

SCHUYLKILL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
929 Lakeshore Drive
Leesport, PA 19533-8631

MINUTES

October 14, 2024

1.0 The Special Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by the Board President, David E. Moll, in the Auditorium of the Schuylkill Valley High School.

1.1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

1.2 ROLL CALL

Members Present: Franklin M. Ammarell, Paul L. Bendigo, Nicoleen M. Kleffel, Linda R. Lash, David E. Moll, Bryan J. O'Donnell, Alfonso F. Rossi, Kelly J. Steinke, Daniel B. Weyandt

Secretary: Linda R. Lash

Recording Secretary: Susan A. Christman (absent)

Administrative Staff Present: Dr. Cathy Taschner, Dr. Joshua Kuehner, Michael Sobczak, Dr. Patrick Winters

1.3 EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board met in Executive Session on October 8, 2024, to discuss safety and security, and on October 14, 2024, prior to the Special Board meeting, to discuss safety and security. The Board also met on October 14, 2024, following the Special Board meeting, to discuss safety and security.

2.0 REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

2.1 PRESIDENT – *David E. Moll*

Mr. Moll read a statement on behalf of the Board which reaffirmed that at Schuylkill Valley the top priority is the safety and well-being of our staff and students.

2.2 BERKS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY REMARKS – *John T. Adams*

Mr. Adams stated that his office has worked closely with Northern Berks Regional Police Department on the incidents that recently took place. He is very pleased with the response from NBRPD as they arrived at the school immediately and addressed the situation. Mr. Adams emphasized that school safety is the top priority for the District Attorney's office.

3.0 SUPERINTENDENT

3.1 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Taschner thanked the Northern Berks Regional Police Department for being tremendous partners, as well as our administrators, staff and students for executing the skills that are practiced in our drills, which kept everyone safe. She reviewed what was learned through this event including the need for more communication to families, enabling a means to alerting all administrators and NBRPD at the same time, and expanding the ability to our teachers to place their building in lockdown, secure, hold, evacuate, or shelter in place at any time, if they have information that warrants the need to do so. The district has an Emergency Operations Plan, and this information is shared with the county. Our staff is trained annually, and we conduct security drills twice a year in conjunction with our local law enforcement. We have a number of confidential security measures in place that cannot be discussed in a public meeting without jeopardizing the safety of staff and students, and we continue to review these each year.

In addition to physical safety measures, we continue to work with agency partners for mental health supports for students and continue to investigate ways by which we can continue to add to that support for students. The Board has created policy that acknowledges the need for anti-bullying programs in each school and has directed that school-wide positive behavior supports be addressed in each building. These are just some of the things that we do to keep our students and staff safe. Dr. Taschner thanked everyone that has reached out with suggestions and shared their experiences and concerns.

4.0 PERSONS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Beth Hoover, Bern Township – District Safety and Security
Julie Zimmerman, Centerport Borough – District Safety and Security
Lisa Jacobson, Bern Township – District Safety and Security, Student Mental Health Supports
Alexis Good, Bern Township – District Safety and Security
Roxanne McMurtry, Centre Township – District Safety and Security
Joseph Brown, Bern Township – District Safety and Security
Kelly Wickersham, Bern Township – District Safety and Security
Milagros Cadena, Ontelaunee Township – District Safety and Security

5.0 BCIU SAFETY & SECURITY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR – *Russell Del Rosario*

Mr. Del Rosario has been the Safety and Security Program Administrator for the BCIU for the past three years and is retired from law enforcement. He works internally with the BCIU for the safety and security of their students, and also collaborates closely with the school districts in Berks County. He has assessed all three of our schools for physical security, and has performed active shooter training, situational training, and standard response protocol training. His services are available to the district whenever they are needed for the safety of our students.

6.0 OTHER (Old/New Business)

Mr. Moll thanked everyone who attended the meeting and for their remarks.


7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Nicoleen Kleffel and seconded by Paul Bendigo that, there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Ammarell, Bendigo, Kleffel, Lash, Moll, O'Donnell, Rossi, Steinke, Weyandt

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.



Linda R. Lash, Secretary
Board of School Directors