**McKEESPORT AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Regular Board Meeting**

**October 28, 2020**

**Presiding** Joe Lopretto, President

**Date, Time, Place** Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 7:30 PM, Board Room, Administration Building, McKeesport Area School District, 3590 O’Neil Boulevard, McKeesport, PA 15132.

**Opening Exercises**

Mr. Lopretto - It is with a heavy heart that we pause to recognize a tremendous educator that has gone too soon. High School teacher, Matthew Bauman, was our friend, colleague, and a well-liked and respected teacher that had been with our district in various roles, since October 2008. Please take a moment to pause in a moment of silence. We extend our thoughts and well wishes to the Bauman and Humanic families during this time. Thank you.

Mr. Lopretto called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM followed by the Pledge to the Flag. We met in Executive Session prior to tonight’s meeting to discuss personnel and potential litigation items and issues.

Mr. Filotei – Mr. President, just one thing, are we within COVID by taking her plexiglass down?

Is that legal or do we need that up to have this meeting?

Mr. Lopretto – It’s not that we need it up, it’s something that I requested. By CDC safety

guidelines I wanted it there, but she asked both people on both sides of her that are six feet

apart which we are six feet apart. If they are good with her not having it up, then I have no

problem with it at all.

Mrs. Sturgess – For me, Mr. Filotei it’s just a matter of principle. We are asking our teachers, our

students, our staff to come in and cannot make decision behind plexiglass whenever it’s not

feasible for our employees and our kiddos.

Dr. Holtzman – I just want to share that the reason the plexiglass was installed to begin with, we

weren’t sure we were going to be able to provide sufficient enough space to have our meetings

here in the Board Room and we struggled with sound in the auditorium. That was the original

process in place. We can have a discussion at another time about whether or not it is necessary.

Mrs. Sturgess – It’s just a personal decision for me, I respect everybody else’s decision to use it.

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

Mr. Lopretto – It’s a personal decision of mine to have it up and if those people on both sides of

her are good with it, then I’m not going to oppose it.

Mrs. Sturgess – Thank you.

**Present** David Donato

Diane Elias

Thomas Filotei

Ivan Hampton

Steve Kondrosky

Joe Lopretto

James Poston

Mindy Sturgess

Excused. James Brown

**Others Present** Dr. Mark Holtzman, Superintendent

Dr. Tia Wanzo, Assistant Superintendent

Joan Wehner, Business Manager/Board Secretary

Charles Kiss, Treasurer  
Krisha DiMascio, Solicitor

**Board President’s Remarks** – I really don’t have much to say. The COVID is here. We’ve really been doing well within our district. Again, I want to complement the Administration for doing what you do. For us as Board Members, we have a tough time but we don’t have it half as tough as the Administration so again I want to thank you and go Tigers.

**Superintendent’s Report** – I have just a few things I want to share this evening. Number one, I would just like to recognize someone who couldn’t be here this evening for her efforts in making the opportunity that was provided to our school district at the beginning of the school year. The 2,500 laptops and internet service that was donated to our district on the Today Show which was such an exciting event not only for myself, but our students and our staff. Mrs. Jen Halaszynski, who is a McKeesport and a current employee of Comcast, really was the catalyst behind that. She was the one that really made a strong effort to make sure McKeesport wasn’t overlooked and made sure needs were met in our community. We had a plaque here for her this evening and a couple of things to show our gratitude that we’ll be taking to her hopefully tomorrow. So, I just want to recognize Mrs. Jen Halaszynski for her effort and her commitment and the pride

