

**Bloomsburg Area School District
Board of School Directors
Special Meeting
Monday, 6 January 2014
7:00 p.m.
District Office Board Room**

MINUTES

Attendance

A special meeting of the Bloomsburg Area School District Board of Directors was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, 6 January 2014, in the district office board room, followed by the pledge to the flag. Directors in attendance were: Mr. David Cantore, Mr. Brent Hock, Mrs. Tina Howell, Mr. Justin Hummel, Mr. Joshua Klingerman, Mr. Terry Kramarz, Ms. Marianne Kreisher, Mrs. Sandra Rupp, and Mr. Thomas Tobin.

Bloomsburg Area School District administrators in attendance were: Mr. Dan Bonomo (left at 10:03 p.m.), Ms. Donna Christensen (left at 8:00 p.m.), Dr. Cosmas Curry, Mr. Marc Freeman (left at 10:04 p.m.), Mr. Chris Groody (left at 8:00 p.m.), Mr. Ryan Moran (left at 8:00 p.m.), Mr. Trevor Palmatier (left at 8:00 p.m.), Mr. Michael Upton, and Mr. Nick Wozniak (left at 9:22 p.m.).

Others present included: Ms. Mary Beth Broadt, Mr. David Hogue, Ms. Stephanie Kessler, and Mr. Michael McFarland.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS & PERSONS WISHING TO SPEAK

Mr. David Hogue, the president of the girls' soccer booster club, distributed a packet to school directors. He argued that in order for the girls' varsity soccer program to be as successful as it could be, the district needed to initiate a girls' junior high soccer program. As he highlighted information in his report, he said that Angela Brown and Dave Van Horn, the coaches for the high school girls' soccer program, were willing to donate their time to coach a junior high program, and that such a program would have access to equipment and uniforms. Mr. Hogue said the costs that would need to be covered by the district would be bus transportation and referee costs, and that the district would also need to provide the student-athletes with a field on which to play. Mr. Hogue said that if necessary, the booster club could discuss making a contribution to a girls' junior high soccer program.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to come before the board at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Homebound Instruction Request

Mr. Hummel made the motion, which Ms. Kreisher seconded, to approve a request for homebound instruction for a Bloomsburg High School student, retroactive to 19 December 2013 and lasting for a period of at least 20 school days. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Approval of Real Estate Tax Exemption

Mr. Tobin made the motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Rupp, to approve a Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission for Real Estate Tax Exemption for Katharine Friedline. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

PERSONNEL

Approval/Acceptance of Personnel Items

Mr. Hummel made the motion, which Ms. Kreisher seconded, to approve/accept the following personnel items:

- Approve the following advisor change for the 2013-2014 school year:
 - Jean Crane as BMS Expressive Arts Chairperson for 80% of the school year (\$600.00) and Autumn Rosini as BMS Expressive Arts Chairperson for 20% of the school year (\$150.00);
- Approve William Brasil as a professional day-to-day substitute, effective upon receipt of his PA Teaching Certificate;
- Approve Alexandria Gunn as a classified substitute, effective upon receipt of her Act 34, 114, and 151 clearances and her tuberculosis test results;
- Accept the resignation of W.W. Evans Elementary School Paraprofessional Lisa Roberts, with her last day of work being 10 January 2014 and add her to the approved classified substitute list;
- Approve William Rudolph and William Robbins as substitute bus drivers through FishingCreek Transportation for the remainder of the 2013-2014 school year;
- Approve the leave of absence request for Beaver-Main Elementary School Teacher Terrie Bennett, retroactive to 9 December 2013 through 31 January 2014; and
- Approve the transfer of Beaver-Main Elementary School Half-Time Reading Specialist Jane Endress to the position of Beaver-Main Elementary School Long-Term Kindergarten Substitute, at a rate of \$100 per day, retroactive to 9 December 2013 through 31 January 2014.

The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:11 p.m., Ms. Kreisher made the motion to adjourn the special meeting and move into the work session. Mr. Hummel seconded the motion, which then passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Kessler
Board Recording Secretary

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Buildings, Grounds, & Maintenance Report

Mr. Wozniak reported that the middle school pool renovation was complete and that everything seemed to be in good working order. Dr. Curry said that earlier that day, the final payment application, for liquidated damages, had been sent to Yannuzzi, Inc. The total cost for liquidated damages was \$8,249.73, and that this amount would be subtracted from the total bill. Dr. Curry also outlined the high school window replacement project, saying that the drawings should be complete in February, that the district would then go out for bid for completion of the project, that the low bidder would be brought to the school board for approval in March, and that the project should then be completed over the summer.

