

**November 14, 2023**

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

**MINUTES**

November 14, 2023

Hanover Area Junior/Senior High School  
Hanover Township, Pennsylvania  
November 14, 2023

A Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Hanover Area School District was held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 7:00PM. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Dr. Vic Kopko.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG**

**ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:**

**PRESENT:** Dr. Vic Kopko, President; Joyce Potsko, Treasurer; Rick Stevens, Secretary; Paul Holmgren; Stephen Mahle, Michael Masur, Rick Oravic; and Matthew Redick.

**ABSENT:** Stacy Bleich

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

**OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT:** Mr. Nathan Barrett, Superintendent; Mrs. Lynn Vitale, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent; Attorney Mark Bufalino, District Solicitor; several District Administrators, and several citizens.

Dr. Kopko provided the following statement regarding the Sunshine Act:  
"Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act, the Board President wishes to announce that at its Regular Meeting convened for general purposes convened on November 14, 2023, the board of education of the Hanover Area School District held an Executive Session to discuss matters of employee relations, labor negotiations, threatened or actual litigation and went into a closed executive session at 5:30PM and began the public meeting at 7:00PM. The subjects discussed in executive session related solely to matters of employee relations, labor negotiations and threatened or actual litigation."

Dr. Kopko, Board President, invited anyone from the press or public to address the board on Agenda Items Only.

Mary Ann Potsko, Hanover Township, addressed the Board regarding:

- Project AWARE Funds, asking if every student would be evaluated under the grant.
- Mr. Barrett, Superintendent replied that the district was still in the initial stages of development for this, noting that we would be a pilot program in conjunction with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and

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Montgomery County IU, Intermediate Unit 18. The program would help students experiencing any issues from an emotional standpoint the program would find and seek out help on their behalf. Final details have not been worked out yet.

- Potosko again questioned if every student would be evaluated, and Barrett replied "no". She then asked how students would be referred to the program to which Barrett replied that those details "still need to be determined" noting that there was such a high need, organizers were still working out how students would be selected and eligible for this program.
- Potosko asked for clarity on the need for "mentally challenged students". Barrett responded that any type of need when it comes to emotional care (referred to as "students in crisis") would help to alleviate these situations when students are in a state of crisis and require a specialized level of care, there is nothing locally for them.
- Potosko then asked who determines if a student is in a mental health crisis to which Barrett replied, "our mental health professionals". She continued: "But how do they know the students to assist"? Barrett replied "through a mental health evaluation from mental health professionals in conjunction with a partnership with our school district".
- Mr. Barrett offered to sit down privately with Mrs. Potosko to explain further, to which she stated she would be appreciative, as the emphasis on mental health care is concerning to her. She noted she "does not see an emphasis on Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, the basics"; and noted "with all of the trauma specialists, psychologists and social workers we have hired, it is like we are a mental health hospital" rather than a school.

Mike Potosko, Hanover Township, addressed the following concerns:

- Would this new program feed into the Education Modified Database. Barrett replied that when those students returned to the school setting, their "Handle with Care" Plans would be housed in that database to show that we are doing what we need to do to ensure that we have a safe environment for all students to learn.
- Potosko highlighted his presumption that the information would be shared with the State of PA, Department of Education. Mr. Barrett clarified the Education Modified is a company recommended by the PA Department of Education, and that we are a pilot school for them. Education Modified is not linked with the PA Department of Ed, and the information housed there is not shared with them.
- Asked if there were any plans to bring any mental health facilities on campus here with Children's Hospital. Barrett replied in the

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negative, highlighting that we were only seeking resources from them to assist children in need.

