kaczor, Mr. Tom Deiseroth, Mrs. Jean Schager and Mrs. Pam Key

Board Members Absent: None

Quorum present

Others Present: Dr. Shannon L. Wagner, Superintendent, Mrs. Jennifer S. Callahan, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary and Dr. Gregory Egnor, Director of Student Services

Student Representatives Present: Jason Wagner, Donovan Cosentino and Ryan Rusiewicz

Executive Sessions

October 8, 2024 – Immediately following meeting - Personnel Agenda
October 15, 2024 - 7:00 PM - Personnel Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Agenda Meeting – September 10, 2024; Regular Meeting – September 17, 2024

Approval of Monthly Financial Reports

- a. Treasurer's Report
- b. General Fund Report
- c. Capital Reports
- d. Food Service Reports
- e. Student Activity Reports

Comments from Public - Agenda Items Only

None

Reports of Administration and Standing Committees

SUPERINTENDENT - DR. WAGNER

Student/Staff Recognition and Reports

Enrollment Report Information

Dr. Wagner reviewed current enrollment numbers and the comparison to projected enrollment. She explained that the District loses about 40-60 students per year. Enrollment declined again and enrollment is under 1700 students this year.

Ms. Shank commented that the Kindergarten total is only at 99 which seems very low.

Dr. Wagner stated yes, we are trending low in grades K,1 and 2. There are 110 or less students in those grades.

Mr. Kaczor asked about the trend at the Middle School and High School.

Dr. Wagner stated that secondary is still holding at around 140 per grade level.

Dr. Wagner reviewed enrollment and capacity data from the June meeting and the June Board hearing on closing Stewart and explained that it is part of the reason she is recommending closing the building.

Adopt Resolution to permanently close Stewart Elementary School as of the commencement of the 2025-2026 school term

Dr. Wagner summarized the data including declining enrollment, student support resources, and infrastructure and aging facility needs. She stated we have been talking about this for 24 months at this point. We have studied it and asked architects for information.

Dr. Wagner stated she provided the transcript and questions from the hearing for Board review. Answers to public questions were posted publicly and there are also articles that were posted on Burrell Buzz regarding these items.

Dr. Wagner stated that next week she will ask the Board to adopt the resolution to close Stewart.

Student Representative Jason Wagner stated that the building is historically important to many people. He reiterated that should the building close, he cautioned the District from selling it to a land developer because it would be fantastic to add money to the budget but will kill the last bit of suburbia.

Mrs. Guido asked if the vote is to close Stewart, do we have to be prepared to determine where the students are going next year.

Dr. Wagner stated that she believes we are still waiting to hear about the grant. The architect has been working on specs as the Board requested. We need to be thinking about if we close the building and where to move students because the architect's timeframe for construction is really for the summer of 2026. She believes that next year we will be in a situation to put 5th grade at Middle School and 4th grade at Bon Air and then the Board can discuss and decide if they want to add classrooms to have 5th grade at Bon Air the following year.

Dr. Wagner stated that Administration has a plan in place to have 5th grade at Middle School and K-4th grade at Bon Air as the Board makes a decision for the long-term.

Dr. Wagner stated she understands that there are people concerned with 5th grade being at the Middle School, but there are 5th grade teachers who feel differently. She stated based on what the architect is giving us, if we

intend to close for the 2025-2026 school year, we would likely have 5th grade at the Middle School and 4th grade at Bon Air. It is a side effect of making the decision to close Stewart.

Mrs. Key asked when 5th grade was previously at the Middle School and what was the reasoning to move it back to elementary.

Dr. Wagner stated she believes it was during construction to make Bon Air bigger. She would need to research it further to find out why. She also explained that a true Middle School has teams of teachers and it was functioning more as a Junior High and that may be another reason they were moved back.

Mrs. Guido asked about the current functioning and is it more of a Middle School structure.

Dr. Wagner responded it is a true Middle School functioning now.

