

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
AUGUST 13, 2024

The Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District conducted a virtual and in person Board meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 2024. This meeting was recorded.

The meeting was called to order at 7:14 p.m. by Dan Santia, Board President.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Santia.

Roll call by the secretary followed. Those Directors in attendance were:

Anitre' Bell
Carla Buxton
Daniel Caton
Victoria Gill
Anissa Klessner
Jeanette Miller
Bethany Pistorius
Daniel Santia
Lindsay Zupsic

Also in attendance were: Dr. Jeffrey Beltz, Superintendent, Deborah Engelman, Business Administrator; Christina Lane, Solicitor; Nancy Barber, Secretary; Rob Kartychak, Principal; and visitors.

An Executive Session was held prior to the start of the meeting to discuss personnel. This announcement is being made to be in compliance with Act 84 of 1986, Pennsylvania's Sunshine Law, as amended.

MOTION #1

By Victoria Gill, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the agenda as written.

Carl Platko, Director of Transportation gave an update on his department. He reported that the district currently operates 16 bus routes within the district, 4 outside the district, and 5 van routes specifically for special needs students. There are 16 CDL (Commercial Driver's License) drivers available, but Carl and the office staff will also need to drive due to a shortage of one van driver. CDL classes are ongoing, with 6 individuals currently participating. The district is working on streamlining routes and discussing future transportation needs with Dr. Beltz and Mrs. Engelman.

Mrs. Miller inquired whether there is a contingency plan in place to address situations where a driver shortage or equipment failure might affect a specific bus or van run. Dr. Beltz explained that at present, no other transportation company is able to assist in case of a driver

shortage or equipment failure because they are also dealing with their own specific needs. He said that he continues to work on finding a solution to this issue.

Mrs. Miller asked about the bus disciplinary process and whether drivers are receiving adequate support when dealing with student behavior issues on the bus. Mr. Platko said that he has open communication with each principal and believes that the appropriate actions are being taken. He said that drivers are given information on disciplinary consequences on an as-needed basis.

Mrs. Miller said that she would like for each Board member to have an opportunity to visit the bus garage. Mr. Platko said that they were welcome any time.

At this time, Dr. Beltz began his review of those items that would be voted on later in this meeting.

Education/Curriculum/Instruction: Mrs. Zupsic, Chair; Mrs. Klessner, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Agreement with the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit to provide Title One Services to students at Our Lady of Fatima and Saints Peter and Paul for the 2024-2025 school year at a per pupil allocation of \$1,059.94.
2. Contract renewal with Pressley Ridge for the 2024-2025 school year.
3. Appointment of the following:
 - a. Optometric Care as District Vision Examiner - \$3.40 per exam; and
 - b. Dr. Rich Covatto to provide dental exams - \$5 per exam.
4. Student handbooks for the Senior High School, Junior High School, and Elementary School.

Athletics: Daniel Caton, Chair; Victoria Gill, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Cooperation agreement with the South Side Area School District for girls and boys varsity swimming beginning the 2024-2025 school year at a cost of \$3,000.00 per year.

Buildings and Grounds: Mr. Caton, Chair; Mrs. Miller, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Request of the Ambridge Area School District to use the varsity tennis courts on August 28, 2024 and September 5, 2024 from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. for their home girls' tennis matches. Cost will be \$50.00 per match.

2. Request of Hopewell Area Aqua Club to use the pool Monday through Friday from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. beginning September 2024 through April 2025.
3. Request from Our Lady of Fatima School to use the Senior High School grass fields on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning August 12, 2024 through October 31, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. for soccer practice.
4. Request of Hopewell Youth Wrestling to use Gym A and Gym B at the Junior High School on December 7th from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and on December 8th from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. for a youth wrestling tournament.
5. Request of Little Lady Vikings Youth Basketball to use Gym B at the Junior High School on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. beginning October 7, 2024 through March 7, 2025 for basketball practice.
6. Request of Little Lady Vikings Youth Basketball to use both gyms at the Senior High School on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. beginning October 12, 2024 through November 30, 2024 for basketball games.
7. Request of Little Lady Vikings Youth Basketball to use Gym B at the Junior High School on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. beginning December 7, 2024 through March 8, 2025, for travel team basketball practice.
8. Disposal of one nonworking Simplicity riding lawnmower from Margaret Ross Elementary School.

Nutrition & Food Services: Bethany Pistorius, Chair; Victoria Gill, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Elementary school student lunch price for the 2024-2025 school year set at \$2.50.

Personnel: Mrs. Pistorius, Chair; Mrs. Buxton, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Resignation for retirement of Rosetta Dufalla, high school English teacher, effective September 6, 2024.
2. Resignation for retirement of Deborah Ross, special education teacher at Margaret Ross Elementary School, effective August 12, 2024.
3. Employment of Jessica Lockerbie, classroom paraprofessional at Independence Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024.
4. Resignation of Dena Litfin, bus driver, effective August 18, 2024.

