

**PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Palmerton, PA

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

An executive session was held Tuesday, March 5, 2024 after the workshop and today after the regular board meeting concerning legal and 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, March 19, 2024, and called to order at 5:30 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, King, Krawchuk, Mazepa, Danielle Paules, Earl Paules, and Schaible  
Absent: Director 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 in the Leader in Me program with a certificate signed by the Superintendent and Board President: Emma Schmoyer, Rachel Roman, Tyghe Ader, and Alivia Bachman at S. S. Palmer Elementary; and Natalie Pisulak, Cecelia Williams, Braelyn George, Aubrey Shollenberger, Madison Miller, Isabel Sterner, and Isabella Marques at Towamensing Elementary

Junior High School – Julia Maupin, grade 7

- *What’s So Cool About Manufacturing?* – students created video on Nestle Purina Petcare for the Lehigh Valley competition; awards event March 26th
- Cybersafety/cyberbullying – representative from PA Attorney General’s office spoke to students this month; informational videos shown to students and laws reviewed about cyberbullying; Safe2Say program discussed
- Band – joined elementary music students to perform annual “Music In Our Schools Month” concert on March 4<sup>th</sup>
- Chorus – nine chorus members selected for the PMEA Intermediate SongFest on March 19<sup>th</sup>
- ELA –8<sup>th</sup> grade gave their speeches on a career of their choice
- Life Skills – participated in Read Across America Book Cover contest; learned about Women’s History Month
- ACE Team – 8<sup>th</sup> grade team participated in a mock competition moderated by Dr. Frankelli to prepare for upcoming competition later this month
- Read Across America – weeklong participation with spirit days and poster contest

High School – Isabella Catania, grade 11

- Class of 2027 – selling hanging flower baskets until April 4<sup>th</sup> for \$25; delivery May 8<sup>th</sup>
- PAAC – annual blanket, towel, and pet supply drive now until end of April
- Wood Shop & CAD – Ms. Allen’s classes accessing the CLIU’s STEM lending library
- Poetry Out Loud – Maddy Wentz place in top five at state competition
- Journalism – publishing some of their work in school newspaper
- Mythology Class – Mrs. Palumbo’s class invited Director Mazepa for a Pysanky demonstration; egg will be sent to the Ukrainian Heritage Museum to add to their display
- Lehigh Changemaker Hub – Mr. Wertz, guidance counselor, will select five students through teacher nominations, who will represent the school at the upcoming conference where educational experience in an ever-changing society will be discussed
- NHS – members visiting Charley Brown Nursery School to volunteer and hold egg hunt

- $\pi$  “Pi” Day – celebrated March 14<sup>th</sup> with various activities
- Scholastic Scrimmage – currently have 4 wins and 4 losses in the league; CLIU competition on April 5<sup>th</sup>; hosted Carbon County Academic Bowl last week, thank you to school directors and administrators who attended the event
- PYEA – preparing mock lessons now and through the next six weeks
- Spring sports – baseball and softball beginning to practice outside, games start March 15<sup>th</sup>; tennis begins on March 25<sup>th</sup>; track season starts today
- Social Studies Department – encouraging and assisting seniors on registering to vote
- Girls’ Basketball – banquet on March 17<sup>th</sup>; seniors: Hailey Andrews, Hannah Barry, Sydney Frantz, and Megan Matsko, along with other players honored; finished 23-2 and won league championship; thank you to Booster Club for holding banquet and to Dr. Frankelli for attending
- Senior Class – just finished Gertrude Hawk fundraiser to help with prom ticket costs; voted on class song, motto, flower, and colors
- International Travelers Club – selling Little Caesars entrees to raise money for trip to Costa Rica

#### **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:**

- Thank you to Mr. Alex Knoll for bring the Carbon County Academic Bowl back to our district
- Thank you to all our guest readers for participating in Read Across America week; great to see how each elementary school celebrated the week
- Congratulations to student Maddy Wentz on her top five finish at the Poetry Out Loud state competition in Harrisburg; first time in school history we had a finisher; happy to have attended the event
- Thank you to teachers, Sarah Smith and Melissa Hoffman, for having her as moderator for practice for ACE competition
- Spoke at Carbon County Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting as guest speaker; able to showcase district happenings

