

*SHALER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT*

*Voting Meeting*

*August 18, 2021 – Hybrid*

*Minutes*

The Board of School Directors of the Shaler Area School District held a Voting Meeting on Wednesday, August 18, 2021, in a hybrid format, in person at the Shaler Area Administration Building, Glenshaw, PA, and on Zoom, a virtual meeting platform, with Mr. James Tunstall, School Board President, presiding. This meeting began at 7:30 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
- Mr. Matt Hoffman, Solicitor

Notice of this meeting was posted as required.

- Mr. Tunstall opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- Mr. Tunstall recognized the Public to Speak on Agenda Items.
  - Bryan Whitaker, of Dorf Drive, asked what novel would be replaced with the addition of “Born a Crime.”
  - Eugene Cawley, of Redstone Drive, spoke against masking in the schools.
- Mr. Tunstall then called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and invited all in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.
- On a motion by Mr. Fisher and a second by Mr. Gapsky, the following Minutes were approved by all in attendance:
  - Combined COW/Voting Meeting – July 14, 2021
- On a motion by Mr. Gapsky and a second by Dr. Kwiatkowski, the following motion was approved by all in attendance:
  - Motion to suspend any applicable Shaler Area School District policies in order to authorize the conduct of this special voting meeting of the Board of School Directors via telephone conference in consideration of the public health concerns and governmental directives arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Notice of such action, along with information as to how members of the public may access the telephone conference meeting, previously was posted at the District Administration office and to the District website.
- Mr. Tunstall then announced items tabled or removed from the agenda:
  - There were none.
- On a motion by Mr. Fisher and a second by Mrs. Donahue, the agenda was approved by all Board members in attendance.

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Dr. O’Black then presented the following Education Items for approval:

<u>ITEM #</u>	<u>EDUCATION ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL</u>	<u>SUP #</u>	<u>ACTION TAKEN</u>
A.1	Approve the IDEA Section 619 Pass-Through Funds from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for the 2021-22 school year in the amount of \$5,607. Funds will be used for contracted services for Kindergarten students who have an IEP.	A.1	<u>IDEA Section 619 Pass-Through Funds</u>
A.2	Approve the addendum with Pressley Ridge Autism effective July 1, 2021, which extends and keeps the original contract originally entered on July 1, 2017.	A.2	<u>Pressley Ridge Autism Addendum</u>
A.3	Approve the Day Student Education Agreement with Glade Run Lutheran Services for the 2021-22 school year.	A.3	<u>Day Student Education Agreement with Glade Run Lutheran</u>
A.4	Approve the adoption of the textbook, <i>The Practice of Statistics</i> , Updated 6 <sup>th</sup> Edition ©2020 for use in the Honors Probability & Statistics class. Student texts 100 @\$153.81 and supplemental materials @\$3,600. Total cost to the district \$18,981.	A.4	<u>Textbook Adoption</u>
A.5	Approve the adoption of the novel, <i>Born a Crime</i> , by Trevor Noah ©2019 for use in the World Literature 10 class. Student books 200 @\$7.21. Total cost to the district \$1,442.	A.5	<u>Novel Adoption</u>
A.6	Approve the second reading of the following new policies: a. Policy No. 137.1 – Extracurricular Participation by Home Education Students b. Policy No. 150 – Title I Comparability of Services	A.6	<u>New Policies – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading</u>
A.7	Approve the second reading of the following revised policies: a. Policy No. 810.1 – School Bus Drivers and School Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers b. Policy No. 810.3 – School Vehicle Drivers	A.7	<u>Revised Policies – 2<sup>nd</sup> reading</u>
➤	Mr. Romac asked about specific language in Item A.7a. Dr. O’Black said the policies would pertain to any future vehicles. Mr. Hoffman said it is an existing policy that has been updated by PSBA. If the district doesn’t have a specific vehicle, the board can rescind the policy, however the purpose is to comply with the law.		

A motion was made by Mr. Romac with a second by Mrs. Donahue, to approve Items A.1-7.

After no further discussion, these items were then approved by a roll call vote.