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

that she shows for advocating for McKeesport, our students and our staff. That was outstanding. Also, would like to mention Mr. Matthew Bauman’s passing. Obviously, many of you may remember his father was our High School principal, his uncle was a long-time educator here, Assistant Superintendent most recently. His wife is currently a 7th grade science teacher in our district. As well as Mr. Humanic who was a long-time employee in our Business Office. They are outstanding people, they are a great family and our hearts go out to them at this time. The last thing I wanted to share is just a couple highlights about our Technology Plan. Due to the large donation of devices and the ability to make our district 1:1, is a project and initiative we have been piloting for several years upon my opportunity to become Superintendent. So, we have now developed a pretty lengthy Technology Plan that will allow us to take a step into the future that we’re going to need to when it comes to technology. I just want to share the 4, 5, 6 focus areas of our plan. We’ll be revealing our plan once it’s out of draft form. The areas that we have taken into consideration obviously are staff professional development, personnel considerations and decisions that are going to need to be made, device inventory, where we’re going to house inventory, how we’re going to prepare to have inventory, all those things. Technology purchasing cycle. How we’re going to build this huge project into financial commitment into our budget. Continued distribution, who, what, when. When new students come into the district, how that distribution will work. Technology policies and development which we are currently working through, I think we have a couple policies on tonight’s agenda that will be voted on. Just updates and things that are going to make sense, so wee are working very closely and diligently to make sure we have a direction for our district so that we can prepare our classrooms, our children, our staff, for the future. I just wanted to share those few things. Those are goals that are very important to us. We have continued to manage our COVID-19 challenges. We added a tracker or ticker to our website. That was sent out today to all families and on social media. You can follow unfortunate positive cases in our district through that tracker. We will do our best to direct you to that to determine. We have been very fortunate within the last eight or nine days. We have only had one positive case, so we have weathered the storm and I want to thank everybody’s continued support and efforts to maintain their safety and their mitigation efforts.

Mrs. Sturgess – Dr. Holtzman, can I just ask one question about the tracker. Is that taking the place of the notification that we sent out to families initially?

Dr. Holtzman – It will replace it to a degree where we will be pointing people to the tracker when new things are added to it. The notifications that we sent out via letter have become redundant, It is very similar in all the language minus maybe a brief description which is going to be able to be gathered from the tracker. So, unless there is a need to do things a little differently, we will send out alerts to look at the tracker to determine if there are new cases.

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

Mrs. Sturgess – Can you just explain the rationale just so everybody is clear on when the cases will be added to the tracker.

Dr. Holtzman – So, once they are substantiated by the Allegheny County Health Department, I think that’s the important part. Sometimes we are working on contact tracing and moving in a direction to manage a particular potential positive case. Sometimes it’s rumored to be, sometimes we have core evidence of an issue. We will not add it to the tracker until we know for absolute sure we receive documentation from Allegheny County because I don’t want to start putting things out into the community that are unfounded or untrue and unfortunately that lags behind a few days. So, just be patient with us and we will continue to communicate the best that we can.

Mrs. Sturgess – That doesn’t mean that as a district we are not acting on those things when they’re reported, it is just when it is posted.

Dr. Holtzman – Yes, absolutely. We will be responding to those things when we know them and reaching out to families and children and staff to make sure that everybody’s being handled with care.

Mrs. Sturgess – Thank you.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Mr. Kondrosky moved to acknowledge receipt of the Treasurer’s Report

for the month of September 2020. Seconded by Mr. Poston.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Hearing of Citizens** – none

**Minutes** – Mr. Poston moved to approve the minutes of the Open Agenda Meeting of September 16, 2020 and Regular Meeting of September 23, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Hampton.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

**Bills** – Mr. Kondrosky moved to approve the list of bills. Seconded by Mr. Poston.

Voting aye. Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Voting no. Mr. Donato

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Refunds** – Mrs. Sturgess moved to approve property tax refunds as presented. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Tax Appeal** – Mr. Poston moved to approve the tax appeal for Block & Lot No. 551-P-130 as per the Solicitor’s recommendation. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky. Mrs. Wehner explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Equipment** - Mr. Poston moved to approve the equipment rental for moisture stabilization through Firewater Response 365 in the amount of $28,529.63. Seconded by Mr. Filotei. Dr. Holtzman explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Parcel** – Mr. Kondrosky moved to approve the request to transfer parcel #382-A-289 to the Redevelopment Authority of the City of McKeesport. Seconded by Mr. Poston. Dr. Holtzman explained.

