

PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Palmerton, PA

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

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, January 23, 2024, and called to order at 5:31 p.m. President Haas presided.

A moment of silence was held to honor Delores Cunfer, past school librarian for over 40 years in our district, and for Christopher Reed, husband of a district teacher, who passed away unexpectedly.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

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

OTHER ATTENDANCE

Jodi Frankelli – Superintendent, Ryan Kish – Business Manager, Jacqueline McCandless – Board Secretary, and Shawn Lochinger– Solicitor

STUDENT REPORT:

Elementary – select students were recognized for their leadership skills through the Leader in Me program with a certificate signed by the Superintendent and Board President: Reid Robertson and Summer Luisi at S. S. Palmer Elementary; and Liam Keller, Connor Shollenberger, Elizabeth Frable, Levi Santiago, Andrew Rodgers, Evan Kresge, and Dhivya Sampanthar at Towamensing Elementary

Junior High School – Amelia Buck, grade 8

- Life Skills – created gingerbread houses after reading about a famous artist’s gingerbread display; created spirit day flyers for “Nine Days of Christmas” event
- Band & Chorus – performed a preview of their concert and had sing-along with elementary students; gave outstanding performance at winter concert on December 13th
- Girls’ wrestling – team is growing and gaining success; Makenna Ringler took first place at recent tournament
- Collected and donated sanitary items during holiday dodgeball tournament to benefit homeless
- Eighth grade – students composed math-themed Christmas carols and sang them to each classroom; twelve students wrote 100-word sagas which are to be published as a book this spring
- Digital News Club – will have their second broadcast this month which will include stories on current happenings

High School – Maddie Everett and Nicole Kester, both grade 12

- Science – thank you to teachers, Mrs. Dougherty and Mr. Petersen for the “Our Trout in the Classroom” project; students will be receiving trout eggs soon; fish tank and other materials were donated; students responsible for counting eggs, recording mortality, and monitoring water quality. If the project is successful, the trout will be released in Aquashicola Creek in spring.
- Drama Club – currently rehearsing for the spring musical, *Chicago*; T-shirts on sale now
- Scholastic Scrimmage – competing via Zoom matches since November; continuing to practice for county competition hosted by our district in March
- PYEA – student teachers have completed first semester assignments; mock group lessons in March will provide constructive feedback
- PBIS/SWIS – focusing on small group meetings to target certain behaviors and attitudes to change for the better, then team will talk about methods and strategies to achieve change
- Poetry Out Loud – Maddy Wentz, grade 12, will compete in the regional competition in Bethlehem on January 31; Maddy performed her poem recitation live at the board meeting

- Athletics – winter sports at halfway point; both boys and girls have winning basketball records so far; Brayden Hosier reached the 1,000 point scoring plateau in basketball; girls have qualified for basketball district playoffs; hosted first girls’ wrestling match last month; recent varsity wrestling tournament for boys and girls was a success; Times News Area Players of the Year include: Connor Hibell, cross country, Sydney Frantz, field hockey, and Matt Machalik, football; Matt Machalik, Logan Anthony, and Zack Anthony named to 1st Team All State for football. Ty Sander and Matt Machalik named to WNEP 16 Dream Team; Matt Machalik named overall Player of the Year by WNEP 16
- FBLA – in regional competition, 89 out of 118 student members qualified for state competition in Hershey in April; members are fundraising to help cover costs for state competition
- Eight students qualified for PA School Press Association Student Journalism state competition to be held at Penn State in April

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

- Thank you to our music teachers for their great job at all the winter concerts in December
- Thank you to our elementary guidance counselors for their hard work leading up to the holidays by organizing our yearly elementary giving trees; almost 500 gifts given out to district families
- Invited to see tryouts for the Poetry Out Loud competition, congratulations to Maddy Wentz for being selected for this year’s event
- Thank you to Rep. Doyle Heffley who visited S. S. Palmer Elementary students recently; Director D. Paules added that a 2020 Palmerton graduate is currently interning at Rep. Heffley’s office
- Thanked Ms. Brianna Keiser for her high school students’ artwork currently on display in the Boardroom
- January is School Director Recognition Month and on behalf of the administration and staff we recognize and thank our school board members for the challenging work they do for the district and community. Director Haas added that she has asked the school newspaper to interview some of our board members for next year’s recognition.