5. Employment of Dena Liftin, classroom paraprofessional at Hopewell Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024.
6. Employment of Christy Pulver, classroom paraprofessional at Hopewell Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024.
7. Employment of Alexandra Klessner, classroom paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 19, 2024.
8. Employment of Somia Rafiq, classroom paraprofessional at Hopewell Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024.
9. Resignation of Brittany Powell, bus driver, effective August 18, 2024.
10. Employment of Brittany Powell, classroom paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 19, 2024.
11. Resignation of Tammy Holland, part-time library aide, effective August 18, 2024.
12. Employment of Tammy Holland, full-time one-on-one paraprofessional at Independence Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024.
13. Resignation of Danielle Notarianni, paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 2, 2024.
14. Employment of Donald Koper, science teacher at the Senior High School at step 1 of the masters scale, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances.
15. Employment of Logan Hyland, science teacher at the Senior High School at step 1 of the masters scale, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances.
16. Employment of Brandt Dykstra, elementary art teacher at step 1 of the masters scale, effective August 19, 2024.
17. Resignation of Lindsey Loos, substitute custodian, effective August 14, 2024.
18. Employment of Anita Dempsey, bus driver, effective August 12, 2024.
19. Resignation for retirement of Tracy Schissler, paraprofessional at the Senior High School, effective June 1, 2024.
20. Employment of Morgan Metzger, School Psychologist, at step 1 of the masters scale, effective August 19, 2024, pending release from current employer and receipt of all clearances.
21. Employment of Tina Haywiser-Swana, classroom paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances.

22. Employment of Kathleen Dunmire, classroom paraprofessional, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances.

Policy/Planning: Mrs. Klessner, Chair; Ms. Bell, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Policy 718 - Service Animals in Schools (first reading)

At this time, Dr. Beltz began his review of those items that would be voted on at the August 27, 2024 Business meeting.

Education/Curriculum/Instruction: Mrs. Zupsic, Chair; Mrs. Klessner, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Senior High School club and activity sponsors for the 2024-2025 school year.
2. Junior High School club and activity sponsors for the 2024-2025 school year.
3. Review of the District's Health and Safety Plan, pursuant to ESSER requirements. Currently, there are no recommended changes to the Plan.
4. Shannon Witkowski, a student at Westminster College to complete her field experience at the Junior High School in January 2025 under the supervision of Chad Toporski.
5. Lauren Boggs, a student at Robert Morris University to complete her pre-student teaching at Hopewell Elementary School beginning August 28, 2024, under the supervision of Katie Snyder and Tina Carbone.
6. Appointment of _____, English Language Arts Department Chair.
7. Appointment of _____, Science Department Chair.

Personnel: Mrs. Pistorius, Chair; Mrs. Buxton, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Continuation of current SRO/Inter-agency agreement for the 2024-2025 school year. Discontinuation of this agreement can occur at any time by either party with 30 days notice.
2. One (1) year extension of the Agreement with the Confidential Employees for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

Effective October 12, 2021, a maximum of thirty minutes total will be reserved during the Board meeting for community members who request to speak. At any time, the Board may allow additional time for the visitors portion of the Board meeting.

Whether the community member is participating virtually, or in-person, the community member will:

- State their name
- Have up to three minutes to make a statement and/or ask a question to the Board
- Only be able to speak once during the visitors portion of the board meeting
- Have their time begin when the individual begins to speak

It is recommended that community members wishing to speak during the visitors portion email the Board Secretary prior to the board meeting, however the online chat will be monitored during the visitors portion of the meeting for anyone wishing to speak.

A response may be given during the meeting, however, it is also possible that no response be provided during the Board meeting. The Board will instruct the Superintendent, the Business Administrator, and/or the Solicitor to either respond to the inquiry or do further research and report back to the Board and/or the resident. For any question that requires a response, the District will contact the individual directly to respond or will share responses at the following Board meeting.

No visitors wished to address the Board.

At this time, Mr. Santia returned to Education/Curriculum/Instruction

Educational/Curriculum/Instruction by Lindsay Zupsic, Chair

MOTION #2

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the agreement with the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit to provide Title One Services to students at Our Lady of Fatima and Saints Peter and Paul for the 2024-2025 school year at a per pupil allocation of \$1,059.94. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #3

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the contract renewal with Pressley Ridge for the 2024-2025 school year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #4

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the following appointments. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

- a. Optometric Care as District Vision Examiner - \$3.40 per exam; and
- b. Dr. Rich Covatto to provide dental exams - \$5 per exam.