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Security** – Mr. Poston moved to approve Security-as-a-Service from Blue Bastion (a division of Ideal Integrations). Seconded by Mr. Hampton. Dr. Holtzman explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Tax Collector** – Mrs. Sturgess moved to accept the resignation of Charisse Richards, tax collector for Versailles Borough. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky. Mrs. DiMascio explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Resolution** – Mrs. Sturgess moved to approve Resolution #1243 – Allegheny Intermediate Unit Joint Purchasing Program. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Resolution** – Mr. Poston moved to approve Resolution #1244 – student discipline. Seconded by

Mr. Kondrosky.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Policies** – first reading of the following Board policies:

#237 – Pupils – Electronic Devices

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

#815 – Operations – Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources

**Request** – Mr. Poston moved to acknowledge Young Scholars of Greater Allegheny request in regards to their facilities. Seconded by Mrs. Sturgess. Dr. Holtzman explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Voting no. Mr. Lopretto

Excused. Mr. Brown

**FID** – Mrs. Sturgess moved to acknowledge the flexible instructional day on November 2, 2020 to promote virtual learning. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky. Dr. Holtzman explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Brown

**Green Sheets** – Mr. Poston moved to approve the personnel recommendations (green sheets). Seconded by Mr. Hampton

PROFESSIONAL:

Retirement: Effective 12/31/20:

Antoinetta Stolic School Nurse

Resignation: Effective Date to be Determined:

Brennan McMahon Special Education Teacher, East End Academy

LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Victoria Pomilio Health and Physical Education Teacher, High School,

leave of absence effective 12/7/20. Unpaid leave will

commence at expiration of specified sick days. FMLA

TO BE HIRED: Extra-curricular activities at Founders Hall for the 2020/2021 school year:

Brad Braverman Newspaper $1,217.01

Sherry Sillings Photographer $869.29

Gerald McGrew Stage $695.43

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

Jen Hairston Student Council $869.29

Shanna Opfer Yearbook $1,217.01

Edward Moore Director of Musical $1,048.19

Edward Moore Producer of Musical $1,048.19

Robin McCabe Junior Honor Society $1,502.87

TO BE HIREDL Extra-curricular athletics for the 2020/2021 school year:

\*Kevin Kovach Boys Basketball Coach $7,313.98

Tim Brown Boys Assistant Basketball Coach $4,608.81

\*Eric Gumbert Boys JV Basketball Coach $3,005.74

\*Dana Brown, Sr. Boys 9th Grade Basketball Coach $2,607.87

\*Vernon Andrews Boys 8th Grade Basketball Coach $2,086.29

Domonjae Walker Boys 7th Grade Basketball Coach $2,086.29

Eric Smith Girls Basketball Coach $7,313.98

Troy Blackwell Girls Assistant Basketball Coach $4,608.81

\*Amy Gumbert Girls JV Basketball Coach $3,005.74

Jon Balogh Girls 9th Grade Basketball Coach $2,607.87

Monica Poupakis Girls 8th Grade Basketball Coach $2,086.29

Carly Tanney Girls 7th Grade Basketball Coach $2,086.29

\*Adam Alfer Wrestling Coach $6,913.21

\*Josh Klimko Assistant Wrestling Coach $4,508.61

\*Cameron Zuber 7/8 Grade Wrestling Coach $2,694.80

Milan Kiska Swimming Coach $5,510.53

\*Jason Pavlecic Weight Lifting Coach (shared) $1,653.16

\*Garey Christian Weight Lifting Coach (shared) $1,653.16

RESIGNATION: Extra-curricular athletics for the 2020/2021 school year effective 9/8/20:

Kenneth Thompson 7/8 Grade Boys Basketball Coach

Adam Hoover 7/8 Grade Girls Soccer

SUPPORT STAFF:

Resignation:

Kathy Caperelli Lunch Aide, Food Service Department, McClure Elementary

School, effective 8/19/20

Pete Maurizio Technology Support Technician, effective 10/30/20

Geoffrey Tate Special Education Assistant, Twin Rivers Elementary School,

Effective 10/2/20

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

TO BE HIRED: Effective immediately:

Timeisha Andrews Instructional Assistant, placement pending bidding process.