#### **BUSINESS MANAGER’S REPORT:**

- Has reviewed how the Governor’s proposed state budget would affect our district. We currently have a \$8.2m budget for basic educational funding in our proposed budget for next year. Governor proposes \$9.4m, or a \$1.2m increase; this would be the second year in a row for a major increase in state funding; will discuss more at May workshop

#### **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:**

- CCTI:
  - Director Danielle Paules showed a video of Robotics Club robot, “Oswald”, which was recently built for competition
- Director Danielle Paules – PSBA:
  - Asked about mental health grants available; Advocacy Day for charter school reform on April 8<sup>th</sup>
  - Director Schaible encouraged the Board to look into scheduling professional development and conduct a board self-assessment survey; Director Haas agreed, and they will start looking into the process and/or webinars to take
- Director Haas – CLIU/Library:
  - *IU*: showed video on students receiving and using their adaptive strollers
  - *Library*: 2024 fund drive ongoing to raise money for the building; National Library Week April 8-13, visiting schools on April 10; Cash bingo and door prizes on April 7 at Aquashicola Fire Company; Dine & Donate at 110 Tavern on April 6; Book Journal workshop on April 20; Haiku workshop on April 17; Library Outreach Day on April 10; seed library; National Poetry Month in April

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- *Athletic fields*: Mr. Joe Faenza reported yesterday about a meeting at the softball field: items discussed were moving the bleachers two feet forward, building up the warning track with infield

mix, rolling the outfield, building a batting cage platform for home plate to make it level, trimming infield, and adding infield mix around bases and pitcher’s mound pad. Turf field – inquired about buying an extended warranty, company will come next week to inspect the turf to see if they can extend warranty for an additional four years. If they agree to extend the warranty, then they will quote a price for it. Baseball fence – we received three quotes between \$40,000 and \$57,000 to replace the chain-link fence; will have to put into the budget next year. Director Mazepa asked about exposed concrete at the poles being a safety hazard. Mr. Faenza said he will look into it.

- *S.S. Palmer Elementary renovation:* Mr. Faenza reported that we are re-bidding the electrical part of the reno project. Advertised for bids March 15, pre-bid meeting April 2, opening of bids on April 10, and award bid at meeting on April 16. Four contractors have shown interest so far. The roof replacement project is out for bid and advertised on March 15, pre-bid meeting April 2, opening of bids on April 10, and award bid at April 16 meeting.
- *Frontline application system:* Ms. Jamie Schuler stated we are almost ready to begin using the system. In the future, when you view the website for job opportunities and click on the links there, it will directly link to a system where applicants can apply for positions. This will ultimately streamline the application process by allowing it to be paperless and files be electronically kept. If someone doesn’t have access electronically, there will be devices available for people to come in and apply as well. Professional development on the system will be done with administrators.
- *Board committees:* Director Haas asked board members to give a report at the next workshop on how the committees they have recently been appointed to are working out together.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

- Earl Paules – gave a timeline on the discussions for S.S. Palmer building renovation; McClure Company projected the renovation to cost \$1.8m in 2020. By 2023, it was estimated to be \$2.4m to complete without the roof being replaced. Now, the projected price without electrical and the roof is \$1.4m. Overall this project should cost under \$2m. Parking lot still needs to be redone and upgrade to the lighting. Gave a timeline about the weight room project which began in 2022. In 2023, after much discussion throughout the year, \$788k was received from one bidder, which then was voted down. Then we added a lot more items and features and the cost in 2024 is now at \$650k, so we are getting more for less. With St. Luke’s grant money, leftover money from insurance payment for 7<sup>th</sup> St. fieldhouse, allowed us to take off \$166k and the cost is now about \$450k out of the pocket for the district
- Danielle Paules – spoke about timeline of hiring HR director; referenced various salaries of area superintendents and administration; asked why the HR duties cannot be split amongst administration; hiring a separate HR position does not make sense as to where the money is coming from; pay attention to our taxpayers more
- Constance Banko – thank you for the upcoming S.S. Palmer renovation, happy that it will cost less than anticipated; if the HR work was getting done with one person before, why do we need to add another person; asked for duties of the HR position
- Richard Banko – asked how many employees and students there are in the district; doesn’t want district to get top-heavy on administrative salaries; find a way to split some salaries
- Mary Farquhar – ask other districts to see how they are making HR work and how they split duties; this position adds up to a lot of money; state mandates should be questioned as to why they are necessary

