

PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Palmerton, PA

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

An executive session was held on Tuesday, November 6, 2024, concerning personnel matters and again after the regular board meeting today, Tuesday, November 19, 2024 concerning personnel matters.

The regular board meeting of the Palmerton Area School District Board of School Directors was held in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 680 Fourth Street, Palmerton, PA, on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, and called to order at 5:31 p.m. President Haas presided. The meeting was viewable via livestream on the district’s Facebook page.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Present: Directors Connell, Haas, Krawchuk, Mazepa, Danielle Paules, Earl Paules, Schaible, and Snyder

Absent: Director King

Absent-Other: Ryan Kish – Interim Superintendent/Business Manager

OTHER ATTENDANCE

Jacqueline McCandless – Board Secretary, and Shawn Lochinger– Solicitor

STUDENT REPORT:

Elementary – select students were recognized for their leadership skills in the Leader in Me program with a certificate signed by the Interim Superintendent and Board President: Londyn Goss, Silas Nieves, Jayda Gacki, Isabel Palazzo, Evelyn Pelaez, Emmalynn Dana, Cole Collins, and Austin Hoffman at S. S. Palmer Elementary; Miguel Diaz, Natalie Pisulak, Aubrey Rodgers, Jonathon Frei, Lucas Sutton, Kory Christman, and Jason Haas at Towamensing Elementary

High School – Derek King, grade 12

- National Honor Society – lunch buddies program has begun; Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning; blood drive; Math night at Towamensing on December 11; induction of members this week
- Marching Band – played in Veterans Day parade and at high school assembly; looking forward to spring trip to Virginia
- Concert Band – winter concert on December 11; six students will audition for all-district band
- Fishing Club – 81 members signed up; community involvement planned
- Athletics – fall sports has ended; congratulations to all student-athletes and coaches for their accomplishments this season; winter sports began November 15
- Scholastic Scrimmage – advanced to quarterfinals for the second time in four years
- Social Studies Department – held annual Veterans Day assembly for seniors where Atty. Steve Vlossak, teacher Josh Nenscel, security officer Matt Pender, and VFW representative Bruce Frisch spoke about their military experience; also held mock election on Election Day

Junior High School – Lincoln Baker, grade 8

- ACE team – tryouts have begun
- Student Council – hosting annual student/faculty volleyball tournament on November 27, students to bring a new, unwrapped toy to participate
- Mrs. Owens’ class – field trip to Unangst Tree Farm to learn about growing pumpkins, went on hayride, navigated a corn maze, and picked pumpkins
- Athletics – winter sports season has begun; girls’ wrestling athletes are increasing
- “*What’s So Cool About Manufacturing?*” – video team will be working with TPEI in Leighton this year
- STEM program – students explored ozobots in their classes with IU support

- Digital News Club – conducting interviews, writing scripts, and editing to finish their stories; first broadcast coming soon
- Band & Chorus – working hard to prepare for the winter concert on December 11
- Mrs. Carroll’s class – made appreciation cards for veterans in our county which will be included in appreciation bags and distributed at the annual veteran’s luncheon in Jim Thorpe

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:

- In lieu of a report, Mrs. Susan Dellicker, HS German teacher, proposed introducing a German exchange program at the high school. The program is organized through a private organization, The Friendship Connection. German exchange students will attend the high school from March 31, 2025 through April 23, 2025. Host students would then have the opportunity to travel to Germany during the summer of 2025 for four weeks. The cost for participating students is \$2,050. Board approval of this will be in December or January.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:

- Director Krawchuk – CCTI: afterschool activities expanded from 2 days a week to 3 days a week, 300 students involved; architect teacher and some students toured the architecture department at Northampton Community College last month; reported Act 93 and Business Manager contracts have been completed
- Director Danielle Paules – PSBA: four trust scholarships open to students until March 14, 2025; one-time \$5,000 award for seniors; webinar on recent court decisions of the Supreme Court on December 6
- Director Haas – CLIU: link on the website about the holiday basket raffle on December 16
- Director Snyder asked about the size of the main sewage pipe in the weight room and if the recent problem there was thoroughly cleaned up