BUSINESS MANAGER’S REPORT:

- For the second consecutive year, our PSERS retirement contribution will drop slightly. In 2022-2023, the rate was 35.36% of salary towards PSERS; this year we will pay 34%, and next year it will drop to 33.9%. The decline is caused by school employers strong payroll growth and favorable demographic changes involving salary increases, mortality, and retirements during the 2022-2023 fiscal year, however, there is no guarantee the rates will continue decreasing.
- Will present a short preliminary budget presentation at our next workshop to provide an overview of next year’s budget; will have a detailed budget presentation in May

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:

- Director Danielle Paules – CCTI:
 - Bag Bingo on February 9, \$25/ticket
 - Two students in the Computer Information Technology program in the Robotics Club built a robot for an over/under competition; each competition requires a new robot be built; this is their third build and they placed 14th out of 37 teams in the competition and also received a sportsmanship award; this is the first year for the club
 - Skills USA – CCTI has had their first female students ever receive gold medal finishes and will move on to national competition - Makayla Scott, in Precision Machine Technology, and Jada Saldukas, cosmetology; PASD silver medal winners: Owen Rakos, Ryan Burkett, Landen Thomas, Trystin Bossard, Julius Kornafel, and Lea Schaible; PASD bronze medal winners: Zackary Anthony and Damon Eckhart
 - eSports program has 40-50 teams in their league with approximately 40 members participating from CCTI
 - Set the limit of number of freshmen students at 10 applicants from each sending district
 - Director Earl Paules requests a formal letter be sent to notify CCTI regarding our JOC appointments instead of via email notification in December

- Mr. Paules stated they are actively interviewing for a new executive director at CCTI
- Director Danielle Paules – PSBA:
 - Asked if the district has applied for school safety and security grants available to us – Dr. Frankelli responded that Mr. Dan Heaney is working on it; discussed various criteria and types/names of grants available
 - Four different scholarships available for students offering a one-time award of \$2,500-\$5,000, deadline March 1, 2024
 - Director Schaible inquired about the timeline to appoint safety committee members to the committee and whether that included guest member appointments; it was determined that it does not include guest member appointments
 - Mrs. Paules said PSBA may offer placement of advertisements for district employment needs on their website; some schools advertise on electronic signs at their own buildings
- Director Haas – Library/CLIU:
 - *Library*: winter festival this Saturday; Blind Date with a Book in February; Take Your Child to the Library Day on February 3
 - *IU*: video of adaptive toys developed for students available on IU website

OLD BUSINESS:

- *Health & Safety Plan*: Dr. Frankelli stated the district’s HSP is required to be reviewed every six months until fall of 2024; plan is to complete one more review; summer school language updated and few resource links removed
- *Feasibility study*: all athletic fields will be included in the study as well as all buildings; the proposed timeline is acceptable
- *S. S. Palmer Elementary renovation*: Mr. Joe Faenza reported a meeting with Keystone Consulting/Crabtree Rohrbaugh was held on January 8 to discuss the outside access ramp work to be done and stated that timelines will coincide together with overall renovation. Director Mazepa asked if the façade will be altered – Mr. Faenza said about 30” of foundation off the present steps on the right-hand side will be exposed and brick face will be placed on it so the architecture will remain intact; project goes out for bid February 9 with substantial completion by August 23 and final completion on October 18
- *Weight room renovation*: ALLOY5 will have bid information to us by February 9 to go out for bid and be publicly advertised on February 16, 19, and 26; construction documents finalized on January 12; substantial completion is September 6; Director Haas stated the district is creating a Facebook page and would like information on projects that can be bid on placed on this page; a flyer will be created and handed out to potential contractors on projects coming up within the district to make them aware so they can bid on them