Administrative Reports

Mr. Moran gave an update on the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System. During Mr. Moran's report, Mr. Hock asked if the district might need to hire a new administrator to help principals with completing teacher evaluations under this new system. Dr. Curry responded that the district may need to look at hiring another administrator, such as an assistant principal or dean of students.

Ms. Christensen said that the administrative team was still looking into the possibility of opening a middle school emotional support classroom at Bloomsburg Middle School, and that she would provide the board with more details as they became available. During conversation about this topic, Mr. Cantore said the district should adopt a code of conduct for students, and Ms. Kreisher agreed with this sentiment. Mr. Hock directed Mr. Cantore to contact Dr. Curry about follow-up to this idea.

The board and administrators then discussed the subject of the middle and high school student schedules. Mr. Cantore said the middle and high school schedules should be exactly the same so that middle school students could take classes at the high school. Mr. Freeman and Mr. Bonomo replied that the schedules were currently the same, with the exception of lunch periods. Mr. Freeman said that there were middle school students taking classes (such as algebra, geometry, and robotics) at the high school, and that this seemed to be working well. Mr. Cantore said he would like more middle school students to be able to take advantage of taking classes, such as Family Consumer Science classes, at the high school, and Mr. Kramarz said the district should consider offering world language classes at 7th and/or 8th grade, instead of just at the high school level. Mr. Freeman concluded the conversation by saying that the district could consider expanding academic opportunities to middle school students.

Mr. Groody then addressed the school board regarding the possibility of changing the elementary schedule from a Monday-through-Friday schedule to a six-day schedule. He said that due to scheduling challenges would occur (due to shared staff in different buildings), department meetings would be more difficult to schedule, and that there would be a decrease of one or two days of each expressive arts class per marking period. The benefits of moving the elementary schools to a six-day cycle would be that all five schools in the district would be on the same cycle and that if school was cancelled three Mondays in a row, students would not miss the same expressive arts class for those three Mondays, as the cycle would be based on day numbers (one through six) instead of days of the week. At the end of this discussion, Mr. Tobin said he

would like the administrative team to come back to the board this spring to make a recommendation regarding whether or not to change the elementary schedule to a six-day cycle to the school board.

Policy Revisions

Dr. Curry highlighted the proposed changes to Policy 210: Student Health Services/Use of Medications and Policy 210.1: Possession/Use of Asthma Inhalers/ Epipens, both of which were scheduled to be brought to the board for first-reading approval at the 20 January 2014 meeting.

Mr. Hock then asked Mr. Cantore to discuss his rationale for wanting to make a revision to Policy 404: Employment of Professional Employees. Mr. Cantore said that he thought the policy should specify who should serve on interview committees (such as members of the department or expressive arts teachers) for professional staff members. Members of the administrative team said that they do try very hard to include appropriate department members on interview committees and that they did not believe this was an issue. Mr. Hummel said that he believed the administrators seem to make a good-faith effort to get interview committees to contain individuals in the specific department for which they are interviewing, and Mr. Hock said he would like to note that the administrative team should continue to try to include appropriate department members on professional staff interview committees. It was the consensus of the board that a policy change was not needed at this point in time.

Dr. Curry distributed samples of Policy 220: Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials and Policy 913: Non-School Organizations/Groups/Individuals for the board to review. He said these two policies would be included for discussion on an upcoming work session agenda. He said he will make appropriate changes, highlight those changes, and send them to the board for review.

Athletics

The first topic discussed under this heading was playing athletics at Bloomsburg University. Dr. Curry summarized the action the board had taken since the flood of September 2011, relative to the decision to continue playing football at Panther Stadium. He said that in the aftermath of the flood, the field was not the top priority, as repairing the school and maintenance shed were. The next year, the board discussed if students should play football at Bloomsburg University's Redman Stadium, and it decided instead to renovate the track, taper the sidelines, and put seed and fertilizer on the field in Spring 2013. The main reason for continuing to have football played at Panther Stadium in Fall 2013 was that the district had just spent money on new locker rooms scoreboards, and brand new bleachers and press box.

Mr. Klingerman then said the football field was not currently in ideal condition and that the district needed either to fix the problem (at Panther Stadium) or play football games at Redman Stadium. Ms. Kreisher said that part of the reason the school board had decided to play football at Panther Stadium instead of going to Redman Stadium was because the board had been guaranteed that Panther Stadium would be in ideal condition for the start of the 2013-2014 school year.

