

PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Palmerton, PA

Wednesday, November 25, 2020

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A special board meeting of the Palmerton Area School District Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, November 25, 2020, called to order at 5:34 P.M. via Zoom. President Fallow presided.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Present: Directors Baumgardt, Fallow, Haas, Larvey, Mazepa, Paules, Recker, Scherer, and Zellers

OTHER ATTENDANCE

Jodi Frankelli – Superintendent, Jacqueline McCandless – Board Secretary

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

- Focused on two areas of the Health and Safety Plan that required Board approval. One is the teaching/learning aspect (pages 5-7 on the HSP), the other is sports participation, (page 35 on the HSP)
- State has required an Attestation Ensuring Implementation of Mitigation Efforts form signed by districts that elect to continue in-person instruction designated with “substantial” transmission rates of COVID-19
- State is still recommending district go to full remote learning if in substantial rate, but there is a shift in the state’s position in that they are giving allowances to districts for their Board of Directors to approve a hybrid learning plan which would allow it under certain conditions if the Attestation is included in a district’s HSP
- Two options for Attestation form: Option #1 is a full remote learning model until no longer in substantial level for two consecutive weeks; state looking at county as a whole as out of substantial for two weeks; Option #2 requires district to implement/adopt/adhere to qualifications to maintain in-person option which must have universal face coverings, procedures in identifying positive cases; this would no longer be a recommendation by the state in that the district would agree to follow this mandate
- In previous guidelines from the state, there was only a vague, general statement once our county was in substantial that full virtual learning is recommended
- In this newer version of guidelines, there are specific designations as to what closures should happen over a rolling 14-day period based on how many cases present, however, the length of closure may be shortened if contact tracing, cleaning/disinfecting can be accomplished in a faster time
- Dr. Frankelli proposed a proactive, temporary move to full remote learning plan beginning December 1, 2020 with resuming hybrid learning on January 19, 2021
- Regarding sports portion of HSP, there has been movement in sports updates at local and state level where masking is mandated for winter sports. PIAA has a Wrestling Steering Committee which is talking about making changes to the sport to account for safety of athletes. Colonial League is in discussions as well. Superintendents in surrounding areas meet with physicians at LVHN and St. Luke’s to work with groups for clarification and to make informed decisions.
- Dr. Frankelli proposed: if we follow Colonial League schedules as a whole; mask

requirements for athletes/coaches then winter sports could occur December 1, 2020 to January 15 during remote learning; sports (practices and games) would not occur if there any closures at the schools

- Mr. Poremba, Athletic Coordinator, will update our plans/documents to include the updated guidance

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- Lisa Snell Kern – appreciated the relook at HSP; asked Board to rethink grades K-4 attending as hybrid learners; have students see each other online during classes
- Beth Ritter-Guth – form a community task force to help parents navigate full remote learning
- Susan Frantz – disagrees with going virtual due to failing rates of students
- Erika Reinheimer – people travelling should quarantine and go full virtual learning; those that don't travel can continue with hybrid learning
- Joleene Delgado – all K-12 students with IEPs should be a consideration
- Sam & Katie Cressman – how does Lehighton have five-day in person learning? Full virtual hinders families
- Stacey Connell – thank you for your time and hearing our voices, need to focus on keeping students in school using hybrid learning
- Donovan Henning – is senior student, grades are suffering but a little better with hybrid learning than all remote
- Kelli Peppard – disappointed in proposed full virtual learning, not conducive to K-4 who need full classroom experience
- Jennie Lasso – give parents the option to choose between hybrid and full virtual so we can make the best decision

UPDATED HSP PLAN Director Haas moved, seconded by Director Scherer, to approve the Palmerton Area School District updated Health and Safety Plan including the Attestation Ensuring Implementation of Mitigation Efforts.

Aye Votes: None.

Nay Votes: All Directors Present. Motion Failed.

AGENDA OPENED Director Scherer moved, seconded by Director Zellers, to open the agenda.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present

Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

UPDATED HSP PLAN Director Paules moved, seconded by Director Paules, to allow hybrid learning and sports participation to resume upon the return to school on December 1, 2020.