OLD BUSINESS:

- Feasibility study update – Ms. Jamie Schuler reported that the steering committee and RLPS Architects met on December 12; looked at feedback from the town hall and the Board; will be collecting more data, staff updated via email; will be surveying the elementary staff after the Thanksgiving break; will meet again before Christmas break; another update expected in February or March 2025; no changes to be made for the 2025-2026 school year except for moving ahead with the high school security project

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- Patricia Woginrich – spoke against class restructuring in regard to the feasibility study; concerned about having disruptions to students and transportation
- Lori Nemeth – questioned the translator/interpreter agreement and costs associated with it
- Marnie Kuhns – concerned with feasibility study results and changes it may bring; in favor of increased high school security
- Calvin Mosiman – asked for more of an explanation on the feasibility study and why it is needed

MEETING MINUTES

Director Krawchuk moved, seconded by Director Schaible, to approve the board meeting minutes from October 15, 2024.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Director Mazepa moved, seconded by Director Connell, to approve the consent agenda.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

FISCAL REPORTS	Approved accounts payable reports Approved treasurer’s reports Approved budget transfers																														
DRAMA CLUB	Approved the contract/performance license with MTI Production in the amount of \$4,125.75 for the Drama Club’s performance of <i>Sweeney Todd School Edition</i> on April 24, 2025 through April 26, 2025																														
IAS	Approved the following Instructional Assistants at a rate of \$18.28 per hour effective November 20, 2024:																														
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 506 529 533">Samantha Haas</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 539 516 567">Janelle Taylor</td> </tr> </table>			Samantha Haas	Janelle Taylor																										
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SEVERANCE & RELEASE	Approved retroactively the severance and release agreement with employee #716 effective November 1, 2024																														
FMLA	Approved the following for Family & Medical Leave:																														
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 770 532 798">Employee #313</td> <td data-bbox="656 770 1455 798">Effective from approximately April 25, 2025 through June 11, 2025</td> </tr> </table>			Employee #313	Effective from approximately April 25, 2025 through June 11, 2025																										
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UNCOMPENSATED LEAVE	Approved retroactively the following uncompensated leave request:																														
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 911 532 938">Employee #609</td> <td data-bbox="656 911 1390 938">Effective from November 12, 2024 through December 6, 2024</td> </tr> </table>			Employee #609	Effective from November 12, 2024 through December 6, 2024																										
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CLUB ADVISORS	Approved the following Club Advisors for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year:																														
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1058 639 1085">Joshua Nenscel, Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="711 1058 951 1085">Student Council-HS</td> <td data-bbox="987 1058 1105 1106">\$2,051.00 prorated</td> <td data-bbox="1143 1058 1406 1106">Effective retroactively November 2, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1121 626 1148">Nellianne Parr, Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="711 1121 899 1169">National Honor Society-JHS</td> <td data-bbox="987 1121 1105 1169">\$1,030.00 prorated</td> <td data-bbox="1143 1121 1492 1148">Effective November 20, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1184 683 1211">Jaclyn Ivancich, Co-Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="711 1184 850 1211">Sixth Sense</td> <td data-bbox="987 1184 1105 1232">\$413.00 prorated</td> <td data-bbox="1143 1184 1492 1211">Effective November 20, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1247 667 1274">William Zeky, Co-Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="711 1247 850 1274">Sixth Sense</td> <td data-bbox="987 1247 1105 1295">\$413.00 prorated</td> <td data-bbox="1143 1247 1492 1274">Effective November 20, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1310 688 1337">Matthew Blanchard, Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="711 1310 802 1337">Fishing</td> <td data-bbox="987 1310 1013 1337">--</td> <td data-bbox="1143 1310 1492 1337">Effective November 20, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1352 688 1379">Julia Dougherty, Co-Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="711 1352 786 1379">STEM</td> <td data-bbox="987 1352 1013 1379">--</td> <td data-bbox="1143 1352 1492 1379">Effective November 20, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1394 639 1421">Travis Fink, Co-Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="711 1394 786 1421">STEM</td> <td data-bbox="987 1394 1013 1421">--</td> <td data-bbox="1143 1394 1492 1421">Effective November 20, 2024</td> </tr> </table>			Joshua Nenscel, Advisor	Student Council-HS	\$2,051.00 prorated	Effective retroactively November 2, 2024	Nellianne Parr, Advisor	National Honor Society-JHS	\$1,030.00 prorated	Effective November 20, 2024	Jaclyn Ivancich, Co-Advisor	Sixth Sense	\$413.00 prorated	Effective November 20, 2024	William Zeky, Co-Advisor	Sixth Sense	\$413.00 prorated	Effective November 20, 2024	Matthew Blanchard, Advisor	Fishing	--	Effective November 20, 2024	Julia Dougherty, Co-Advisor	STEM	--	Effective November 20, 2024	Travis Fink, Co-Advisor	STEM	--	Effective November 20, 2024
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RESIGNATIONS	Accepted the following resignations:																														
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1556 521 1583">Kaitlin Ribble</td> <td data-bbox="623 1556 889 1583">Instructional Assistant</td> <td data-bbox="1089 1556 1409 1583">Effective October 30, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 1589 532 1617">Joshua Nenscel</td> <td data-bbox="623 1589 1008 1617">Student Council-HS Co-Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="1089 1589 1425 1617">Effective November 1, 2024</td> </tr> </table>			Kaitlin Ribble	Instructional Assistant	Effective October 30, 2024	Joshua Nenscel	Student Council-HS Co-Advisor	Effective November 1, 2024																						
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SUBS	Approved the following Substitutes at a rate of \$10.00 per hour effective November 20, 2024:																														
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PAMPA CHAPERONE	Approved Melissa Fronheiser as a Palmerton Area Music Parents’ Association (PAMPA) Volunteer Chaperone for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year effective November 20, 2024																														

