

WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR APRIL BOARD MINUTES
APRIL 10, 2024
In Person and Zoom

The Regular April Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Wyoming Valley West School District was held at the Middle School and on Zoom on the above date. Meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by President Kamus. The following Board Members answered present to roll call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt (by phone), and Kamus. Superintendent Tosh, Finance Manager Kachurak, Attorney Messinger and Board Secretary Bullock were present.

Moment of Silence was followed by a salute to the flag.

President Kamus announced that an executive session was held prior to this meeting to discuss personnel items.

Mr. Tosh introduced Jordan Cosenza, 5th Grade student at State Street Elementary School, and thanked him for his quick thinking and heroic actions when a Kindergarten student was choking on a piece of candy on the school bus. The Board members thanked Jordan for his heroic actions.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD – Lilian Mahoney; Simona Debru

Mrs. Tara Carey, High School Principal, gave a brief presentation on the development of the Stem Lab in the high school library and explained the remodeling plans.

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Mr. Tosh thanked the administration, teachers, and students who came out last night at Dana Elementary School for Math Adventures in Candyland. Seventy-six families came out for Family Literacy Night. They have been extremely popular nights this year. Chester St. is having one right now, the Title Family Engagement Night across the street. Thank you to all the families and educators who have participated. This parent/family engagement is a partnership that is critical to the academic success of children. A big thank you to all who organized or participated in Steam Day at Chester St. hosted by the Chester St. PTO yesterday, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math. Information about the presenters will be available on Facebook. Again, thank you to all. The Unified Track home meet tomorrow is cancelled until April 18th. Our Occupational Therapy Department has created a monthly newsletter that is shared on the district website. It is underneath the tab parents, and you can find it under Occupational Therapy, regarding what school-based Occupational Therapy programs there are, as well as tips for skilled development for home. They did a very good job, congratulations. Report cards will be available on the Skyward Parent Portal one week tonight, Wednesday, April 17th. Finally, congratulations to Olivia Yelen for being named The Citizens' Voice Scholastic Superstars of 2024. She is part of a 25-member class chosen by a panel of judges from nominations submitted by many of the school districts in the Citizens Voice coverage area. Scholastic Superstars may excel in the classroom, but they also shine outside of academics. They volunteer in the community, they lead clubs and other organizations, and star on the stage. Olivia will receive her medal during a ceremony on April 25th at the F.M. Kirby Center. Congratulations to Olivia.

STATEMENTS FROM INTERESTED CITIZENS

Citizens addressing the Board are asked to state their name and town of residence in accordance with Board Policy #903 (copy available). Statements are limited to three minutes.

Elijah Serota, Forty Fort, said he and the cast and crew members have some concerns with the Director of the Musical, Mr. Hettrich. They like their fellow cast and the theater department itself, just wish for it to be under a different director. Practices were held far past 9:30 at night and some did not get home until 11:00. Mr. Hettrich gets mad or upset over the littlest things, personally messaging students on Instagram. When things don't go his way with students, he makes them do something that they do not want to do, threatens to kick students out of the plays or musicals for unnecessary reasons, and makes students do things they are uncomfortable with.

Mr. Tosh told Elijah that Mr. Hettrich is not present tonight to defend himself and he would prefer to meet with Elijah at the high school tomorrow or in his office. Elijah agreed.

David Sieminski, Forty Fort, said he teaches at the high school since 2009 and has been running the Ski Club since 2010. He wanted to introduce himself. Every year he writes a letter to the Board for approval of the ski trip to Vermont. He will be writing a letter for approval to return to Jay Peak, Vermont this year with the Ski Club.

Amy Carrozza, Forty Fort, said there are 30 policies, 102 pages, and it is a lot for somebody that actually likes to look at the policies and see the changes from the old to the new. She was previously part of the Policy Committee meetings as a parent, and she would like to be part of the future meetings. Mr. McGinley confirmed that she will be contacted.

