

October 5, 2021

**HANOVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

October 5, 2021

Hanover Area Junior/Senior High School
Hanover Township, Pennsylvania
October 5, 2021

NOTE: The Board of Education held this Regular School Board Meeting in person. Due to the ongoing pandemic and for the health and safety of individuals, the meeting was streamed live using the virtual platform Zoom, so that the public had the option to attend in person or participate virtually.

A Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Hanover Area School District was held on Tuesday, September 7, at 6:14 PM. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, John J Mahle.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG

ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:

PRESENT: John J. Mahle, Jr., President; Stacy Bleich, Vice President; Joyce Potsko, Treasurer; Rick Stevens, Secretary; Frank Ciavarella Jr., Paul Holmgren, Dr. Vic Kopko, Michael Mazur and Matthew Redick.

ABSENT: None

Rick Stevens, Secretary, stated a Quorum was established for the meeting.

OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT: Mr. Nathan Barrett, Superintendent; Attorney William Finnegan, School Solicitor; Mrs. Lisa Kitchen, Administrative Assistant; and a number of citizens, both in person and via the Zoom Platform.

John J. Mahle, Jr; Board President, provided the following Executive Session Report: "Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act, the Board President wishes to announce that at its Regular Meeting on Tuesday September 7, 2021, the board of education of the Hanover Area School District held an Executive Session to discuss matters of employee relations, labor negotiations, threats of or actual litigation and went into a closed executive session at 5:00PM and began the public meeting at 6:14PM. The subjects discussed in executive session related solely to matters of employee relations, labor negotiations and threats of or actual litigation. Is there any public input on the Agenda Items Only?"

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APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES/REPORTS:

It was moved by Mr. Redick and seconded by Mrs. Potsko: To approve the following minutes and accept the following reports:

- Regular Board Meeting minutes of September 7, 2021.
- Luzerne Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Regular Meeting minutes of August 11, 2021.
- Wilkes-Barre Area Career & Technical Center board of Education-Joint Operating Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2021

BOARD VOTE: YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Mazur, Potsko, Stevens and Redick

No: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Chair declared the motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Mr. Nathan Barrett, Superintendent, offered the following report: "Yes, President Mahle, I thank you. This week the Hanover Area School District is recognizing Homecoming Week. The elementary schools, on a daily basis, have themed days, as well as at the high school. But, this Thursday, we are having an event filled day where students are going to recognize the senior soccer players, girls soccer team. That moves to the community pep rally and then something the administration has dubbed as a "Senior Swaree" which is out in the courtyard area which is set up very nice. It is decorated, the staff put lights up there, and it is going to be a catered event to recognize the Seniors and the Class of 2022 for their social gathering this Thursday night. And, of course this Friday is a parade ending with the Homecoming Game at Memorial Stadium at 7 o'clock. So, I'd like to recognize those kids and wish them the best of luck this week and enjoy themselves. I also want to recognize Riley Corbett, September Student of the Month, at the high school. We had advertised her last week on our social media for those folks who want to check out her accolades, she is quite the athlete and academic student and I am proud to announce her as our September Student of the Month. Two other recognitions I want to give this evening are Board Member recognitions. The volunteers up on this stage this evening come and donate their time on a weekly basis, they hear from me the operations, the safe travels, and the safe education of students, make policy and all the aspects that come along all on a voluntary basis. So, Miss Bleich, who sits just to the right of me, has dedicated 8 years to this community, and the students of this community and the teachers to make sure everybody is being educated in a safe and responsible manner. So I would like to recognize her with a certificate of appreciation for her

8 years, PSBA recognizes her. (Applause) In addition, the other certificate of appreciation, Mr. Ciavarella could not make it this evening, but he is being recognized for 12 years of service to this community and the children and the teachers and staff members of this district, so I'd like to recognize Mr. Ciavarella who is present with us this evening on the phone. I'd just like to thank you and recognize you this evening, Mr. Ciavarella, for 12 years worth of service. I have a certificate for you. (Applause) And, the final thing in my Board Report this evening, is my daughter wanted me to wish the Yankees the best of luck in their first play off game this evening. (Laughter) Ok, so I wish the Yankees the best of luck this evening."