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- Richard Banko – thanked Dr. Frankelli for the S. S. Palmer Elementary tour in December; congratulated Director Haas on her presidency and to the new board members; S. S. Palmer should be renovated instead of replaced to preserve the community’s memories
- Constance Banko – asked if there will be a public presentation on the feasibility study and how the decision will be made on which company to choose to do the work; cited construction and installation issues with a neighboring elementary center and is concerned how our district will protect itself from the lack of quality construction on our upcoming renovation projects

MEETING MINUTES

Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Connell, to approve the board meeting minutes from November 21, 2023, December 5, 2023 (reorganization), and December 5, 2023 (regular).

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

MOTION TO TABLE CONSENT ITEM

Director Danielle Paules moved, seconded by Director Earl Paules, to table consent agenda Item #2 Personnel, Letter C, Line Item 1 only, hiring of Joshua Gillen.

EXECUTIVE SESSION	<p>Director Haas called an EXECUTIVE SESSION at 6:47 p.m. for a personnel matter. The meeting resumed at 6:53 p.m.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>						
CONSENT AGENDA w/ exception	<p>Director Earl Paules moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to approve the attached consent agenda with the exception of Item #2 Personnel, Letter C, Line Item 1 only, hiring of Joshua Gillen.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present with the exception of an abstention from Director King for consent agenda Item #2 Personnel, Letter K, due to a conflict of interest. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>						
FISCAL REPORTS	<p>CONSENT AGENDA:</p> <p>Approved Accounts Payable Reports</p>						
BUDGET TRANSFERS	<p>Approved Treasurer's Reports</p>						
SPECIAL ED. TEACHER	<p>Approved Budget Transfers</p> <p>Approved Kendra Smiley as Elementary Special Education Teacher, Life Skills at S. S. Palmer Elementary, at Bachelor's, Step 1, at an annual salary of \$47,743.00 prorated effective upon receipt of certification</p>						
IA	<p>Approved Margaret Morgan as Instructional Assistant at a rate of \$17.41 per hour effective January 24, 2024</p>						
CUSTODIAN	<p>Approved the following Custodian:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="345 1102 1401 1144"> <tr> <td>John Zmarzley</td> <td>Part-Time Flex Custodian</td> <td>\$12.87/hour effective January 24, 2024</td> </tr> </table>	John Zmarzley	Part-Time Flex Custodian	\$12.87/hour effective January 24, 2024			
John Zmarzley	Part-Time Flex Custodian	\$12.87/hour effective January 24, 2024					
HORIZONTAL MOVEMENTS	<p>Acknowledged the following horizontal movements effective the second semester of the 2023-2024 school year:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="345 1270 1255 1381"> <tr> <td>Sage Nalesnik</td> <td>From Master's to Master's +15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sarah Smith</td> <td>From Bachelor's +24 to Master's</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kristen Perdew</td> <td>From Master's to Master's +15</td> </tr> </table>	Sage Nalesnik	From Master's to Master's +15	Sarah Smith	From Bachelor's +24 to Master's	Kristen Perdew	From Master's to Master's +15
Sage Nalesnik	From Master's to Master's +15						
Sarah Smith	From Bachelor's +24 to Master's						
Kristen Perdew	From Master's to Master's +15						
UNCOMPENSATED LEAVE	<p>Approved the following uncompensated leave request:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="345 1480 1255 1522"> <tr> <td>Employee #10</td> <td>March 15, 2024 and March 18, 2024</td> </tr> </table>	Employee #10	March 15, 2024 and March 18, 2024				
Employee #10	March 15, 2024 and March 18, 2024						
MENTOR	<p>Approved the following Mentor for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="345 1627 1469 1669"> <tr> <td>Vicki McHugh</td> <td>for Kevin Wertz</td> <td>\$1,490.00 prorated effective January 2, 2024</td> </tr> </table>	Vicki McHugh	for Kevin Wertz	\$1,490.00 prorated effective January 2, 2024			
Vicki McHugh	for Kevin Wertz	\$1,490.00 prorated effective January 2, 2024					
ADVISOR	<p>Approved retroactively the following Advisor for the 2023-2024 school year:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="345 1753 1125 1795"> <tr> <td>Isabelle Beedle</td> <td>Chorus-Elementary</td> <td>\$1,585.00</td> </tr> </table>	Isabelle Beedle	Chorus-Elementary	\$1,585.00			
Isabelle Beedle	Chorus-Elementary	\$1,585.00					
HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION	<p>Approved Lindsay Fronheiser to teach five (5) hours a week of homebound instruction at the Professional Services rate per the PAEA Collective Bargaining Agreement for the second semester of</p>						