Mikhail Hazlak, Kingston, said there are some issues with the theater program, specifically Mr. Hettrich. The program over the past year or two has become sort of a toxic environment. He asked to receive the health forms necessary for participating in the stage crew, which is not a tryout-based activity. Essentially, if you sign up, you are in stage crew. He was informed that he would not be allowed to work in the stage crew but instead he would be allowed to come support the show. He was told that the reason he was excluded was because he made some constructive criticism towards the last show, especially regarding the issue that the director had stated that he didn't care what our actors did as long as he made a profit.

Mikhail agreed to meet with Mr. Tosh and Elijah at the high school on Friday.

MINUTES APPROVED

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Dubaskas, that the Board of School Directors approve the minutes of the Regular **March 13, 2024** Board Meeting and the Special Meeting **March 22, 2024** for General Purposes.

Voice vote. **Motion Carried.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Dubaskas, Athletics, said we started our turf replacement project, estimated 3 weeks for completion. They already have the old turf off, looking at about a May 1st completion date. Our dugouts had a little bit of a delay, and the week of rain didn't help any. We are looking at finishing that around April 26th so we may need to reschedule a home game or two in that time frame, but hopefully by the 26th we will have our new dugouts.

Mr. Keating, Contracts and Finance, said the Finance and Personnel Committee began to work with both the Superintendent and the Business Manager on identifying vacancies that will be created through retirements, as well as new requests based on pupil enrollment. We started doing some preliminary discussions on the 2024-2025 budget.

Mr. McGinley, Education/Policy, said the Policy Committee is moving along with a lot of First Readings tonight with any revisions that would be appropriate.

Mr. Hardwick, Special Education/ESSERS, said ESSERS invoices are coming in and being paid. A lot of work is going on within the district regarding ESSERS. We will be having a meeting with buildings and grounds and ESSERS to make sure that everything is on track and on target. The Special Education Committee met last week with Director Baratta and reviewed two due process cases. We looked at some of the items related to the CTC, as well as the district. We reviewed how the intermediate unit presents billings and items for special education. We will ask Mr. McGinley and our business manager to see if we can get a little better clarity and description in invoices through the intermediate unit. Last year we spent about \$1,900,000. A lot of money. The request is simple, just some greater detail within the invoices to help Marya and our business manager to track the cost for each student.

GENERAL RECOMMENDED ACTION

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Keating to accept the proposal from Don Bly Tree Service for the removal of trees behind the high school, \$3,800. (Item #39)

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt (by phone), and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

Moved by Hardwick, seconded by Keating that the Board of School Directors act on the following General Recommended Items:

1. Accepted and authorized advertisement for **bids** to be received and opened at the District Office on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.
 - ❖ Interscholastic Sports Supplies (2024-2025)
 - ❖ Paper and General Supplies (2024-2025)
2. Approved awarding **bids** which were received and opened on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. for the following, as presented:
 - ❖ Art Supplies (2024-2025)
 - ❖ Janitorial Supplies (2024-2025)
3. Approved Agreement between **KDP Digital Photography** and Wyoming Valley West School District for the 2024-2025 High School Yearbook Photography, as presented.
4. Approved Resolution appointing Robert Kachurak, Business Manager/Tracy Varvaglione, Assistant as authorized representatives to make requests and receive any and all tax information and records from **Berkheimer**, relative to the collection of taxes for Wyoming Valley West School District.
5. Approved Agreement between **Golden Care of Northeastern PA** and Wyoming Valley West School District for daily nursing services provided to specified student(s).
6. Adopted **Policy 200**, Enrollment of Students. (First Reading)
7. Adopted **Policy 202**, Eligibility of Nonresident Students. (First Reading)
8. Adopted **Policy 210**, Medications. (First Reading)
9. Adopted **Policy 210.1**, Possession/Administration of Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors. (First Reading)
10. Adopted **Policy 217**, Graduation. (First Reading)
11. Adopted **Policy 220**, Student Expression/Dissemination of Materials. (First Reading)
12. Adopted **Policy 222**, Tobacco and Vaping Products. (First Reading)
13. Adopted **Policy 223**, Use of Motor Vehicles. (First Reading)
14. Adopted **Policy 224**, Care of School Property. (First Reading)
15. Approved recommendation from PSBA to retire **Policy 225**, Students and the Police.