It was motioned by Mr. Stevens, seconded by Mr. Masur: To accept the Report of the Superintendent.

BOARD VOTE: YES: Bleich, Chivarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Potkso, Stevens and Redick.

NO: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Chair declared the motion carried.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GENERAL:

It was moved by Mr. Masur, seconded by Dr. Kopko: To approve the following motions #1 through #4:

1. Approve the second and final reading of the following new/updated Board Policies as per Exhibit G-1:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 006 | Meetings |
| 006-BOG-0 | Publish, Post, and Notify-Board Meetings/Agendas |
| 146.1 | Trauma-Informed Approach |
| 218.1 | Weapons |
| 218.2 | Terroristic Threats |
| 236.1 | Threat Assessment |
| 246 | School Wellness |
| 247 | Hazing |
| 249 | Bullying/Cyberbullying |
| 252 | Dating Violence |
| 805 | Emergency Preparedness and Response |
| 805.2 | School Security Personnel |

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2. Approve the first reading of the following new /updated Board Policies as per Exhibit G-2:

- #800.1 Electronic Signatures
- #816 District Social Media
- #903 Public Participation in Board Meetings
- #916 Volunteers

3. Approve the following Administrative Regulation/Procedure(s):

- #800-AR-1 Records Retention Schedule
- SAFE2SAY Something Procedures

4. Approve the change order request from Luzerne County asking for the Homestead/Farmstead applications to be translated into Spanish to accommodate the Spanish-speaking property owners that receive an application.

Exhibit G-4

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTION #1 through #4 ABOVE): YES: Bleich, Chivarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Potsko, Redick, and Stevens.

NO: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

Chair declared the motions carried.

FINANCIAL:

It was moved by Ms. Potsko, seconded by Mrs. Bleich: To approve the following motions 1 through 4:

1. Ratify the following PNC check register(s): (Exhibit F-1)
August 25, 2021 to September 23, 2021
2. Approve the PNC check registers of: (Exhibit F-2)
September 24, 2021
3. Elliott, Greeleaf & Dean \$3,099.24
August 2021
Invoice #159900
4. Ratify the agreement between the Hanover Area School District and Reliable Incorporated, for transportation services, for the period August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022, as per Exhibit F-4.

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BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 TO AND INCLUDING #8 ABOVE):

YES: Bleich, Chivarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Potsko, Stevens and Redick.

NO: Kopko #2

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: Masur #1 and #2

Chair declared the motions carried.

PERSONNEL:

It was moved by Mr. Masur, seconded by Ms. Dr. Kopko: To approve the following motions 1 through 22:

1. Approve the September 2021 Salary Adjustments as per the HAEA Union Contract. (Exhibit P-1)
2. Approve the September 2021 Tuition Reimbursements as per the HAEA Union Contract. (Exhibit P-2)
3. Ratify the following substitute teachers for the 2021-2022 school year at a rate of \$100/day:
Richard Gray
Catherine Luksh
Kathy Marino
4. Ratify the following as Pre-K Counts Teacher Assistants at a rate of \$90/day:
Carrisa Snyder
Cassandra Williams
5. Ratify the Family & Medical Leave (FMLA) for employee #30624, effective August 30, 2021.
6. Ratify the Family & Medical Leave (FMLA) for employee #30924, effective October 1, 2021.
7. Accept the resignation of Jeffrey DeRocco, Elementary Teacher, effective October 5, 2021 as per exhibit P-7.
8. Appoint Catherine Nicole Hoskins as Head Varsity Softball Coach for the 2021-2022 school year at a salary of \$3,348.00.
9. Appoint Donovan Ray Breeding as Unpaid Athletic Intern for the 2021-2022 school year.