Student Representative Jason Wagner asked what is different between Middle School and Junior High School.

Dr. Wagner explained that Junior High moves between classrooms and Middle School is much more integrated and ours has been moving more that way.

Mrs. Watson stated if we put 5th grade at Middle School for one year, it will be harder to move them back to Bon Air. She believes 5th grade needs recess and questioned if there is a way to have it for Middle School students.

Dr. Wagner stated there are multiple ways to have recess. Currently there are students walking around the buildings often and stated that they take brain breaks.

Mrs. Watson asked if there is a place for them to play.

Dr. Wagner stated there is space to have games if needed and that there is an opportunity for play. She stated that we are building a schedule to see how we can engage students differently. She discussed specials and having them pulled into the core content. She would like to see more integration and competency based. She would like to see that and having 5th grade there would be more of an opportunity for them.

General discussion ensued about "free play" for students.

Student Representative Ryan Rusiewicz asked if kids are moved to Middle School and Bon Air would it increase class size because he feels smaller size classes are better for learning.

Student Representative Jason Wagner asked how can Middle School accommodate the classrooms.

Dr. Wagner stated there are several empty spaces to fit the grade level in the building.

Mrs. Callahan added it is also due to the lower overall class numbers than in the past.

Mrs. Guido stated it is our intention to keep smaller class sizes.

Student Representative Ryan Rusiewicz stated it is an easier learning environment with current class sizes.

Mr. Kaczor commented that there are parents old enough now who went through 5th- 8th grade and don't have a problem with it.

Student Representative Jason Wagner stated his parents went through it that way.

Mrs. Guido commented that she does not think it is a good idea and to table the discussion about where students will be placed. She believes that the Board should be prepared to provide answers and to provide the narrative.

Dr. Wagner suggested that the Board could incorporate that into the vote on closing Stewart.

Mrs. Schager asked if Bon Air still has enough capacity for all students in 4th grade.

Dr. Wagner stated if we put 4th grade at Bon Air next year, we will need to have meals in the cafeteria and gym for the first year for one lunch period. She added that we can build a schedule to accommodate that.

Student Representative Jason Wagner asked if the reducing class size is also reducing personnel.

Dr. Wagner stated it could be but it could be reallocating staff as well.

General discussion ensued about class sizes.

Mr. Kaczor stated no one will lose their job based on closing Stewart. We discussed natural attrition so if teachers retire, we may not replace those positions.

General consensus of the Board is that they don't want anyone to lose their job.

Dr. Wagner asked if the Board wants to consider an official vote on where the grade levels will be.

Mrs. Key stated yes.

Mrs. Watson stated the cost to update Stewart is also part of the discussion and why we are making a decision now rather than waiting to make a decision about where students will be going.

Dr. Wagner stated yes, closing Stewart now saves money that can go toward a bond issue to help upgrade the heating and ventilation units at the High School and Bon Air.

Mrs. Key stated she thinks we have discussed this at meeting after meeting, so we need to vote on what we are doing. She stated that Dr. Wagner should not have to justify it with a presentation all over again.

Mrs. Schager asked to confirm if we decided to keep Stewart open, it would cost \$36 million as opposed to closing it and spending \$20 million to renovate all other buildings.

Dr. Wagner stated yes, that is needed to update just the systems at Stewart.

Dr. Wagner suggested the Board should be clear with what they are deciding for the 2025-2026 school year. She is basing it on the tentative timetable that the architects gave her.

Student Representative Jason Wagner asked about the status of the pool.

Dr. Wagner stated it is still on our list to consider but suggested the Board consider heating and ventilation first because it is a greater need.

General discussion ensued about 5th graders.

Student Representative Jason Wagner stated he has a few younger relatives and he thinks they may fit in at the Middle School based on their maturity level.

Mr. Kaczor added that we would try to make sure that 5th graders are not mixing with the 7th and 8th graders.