16. Adopted **Policy 226**, Searches. (First Reading)
17. Adopted **Policy 227**, Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia. (First Reading)
18. Approved recommendation from PSBA to retire **Policy 227.1**, Use of Canines to Search.
19. Adopted **Policy 228**, Student Government. (First Reading)
20. Adopted **Policy 229**, Student Fundraising. (First Reading)
21. Adopted **Policy 230**, Public Performances by Students. (First Reading)
22. Adopted **Policy 231**, Social Events and Class Trips. (First Reading)
23. Adopted **Policy 232**, Student Involvement in Decision-Making. (First Reading)
24. Adopted **Policy 233**, Suspension and Expulsion. (First Reading)
25. Adopted **Policy 234**, Pregnant/Parenting/Married Students. (First Reading)
26. Adopted **Policy 235**, Student Rights and Responsibilities. (First Reading)
27. Adopted **Policy 235.1**, Surveys. (First Reading)
28. Adopted **Policy 236**, Student Assistance Program. (First Reading)
29. Adopted **Policy 236.1**, Threat Assessment. (First Reading)
30. Adopted **Policy 237**, Electronic Devices. (First Reading)
31. Adopted **Policy 239**, Foreign Exchange Students. (First Reading)
32. Adopted **Policy 246**, School Wellness. (First Reading)
33. Adopted **Policy 247**, Hazing. (First Reading)
34. Adopted **Policy 249**, Bullying/Cyberbullying. (First Reading)
35. Adopted **Policy 250**, Student Recruitment. (First Reading)
36. Approved recommendation from PSBA to retire **Policy 251**, Social Probation.
37. Adopted **Policy 251**, Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and Other Educational Instability. (First Reading)
38. Adopted **Policy 254**, Educational Opportunity for Military Children. (First Reading)
39. Accepted the proposal from **Don Bly Tree Service** for the removal of trees behind the high school, \$3,800.
40. Approved Agreement with **Pat Curley Detective Agency, Inc.** for armed security services for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, as presented.
41. Accepted and awarded the proposal for **Architectural and Engineering Services** to SitelogIQ, as the preferred, but non-exclusive provider of general architectural and engineering services at the hourly rates and prices contained in their Fee Proposal.
42. Approved **refund of paid taxes** for the following property owner:
 - ❖ Hoegen & Associates, P.C. – Court Order #2015-12994-for the year 2021 \$1,445.36
 - ❖ Hoegen & Associates, P.C. – Court Order #2015-12994-for the year 2022 \$3,141.62
 - ❖ Hoegen & Associates, P.C. – Court Order #2015-12994-for the year 2023 \$6,956.47
 - \$11,543.45

 - ❖ Hoegen & Associates, P.C. – Court Order #2015-12995-for the year 2021 \$ 272.11
 - ❖ Hoegen & Associates, P.C. – Court Order #2015-12995-for the year 2022 \$ 590.16
 - ❖ Hoegen & Associates, P.C. – Court Order #2015-12995-for the year 2023 \$1,398.18
 - \$2,260.45

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt (by phone), and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Moved by Dubaskas, seconded by Wilson, that the Board of School Directors act on the following Staff Recommended Items:

- A. RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED TO THE BOARD FOR ACTION:
1. Approved **excused absences** March 1, 2024 – March 31, 2024.
 2. Appointed the following **new hires**:
 - ❖ **Amanda Demelfi** – Life Skills Aide/State Street, \$13.00/hr. effective March 11, 2024.
 - ❖ **Emily Marosky** – Cleaner/High School, \$13.00/hr. effective March 28, 2024.
 - ❖ **Rita Yablonski** – Cleaner/Middle School, \$13.00/hr. effective March 18, 2024.
 3. Accepted the following **resignations**:
 - ❖ **Stacey Kase** – Cleaner/Dana Street, last day March 4, 2024.
 - ❖ **Morgan Collura** – Life Skills Support Aide/Middle School, last day March 22, 2024.
 - ❖ **Jada Guthrie** – Life Skills Support Aide/State Street, last day March 22, 2024.
 - ❖ **Deborah Kolva** – Autistic Support Aide/State Street, last day March 22, 2024.
 - ❖ **Kiara Kane** – Autistic Support Aide/State Street, last day April 17, 2024.
 4. Appointed the following **Mentor** for 2023/2024:

