

May 7, 2024

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

MINUTES

May 7, 2024

Hanover Area Junior/Senior High School
Hanover Township, Pennsylvania
May 7, 2024

A Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Hanover Area School District was held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 7:00 PM. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Brian C. McDermott.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG

ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:

PRESENT: Stacy Bleich, Paul Holmgren, Jacob Hyder, Dr. Vic Kopko, Michael Mazur, Brian C. McDermott, Richard Oravic, Matthew Redick, and Rick Stevens

ABSENT: NONE

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

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

Mr. McDermott, Board Chairman, asked for public input on the Board Agenda Items.

Brian McDermott, 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 convened for general purposes on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, 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 5:10PM 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."

Chairman McDermott solicited public input on Board Agenda Items.

No one from Press or Public addressed the board on Agenda Items.

APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES/REPORTS:

It was moved by Rick Oravic and seconded by Stacy Bleich to approve the following minutes:

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- Regular Board Meeting minutes of April 9, 2024
- Luzerne Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Regular Meeting minutes of March 27, 2024

BOARD VOTE:

YES: YES: Bleich, Holmgren, Hyder, Kopko, Oravic, Mazur, McDermott, Redick and Stevens

NO: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

Chair declared the motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

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

Recognized the following Students of the Month:

- Audrianna Mangan, April Student of the Month- Hanover Area Jr/Sr High School
- Gavin Whitesell, April Student of the Month- Wilkes-Barre Area CTC

Congratulated the following 4th Grade students who went above and beyond for their community in the Borough of Ashley on Earth Day (April 22nd). These students took it upon themselves to do some "clean-up work" in their own neighborhoods:

- Nazyiah Brice
- Fenix Gomez Duarte
- Abelis Candelier
- Alexa Wilson

With this being the last public Board of Education meeting prior to Graduation, Superintendent Barrett congratulated the Hanover Area Class of 2024, noting that the Commencement List was on the agenda for approval this evening.

It was moved by Jacob Hyder and seconded by Rick Stevens: To accept the Report of the Superintendent.

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BOARD VOTE:

YES: Bleich, Holmgren, Hyder, Kopko, Oravic, Mazur, McDermott, Redick and Stevens

NO: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

Chair declared the motion carried.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GENERAL:

It was moved Rick Oravic by and seconded by Paul Holmgren: To approve the following motions #1 through #3:

1. Approve the Second Reading of the following School Board Policies:

(Exhibit G-1)

Policy #819 Vol IV 2023

Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response

Policy #137.3 Vol I 2023

Participation in Career and Technical Education

Programs by Home Education Students

2. Authorize "Hawkeye Day" on May 24, 2024.

(Exhibit G-2)

3. Approve the Special Education Plan for years 2024-2027.

(Exhibit G-3)

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 TO AND INCLUDING #3 ABOVE):

YES: Bleich, Holmgren, Hyder, Kopko, Masur, McDermott, Oravic, Redick and Stevens

NO: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

Chair declared the motions carried.

FINANCIAL:

Dr. Vic Kopko, Chairman of Finance Committee, gave a brief report on Financial Item

#5. Dr. Kopko noted the following:

- Much work has gone into the final budget in these challenging times.
- HASD's current budget is balanced with no tax increase.
- Past several years focused on debt repayment
- HASD is growing by "leaps and bounds", and that issue will have to be addressed in the very near future.

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- As the district grows, so does the special needs of our student population. Thanks to Special Education Director, Shannon Bennett, for confirming these numbers prior to our meeting.
 - The High School is at an “economically disadvantaged” rate of 68% of the student population.
 - Memorial School is at 71%
 - This means that there are financial stressors that go along with that. These students, who are being educated in our system, most of them have special needs and that is a very expensive proposition.
 - We were able to handle that and absorb that. We have a focus on academics in this budget and I am proud to say that.

- A lot of work went into this. I want to thank Nathan Barrett and Joe Caputo for their work on this and hopefully we will have approval this evening.

Chairman Brian C McDermott thanked Dr. Kopko for the report and members of the Board of Education for their work on that as well.

It was moved by Stacy Bleich and seconded by Rick Stevens: To approve the following motions #1 through #10:

1. Ratify the following FNCB check register(s): (Exhibit F-1)
April 4, 2024 to April 30, 2024

2. Approve the FNCB check register(s): (Exhibit F-2)
May 1, 2024

3. Law Office of Mark W. Bufalino
Attorney Mark Bufalino
May 2024 (April Services) \$7,293.00

4. Joyce, Carmody & Moran, PC
Attorney Joseph Joyce \$2,272.50

5. Approve the Hanover Area School District 2024-2025 Proposed Final General Fund Budget Projected Revenues amount to \$42,872,534 and Projected Expenditures amount to \$42,872,534.

The stated millage rate is 18.7743. A copy of the Proposed Final General Fund Budget will be on display for inspection of the general public in the District Administrative Office and on the Hanover Area School District website, beginning May 8, 2024.

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6. Motion to consider offering the Memorandum of Understanding/Voluntary Employment Separation Plan (VESP) between the Hanover Area School District and the Act 93 Administrators. Contingent upon final review of language and approval of district solicitor.

7. Motion to consider offering the Memorandum of Understanding/Voluntary Employment Separation Plan (VESP) between the Hanover Area School District and the Hanover Area Education Association. Contingent upon final review of language and approval of district solicitor.

8. Motion to consider offering the Memorandum of Understanding/Voluntary Employment Separation Plan (VESP) between the Hanover Area School District and the Hanover Area Education Support Professionals Association. Contingent upon final review of language and approval of district solicitor.