Permission to place one secondary education biology student teacher from Carlow University at Burrell High School for Spring Semester 2025

Approval of First Reading of Revisions to Policy 222 - Tobacco Use

Dr. Wagner stated that items 5-9 are policy revisions all associated with safety. She discussed the recommended revisions. The solicitor is reviewing them so they are drafts. This was not updated since 2015.

Mr. Kaczor asked if the Board could review them and discuss further at the Agenda meeting in November.

Mr. Deiseroth asked since policies need two readings, could the Board vote on them as they are now and then change them in November.

Mrs Key suggested the Board take the month to review them and have the first reading in November.

Approval of First Reading of Revisions to Policy 225 - Students and the Police

Approval of First Reading of Revisions to Policy 226 - Locker Search

Approval of First Reading of Revisions to Policy 810.2 - Video Monitors

Dr. Wagner stated Policy 810 currently exists and it is only regarding bus video monitors. She will be asking if Solicitor Lee Price is ok with eliminating this policy and then including bus cameras in a Policy 817 regarding video surveillance.

Approval of First Reading of Policy 817 - Use of Video Surveillance

OTHER ADMINISTRATION - DR. TURK / DR. EGNOR

Approval of Student Education Agreement with River Academy of Excellence for Special Education Services for 2024-2025 school year

Dr. Egnor stated this is an agreement for another student that was placed because this student requires significant support.

Approval of Athletic Trips and Field Trips 2024-2025

Dr. Egnor stated this is the annual field trip list as submitted through Friday of last week.

Mrs. Guido asked if these are just school sponsored day trips.

Dr. Egnor responded it includes overnight trips as well and they are marked.

Mrs. Guido stated it is also marked how they are funded.

PERSONNEL: Approval of Personnel Log dated October 15, 2024

Northern Westmoreland Career & Technology Center Report - Mr. Kaczor/Mr. Vinkovich

Westmoreland Intermediate Unit Report - Mrs. Watson

PSBA Liaison Report - Mr. Deiseroth

Mr. Deiseroth reported:

- October 21 is last day to register to vote
- PennDOT is having an "Innovations Challenge" effectively increasing awareness of seatbelt safety; Winning team receives \$6,000

BUSINESS - MRS. CALLAHAN

Approval of budgetary transfers

Mrs. Callahan stated as permitted by school code beginning in October, budgetary transfers will be presented for Board approval each month as necessary. Since we budget in June for the upcoming entire fiscal year, there are often changes that need made due to unexpected needs and/or changes.

Permission to advertise for bids for Janitorial and Athletic Supplies for 2025-2026 school year

Mrs. Callahan stated because we purchase more than \$20,000 of like items in our Facilities and Athletic Department each year, we bid the items to comply with the law and to ensure we are getting the best price available. This item allows us to advertise for bids when we are ready sometime in winter as we work through the budget process for next fiscal year.

Approval of Lease Agreement with Burrell Baseball Association for Braeburn Heights Baseball Fields for period October 21, 2024 through October 20, 2034

Mrs. Callahan stated that as far back as the 1980s, the District has had a lease agreement in place with Lower Burrell Little League, now named Burrell Baseball Association, for their use of the Braeburn Height fields – called ABC fields. The District owns the 6.2 acres but according to the lease LBLL/BBA has always used and maintained the property. The lease has been a 10-year lease with really no major changes over the past 3 agreements. It was reviewed by our solicitor, Lee Price, in detail in 2014 when he made some language changes. The agreement essentially requires Burrell Baseball Association to maintain the property, pay for utilities and request approval for any alterations or improvements to the property which all become property of the District. They can only use it for the recreational programs unless the Board gives written approval for other uses, and they must maintain Insurance coverage as required by the District.

Mrs. Callahan stated because the lease expires this month, another lease for 10 years has been presented for your consideration. At this time, no changes have been made other than the dates.