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(TABLED) 10. Approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Hanover Area School District and the Hanover Area Education Association on Distance Learning/Cyber-education. (Exhibit P-10)

(TABLED) 11. Approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Hanover Area School district and the Hanover Area Education Association pertaining to Employee #31784. (Exhibit P-11)

12. Appoint Charles Middaugh as a Crossing Guard for the 2021-2022 school year.

13. Appoint Nicole Rinehimer as Substitute Assistant School Nurse at \$26.00/hour.

14. Accept the resignation of Daniel Malloy, District Secondary Principal, as per exhibit P-14.

15. Approve the request of Maureen Lisman, Elementary Teacher, to take October 14 and October 15, 2021 off as UNPAID days, with the understanding that this will not set a precedent or establish a past practice. (Exhibit P-15)

16. Appoint Jocelyn Holodick-Reed a Senior Honor Society Advisor at a salary of \$1,077.00, for the 2021-2022 school year.

17. Appoint Mary Kennedy as Social Worker, on an as needed basis, at a rate of \$30.00/hour, no benefits. This is a grant funded 1-year position.

18. Appoint Amanda Turner as school nurse at a salary to be negotiated, under an emergency certificate to be revisited on an annual basis.

19. Appoint Alison Gray as Elementary Teacher at a salary of M, Step 1, \$62,228.

20. Appoint Haley Gayoski as Pre-K Counts Teacher at a salary of B, Step 1, \$49,328.

21. Appoint Mallory Hudak as Title I Mathematics Teacher at a salary of M+60, Step 12, \$80,628.

(Tabled) 22. Motion to appoint a Title I Reading Teacher.

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BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 - #22 Above with items 10, 11 and 22 TABLED):

YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle Masur, Potsko, Stevens and Redick

NO: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

FUTURE MEETINGS:

November Work Session: Tuesday, November 9, 2021

November Regular Meeting: Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Public Comments:

Mr. Mahle, Board President, asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to address the Board.

Sarah Miscavage addressed the Board of Education in person.

- Questioned use of 11million in COVID money awarded to the district and why money wasn't used to purchase an air filtration system for district buidings.
- Superintendent Barrett clarified that we are in contact with 3 companies to complete a bipolar ionization—which is an electrostatic system that goes into our air filtration system that kills any virus, bacteria, or contaminant in the air. The \$11 million will be disbursed in stages once each part of the project is approved and the money is received. It is a process and we are in the very early stages. He offered to show Ms. Miscavage the current plan to change filters in our current system, which are available for review in Central Administration.
- Miscavage questioned where are we with the filtration systems and names of the companies involved, demanding to know the names of the companies.

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- Mr. Barrett offered for Miscavage to stop by his office for the information. Miscavage refused. Barrett offered to email the information to her. Miscavage stated the Mr. Barrett did not know the names of these companies, which he denied.
- Attorney Finnegan responded that Mr. Barrett indicated that he does know the names of the companies involved, but that information is not open for discussion in the public meeting because the work is out for bid.
- Miscavage asked about the "shield precaution" and asked if Barrett had considered revising current district policy.
- Barrett replied "absolutely not", citing the fact that the Hanover Area School District is reporting the lowest COVID transmission numbers in the valley right now indicating that what we are doing regarding precautions is successful.
- Miscavage cited that CDC guidelines recommend against using barriers, citing a statement from the CDC website dated March 19, 2021.
- Barrett responded that with the lack of space and the ability for students and teachers to maintain the 3 foot distance at all times within the confines of our buildings, the barrier provides an added layer of protection.
- Miscavage cited sources from the New York Times stating Johns Hopkins restricting air flow in small spaces via barriers was problematic.
- Mr. Barrett again responded that without having the ability to put a minimum of 3 feet of distance among all individuals, having the added layer of protection afforded by the shield would remain the district's policy.
- Mrs. Miscavage stated that her daughter, Elizabeth Miscavage would not be carrying the shield because the CDC advises it and she is the one who will decide what is best for her daughter. She claimed Mr. Barrett is lying to her.
- Dr. Kopko interrupted and stated that Mr. Barrett did not lie to Mrs. Miscavage, but provided an explanation.
- Miscavage asked if all schools can have a police officer like Hanover Green does, citing that Lee Park almost had a hit and run last week in the front of the building.
- Mr. Barrett said that he could put out a request but had no authority over when or how they disburse police officers.