	the 2023-2024 school year											
GUEST TEACHER	Approved Joseph Peters as Guest Teacher at a daily rate of \$110.00 effective January 24, 2024											
SUBSTITUTES	Approved Marcey Goodbred as Substitute Nurse at a daily rate of \$110.00 effective January 24, 2024											
	Approved Ryan King as Substitute Teacher at a daily rate of \$110.00 effective January 24, 2024											
	Approved Ricky Muffley as Substitute Custodian at a rate of \$10.00 per hour effective January 24, 2024											
COACHES	Approved the following Coaches for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 24, 2024:											
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Jamie Hibell</td> <td>Track Volunteer Assistant Coach</td> <td>--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Margaret Morgan</td> <td>Track Volunteer Assistant Coach</td> <td>--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trisha Sterling</td> <td>Softball Co-Assistant Coach (1/2)</td> <td>\$1,386.00</td> </tr> </table>			Jamie Hibell	Track Volunteer Assistant Coach	--	Margaret Morgan	Track Volunteer Assistant Coach	--	Trisha Sterling	Softball Co-Assistant Coach (1/2)	\$1,386.00
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Trisha Sterling	Softball Co-Assistant Coach (1/2)	\$1,386.00										
BUS DRIVER	Approved retroactively Matthew Ruch as George’s Transportation bus driver for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 2, 2024											
RESIGNATION	Accepted the following resignation:											
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Julie Cenci</td> <td>Elementary Guidance Counselor</td> <td>Effective December 14, 2023</td> </tr> </table>			Julie Cenci	Elementary Guidance Counselor	Effective December 14, 2023						
Julie Cenci	Elementary Guidance Counselor	Effective December 14, 2023										
RESCIND EMPLOYMENT	Rescinded the following employment:											
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>George Kattner</td> <td>Custodian at Towamensing Elementary</td> <td>Effective December 21, 2023</td> </tr> </table>			George Kattner	Custodian at Towamensing Elementary	Effective December 21, 2023						
George Kattner	Custodian at Towamensing Elementary	Effective December 21, 2023										
TUITION REIMBURSEMENTS	Approved tuition reimbursements											
SECURITY GUARD	Approved retroactively Kyle Karlson as KRE Security Guard at Parkside Elementary for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 4, 2024											
LEARN WELL	Approved retroactively the agreement with LearnWell, Fort Washington, PA, beginning November 21, 2023 through no later than June 30, 2024 (enclosure)											
BILINGUAL EVALUATIONS	Approved the agreement with Sharp-Ross PsychEd Services, LLC, for bilingual psychoeducational evaluations for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year											
DJ SERVICES	Approved the following the contracts for DJ services provided by B-Flat Entertainment, LLC, Brian N. Stephens:											
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Junior High National Honor Society Dance</td> <td>Retroactively December 8, 2023</td> <td>\$375.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Junior High National Honor Society Dance</td> <td>February 9, 2024</td> <td>\$375.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Junior High National Honor Society Dance</td> <td>May 10, 2024</td> <td>\$375.00</td> </tr> </table>			Junior High National Honor Society Dance	Retroactively December 8, 2023	\$375.00	Junior High National Honor Society Dance	February 9, 2024	\$375.00	Junior High National Honor Society Dance	May 10, 2024	\$375.00
Junior High National Honor Society Dance	Retroactively December 8, 2023	\$375.00										
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Junior High National Honor Society Dance	May 10, 2024	\$375.00										
CONFERENCES	Approved the following conferences:											
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Daniel Heaney</td> <td>PA Educational Technology Expo & Conference, Hershey, PA</td> <td>February 5, 2024 through February 7, 2024</td> <td>Estimated cost of \$712.58</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Demi Rohlfig</td> <td>PDE-Making a Difference: Educational Practices That Work!, Hershey, PA</td> <td>February 28, 2024 through March 1, 2024</td> <td>Estimated cost of \$863.75</td> </tr> </table>			Daniel Heaney	PA Educational Technology Expo & Conference, Hershey, PA	February 5, 2024 through February 7, 2024	Estimated cost of \$712.58	Demi Rohlfig	PDE-Making a Difference: Educational Practices That Work!, Hershey, PA	February 28, 2024 through March 1, 2024	Estimated cost of \$863.75	
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Kyle Poremba	PA Athletic Director Association, Hershey, PA	March 19, 2024 through March 22, 2024	Estimated cost of \$1,117.83
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FIELD TRIP