Aye Votes: Directors Scherer and Paules.

Nay Votes: Directors Baumgardt, Fallow, Haas, Larvey, Mazepa, Recker, and Zellers.
Motion Failed.

Director Recker moved, seconded by Director Haas, to authorize participation in winter sports effective immediately, begin 14 days of full remote learning, then back to hybrid learning as of December 15, 2020. Motion withdrawn by Director Recker and seconded by Director Scherer.

Director Larvey moved, seconded by Director Fallow, to approve the move to full remote learning from December 1, 2020 through January 18, 2021 with a return to hybrid learning on January 19, 2021.

Aye Votes: Directors Baumgardt, Fallow and Larvey.

Nay Votes: Directors Haas, Mazepa, Paules, Recker, Scherer, and Zellers. Motion Failed.

Director Mazepa moved, seconded by Director Haas, to approve the move to full remote learning from December 1, 2020 through December 13, 2020 with a return to hybrid learning on December 14, 2020 through December 23, 2020, then back to full remote learning from January 4, 2021 through January 18, 2021 with a return to hybrid learning on January 19, 2021.

Aye Votes: Directors Baumgardt, Haas, Mazepa, and Recker.

Nay Votes: Directors Fallow, Larvey, Scherer, Paules, and Zellers. Motion Failed.

Director Baumgardt moved, seconded by Director Larvey, to approve the move to full remote learning from December 1, 2020 through January 18, 2021 with a return to hybrid learning on January 19, 2021.

Aye Votes: Directors Baumgardt, Fallow, Larvey, and Zellers.

Nay Votes: Directors Haas, Mazepa, Scherer, Paules, and Recker. Motion Failed.

Director Zellers moved, seconded by Director Larvey, to revisit the original motion of the teaching/learning part of the Health and Safety Plan and approve the move to full remote learning from December 1, 2020 through January 18, 2021 with a return to hybrid learning on January 19, 2021.

Aye Votes: Directors Baumgardt, Fallow, Larvey, and Zellers.

Nay Votes: Directors Haas, Mazepa, Paules, Recker, and Scherer. Motion Failed.

Director Scherer moved, seconded by Director Paules, to approve the move to full remote learning from December 1, 2020 through January 3, 2021 with a return to hybrid learning on January 4, 2021.

Aye Votes: Directors Haas, Paules, Recker, Scherer, and Zellers.

Nay Votes: Directors Baumgardt, Fallow, Larvey, and Mazepa. Motion Carried.

**WINTER
SPORTS &
EXTRACURRIC-
ULAR
PARTICIPATION**

Director Mazepa moved, seconded by Director Paules, to approve winter sports participation and extracurricular clubs that adhere to the Health and Safety Plan whether we are in remote or hybrid learning model effective immediately.

Aye Votes: Directors Haas, Mazepa, Paules, Recker, Scherer, and Zellers.

Nay Votes: Directors Baumgardt, Fallow, and Larvey. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- Jenna McHugh –get students back in school
- Michelle Muffley – can NHS induction ceremony be held in person? Director Scherer responded we have to allow for indoor building capacity which is currently at maximum of 25 people

- Joleene Delgado – happy with the dates for hybrid learning return; kids should follow the rules for sports participation
- Beth Ritter-Guth – appreciates the Board for serving the community and again asks for task force to be formed to help families cope with virtual learning
- Magin Gursky – thank you for choosing a return to hybrid learning in January
- Lisa Snell Kern – HSP states you can join a pandemic team; NHS should have a ceremony
- Kelli Peppard – why allow extracurricular clubs and sports but not hybrid learning? There is too much computer time for students
- Erika Reinheimer – kids need sports and extracurricular clubs
- Mary Jo King – thank you for giving parents an opportunity to make choices on their child’s learning; the Board compromised to get this done

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Director Recker thanked everyone in coming to a resolution this evening.

ADJOURNMENT Director Scherer moved, seconded by Director Haas, to adjourn the meeting at 10:22 P.M.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline McCandless
Board Secretary