Mrs. Kitchen stated there were a few questions coming in from the Zoom Call.

Megan McCabe identified herself and questioned why Item 11 was tabled again on the agenda. She stated that she knew the Board could not discuss specific items relating to employees, but revealed that she was the employee in question and gave her permission to discuss in the open meeting. McCabe stated that the MOU was written following a meeting with Mr. Barrett in August and the item, which involves paying her for her time doing COVID contact tracing in the 2020 and 2021 school years has been tabled at every meeting since August.

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Attorney Finnegan stated that the item is a personnel issue that was in discussion in the Executive Session and it was tabled there. He noted that it is the board's decision to make regarding items that are discussed publicly, not hers.

Carl Daubert, Social Studies Teacher, addressed the board to publicly thank Mr. Dan Malloy for his service to the district and to wish him the best in his new position and future endeavors.

Mike Potsko addressed the board asking why the board didn't think the parents were capable to make their own decisions about their own kids in regards to keeping them safe and healthy. He cited smoking tobacco as a more deadly threat to our children's health and well being than COVID and we were not addressing that.

Mr. Barrett responded that he was assuming he was referring to the mask mandates. Again, he stated that we follow the guidelines provided by the CDC and the State Department of Health. Due to the loss of in person instructional time over the last 16 months, Hanover Area is going to do whatever we can to keep students in desks, in person, in school. The mask mandate is one of those requirements put in place to keep everyone safe.

Mr. Potsko questioned why isn't smoking taken as seriously as the COVID virus. The school districts pays health insurance for school teachers who can smoke on their own personal time, and they come to school and have to wear a mask. He cited that at Beaver Stadium, fans are packed shoulder-to-shoulder but don't have to wear a mask, but in our schools, we do. He then brought up measles, polio, and chicken pox vaccines and that state laws allow for exemptions of those vaccines. So, why are we not exempting kids from these mandates?

Mr. Barrett responded that the COVID virus is a live virus and not one that has yet been eradicated through vaccination. He also indicated that we are a tobacco free public building and that he has no authority to tell teachers not to use tobacco on their own personal time. The Board thanked Mr. Potsko for his input.

Miscavage returned for one more question. You said your policy is to use the shields for less than 3 feet distance, but the board is sitting one next to another with no shields between them. Why?

Mr. Mahle and Dr. Kopko replied that they are vaccinated and wearing masks. Mrs. Miscavage pointed out that they have the ability to choose that and the children/parents do not have that same choice. "I want that same choice for my daughter."

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Dr. Kopko stated that Superintendent Barrett and the Board of Education had to make policy decisions on behalf of all of the students and staff members in the district, not just one child, and that is what we are all attempting to do here.

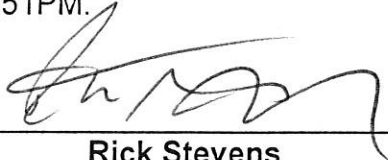
Miscavage again stated that she was respectfully asking that the shield mandate be lifted, as she didn't think it was necessary or fair.

The Board of Education and Mr. Barrett responded that the current policies will remain in place now and for the foreseeable future.

President Mahle then called for Adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Mr. Redick, seconded by Mr. Stevens: To adjourn the Regular School Board Meeting at 6:51PM.

ATTEST:  _____, Secretary

Rick Stevens
Hanover Area School Board