**ACTION:**  
**Approved**  
**Items A.1-7**

Motion Carried: 9 aye; 0 nay

Donahue	Fisher	Gapsky	Kwiatkowski	Machajewski	Petrovich	Phillips	Romac	Tunstall
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Dr. O’Black then presented the following Personnel items for approval:

<u>ITEM</u> #	<u>PERSONNEL ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL</u>	<u>SUP</u> #	<u>ACTION</u> <u>TAKEN</u>
B.1	Rescind the following <b>Temporary Professional Employee (TPE)</b> contract:		<u>Rescind TPE</u>
a.	Riley Young, a graduate of Pennsylvania State University, as a FT 1.0 TPE, Spanish, Middle & High Schools.		
B.2	Approve the following FT 1.0 <b>Professional Employee (PE)</b> :		<u>Professional Employee</u>
a.	Lauren West, a graduate of Duquesne University, as a FT 1.0 Special Education teacher, Elementary School, upon release from her current employer, at a Master’s Step 8 salary level.	<b>B.2a.</b>	
B.3	Approve the following FT 1.0 <b>Temporary Professional Employees (TPE’s)</b> :		<u>TPEs</u>
a.	Chloe Chiado, a graduate of Indiana University of PA, as a FT 1.0 TPE Special Education teacher, Elementary School, effective August 17, 2021, at a Bachelor’s Step 1 salary level.	<b>B.3a.</b>	
b.	Samantha Robbins, a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, as a FT 1.0 TPE Spanish teacher, Middle & High Schools, effective August 17, 2021, at a Master’s Step 1 salary level.	<b>B.3b.</b>	
B.4	Approve the following FT 1.0 <b>Maintenance/HVAC employee</b> :		<u>Maintenance/HVAC employee</u>
a.	Hunter Boyle, as a FT 1.0 Maintenance/HVAC employee, Bldgs. & Grounds, effective upon release of employment from his current employer (on or about September 2, 2021).	<b>B.4a.</b>	
B.5	Approve Christopher Catanese as a FT 1.0 <b>Dean of Students</b> at the Middle School for the 2021-22 school year.		<u>Dean of Students – Middle School</u>

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- B.6 Approve the following **Interns** for the 2021-22 school year: Interns
- a. Mary Krepp, Westminster College, as a Guidance Counselor Intern, with Lezlie DeVecchio-Marks, Burchfield/Reserve Primaries, for the 2021-22 school year, at no cost to the District. **B.6a.**
  - b. Kristen Kaminski, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, for a School Counseling Practicum, with Maryann Swartz, Scott Primary, for the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the 2021-22 school year, at no cost to the District. **B.6b.**
- B.7 Rescind the following supplemental contracts for **Sponsors** for the 2021-22 school year: Rescind  
Supplemental  
Contracts –  
Sponsors
- High School**
- a. Percussion Instructor Philip Varvaro
  - b. Club Sponsor: Sophomore Class Jeff Ward (100%)
- B.8 Approve the following supplemental contracts for **Sponsors** for the 2021-22 school year: Supplemental  
Contracts –  
Sponsors
- High School**
- a. Club Sponsor: Sophomore Class Jeff Ward (50%)
  - b. Matthew White (50%)
- B.9 Rescind the following supplemental contracts for **Coaches** for the Fall Season of the 2021-22 School year: Rescind  
Supplemental  
Contracts –  
Coaches
- Soccer (Fall)**
- a. Boys JV Coach Frank Masi
- Football (Fall)**
- b. Assistant 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Drew D’Agostino
- B.10 Approve the following supplemental contracts for **Coaches** for the Fall Season of the 2021-22 School year: Supplemental  
Contracts –  
Coaches
- Soccer (Fall)**
- a. Boys’ 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Assistant James Faint **B.10a.**
- Football (Fall)**
- b. Assistant 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> William Mitchell
  - c. Volunteer Assistant Coach Eddie Wynkoop **B.10c.**
- Tennis (Fall)**
- d. Girls Volunteer Asst. Coach Susan Wilkins **B.10d.**