**MEETING MINUTES**

Director Connell moved, seconded by Director Mazepa, to approve the board meeting minutes from February 6, 2024 and February 20, 2024.

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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Director King moved, seconded by Director Schaible, to approve the attached consent agenda.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.

Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**FISCAL REPORTS**

Approved Accounts Payable Reports

Approved Treasurer’s Reports

**BUDGET TRANSFERS**

Approved Budget Transfers

**CSIU RATES**

Approved the 2024-2025 Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) Computer Service eService Rates Agreement based on student enrollment

**TAX COLLECTORS-CORRECTION**

Accepted the correction of the following two current tax collectors’ names from the collection of the 2023-2024 school year delinquent per capita taxes effective January 1, 2024:

Palmerton Borough	Raquel Lutton	\$12,930.00
Towamensing Township	Susan Marques	\$ 7,830.00

**DJ PROM 2024**

Approved the DJ event services agreement with Lehigh Valley Events & Productions, LLC, for the Class of 2024 Senior Prom on May 3, 2024, in the amount of \$1,200.00

**PROM 2025**

Approved the contract with Twin Lakes, Allentown, PA, for the Class of 2025 Senior Prom on May 2, 2025

**DONATION**

Accepted the following donation:

Bowmanstown Area Residents Connected	to the FBLA Activity Club	\$50.00
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**LTS SPECIAL ED**

Approved Benjamin Wysocki as Long-Term Substitute Special Education Teacher, Life Skills at the High School, at Bachelor’s +24, Step 1, at an annual salary of \$48,243 prorated for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective upon receipt of emergency certification

**HORIZONTAL MOVEMENT**

Acknowledged the following horizontal movement effective the second semester of the 2023-2024 school year:

Tanya Hess	From Master’s to Master’s +15
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**UNCOMPENSATED LEAVES**

Approved the following uncompensated leave requests:

Employee #129	May 20, 2024 ½ day; May 28, 2024 ½ day
Employee #158	Retroactively March 6, 2024 and March 7, 2024
Employee #311	April 23, 2024 and April 24, 2024
Employee #496	Retroactively February 26, 2024 ½ day; February 27, 2024
Employee #570	Retroactively February 22, 2024 and February 23, 2024, February 26, 2024 through March 1, 2024; March 20, 2024; April 12, 2024; May 2, 2024; May 7, 2024
Employee #635	April 24, 2024 through April 26, 2024; April 29, 2024

**FMLA**

Approved the following for Family & Medical Leave:

Employee #106	Retroactively effective from February 16, 2024 through March 18, 2024
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**COACH** Approved the following Coach for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective March 20, 2024:

Megan Green	Softball Volunteer Assistant Coach	--
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**PAMPA CHAPERONE** Approved Staci Hillegass as Palmerton Area Music Parents’ Association (PAMPA) Volunteer Chaperone for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective March 20, 2024