- Asked what we have learned from the spending of 2million dollars in ESSER funds through the hiring of various mental health professionals in the district that we decided this was the best path to take. Barrett replied that the Social Workers and Trauma Therapists we hired in the district are used for the management of care so it is persistent and consistent care for the students that are housed in this building and is an immediate service we can provide from them being embedded in the schools. Project AWARE is for students who have elevated beyond the levels and capabilities of our current staff. Our goal is to get these students cared for so we can get them back into the buildings and educate them. Right now, there is nowhere to send them. This partnership provides us with a network to help with emergency crisis students to get them the help they need immediately so we can come back and manage them.
- Potsko asked why parents couldn't seek out additional help. Barret replied that they were, but there was nowhere to go. Barrett noted that any research of the area would note that there is nowhere to go for crisis care. They are filled to capacity. If students go without this help, it is beyond our capability to help them.

### **APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES/REPORTS:**

It was moved by Mike Masur and seconded by Paul Holmgren: To approve the following minutes and accept the following reports:

- Regular Board Meeting Minutes of October 3, 2023
- Luzerne Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes of September 27, 2023
- Wilkes-Barre Area Career & Technical Center Board of Education-Joint Operating Committee Meeting Minutes of September 18, 2023

### **BOARD VOTE:**

YES: Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Potsko, Oravic, Stevens, and Redick  
NO: NONE  
ABSTAIN: NONE  
ABSENT: Bleich

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**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Mr. Nathan Barrett, Superintendent, offered his report which noted the following:

- Recognition of our October Student of the Month at the Hanover Area Junior/Senior High School: Kaurisvel Hichez-Columna
- Recognition of the WBA-CTC Student of the Month: Kristina Ramos
- Recognized the Jr/Sr High School for "achieving growth in 13 out of 17 categories showing major upticks in every major content area. 100% of our students in Science/Biology met the academic standard from a state aspect. Eighty percent who took the English/Language Arts portion met the annual growth that was required by the state. I'm congratulating Mr. Sipper, Mrs. Rupert's out there, Mrs. Mantione was in the position at that point. They have done an amazing job. This trend has continued to grow as we matriculate down through the grade levels. Mrs. Langdon is here. Both her 6<sup>th</sup> grade building and her 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade building have showed tremendous growth. I congratulate every academic leader, every teacher and most importantly every student in this district that has done an amazing job. I am very proud of them. I am proud to be their academic leader".
- Recognized Joyce Potsko for 8 years of service on the Board of Education.
- Recognized Mr. Stephen Mahle for completing his father's term, following the tremendous loss of his father.
- Wished everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**GENERAL:**

1. Approve the second reading of the following School Board Policies:  
(Exhibit G-1)  
Policy #204 Attendance  
Policy #233 Suspension and Expulsion
2. Approve the Administrative Regulations 204-AR-0 (Exhibit G-2)
3. Approve the Business Associate Agreement between Hanover Area School District and Medical Decision Logic, Inc. for services and bhworks platform and is part of the bhworks Agreement 2023 MCIU Project AWARE until 12/30/2026.  
(Exhibit G-3)

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**BOARD VOTE (on Motions #1 through #3 Above):**

YES: Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Potsko, Oravic, Stevens, and Redick  
NO: NONE  
ABSTAIN: NONE  
ABSENT: Bleich

**Chair declared the motions carried.**

**FINANCIAL:**

It was moved by Rick Oravic and seconded by Mike Masur: To approve the following Motions 1 through 3 and #5 and #6; **Item #4 is Tabled:**

1. Ratify the following PNC check register(s): (Exhibit F-1)  
September 27, 2023 to November 7, 2023

2. Approve the PNC check register(s): (Exhibit F-2)  
November 8, 2023

3. Law Office of Mark Bufalino  
Attorney Mark Bufalino  
September 2023 \$1,794.00  
October 2023 \$1,657.50

**4. (Tabled) Award ---- , to enter into an agreement with Hanover Area School District, who was awarded the Hanover Green Parking Lot Construction Project. Award is pending review of all required documents by the Solicitor.**

5. Accept the certification form the PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs of Disabled Veterans Real Property Tax Exemption for:

Douglas D. Jockel

\*Note: The Board thanks Mr. Jockel for his service and sacrifice for our country.