B.11 Approve the following applicants in the **Shaler Area Community Rec Swim Program**:

Shaler Area  
Community Rec  
Swim Program  
Applicants

- a. Instructor Aide Lillian Beck
- b. Instructor Aide Savannah Gray
- b. Lifeguard Xander Hill

B.12 Approve the following **Day-to-Day Substitute Teacher** for the 2021-22 school year

Day-to-Day  
Substitute –  
Teacher

- a. Keegan Phillips, Social Studies

B.13 Approve the following day-to-day **Substitute Clericals** for the 2021-22 school year:

Day-to-Day  
Substitute –  
Clerical

- a. Lynn Ball
- b. Anupama Viswanath

A motion was made by Dr. Kwiatkowski with a second by Mr. Fisher, to approve Items B.1-3, B.6-13.

After no further discussion, these items were then approved by a roll call vote.

Motion Carried: 9 aye; 0 nay

ACTION:  
Approved  
Items B.1-3,  
B.6-13

Donahue	Fisher	Gapsky	Kwiatkowski	Machajewski	Petrovich	Phillips	Romac	Tunstall
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

A motion was made by Mrs. Donahue with a second by Mr. Gapsky, to approve Item B.4.

After no further discussion, this item was then approved by a roll call vote.

Motion Carried: 8 aye; 1 nay

ACTION:  
Approved  
Item B.4

Donahue	Fisher	Gapsky	Kwiatkowski	Machajewski	Petrovich	Phillips	Romac	Tunstall
Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

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A motion was made by Mr. Fisher with a second by Mrs. Petrovich, to approve Item B.5.

After no further discussion, this item was then approved by a roll call vote.

ACTION:  
Approved  
Item B.5

Motion Carried: 7 aye; 1 nay; 1 Abstain

Donahue	Fisher	Gapsky	Kwiatkowski	Machajewski	Petrovich	Phillips	Romac	Tunstall
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Abstain	Y

Ms. Ludwig then presented the following Finance items for approval:

<u>ITEM</u> #	<u>FINANCE &amp; OPERATION ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL</u>	<u>SUP.</u> #	<u>ACTION</u> <u>TAKEN</u>
C.1	APPROVE FUND PROFILES:		<u>Fund Profiles</u>
A.	General Fund – Schedule of Bills and Addendum	C.1A	
B.	Cafeteria – Schedule of Bills	C.1B	
C.	2019 Bond Proceeds – Schedule of Bills	C.1D	
D.	Year-to-Date Financial Reports	C.1E	
E.	Fund Profiles and Investments	C.1F	
F.	Student Activity Funds & Investments – High School, Middle School and Elementary School –April 1, 2021, and June 30, 2021.	C.1G	
C.2	Cafeteria Operating Statement	C.2	<u>Cafeteria Operating Statement</u>
C.3	Approve school of attendance exception applications for the 2021-22 school year (pending final enrollment).	C.3	<u>Attendance Exception Applications</u>
C.4	Acknowledge receipt of the lists of unpaid taxes as submitted and further, the Board charges PA Municipal Service (PAMS) with the responsibility for delinquent tax collections.	C.4	<u>Receipt of Unpaid Taxes</u>

Background Information:

The tax collectors responsible for collection of the real estate taxes have submitted lists of unpaid 2020 taxes for exoneration from collection and appointing PAMS for collection.

The following represents unpaid taxes as of June 30, 2021:

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Properties</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Etna Borough	198	\$153,249.81
Millvale Borough	318	\$432,987.98
Reserve Township	243	\$180,001.37
Shaler Township	642	\$1,106,689.45

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C.5 Approve ABC Transit, Inc. Bus Drivers for the 2021-22 school year.

C.5 ABC Transit Bus Drives

C.6 Approve the bus stop addition for 2021-22 school year.

C.6 Bus Stop Addition

- Dr. Kwiatkowski confirmed that someone followed up with a parent who expressed previous concern about a bus stop change request.