**FALL COACHES 2024-2025** Approved the following Fall Coaches for the 2024-2025 school year:

<b>FOOTBALL:</b>		
Christopher Walkowiak	Head Coach	\$6,480
Mark Versuk	Assistant Coach	\$4,242
Michael Falcone	Assistant Coach	\$4,242
Freddie Leshner	Assistant Coach	\$4,242
Logan Leshner	Assistant Coach	\$4,242
Christopher Frace	Assistant Coach (MS)	\$4,242
Shawn Leadbetter	Assistant Coach (1/4)	\$1,061
Andrew Sabo	Assistant Coach (1/4)	\$1,061
James Hunsicker	Volunteer Assistant Coach	--
<b>CROSS COUNTRY:</b>		
Michael J. Horvath	Head Coach	\$4,261
Michael Noyola	Assistant Coach	\$2,798
<b>FIELD HOCKEY:</b>		
Megan Leadbetter	Head Coach	\$4,261
Jillian Frank	Assistant Coach (MS)	\$2,798
Tara Frantz	Volunteer Assistant Coach	--
Lauren Salerno	Volunteer Assistant Coach	--
<b>SOCCER-BOYS:</b>		
Antonio Orlando	Head Coach	\$4,261
William Hansen	Assistant Coach	\$2,798
Michael Hansen	Volunteer Assistant Coach	--
<b>SOCCER-GIRLS:</b>		
Jonathan Perloni	Head Coach	\$4,261
Connor Russo	Assistant Coach	\$2,798
<b>GOLF:</b>		
Alexander Knoll	Co-Head Coach	\$1,281
Joseph Trimmel	Co-Head Coach	\$1,281
<b>VOLLEYBALL:</b>		
Savannah Mickel	Head Coach	\$4,261
Brittany Brice	Volunteer Assistant Coach	--

**SUBSTITUTES** Approved the following Substitutes effective March 20, 2024:

Meghan Miller-Brown	Substitute Teacher	\$110.00 per day
Syndie Christman	Substitute Teacher	\$110.00 per day
William Schwartz	Substitute Teacher	\$110.00 per day
Nicole Smith	Substitute Secretary	\$10.00 per hour
Charles Young	Substitute Custodian	\$10.00 per hour

**REMOVED  
SUBSTITUTES**

Removed the following from the current substitution lists effective March 20, 2024:

Steven Semmel	Substitute Teacher
Arissa Snyder	Substitute Nurse

**TUITION  
REIMBURSEMENTS**

Approved tuition reimbursements

**CLIU  
INTERGOV'T.-  
Spec Ed**

Approved the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 Intergovernmental Agreement for Special Education Services for the 2024-2025 school year

**CLIU POLICY  
ADOPTION**

Approved the Notice of Adoption of Approved LEA Policies, Procedures, and Use of Funds by School District from Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21

**CLIU LINKAGE  
AGREEMENT**

Approved the Linkage Agreement with the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21

**PED. THERAP.  
SERVICES**

Approved the Therapy Services Agreement Addendum with Pediatric Therapeutic Services, Inc., for nursing services for the remainder of the school year effective March 19, 2024 through June 30, 2024

**ESU  
AFFILIATION**

Approved the Affiliation Agreement with East Stroudsburg University's College of Education effective March 20, 2024 through March 19, 2029

**CONFERENCE**

Approved the following conference:

Joseph Faenza	PASBO Construction Project Management Symposium, Berks IU, Reading, PA	April 10, 2024	Estimated cost of \$191.00
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**1<sup>st</sup> READING  
POLICIES 006.2-  
237-815-815.1**

Approved the first reading of the following policies:

- 1) Policy #006.2 Broadcasting Board Meetings
- 2) Policy #237 Electronic Devices
- 3) Policy #815 Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers & Network Resources
- 4) Policy #815.1 Use of Livestream Video on School District Property

**2<sup>nd</sup> READING &  
ADOPTION  
POLICY 005**

Approved the second reading and adoption of the following policy:

- 1) Policy #005 Organization

**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**PALMER RENO-  
GC**

Director Mazepa moved, seconded by Director Krawchuk, to award the General Construction bid for the S.S. Palmer Elementary School renovation project to RC Construction Associates, Inc., Nazareth, PA, at a cost of \$782,015.00.

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

**PALMER RENO-  
HVAC**

Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to award the HVAC Construction bid for the S.S. Palmer Elementary School project to JBM Mechanical Inc., Nazareth, PA, at a cost of \$413,000.00

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

**PALMER RENO-  
PLUMBING**

Director Krawchuk moved, seconded by Director Connell, award the Plumbing Construction bid for the S.S. Palmer Elementary School project to JBM Mechanical Inc., Nazareth, PA, at a cost of \$53,000.00.