Approved the following field trip request:

Video Club/ Yearbook/Newspaper	PA School Press Association state competition at Penn State University, State College, PA	April 2, 2024 through April 4, 2024
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DONATIONS

Accepted the following donations:

PA Association of Broadcasters	to the Video Club	\$500.00
A. Donald & Mary G. Behler Foundation	to the Drama Club	\$500.00
Patrick Roche	to the General Fund (use of facilities)	\$350.00
St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of Towamensing	to the Drama Club	\$170.00

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

**WEIGHT ROOM-
ALLOY5
BILLING RATES**

Director King moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to approve retroactively the billing rates agreement dated December 5, 2023, with ALLOY5, Bethlehem, PA, for the remainder of the weight room renovation project.

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- Jacob Grammes – grade 12, requested a new head coach for the boys’ basketball team; feels coach is holding back the team
- Matthew Machalik – grade 12, plays on the basketball team for fun and also wants to be a role model for others; feels current coach is taking that enjoyment away from the team; wants the future team to be able to enjoy the sport
- Carolee Boyer – will only support an individual who is looking out for the well-being of our team; questions if there will be any damage to students in their future lives because of behavior of coach
- Lori Nemeth – Ken Termini has done nice things for the community and youth but if he is speaking to players as is said then he should not be allowed to do so
- Linnaea Leister – have great players on the boys’ basketball team; has heard head coach make rude comments to team

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:

- Director Haas and Dr. Frankelli spoke about the Parkside Elementary ongoing water drainage issue when it rains heavily. The flooding in the basement over the last few years has become more frequent. Recently, we hired a company to bring a camera to view the pipes underground as there is a concern of a clogged pipe or collapse. The camera showed no obstruction or collapse visible on district property, so we are confident the issue occurs off district property. The engineer for the district and Palmerton Borough will begin to look into issue to solve this problem.
- Director Earl Paules stated we don’t need CCTI to present their budget to us at the next workshop as was previously planned; it was agreed upon to cancel our request to CCTI
- Director Mazepa asked to discuss the boys’ basketball head coach position in regard to the public comments this evening
- An executive session will be held immediately following this evening’s regular meeting for personnel reasons.

ADJOURNMENT

Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Connell, to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline McCandless
Board Secretary