Mr. Kaczor asked if there are taxes on the property.

Mrs. Callahan responded no because the District owns the property so it is tax exempt.

Mrs. Beveridge asked what would our intention be for this property if it was not used for Baseball.

Mrs. Callahan responded that there are no known intended uses at this time.

Bond Issue 2024 Information

Mrs. Callahan stated in June 2024, the Board approved the issuance of Debt by General Obligation Bonds in an amount expected not to be greater than \$10 million. As explained at that time, it takes about 2 months for Bond Counsel, our Bond Underwriter and herself to prepare and finalize all of the documents, and to go out to market for the bonds.

Mrs. Callahan stated part of that process includes the District's bond rating. A solid rating helps obtain better rates. The rating is established after an extensive review of our financial data, budgeting and accounting, and other economic information as well as a detailed interview where she is required to answer questions about and discuss financial status of the District. She is pleased to state that the District maintained a solid A+ rating which is considered financially stable.

Mrs. Callahan stated as Alisha Henry from PNC Capital Markets explained in May and June, the rates are not determined until the bonds are priced when they are taken to market. This happened late in August with a Bond Closing date of September 26.

Mrs. Callahan stated she included this item on the agenda to report the final Bond Issue figures which came in slightly less than estimated in June. The Payment schedule that shows the bond issue extends through the 2034-2035 fiscal year as planned. Our annual payments for this issue are around \$395,000 for the first part of the bonds. The overall payment amount of \$13.1 million is about \$45,000 less than estimated in June and the District received proceeds of \$9,855,000 at closing which is about \$55,000 more than originally estimated. Overall, this was a successful bond issue to help fund some of the Capital Improvements needed District wide.

Accept resignation of Nikki Watson as Westmoreland Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Representative effective immediately

Appointment of _____ as Westmoreland Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Representative to serve remainder of unexpired term through June 30, 2025

Mr. Deiseroth stated he will volunteer to do it if no one else will do it.

Mrs. Beveridge reminded him that it is a drive late at night for monthly meetings.

Board members thanked Mr. Deiseroth for his wiliness to serve.

Communications

The Board has received one item of communication which has been provided for your review.

Requests for Use of Buildings

Mrs. Callahan presented the building use requests as prepared and recommended by Director of Athletics and Building Operations, Brian Ferra.

Payment of Bills

Additions to Agenda (Agenda Meeting only)

None

Comments from Public

None

Adjournment at 8:24 PM

<u>MOTION:</u>	Motion by: Mr. Vinkovich	Seconded by: Mrs. Schager
<u>VOTE:</u>	Roll Call: All in Favor	MOTION CARRIED



Jennifer S. Callahan
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**BURRELL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 15, 2024**

Call to Order

The Burrell School District Board of Directors Board Meeting was held in the High School Board Room and was called to order at 7:31 PM by President Pam Key.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Key asked all present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Mrs. Gretchen V. Beveridge, Mr. Timothy J. Vinkovich, Ms. Tricia Shank, Mrs. Nikki Watson, Mrs. LeeAnn S. Guido, Mr. Rick Kaczor, Mr. Tom Deiseroth, Mrs. Jean Schager and Mrs. Pam Key

Board Members Absent: None

Quorum present

Others Present: Dr. Shannon L. Wagner, Superintendent, Mrs. Jennifer S. Callahan, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary, Dr. Gregory Egnor, Director of Student Services, Dr. Autumn Turk, Director of Curriculum and Development and Solicitor Trish Andrews

Student Representatives Present: Jason Wagner and Donovan Cosentino

Executive Sessions

October 8, 2024 – Immediately following meeting - Personnel Agenda
October 15, 2024 – 7:00 PM - Personnel Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Agenda Meeting – September 10, 2024; Regular Meeting – September 17, 2024

<u>MOTION:</u>	Motion by: Mr. Vinkovich	Seconded by: Mr. Kaczor
<u>VOTE:</u>	Roll Call: All in Favor	MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Monthly Financial Reports