A motion was made by Mrs. Petrovich with a second by Mr. Fisher, to approve Items C.1a-e, C.2-6.

After no further discussion, these items were then approved by a roll call vote.

Motion Carried: 9 aye; 0 nay

ACTION:  
Approved  
Items C.1a-  
e, C.2-6

Donahue	Fisher	Gapsky	Kwiatkowski	Machajewski	Petrovich	Phillips	Romac	Tunstall
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

A motion was made by Mrs. Petrovich with a second by Mrs. Donahue, to approve Items C.1f.

After no further discussion, these items were then approved by a roll call vote.

Motion Carried: 6 aye; 3 nay

ACTION:  
Approved  
Items C.1f

Donahue	Fisher	Gapsky	Kwiatkowski	Machajewski	Petrovich	Phillips	Romac	Tunstall
Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y

- Mr. Tunstall then announced the following upcoming meetings:
  - Thursday, August 19, 2021
    - 6:00 p.m. – A. W. Beattie Committee, Babcock Blvd.
  - Wednesday, September 8, 2021
    - 6:00 p.m. – Executive Session
    - 7:15 p.m. – Committee of the Whole Meeting
  - Wednesday, September 15, 2020
    - 6:15 p.m. – Executive Session
    - 7:15 p.m. – Voting Meeting

- Announcement of Past Executive Sessions was made by Mr. Tunstall.

- Mr. Tunstall then asked if there was any other business to come before the board.
- Dr. Kwiatkowski asked for an update on the Marzolf paving project. Mr. John Kaib, supervisor of buildings and grounds, said that if it doesn't rain the next day, crews will stripe on Saturday. Staff can park on one side while crews work on the other.
  - Dr. Kwiatkowski asked if the district should start considering alternatives for Homecoming. Dr. Aiken said the district is considering alternatives. One alternative is to hold it outside.
  - Mr. Gapsky asked if the district is prepared if it has to transition to hybrid. Dr. Aiken said that having done it last year, the district is prepared to pivot if necessary. However, he is hopeful that with the mitigation strategies, the district can maintain 180 days of in-person instruction.
  - Mrs. Donahue asked about the status of the graduation gown discussion. Dr. Aiken said he does not have anything new to report but that the high school administration is looking at options. It will work through the options over the next month and provide a report in October or November.

After no further items were presented, on a motion by Mr. Gapsky and second by Mrs. Donahue, the Business Meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Mr. Tunstall then recognized the public to speak on any non-agenda item:

- Dorothy Petrancosta, of Skylark Drive, said the demographic study done in February of 2015 and the building study that followed was the last time the district dealt with enrollment. Based on the demographer's numbers, the district's enrollment has decreased and the district is 1,000 less than the demographer's projections. Dr. Aiken said the district has totaled about 3,900 students in the past two years. Ms. Petrancosta said the district is likely to go into day 3 with 3,800 students and therefore it is time the district look at Reserve Primary School. There are fewer than 10 percent of students in Reserve. All of the students could be housed in the other three buildings. If the district moved students, it would not increase the student to principal ratio it had in 2014. Dr. Aiken requested a meeting with Ms. Petrancosta to clarify her numbers. Ms. Petrancosta added that she applauds what the district did with universal masking.
- Bryan Whitaker, of Dorf Drive, said in speaking with families from Reserve, while they agree it might save the district money, the school district should prioritize the safety of students and concern with longer bus times and the trouble it would cause. He said the district has a duty to all of the students in the district. Students get a great education at Reserve, and it's important for students to be with students in their neighborhood. Mr. Gapsky clarified that there has been no discussion at the board level regarding closing Reserve Primary.
- Gail DeHart, of Venango Ave, said COVID poses almost no risk to children. She argued the flu is more dangerous than COVID. She asked if there was any concern with the psychological effects of wearing a mask on children. She said we are scaring them and depriving them of a normal childhood experience. She argued that there are studies that masks don't do anything. She argued that children are not super spreaders and shared research with the school board members arguing that the district is masking children for no reason. Dr. Kwiatkowski said the district has the recommendations of the CDC, AAP and Department of Health supporting masking. Ms. DeHart said it is negatively affecting students' immune system. She believes everyone should be given the choice. Dr. Aiken said the district hears her concern and respects it. Mr. Gapsky said the district would reevaluate in September. Dr. Aiken reiterated the district's goal to have students in school 5 days per week for all 180 days of the school year.
- Wendy Bartsch, of Wible Run Road, shared research regarding masks and the lack of conclusive studies that show masks prevent COVID. She argued that they 1) distract students who wear them, 2) can cause acne and skin problems, 3) increase discomfort and distract students in their academics, 4) may cause anxiety and breathing difficulties, 5) can lead to increased levels of CO2 in the blood, 6) can be vectors for pathogens, and 7) cause possible psychological harm and mutes nonverbal forms of communication. She requested the school board consider a policy that would make masking voluntary.