MOTION #5

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Anitre Bell, approved the student handbooks for the Senior High School, Junior High School, and Elementary School. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Athletics by Dan Caton, Chair

MOTION #6

By Dan Caton, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, approved the Cooperation Agreement with the South Side Area School District for girls and boys varsity swimming beginning the 2024-2025 school year at a cost of \$3,000.00 per year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance

Buildings and Grounds by Dan Caton, Chair

MOTION #7

By Dan Caton, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of the Ambridge Area School District to use the varsity tennis courts on August 28, 2024 and September 5, 2024 from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. for their home girls' tennis matches. Cost will be \$50.00 per match. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #8

By Dan Caton, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the request of the Hopewell Area Aqua Club to use the pool Monday through Friday from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. beginning September 2024 through April 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #9

By Dan Caton, seconded by Anitre Bell, approved the request of Our Lady of Fatima School to use the Senior High School grass fields on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning August 12, 2024 through October 31, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. for soccer practice. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #10

By Dan Caton, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of Hopewell Youth Wrestling to use Gym A and Gym B at the Junior High School on December 7th from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and on December 8th from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. for a youth wrestling tournament. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #11

By Dan Caton, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the request of Little Lady Vikings Youth Basketball to use Gym B at the Junior High School on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. beginning October 7, 2024 through March 7, 2025 for basketball practice. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #12

By Dan Caton, seconded by Anitre Bell, approved the request of Little Lady Vikings Youth Basketball to use both gyms at the Senior High School on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. beginning October 12, 2024 through November 30, 2024 for basketball games. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #13

By Dan Caton, seconded by Anitre Bell, approved the request of Little Lady Vikings Youth Basketball to use Gym B at the Junior High School on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. beginning December 7, 2024 through March 8, 2025, for travel team basketball practice. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #14

By Dan Caton, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the disposal of one nonworking riding lawnmower from Margaret Ross Elementary School. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Nutrition and Food Services by Bethany Pistorius

MOTION #15

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved elementary school student lunch price for the 2024-2025 school year set at \$2.50. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Personnel by Bethany Pistorius, Chair**MOTION #16**

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, accepted the resignation for retirement of Rosetta Dufalla, high school English teacher, effective September 6, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #17

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anissa Klessner, accepted the resignation for retirement of Deborah Ross, special education teacher at Margaret Ross Elementary School, effective August 12, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #18

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, approved the employment of Jessica Lockerbie, classroom paraprofessional at Independence Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #19

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, accepted the resignation of Dena Litfin, bus driver, effective August 18, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #20

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the employment of Dena Litfin, classroom paraprofessional at Hopewell Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #21

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of Christy Pulver, classroom paraprofessional at Hopewell Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #22

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anitre Bell, approved the employment of Alexandra Klessner, classroom paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 19, 2024. MOTION carried with eight votes, with Mrs. Anissa Klessner abstaining due to the fact that Alexandra Klessner is her daughter.

MOTION #23

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of Somia Rafiq, classroom paraprofessional at Hopewell Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #24

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, accepted the resignation of Brittany Powell, bus driver, effective August 18, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #25

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anitre Bell, approved the employment of Brittany Powell, classroom paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 19, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #26

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anitre Bell, accepted the resignation of Tammy Holland, part-time library aide, effective August 18, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #27

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of Tammy Holland, one-on-one paraprofessional at Independence Elementary School, effective August 19, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #28

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anissa Klessner, accepted the resignation of Danielle Notarianni, paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 2, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #29

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the employment of Donald Koper, science teacher at the Senior High School at step 1 of the masters scale, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #30

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, approved the employment of Logan Hyland, science teacher at the Senior High School at step 1 of the masters scale, effective August 19, 2024,

pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #31

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of Brandt Dykstra, elementary art teacher at step 1 of the masters scale, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #32

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, accepted the resignation of Lindsey Loos, substitute custodian, effective August 12, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #33

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the employment of Anita Dempsey, bus driver, effective August 12, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #34

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, accepted the resignation for retirement of Tracy Schissler, paraprofessional at the Senior High School, effective June 1, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #35

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anissa Klessner, approved the employment of Morgan Metzger, School Psychologist, at step 1 of the masters scale, pending release from current employer and receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #36

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the employment of Tina Haywiser-Swana, classroom paraprofessional at the Junior High School, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #37

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of Kathleen Dunmire, classroom paraprofessional, effective August 19, 2024, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Policy/Planning by Anissa Klessner, Chair

MOTION #38

By Anissa Klessner, seconded by Anitre Bell, approved the first reading of Board Policy 718, Service Animals in Schools. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Other Business

Mrs. Miller asked the Board to decide on dates to discuss the feasibility study.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beltz reported that fall sports are underway. He said that staff returns on Monday, August 19th and that students return on Thursday, August 22nd. He said that 9th grade orientation is tomorrow, August 14th and kindergarten orientation is August 15th.

Upcoming Board Meetings

August 27, 2024, 7:00 p.m. - Central Administration Board Room and Virtual

MOTION by Dan Caton, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, that the meeting be adjourned. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Mr. Santia adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Daniel Santia, Board President

Nancy Barber, Secretary