- a. Treasurer's Report (Attachment 10-1)
- b. General Fund Report (Attachment 10-2)
- c. Capital Reports (Attachment 10-3)
- d. Food Service Reports (Attachment 10-4)
- e. Student Activity Reports (Attachment 10-5)

<u>MOTION:</u>	Motion by: Mr. Vinkovich	Seconded by: Mr. Kaczor
<u>VOTE:</u>	Roll Call: All in Favor	MOTION CARRIED

Comments from Public - Agenda Items Only

None

Reports of Administration and Standing Committees

SUPERINTENDENT - DR. WAGNER

Student/Staff Recognition and Reports

Dr. Wagner presented:

- Coach Alli - Cheer coach – took Varsity squad to competition on October 13, 2024
 - Burrell brought home 3rd place competing against larger schools
 - Will compete at Plum in December and hopefully at WPIAL
- Marching Band and Mr. Pagnotta
 - Competition at Mt. Lebanon High School on October 12th
 - Highest score of season and winners of their class and every special award within their class

Enrollment Report Information

Dr. Wagner stated that she shared the report with the Board. The current enrollment is 1,674 students as of October 1st.

Adopt Resolution to permanently close Stewart Elementary School as of the start of the 2025-2026 school term (Attachment 10-6)

Dr. Wagner stated that Administration is recommending that the Board adopt the resolution to permanently close Stewart as of the start of the 2025-2026 school term.

MOTION: Motion by: Mrs. Guido Seconded by: Mr. Kaczor

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Schager stated she does not agree with closing Stewart but does not think there is any other way to do it. It seems it is better to close Stewart and not spending extra money to renovate the building.

Mr. Vinkovich stated he agrees with Mrs. Schager. He went there and doesn't want to close it but just can't justify spending the money and additional tax increase needed so overall the better way is to close it.

Student Representative Jason Wagner urged the District not to sell it to a land developer because kids go there to play and many residents went to school there.

Mrs. Key stated we all love Stewart School and we understand the history but it is about doing what is fiscally responsible for the District overall.

VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Approval of the following building grade levels for school year 2025-2026:

**Bon Air Elementary School - Grades Kindergarten through 4
Charles A. Huston Middle School - Grades 5 through 8
Burrell High School - Grades 9 through 12**

Dr. Wagner stated that last week, the Board discussed making a clear decision on where students will be for next school year. She stated the Board is doing this with the idea of waiting to see what construction costs are for final placement of grade levels for future years.

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Vinkovich Seconded by: Mr. Kaczor

DISCUSSION:
Mrs. Watson clarified that this is not voting on a permanent solution, it is for the first year only.

Mrs. Watson suggested a pod scenario with 5th and 6th grade so that might be a nice way to help 6th grade as well to include things like recess and keep these grades in a group together. She suggested to keep their own bathrooms as well which is a concern for some parents.

VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor except Mrs. Key voted NO MOTION CARRIED

Permission to place one secondary education biology student teacher from Carlow University at Burrell High School for Spring Semester 2025

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Vinkovich Seconded by: Mrs. Schager

VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Approval of First Reading of Revisions to Policy 222 - Tobacco and Vape Use

Dr. Wagner stated items 6-10 were discussed last week and she recommended moving them to November.

Approval of First Reading of Revisions to Policy 225 - Students and the Police

Approval of First Reading of Revisions to Policy 226 - Locker Search

Approval of Elimination of Policy 810.2 - Video Monitors

Approval of First Reading of Policy 817 - Use of Video Surveillance

OTHER ADMINISTRATION - DR. TURK / DR. EGNOR

Approval of Student Education Agreement with River Academy of Excellence for Special Education Services for 2024-2025 school year

MOTION: Motion by: Mrs. Guido Seconded by: Mr. Vinkovich

DISCUSSION:
Mrs. Schager asked if we have other students at that school.