Yearly salary will be $16,500 (pro-rated)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Vickie Babyak Instructional Assistant, High School, unpaid leave of absence

Effective 10/26/20 to an undetermined date (not to exceed 1 year

Mary Elizabeth Jones General Worker, Food Service Department, McClure Elementary

School, effective 10/5/20 to an undetermined date (not to

exceed 1 year

Stephanie Lovett Instructional Assistant, High School, unpaid leave of absence

effective 9/2/20 to an undetermined date (not to exceed 1 year)

CHANGE OF STATUS:

Lisa Misura General Worker, Food Service Department, McClure Elementary

School

From: Unpaid leave of absence

To: Leave of absence effective 9/9/20, unpaid leave will

commence at expiration of sick days (not to exceed 1 year

CHANGES TO THE SUBSTITUTE LISTS:

Deletion:

Vicki Jones Food Service

BOARD ACTION TO CREATE THE FOLLOWING TEMPORARY SUPPORT STAFF POSITION EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY FOR THE 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR; (Position will be based on a yearly Memorandum of Understanding):

1 Pandemic/Health Specialist

\*Pending receipt of Act 24, 34, 114 and 151 clearances, Act 168 Disclosure Release, TB Tine and Drug Test results.

\*\*Step placement pending employer verification

Voting aye. Mr. Donato, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, \*Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mr.

Poston, Mrs. Sturgess

\*Mr. Kondrosky abstained on To Be Hired Extra-Curricular, Kevin Kovach.

Excused. Mr. Brown

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Athletic** – Ivan Hampton – We had our meeting October 13th mainly we talked about personnel decisions. We talked about the upcoming game with TJ. Congratulations to the Tigers for a nice win. The first playoff game will be at Plum this coming Friday. That’s all I have to report.

**Buildings & Grounds** – Steve Kondrosky/Mindy Sturgess – Mr. Kondrosky reported. Mr. Balogh and myself met this morning. He gave me a list of things they have accomplished.

* South Hall pool leaks. Pool tiled re-grouted and sealed
* Promethean boards hung throughout Founders’ Hall
* South Hall teacher parking area landscaped and grass planted
* Admin exterior/parking lot lighting repaired. New electrical trenched
* Storage and distribution support of today show laptops
* Pick up and storage of school supplies from Wal Mart. Donated by County Sheriff
* Stadium bleachers repaired reserved side. Seams and brackets
* Trees trimmed at McClure. Obstructing view for bus drivers
* Lead water testing completed 9/29, 9/30, 10/1 AGX. Passed. Report pending.
* Elevator pit repairs Founders’ hall 6th grade elevator Lins. Pit was rusted out would not pass inspection.
* Boiler repair South Hall boiler. Fill low water cut off valve.
* Prepped boilers for winter. Boilers fired up and running.

Hopefully we will make it through this winter and that concludes my report.

**Community Relations/Cultural Diversity** – Mindy Sturgess/Ivan Hampton –Mrs. Sturgess reported. I am happy to report that we did have a meeting this month and I am going to begin participating in those. We had some really exciting information that Dr. Wanzo and Dr. Holtzman had worked with Penn State Greater Allegheny to come up with some opportunities for us to really focus on our diversity and our cultural relations and offer some additional offerings to both staff and students. It is multi-pronged approached where we would, pending Board approval, we would be looking at partnering with them, one, to hire a success coach that would be dedicated specifically to McKeesport. We could work with them to identify the grade levels that the success coach would work with and it would be that they would be providing both academic and personal support and goal setting with our students that are at most high risk. So we can identify students that are both in the virtual learning platform that maybe aren’t logging in or need some credit recovery and aren’t participating in that. Or kids that may have some disruption in school or just may be seeking out some additional support. So that we can really target and provide those additional avenues for students. The second part would be to improve

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

teacher students relationships so within the role of the success coach and also I believe it’s through some partnership with the folks at Penn State Greater Allegheny, we would be able to provide some professional development with our teachers and staff and specifically we did ask that our school police be included in that so that we can make sure we are accentuating positive experience with students and we have the skill set to mend relationships when they may not be right where we would want them to be overall. We will look at things that are researched based in trying to talk about that. The second would be to strengthen school and community partners and really in the wake of what is going on in our country with George Floyd and the recent shooting in Philadelphia, this is really an opportunity to take those real issues that students are facing in our community and in our country at this time and have real conversations. They have some national speakers that come in this year focusing on health care. Black women health care and some of the difficulties that people may encounter and some of the discrepancies. I think this is a real good opportunity. I would encourage the Board to consider it. The success coach, they are really looking for someone in our community that has a Bachelors degree and can relate to our students and knows our community. Hopefully, if we are able to secure some funding through grants and hopefully this will be on the agenda next month that we will be able to push this through and get this started for both our kids and our community. I think it’s a really good opportunity. That concludes my report.