<u>New (Occupational Therapist)</u>	<u>Mentor</u>
Ashley Grevera	Brenda Hamersley
 5. Approved **long term status** for the following substitute teacher:
 - ❖ **Daisy Sosa-Terron** – effective, April 3, 2024.
 6. Accepted declination of appointment, **Caitlin Thomas**, Social Worker, March 13, 2024.
 7. Approved the following **terminations** due to abandonment of employment:
 - ❖ Emp. #343895 – effective February 29, 2024.
 - ❖ Emp. #526167 – effective March 28, 2024.
 8. Approved the following **transfer of position**:
 - ❖ **Kim Resetar** – PCA/Chester Street to General Duty Aide/Dana Street, effective March 22, 2024.
 9. Appointed the following **Mentor** for 2023/2024:

<u>Teacher (State Street)</u>	<u>Mentor</u>
Nicole Chismar	Lindsay Meyer (rescind)
Nicole Chismar	James Casey
 10. Approved **Professional Contract Status (Tenure)** to the following Teacher:
 - ❖ James Lapidus
 11. Approved **Compensation** to professional staff members, as presented:
 - ❖ 18 Credits Beyond Bachelor’s Degree
 - ❖ 24 Credits Beyond Bachelor’s Degree
 - ❖ Master’s/Master’s Equivalency
 - ❖ Beyond Master’s/Master’s Equivalency for courses approved by the Superintendent
 12. Appointed the recommended candidate, **Sehara Wessner**, Social Worker, effective TBD, \$51,000. (Grant Funds; ACCESS Funds 2024-2025)
 13. Approved the appointment of the recommended candidate, **Joseph Jarski**, High School Assistant Principal, \$85,000 effective TBD.

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt (by phone), and Kamus voting yes. (Mr. McGinley voted No on #13) **Motion Carried.**

FINANCE RECOMMENDED ACTION

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Dubaskas, that the Board of School Directors approve the following:

1. Accepted and approved the following as presented: **Bills for Payment, Finance Manager’s Reports and Treasurer’s Report.**

Roll Call: Wilson, Dubaskas, Hardwick, Keating, McGinley, Perfetto, Kobusky, Cussatt (by phone), and Kamus voting yes. **Motion Carried.**

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Perfetto thanked Mr. Hardwick for chairing the Special Education Committee, we have accomplished quite a bit.

Mr. Wilson thanked Mrs. Carey for the presentation, and thanked Jordan for his actions on the bus.

Mr. Hardwick thanked Mrs. Carey and said it was a great presentation. He looks forward to seeing the Stem Lab move forward and all the folks who have been working on it and continue to work on it. If he is ever on public transportation, he hopes Jordan is on with him.

Mr. Keating commended Jordan and thanked Tara and her staff for a really good job on the STEM presentation. A great thing for the school.

Mr. Dubaskas said all of our spring sports are now in action after some delays with outdoor sports. Thanks to all the athletes participating. It is a lot of extra work. Thank you for making our district look good in sports.

Mr. Kachurak thanked the Board for the opportunity. We have a lot of work ahead of us.

Mrs. Cussatt thanked our hero, Jordan, and Tara Carey and her team for the Stem Lab.

Mr. Tosh thanked Mrs. Carey. He thanked Mr. Waskevich, a dedicated employee, for all his hard work with the Stem Lab. He thanked Chris Gegaris, assistant principal at the Middle School, during his first year with some personnel vacancies that we had administratively, he went above and beyond running from the middle school to the high school, back and forth like a ping pong ball. I want to thank him for his cooperation and his professionalism in helping us out.

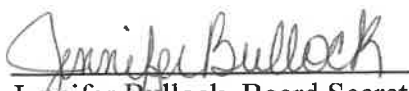
President Kamus announced the next Work Session, Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. and the Regular Monthly Meeting, Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by McGinley, seconded by Wilson, that the Board of School Directors adjourn this meeting.

Motion Carried.

Adjourned: 8:09 pm



Jennifer Bullock, Board Secretary

A tape of this meeting will be maintained at the District Office until the minutes are accepted at the next scheduled Board Meeting.