9. Motion to renew CSIU services for software services provided from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

(Exhibit F-9)

10. Accept the verification from PA Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs of Disabled Veterans Real Property Tax Exemption for:

Francis M. Pilch March 25, 2024

Note: The Board thanks Mr. Francis M. Pilch, Jr. for his service and sacrifice to our country.

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 TO AND INCLUDING #10 ABOVE):

YES: Bleich, Holmgren, Hyder, Kopko, Masur, McDermott, Oravic, Redick and Stevens

NO: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

Chair declared the motions carried.

PERSONNEL:

Chairman Brian C McDermott noted a small change in the Agenda to Personnel Item #8 to approve Hunter Pearson as Technology Support Technician at a salary of \$48,000 with benefits to add "effective May, 2024".

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It was moved by Jacob Hyder, seconded by Paul Holmgren: To approve Items #1 through #10.

1. Accept the resignation of Brooke Adair, 6th Grade Social Studies Teacher, as of April 12, 2024. (Exhibit P-1)
2. Accept the resignation of Olivia Hart, 6th Grade Learning Support Teacher, as of the end of the 2023-2024 School Year. (Exhibit P-2)
3. Approve the termination of Employee #32347, effective May 8, 2024.
4. Ratify the continuous FMLA request for Employee #30965, beginning April 19, 2024, and will end approximately May 31, 2024. Employee is requesting to use accumulated sick/vacation days.
5. Motion to approve the expulsion adjudication regarding student I.R.
6. Ratify the Memorandum of Understanding between Hanover Area School District and Hanover Area Education Association and Employee #32363.
7. Approve the tentative 2024 Graduation List. The final list of graduates will be conferred on June 4, 2024. (Exhibit P-7)
8. Approve Hunter Pearson, as Technology Support Technician, at a salary of \$48,000.00 with benefits, effective May, 2024.
9. Appoint Joseph Pericci, as a part time School Police Officer for the 2023-2024 school year, as per 1099 contract.
10. Appoint Courtney Cragle, as a Home Instruction Instructor, as needed, at a rate of \$35.00 per hour.

BOARD VOTE (on Motion #1 through #10):

YES: Bleich, Holmgren, Hyder, Kopko, Oravic, Mazur, McDermott, Redick and Stevens
NO: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

Chair declared the motions carried.

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Following the vote, Chairman Brian C McDermott noted: "I mentioned in our work session that both Mr. Pearson and Mr. Pericci are both Hanover Graduates and we always like to take care of our own when we can, and I welcome you both to the school district full time."

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Michael Potsko, Hanover Township, addressed the following points with the Board of Education:

- Congratulated the students that participated in the AMVETS Americanism Contest
- Highlighted good participation in certain grades.
- Noted this (lack of participation) "piggy-backs" off the huge focus on mental health all these things that don't seem to be a particular issue and a lack of what we should be focusing on like academics and things like this.
- Noted at least 3 students in grades K-4 participated in the Americanism contest and then 5th grade had 1, 7th grade had 0, 8th grade had 1, 9th grade had 0 and 12th grade had 1.
- It doesn't seem we have the focus we need to be having throughout the district on academics and competitions like this to not even get a single participant just seems pretty awful to me.
- I give the students who did participate all the credit in the world as well as the teachers who are promoting this stuff.
- Noted that this shows we are not highlighting and focusing on some of the things we should be. Hopes in the future, we would promote and encourage more of this type of activity that goes above and beyond what is required in the classroom, though he understands that it is not for everybody.

Mary Ann Potsko, Hanover Township, addressed the following points with the Board of Education:

- Noted the bulletin board in the HS which promotes "Planting Seeds of Kindness" and found it interesting that we will be "planting seeds of mental health and planting seeds of suicide and depression" on children that it's never even entered their minds.
- Stated that if a child needs help, "you should get them help, but if one child has a toothache, you don't send the whole school district to a dentist".
- It is absolutely ridiculous that we're going to be focusing on things that children that age should not even be contemplating for the most part.
- As Michael said for the students that are participating in the AMVETS essay contest. It is extremely sad that you see no participants in the 7th and 8th grade, etc.
- Noted she knows kids in the elementary and it's sad that we are not teaching History. We are not teaching these kids cursive writing. They still cannot sign

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their names. If you were to show the children the Declaration of Independence, they couldn't read it.

- It is absolutely appalling that we have lost interest in the educational portion of their education and we are focusing so much on mental health and things that, hopefully, they will never have to contend with, until we plant the seeds we are planting.
- I'm just going to keep bringing it up because it just breaks my heart to see these kids getting into things they shouldn't be into. They're children. For God's Sakes, let them be children and teach them what they need to know to survive once they graduate from high school. Thank you.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

FUTURE MEETINGS:

June Work Session: Tuesday June 4, 2024

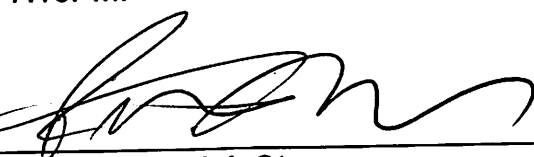
Regular Meeting: Tuesday June 4, 2024

Chairman Brian C McDermott extended congratulations to the Class of 2024, wishing them nothing but the best. Thanked members of the Board for all their committee work, as well as Mr. Barrett and Mr. Caputo, Dr. Kopko, and Mr. Bufalino for their work on the budget.

President McDermott then called for Adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Paul Holmgren, seconded by Rick Oravic, to adjourn the Regular School Board Meeting at 7:16PM.

ATTEST:  _____, Secretary
Rick Stevens
Hanover Area School Board