<p>TUITION REIMBURSEMENT</p>	<p>Approved tuition reimbursement</p>				
<p>FIELD TRIP</p>	<p>Approved the following revised field trip request:</p>				
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="324 222 558 298"> <p>HS International Travelers Club</p> </td> <td data-bbox="558 222 727 298"> <p>Costa Rica</p> </td> <td data-bbox="727 222 1068 298"> <p>Approximately June 20 through June 27, 2025</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1068 222 1515 298"> <p>Expenses fully covered by student participants and their families</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>HS International Travelers Club</p>	<p>Costa Rica</p>	<p>Approximately June 20 through June 27, 2025</p>	<p>Expenses fully covered by student participants and their families</p>
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<p>TRANSLATOR/ INTERPRETER</p>	<p>Approved the independent contractor translator/interpreter agreement with Alfred Bravo beginning on November 20, 2024 through June 30, 2025</p>				
<p>2nd READING & ADOPTION POLICY 816</p>	<p>Approved the second reading and adoption of the following policy:</p> <p>1) Policy #816 District Social Media</p>				
	<p>END OF CONSENT AGENDA</p>				
<p>SUBSTITUTE JUNIOR HIGH PRINCIPAL</p>	<p>Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Krawchuk, to approve David Sodl as Substitute Junior High School Principal at the annual salary of \$100,000.00 prorated effective November 20, 2024 through January 2, 2025.</p>				
	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>				
	<p>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constance Banko – asked why the public can’t vote in the district board president election every year • Lori Nemeth – asked if there will be after-hours procedures also with an improvement in high school security • Matthew Moore – expected more of an explanation this evening on the feasibility study results; people are worried about any immediate actions to be taken • Patricia Woginrich – concerned the Board will move forward even if the community doesn’t want the changes proposed in the feasibility study • Pinar Angun – stated the Board represents the parents and community, not the architects; asked about restructuring the size of the actual classrooms • Laura Haydt – concerned about long bus rides for students and daycare availability if there is restructuring of buildings; in favor of exchange student program • Heather Pisulak – consider what parents think and how students will function with restructuring 				
	<p>FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Haas stated an executive session will be held today immediately following this meeting for personnel matters 				
<p>ADJOURNMENT</p>	<p>Director Snyder moved, seconded by Director Krawchuk, to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Jacqueline McCandless Board Secretary</p>				