Dr. Egnor responded yes and that the school does individual agreements for each student.

VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Athletic Trips and Field Trips 2024-2025

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Deiseroth Seconded by: Mrs. Schager
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

PERSONNEL: Approval of Personnel Log dated October 15, 2024 (Attached)

MOTION: Motion by: Mrs. Guido Seconded by: Mr. Vinkovich
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Northern Westmoreland Career & Technology Center Report - Mr. Kaczor/Mr. Vinkovich

Mr. Vinkovich stated they have a meeting this coming Thursday.

Mr. Kaczor stated one teacher is resigning so they will be looking for a replacement in Advanced Manufacturing.

Westmoreland Intermediate Unit Report - Mrs. Watson

PSBA Liaison Report - Mr. Deiseroth

Mr. Deiseroth stated the report is on the drive.

Mr. Deiseroth reported:

- HB 2383, SB 232 and SB 801 are all on governor's desk now
- PSBA Trust Scholarship of \$5,000 that student representatives are eligible to apply; can provide more information if any of our student representatives are interested

BUSINESS - MRS. CALLAHAN

Approval of budgetary transfers (Attachment 10-7)

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Vinkovich Seconded by: Mr. Deiseroth
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Permission to advertise for bids for Janitorial and Athletic Supplies for 2025-2026 school year

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Deiseroth Seconded by: Mrs. Schager
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Lease Agreement with Burrell Baseball Association for Braeburn Heights Baseball Fields for period October 21, 2024 through October 20, 2034

MOTION: Motion by: Ms. Shank Seconded by: Mr. Vinkovich
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Bond Issue 2024 Information

Mrs. Callahan stated that last week she provided a summary of the bond issue that closed on September 26 resulting in proceeds of just under \$10 million to use toward capital improvements over the next few years as determined by the Board.

Accept resignation of Nikki Watson as Westmoreland Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Representative effective immediately

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Vinkovich Seconded by: Mr. Deiseroth
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Appointment of Tom Deiseroth as Westmoreland Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Representative to serve remainder of unexpired term through June 30, 2025

MOTION: Motion by: Mrs. Guido Seconded by: Mrs. Schager

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Watson requested that Mr. Deiseroth still send the WIU Beard Law Group emails to her.

Mr. Kaczor asked if Mr. Deiseroth will also still serve as the legislative representative.

Mr. Deiseroth replied he will do so until December reorganization.

VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Communications

Mrs. Callahan stated one item of communication is in documents for review.

Requests for Use of Buildings (Attachment 10-8)

Mrs. Callahan presented the building use requests as prepared and recommended by Director of Athletics and Building Operations, Brian Ferra.

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Deiseroth Seconded by: Mr. Vinkovich
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor MOTION CARRIED

Payment of Bills (Attachment 10-9)

MOTION: Motion by: Mr. Deiseroth Seconded by: Mr. Vinkovich
VOTE: Roll Call: All in Favor except Mrs. Guido abstained from check# 88887597

MOTION CARRIED

Additions to Agenda (Agenda Meeting only)

Comments from Public

Mrs. Key stated regarding Stewart and plans for Bon Air, she is "old school" and has an issue with 5th grade being in the Middle School.

Mrs. Key reminded everyone that Saturday is the Fall Festival at Kotecki Park beginning at 11:00 AM. There will be free activities for the kids and Karly Logan has put in a lot of work.

Mrs. Watson stated that people have come to her about wanting to keep 5th grade at Bon Air so she is advocating for that angle. She believes there are a good amount of people who she wants to represent.

Adjournment at 7:51 PM

MOTION:

Motion by: Mrs. Key

Seconded by: Mr. Kaczor

VOTE:

Roll Call: All in Favor

MOTION CARRIED



Jennifer S. Callahan

Business Administrator/Board Secretary

JSC/mls