<p><b>PALMER ACCESS RAMP RENO</b></p>	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Director King moved, seconded by Director Mazepa, to award the bid for the S.S. Palmer Elementary School ADA access ramp project to LB Construction Enterprises, Spring House, PA, at a cost of \$148,000.00 for the base bid, plus Alternate #1 at a cost of \$16,500.00 for a grand total of \$164,500.00.</p>
<p><b>CHANGE COST FOR PALMER ROOF DESIGN</b></p>	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Connell, to change the motion on the cost from Crabtree, Rohrbaugh &amp; Associates for the design, bidding, and construction administration for the S.S. Palmer Elementary School roof replacement project to \$28,500.00.</p>
<p><b>PALMER ROOF DESIGN</b></p>	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Connell, to accept the Crabtree, Rohrbaugh &amp; Associates proposal for the design, bidding, and construction administration for the S.S. Palmer Elementary School roof replacement project at a cost of \$28,500.00.</p>
<p><b>WEIGHT ROOM RENO-GC</b></p>	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to award the General Construction bid for the high school weight room renovation project to NorthEast Construction Management Group, Lehighton PA, at a cost of \$339,363.00 for the base bid, plus Alternate #1 at a cost of \$2,091.00 and Alternate #2B at a cost of \$577.00 for a grand total of \$342,031.00.</p>
<p><b>WEIGHT ROOM RENO- PLUMBING</b></p>	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Director Krawchuk moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to award the Plumbing Construction bid for the high school weight room renovation project to KC Mechanical, Inc., Mt. Bethel, PA, at a cost of \$224,000.00 for the base bid, including Alternate #1 at a reduction cost of \$10,100.00 for a grand total of \$213,900.00.</p>
<p><b>WEIGHT ROOM RENO- ELECTRICAL</b></p>	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Director Connell moved, seconded by Director King, to award the Electrical Construction bid for the high school weight room renovation project to West Side Hammer Electric, Bethlehem, PA, at a cost of \$52,175.00 for the base bid, plus Alternate #1 at a cost of \$5,825.00 for a grand total of \$58,000.00.</p>
<p><b>WEIGHT ROOM RENO- RELOCATION EQUIPMENT</b></p>	<p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Director King moved, seconded by Director Danielle Paules, to approve the Weight Room Equipment Relocation Agreement with NorthEast Construction Management Group, Lehighton, PA, at a cost not to exceed \$8,558.00.</p>

<b>WEIGHT ROOM RENO-WATER HEATER</b>	<p>Director Krawchuk moved, seconded by Director Connell, to approve the purchase of one (1) water heater from RJ Walker, Lehighton, PA, for the high school weight room renovation project at a cost not to exceed \$9,269.81.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p>
<b>HR DIRECTOR</b>	<p>Director Mazepa moved, seconded by Director Schaible, approve Karissa Belcher as the Director of Human Resources at an annual salary of \$85,000.00 prorated effective May 6, 2024 pursuant to the terms and conditions set forth in a contract negotiated between Ms. Belcher and the Palmerton Area Board of School Directors.</p> <p>Aye Votes: Directors Connell, Haas, King, Krawchuk, Mazepa, and Schaible. Nay Votes: Directors Earl Paules and Danielle Paules. Motion Carried.</p> <p><b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michelle Muffley – thankful that with the HR position filled now, Ms. Schuler can concentrate on curriculum within the district; it is important to have an HR Director to handle all issues that arise with staff; we have chosen a good candidate for this district</li> </ul> <p><b>FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Danielle Paules stated that Ethan Zych, senior, has received the Group 4 Cadet of the Year Award recently, which is the ultimate accolade as a Civil Air Patrol Cadet Chief Master Sgt.</li> <li>• Director Schaible noted that BRCTV13 interviewed Coach Rake, Gretchen Schaible, and Mrs. Husar in support of the girls’ wrestling team</li> <li>• Director Haas stated an executive session will be held immediately following this evening’s regular meeting for personnel matters</li> </ul>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	<p>Director Connell moved, seconded by Director King, to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 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>