**Education/Legislation/Policy** – Diane Elias/Mindy Sturgess – Mrs. Sturgess reported. That meeting happened yesterday, which is the 27th. Some of the things that we discussed were some of the concerns that our students participating in our virtual learning experienced over the first nine weeks and what a transition it is. I know that I have heard from some families and I think the district has been very receptive in looking at making those students in the cyber program become more of a part of the classroom and what is going on. Especially our little ones because they miss out on those things like student of the month, or getting a certificate or those kind of things because their learning is happening asynchronously, more or less independent. So, we are going to start looking at those kinds of opportunities to students and I have also heard from some families, I would really suggest it, especially for our little ones or kids that maybe just have a hard time or have some questions on the online file form because it is difficult. We do at the K-8 level through some of our grant funding, we are able to offer live teaching via zoom with district certified staff. It goes on every Monday through Thursday from 3:30 to 6:30 and there is homework help available. Right now we can’t get enough students to participate. Our participation rate has been very low. If your students are interested and you are interested, then the parents will be able to have an opportunity to have the student work directly with our staff and certified teachers. They will doing things like the STEAM project, project based learning, talking about attendance incentive for kids that are participating regularly, virtual field trips, college and career exploration and homework academic enhancement. It’s really a good

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

opportunity. It’s free and students can participate as the schedules permit or allows. I would really encourage people to take advantage of that and we have a flyer. I believe teachers would be making some calls to the students that are in the online learning platform. It’s not just for those students, it’s for all students. I have heard some positive things from parents of students that have taken advantage of that. Will this be posted on the website. (Mrs. James explained that it is under news and info on the district website.) Make sure you are telling your families or anyone watching at home that it is a live link. (Need to sign up first.) I also have an update I know a few meetings ago that I did make a proposal that we would consider hiring some special education certified teachers to work with our low incidence students that are enrolled in special education and provide them with live instruction. Unfortunately, we haven’t. We have a vacancy, I don’t know that it has been filled right now. We haven’t been able to fill those rolls. We are still looking, so if anybody knows special ed certified teachers please encourage them to reach out to Dr. Holtzman or Dr. Wanzo. Our special ed teachers have been doing some live sessions and using google platform. They are using two new programs in unique learning and they are doing some trials which would be similar platform to Calvert, but is more geared to instructional levels and maybe more appropriate to meet the needs of our students. Attendance is still a concern in some of those live sessions. We are still supplementing the packet. They have made efforts to improve that instruction and to get that out. That concludes my report.

**Finance/Grants/Outside Funding** – Diane Elias/James Poston – Mr. Poston reported. We met on the 21st and the new timelines for the 2021/2022 budget were released. Went over a recap of grants that we had received. I got an update from Keystone Collections. We touched on the base of the rental of the dehumidifiers for Founders Hall. Tax collection in the City of McKeesport is going to be done here now instead of at the city. That concludes my report for finance.

**Personnel** – Mindy Sturgess/Steve Kondrosky – Mrs. Sturgess reported. The personnel committee met to discuss and approve those items listed on this evening’s green sheets.

**Safe Schools** – James Poston/David Donato/Thomas Filotei – Mr. Poston reported. We met today and we have some camera issues that the IT is going to look at to see how they can resolve them. School police continue to work with building principals and teachers and students. Positive inputs and they have a class of eight hours of training coming up sponsored by Allegheny County Training Academy and that is no cost to us. Those guys and ladies do it on their own time. The Covid tracker that we talked about has been put on our website. That’s all I have to report.

**Solicitor’s Report** – Report was given in Executive Session.

**Correspondence** – none

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

**New Business** –

Mr. Donato – Only this Mr. President, I have watched over the last couple of meetings, Dr. Holtzman, number of policies that we are getting ready to put in place on the agenda the last few months. Does anyone check to see if the new language is in conflict with an existing policy comes into play or is the new policy, does the older policy automatically defer to the new policy coming in? Is anyone pulling out sheets in conflict with older policies?