6. Accept the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) 2023-2024 agreement between the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and Hanover Area School District (School Food Authority). This agreement is effective July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, and may be renewed at the discretion of PDE. PDE has awarded the following:

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Lyndwood Elementary School	\$12,168.00
Hanover Green Elementary School	\$22,032.00
Lee Park Elementary School	\$21,816.00
Memorial Elementary School	\$24,120.00

**BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 through 3; #5 and #6 ABOVE):**

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

NO: Kopko on #2

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: Bleich

**Chair declared the motions carried.**

**PERSONNEL:**

It was moved by Paul Holmgren, seconded by Joyce Potsko, to approve Items 1 through 11.

1. Accept the resignation of Kenneth Edwards, School Police Officer, effective October 20, 2023. (Exhibit P-1)
2. Approve the request of Amy Shingler to transfer 25 sick days from Lakeland School District to Hanover Area School District as per the Pennsylvania School Code. (Exhibit P-2)
3. Ratify the request of Employee #32343 to take an UNPAID leave beginning November 7, 2023, through November 30, 2023, with the understanding that this will not set a precedent or establish past practice. (Exhibit P-3)
4. Appoint the following Extra-Curricular personnel for the 2023-2024 school year:

Daniel Erickson	Boys Wrestling Asst. Varsity Coach	\$3,725.00
Chris Caines	Boys Wrestling Jr. High Head Coach	\$3,361.00
Justin Thomas	Boys Wrestling Asst Jr. High Coach	\$3,361.00
Kim Drozda	Girls Wrestling Asst. Varsity Coach	\$3,725.00
Dave Rother	Girls Wrestling Jr. High Head Coach	\$3,361.00
Shawn Wright	Wrestling Volunteer Coach	UNPAID
Nicholas Hannon	Wrestling Volunteer Coach	UNPAID
Amanda Augustin	Girls Basketball Volunteer	UNPAID

5. Appoint Kimberly Pearson as a Crossing Guard at a rate of \$50/Day, pending all clearances.

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6. Ratify the appointment of Deanna Piekanski as a part-time School Police Officer for the 2023-2024 school year, as per 1099 contract, effective November 6, 2023.

7. Appoint the following part time School Police Officers for the 2023-2024 school year, as per 1099 contract, pending all clearances:

Floyd Bowen  
Scott Kaminski  
Mark Sadowski

8. Approve the salary increase for Judith McGavin, Confidential Secretary, in the amount of \$10,349.79, at a salary of \$41,263.60, effective November 15, 2023.

9. Approve the salary increase for Wendy Smith, Confidential Secretary, in the amount of \$8,514.79, at a salary of \$41,263.60, effective November 15, 2023.

10. Approve the salary increase for Melissa Grenewicz, Confidential Secretary, in the amount of \$10,349.79, at a salary of \$41,263.60, effective November 15, 2023.

11. Approve the salary increase for Lynn Vitale, Confidential Secretary-Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, in the amount of \$2,500.00, at a salary of \$43,763.60, effective November 15, 2023.

**BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 through # 11 Above)**

YES: Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Oravic, Potsko, Stevens, and Redick

NO: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: Bleich

**Chair declared the motions carried.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None



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**FUTURE MEETINGS:**

December Work Session	Tuesday, December 5, 2023
December Regular Meeting	Tuesday, December 5, 2023
December Re-organization Meeting	Tuesday, December 5, 2023

President Kopko then called for Adjournment.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Paul Holmgren and seconded by Rick Stevens.

**BOARD VOTE: (ON Motion to Adjourn)**

YES: Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Oravic, Potsko, Stevens, and Redick

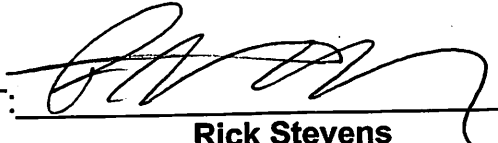
NO: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: Bleich

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19PM.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Rick Stevens  
Hanover Area School Board

, Secretary