

*SHALER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Committee of the Whole Meeting
November 11, 2020 – Hybrid
Minutes*

The Board of School Directors of the Shaler Area School District held a Committee of the Whole Meeting on Wednesday, November 11, 2020, in a hybrid format, in person at the Shaler Area Middle School library, 1810 Mt. Royal Blvd, and on Zoom, a virtual meeting platform, with Mr. Jim Tunstall, School Board President, presiding. This meeting began at 7:20 p.m.

Board Members Present:

- Mrs. Suzanna Donahue
- Mr. James Fisher
- Mr. Tim Gapsky
- Dr. April Kwiatkowski
- Mr. Jason Machajewski
- Mrs. Jeanne Petrovich
- Mrs. Eileen Phillips
- Mr. Steve Romac
- Mr. James Tunstall

Others Present:

- Mr. Sean Aiken, Superintendent
- Dr. Bryan O’Black, Assistant Superintendent
- Ms. Sherri Ludwig, Director of Business Affairs
- Dr. Kathleen Graczyk, Director of Student Services
- Mr. Matt Hoffman, Solicitor
- Catherine Clark, Student Representative

Notice of this meeting was posted as required.

- Mr. James Tunstall called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.
- Mr. Aiken and Dr. O’Black then recognized the following:
 - Capt. David Boyles, a Shaler Area High School art teacher, presented the Patriot Award to Mr. Aiken and the school district for their continued support of soldiers as they serve in their communities where they work and when needed.
 - Two Shaler Area High School seniors achieved the rank of Eagle Scout: Peter Lesnett and Jared Vance.

Dr. O’Black then announced the following Education Items:

<u>ITEM</u>		<u>SUP</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
#	<u>EDUCATION ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL</u>	#	<u>TAKEN</u>
A.1	Approve the first reading of the following new policies: a. Policy No. 332 – Working Periods b. Policy No. 340 – Responsibility for Student Welfare	A.1	_____
A.2	Approve the first reading of the following revised policies: a. Policy No. 334 – Sick Leave b. Policy No. 705 – Facilities & Workplace Safety	A.2	_____
A.3	Approve the second reading of the following new policies: a. Policy No. 309.1 – Telework b. Policy No. 318 – Attendance & Tardiness	A.3	_____

- A.4 Approve the second reading of the following revised policies: A.4
- a. Policy No. 209 – Health Examinations/Screenings (Pupils)
 - b. Policy No. 314 – Physical Examination (Employees)
 - c. Policy No. 907 – School Visitors
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Dr. O’Black then announced the following Information Items:

Information Items:

1. Student Representatives – Catherine Clark reported that students are very appreciative for the free breakfast and lunch program. While the district and high school saw its first positive cases of coronavirus, everyone has been compliant with mitigation strategies. She noted an interesting trend in students switching to Cohort C especially with large events coming up as a way to self-quarantine themselves. She also noted that the lunch room continues to go well and teachers remain diligent in reminding students to wear masks. She said there are many hybrid options for events that typically happen in person such as the National Honor Society induction and the fall play. She said the biggest concern is going back to 100 percent virtual and the uncertainty of moving back and forth between instruction models. Mr. Aiken asked her to elaborate on the student experience in the hybrid model. Ms. Clark said she loves school and being in person is best for her, but the at home technology is getting better. She recognizes that teaching to two separate audiences is challenging but some teachers are very good at this and others are getting better. She said the technology has gotten much better and the district tech department is amazing with the turnaround time in addressing issues.
2. Shaler Area Education Foundation – Dr. Kwiatkowski noted that there is not a lot of fundraising happening but the Foundation has had the opportunity to grow the Foundation itself with policies, procedures, and strategies. There are three alumni in executive leadership roles and the grant process is currently open. Dr. Kwiatkowski said she has been part of the Foundation from the inception and is in year six of her service. She said her tenure was up last year and when the board reorganizes next month, someone will have to fill her position as the board representative. There is a meeting Monday night.
3. Hybrid Learning Update – Dr. O’Black explains how staff is still engaging students and building community in the hybrid setting. He shares information about a primary school music class and a whole-school event at Scott Primary that was presented in a hybrid format. He also highlights how the Elementary School staff are engaging at-home and in-school students with the same activity. He also points out how the desk shields are being used. Mr. Aiken shares that classrooms look a little different with the teacher teaching from the desk in order to engage at-home students. Ms. Clark said it is challenging for some teachers but other teachers are finding different solutions such as projecting the at-home students’ faces on the screen for the in-school students to engage with them in class discussions. Mr. Aiken said engaging in hybrid is challenging but teachers are doing an amazing job. Dr. Kwiatkowski said she is so appreciative for what the teachers have done for her child and the district students. Mr. Aiken explained how teachers are using creativity with the spaces they have available such as the high school chorus class being conducted in the school auditorium and illustrated how a high school science class used livestreaming to have lab groups participate in school and at home. Dr. Kwiatkowski noted that in the past the district has had conversations about the inconsistent iPad use in the classroom, but in many of the photos shown by Dr. O’Black and Mr. Aiken, the students have their iPads out on their desks. Dr. O’Black said at the primary and elementary level, iPads are used at the classroom level because the use needs to be age appropriate. The devices are more of a tool for survival now and teachers are putting so much more online. Students can be in Cohort A one day and Cohort C the next. Dr. Kwiatkowski said the transition was seamless for her child when it happened to her. Dr. O’Black said the teachers have contributed a tremendous amount of work and attention to detail and ability to pivot very quickly, and they deserve all the credit right now. Mrs. Donahue asked what the district would do to commend them. She asked if an internal letter from the board could be shared. She said she wants teachers to know the administration has their back.