Dr. Holtzman – Typically, we take the existing policy and we are renewing it, so it’s not really changing a whole lot, if we’re adding anything minor for example, the dress code policy was one we got into because we had to add the addition of the requirement of masks. The current technology stuff is just making sure that whatever decisions we’re making with technology aligns to our policy and expectations of our children when it comes to good and bad decisions, things of that nature. So, we are not just replacing a policy, or adding a totally new policy that never existed, We are more revamping policies that currently are in place.

Mr. Donato – It’s done side by side of existing policies.

Dr. Holtzman - Yep.

Mrs. Sturgess - I would also like to make a recommendation for the second nine-week period. I look at numbers and we have approximately 306 students returning to brick and mortar for the second nine weeks and I know, has there been, I know Mr. Matta was going to reach out last week to the Allegheny County Health Department to see if they would give us anything in writing in terms of their recommendations. Are they willing to do that, is that correct?

Mrs. DiMascio – That is correct and I think that Dr. Holtzman has provided us with all of the written communication across the State and from the Allegheny County Health Department at this time and I know that they have made comments to us…

Dr. Holtzman – I do have a little bit of an update somehow that crossed my mind when we were talking earlier tonight. So, Allegheny County Health Department is currently putting together I guess their own tracker of the local community infection which will show us a couple different things, the positivity rate which is something very important and also involves the transmission of the disease here in the community per 100,000 people. That is supposed to be out by the end of the week according to Dr. Brink, who is the top epidemiologist at the Allegheny County Health Department. I do have my weekly tomorrow at 2:00 PM, so hoping to get an update. That new data that will be tracked strategically will then hopefully be aligned. Also, the AIU which helps direct our school district is currently working with the State Health Department and PDE to

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

determine and reformulate the matrix that Allegheny County is no longer recognizing. That don’t have an update as of last Thursday, but I’m hoping tomorrow we will get another update with a document that works. So, they are trying to align the new data that the health department is collecting per school communities and the new matrix so that they don’t contradict one another and it gives school districts a direction for making decisions that area more of a black and white decision than we are waiting for the Health Department to give us guidance. We are working together but we could use a little but more specific guidance I guess for lack of a better word.

Mrs. Sturgess – I agree, but just in looking at these numbers were very high today at 199, looking at what is neighboring Westmoreland County, they are having a recommendation for school closures, my recommendation to the Board and what I would ask you, is in lieu of written recommendations from Allegheny County, is for the second nine weeks for the 300 plus students returning to our buildings, social distancing is going to be more difficult, I’m not saying it’s not going to occur, Dr. Holtzman has assured us that our classrooms will be six feet, our students will still be six feet apart, but in lieu of that I would make a recommendation and a second and we could vote it we would have any momentum to follow the written recommendations that were put our by PDE for school closures on August 6th. This would only be until something came out specifically for Allegheny County. It is just out of an abundance of caution so that we don’t end up like Westmoreland County. We have been very lucky. It is purely luck because we know that Covid is everywhere and luckily through the mitigation efforts that our district has put in place, we have been able to ward that off, but just to keep our students safe, our staff safe and have some level so that I’m not questioning decisions, the community is not questioning decisions, this is pretty much all we have right now and hopefully this will be short term, but I would make that recommendation for consideration by the Board for the beginning of the second nine-week period. I believe we all had those recommendations last week. I make a motion.

Motion failed for lack of a second.

Mrs. Sturgess – Thank you for your consideration.

Mr. Lopretto – Before I ask for an adjournment, I just want to say since we will not have a meeting in November, and I want to tell everybody to have a nice, safe, healthy Thanksgiving and we’ll have our meetings the first two Wednesdays in December. So again, Happy Thanksgiving to everybody on the Board and everybody out there.

Regular Board Meeting

October 28, 2020

**Adjournment** – 8:50 PM – Mr. Kondrosky moved for adjournment. Seconded by Mr. Poston.

Voting aye. All Members present.

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

Joan Wehner, Business Manager/Board Secretary