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- Keely Sidick, of Wetzel Road, said she also feels families should have the choice, but she also wants her children to be in school 5 days per week 180 days of the school year. If hybrid or virtual options have to occur, what will it look like. Dr. Aiken said the district is talking through when that might happen with the Allegheny County Health Department. He said the district is not in a place to release a specific metric at this time. Mr. Gapsky reiterated that there is a small chance that the district would have to close a school. Ms. Sidick expressed disappointment that the district is choosing to mask and pressed for a plan if the district has to transition to virtual instruction. Dr. O'Black clarified that students who elect to be in the full virtual model will stay in the model for the semester. If the district has to make an emergency transition to virtual, it would look similar to last year. Dr. Aiken said the district is looking to increase consistency this school year and masking is the most conservative and the right decision at this time. Mr. Tunstall reiterated the objective to keep students in school. Dr. Aiken said if a student has to quarantine, they would stay out of school for a period of time and work would be sent home.
- Sherry Kai, of Anderson Road, said she came from communist China and everything happening is step by step like China. She said she realizes it is a difficult decision, but the U.S. is what it is because people make difficult decision and buck the system.
- Eugene Cawley, of Redstone Drive, shared research from the University of Minnesota that stated cloth masks are only effective for 5 minutes, so making students wear masks is useless. Mrs. Donahue said a quick google search shows masks are effective. Mr. Cawley said studies can be manipulated. Ms. Bartsch said there are many doctors and scientists who are giving alternative information and asked the board to take the time to educate themselves on opposing views. Mr. Gapsky said that he does his research before every vote. Mrs. Petrovich said she feels strongly with all opposed to masking but in the hopes of keeping schools open and with the hope the variants do not come into the community is the reason she voted for masking. She added that the district has to consider every child. Dr. Aiken said the district is considering relaxing the mask mandate but not while the county is in the high range of transmission.
- Bryan Whitaker, of Dorf Drive, thanked Mrs. Petrovich for her comments and acknowledged that it has been a whirlwind and thanked the board for understanding parents' feelings. He asked the board to consider allowing masks to be removed in certain situations.
- Lindsey Leskowak, of E. Beckert Ave, is a representative of the Reserve Parent Organization. She said there have been so many comments in the public about closing Reserve that the parents of Reserve wanted to speak in favor because the comments are concerning. She said there were 176 students at Reserve last year and every student is known by name. There is a shorter transportation time to the school. Additionally, there is a plan of townhomes being built in Reserve that would raise registration numbers in the future.
- Megan Brown, of Alfred Street, thanked Ms. Petrancosta for her research skills but also wanted to express support for Reserve. She encouraged everyone to visit the school and talk to families about what the school means to the community. Mr. Gapsky said that there have been no discussions at the school board level in the last four years about closing Reserve. The only conversation has been during the public comment period of school board meetings.
- Crystal Lehmeier, of Hillwood Road, said she is a supporter of Reserve. She said she wants the board to know that the school is more than a financial item, it's about community engagement. Reserve and parts of Millvale are very segregated and that would be amplified by removing Reserve Primary School.

When no one else approached to speak, the meeting's Final Adjournment occurred at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Baker  
Assistant Board Secretary