Ms. Ludwig then announced the following Finance Items:

<u>ITEM</u> #	<u>FINANCE & OPERATION ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL</u>	<u>SUP</u> #	<u>ACTION</u> <u>TAKEN</u>
C.1	APPROVE FUND PROFILES:		
	A. General Fund – Schedule of Bills	C.1A	_____
	B. Cafeteria Fund – Schedule of Bills	C.1B	_____
	C. 2019 Bond Proceeds – Schedule of Bills	C.1C	_____
	D. Year-to-Date Financial Reports	C.1D	_____
	E. Fund Profiles and Investments	C.1E	_____
C.2	Cafeteria Operating Statements (September & October)	C.2	_____
C.3	Approval of additional ABC Transit personnel	C.3	_____

- Mr. Romac asked for clarification on ABC Transit’s payment request. Ms. Ludwig explained that there are two payments in accounts payable, one for regular items and items of urgent nature. She said that in October there were fewer transportation days and no transportation in September, which resulted in a decrease in funds, however, they are still paying for capital assets. She added that this isn’t anything unusual but just wants the board to be aware. The bill will be the same as it normally is but bumped up two to three weeks. The district has never done this for ABC Transit before. Mr. Romac expressed concern that the company is experiencing cash flow problems. He said he is fine paying the company twice per month but not changing the pay schedule. Ms. Ludwig said the district is just offering to pay the company a few weeks early. The district does this for other vendors and everything goes through the regular procedures. Mr. Gapsky said he doesn’t agree with that process. He asked what happens if the board doesn’t approve the payment. Mr. Romac said he doesn’t want a vendor to dictate when they want to be paid. Mr. Aiken said the pay is contractual but that they are also educational partner. In a typical situation, the company wouldn’t come to the district with this request. Mr. Hoffman added that while he doesn’t have the contract in front of him, he is sure that it includes payment terms. He said that deciding to issue payment quicker than the payment terms is at the district’s discretion. Dr. Kwiatkowski said this is a very different year for everything. She asked if the district would experience increased costs for its other runs. Ms. Ludwig said that right now another vehicle hasn’t been needed to be added to the athletic runs.
- Mr. Romac asked if it would be possible to issue automatic reimbursements to families with positive lunch balances when the student exits the school district. Ms. Ludwig said she will look into that.
- Mr. Romac asked for an update on the stake body truck. John Kaib, supervisor of buildings and grounds, said there was no update. He said there have been meetings about it, and he plans to talk to the township about how it gets its trucks. Mr. Romac asked if any other type of truck could meet the district’s needs.
- Mr. Tunstall then invited the board to speak on any other business.
 - Mr. Aiken announced the fall play, “Little Women,” will run for three shows through livestream. Parents will be permitted to attend in person.
 - Mrs. Phillips announced the Glenshaw Century Club’s Craft Fair fundraising event will take place that weekend. The money goes back to the community, including in the form of scholarships for Shaler Area seniors.

November 11, 2020 – Committee of the Whole Meeting

- Mr. Gapsky asked if the district would provide Thanksgiving meals for families in need. Mr. Aiken said they are looking for some different options for this year and will provide an update on Friday.
 - Mr. Gapsky asked for an update on plans to honor Reserve Primary teacher Mrs. Young. Mr. Aiken said he spoke to the school principal and they will convene a committee to start to brainstorm ways to honor her. Mr. Gapsky requested to be considered for that committee.
 - Dr. Kwiatkowski said that she understands the Backpack Initiative is back up and running. Mr. Aiken said Maryann Swartz, school counselor, is partnering with Emmanuel Lutheran to run the program this year. A large donation from the Shaler Rotary is making it possible.
 - Mrs. Phillips said that the middle school is planning a virtual vendor fair for this year and more information will be forthcoming.
- Mr. Tunstall then recognized the public to speak on any other items:
- Diana Meyer, of Willowood Drive, said she is the mom of three children; one is a student at Reserve Primary. She said the school is in an urgent situation and in need of school counseling services. The school suffered a devastating loss and the teachers can't provide the emotional support the students need. She asked that the part time counselor position be reconsidered.
 - Lori Howe, of James Drive, said she has two children in Shaler Area and her daughter was a student of Mrs. Young. She said she is speaking for the same reason as Mrs. Meyer. She feels it would be very beneficial to have a part time counselor at Reserve Primary School this year. Mr. Aiken said there is a school counselor in the building, the expectation is two days per week, but the district understands there is a significant need. He said it is something the district will continue to look at and follow up on. He acknowledges that it will be a challenge.
 - Steve Deal, of Hoffman Street, said he wanted to put in a plug for the high school fall play next week. He shared that the money that the play generates will also help the musical, which had its revenue cut last year by the cancellation of the second week of performances due to the coronavirus. He said that the benefit of the livestream performance is that relatives all over the country have been able to purchase the streaming service.

After no further items were presented, final adjournment occurred at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Baker
Assistant Board Secretary