In the discussion that followed, Mr. Hock said he would like to know what the steps were to fix Panther Stadium and who was responsible for making sure it got done. Dr. Curry stated that as superintendent, he would be responsible, and that the district had purchased over \$12,000 in grass seed, fertilizer, and weed control from Fisher & Sons for all athletic fields. Mr. Upton explained that the district had purchased an aerator and sprayer, and that the district already had a slicer and seeder, and that the district was evaluating whether to purchase a water wheel to help maintenance staff. It was also reported that the district had used \$395,000 gallons to water the field, of which the district paid water and sewage. Mr. Upton explained that the district was seeking a variance to remove sewage from that part of the bill, moving forward. Mr. Hock asked why we couldn't use well water to water the field, and Mr. Upton explained that the well was not adequate enough to provide pressure and water volume to properly water the fields, so the district had to rely on town water. Mrs. Howell said she had donated money to the Old Panther Group for seeding

and fertilizing the field, and was disappointed in the condition of the field. Dr. Curry apologized for the condition and said that if he's going to be held responsible, he will update the board on costs associated with field maintenance and make sure the board was a part of the process. He stated that the field would be much better by August 2014, but that by October 2014, it would be in well-used condition, and in the following August, it would be a little better, but that again by October, it would be in similar condition to what it was the previous October. By August of the third year, there should be a much better grass surface. Mr. Klingerman said he thought the district would save money in the long run by playing at Bloomsburg University. Mr. Cantore asked if the athletic fields were insured, and Mr. Upton responded that they were insured through FEMA. Mr. Cantore said he'd like the district to continue to play at Panther Stadium in order to keep its identity, and Mrs. Rupp also said she thought varsity football should continue to play at Panther Stadium. Mr. Kramarz said he would like to know what the district's break-even point was, at which time the district would be losing money on maintaining the field. Mrs. Howell pointed out that even if varsity football games were played at Bloomsburg University, the district's fields would still need to be maintained for other athletic groups. Mr. Hock said he would like an emphasis to be placed on mulching around trees and maintaining (watering) athletic fields, and that the district could then review the condition of the grounds next year.

Dr. Curry distributed to board members a draft of the contract between the district and Bloomsburg University to use its track for track and field meets in Spring 2014, as well as using BU facilities for other sports, should the need arise.

The board then discussed the possibility of reinstating an athletic subcommittee. Mr. Hock said that until about two years ago, there had been an athletic subcommittee of the school board, but that it had been disbanded because the subcommittee would hold its meeting and then rehash that same information at a full school board meeting. Ms. Kreisher said that the board should consider reinstating an athletic subcommittee and move on in the agenda.

The board then discussed the possibility of initiating a girls' junior high soccer program. Dr. Curry said that he had checked into the potential for creating such a program as a club sport, and that he had found out that if created this way, the team would not be able to play other districts' teams. He recommended the board consider adding girls' junior high soccer as an intramural sport for this then evaluate it at the end of the season.

Sex Education

Dr. Curry reported responded to the board in regard to a parent's concerns, voiced at the 16 December 2013 regarding a sex education video shown in an eighth-grade health class. He then shared with board members the memo regarding the HIV/AIDS education opt-out procedure that had been distributed to eighth-grade parents. He said that starting next school year, a similar letter would be included in each school's student handbook, which parents sign off on at the beginning of the school year. It would be a parent's decision to contact the school to request their child "opt out" of HIV/AIDS and life-threatening or other communicable disease education, citing religious beliefs as the reason for opting out.

Directors discussed the video featuring Pam Stenzel that was shown in the eighth-grade health class, which had been criticized by a guest at the prior school board meeting. Mr. Hock said that after viewing the video, he thought it was in line with curriculum standards and that there were no religious connotations in it. Mr. Klingerman said he would like students to view a more recent video (the one they saw was from 2006), and Mr. Kramarz said he had issues with the video, stating it was full of misinformation. It was the consensus of the school board that the district should look for a more current video to show to students. Mr. Hock said that from now on, if a parent has a concern about something being taught in a class, he will direct him/her to go through the proper channels – first to the teacher, then to the principal, then to the superintendent, and then to the school board.

Budget / Act 1 Timeline

Mr. Upton went over the 2014-2015 proposed preliminary budget and also the Act 1 timeline. He said that at this point, he would not be recommending a tax increase. Mr. Hummel asked Mr. Upton to give a 10-year budget projection at the next school board meeting. Dr. Curry stated that if the board approved a proposed preliminary budget without a tax increase and would need one after it was approved, the district would be unable to do so because of Act 1 law.

Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School Report

Mr. Tobin reported that the CMAVTS admission policy was under scrutiny over whether it should be worded that a student must reside in the district versus that a student must attend school in the district. Dr. Curry said that Mr. William Forsythe, the CMAVTS Executive Director, would be at the next board meeting to make a presentation to the board.

Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit Report

Mr. Hummel referred to the CSIU report/highlights that had been distributed to the school board and asked directors to read it at their leisure.

ADJOURNMENT

The work session was adjourned at 10:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Kessler
Recording Secretary