**McKEESPORT AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Regular Board Meeting**

**December 2, 2020**

**Presiding** Joe Lopretto, President

**Date, Time, Place** Wednesday, December 2, 2020, 7:30 PM, Board Room, Administration Building, McKeesport Area School District, 3590 O’Neil Boulevard, McKeesport, PA 15132.

**Opening Exercises** Mr. Lopretto called the meeting to order at 7:30 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.

**Present** James Brown

Diane Elias

Thomas Filotei

Ivan Hampton

Joe Lopretto

James Poston

Mindy Sturgess – by phone

Excused. David Donato

Steve Kondrosky

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

Dr. Tia Wanzo, Assistant Superintendent

Charles Kiss, Treasurer  
Gary Matta, Solicitor

**Board President’s Remarks** –  I really don’t have much to say. I just want to thank my fellow Board members again for nominating me for President. I will try to do the best I can. You know I’m going to screw up every meeting and it makes it a little more fun, so it gives you a chuckle or two. I also want to congratulate Mrs. Elias on the Vice-Presidency. I just want to wish everybody happy holidays. Thank you.

**Superintendent’s Report** – A few things I’d like to share. Number one, obviously, the reorganization meeting tonight kind of to me signifies the end of the 2020 year. We are looking forward to moving into a new year with some hope and encouragement that we can continue to

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educate our children at a high level, have our schools open, continue to allow children to participate in activities and continue safely to manage our schools the best that we possibly can. With that being said, I just want to share a few updates when it comes to Covid-19 and our schools. Obviously, we implemented a tracker. We have seen an increase in cases, those cases are now up to date. One of the issues we ran into was receiving feedback confirmation from the Allegheny County Health Department about probably cases and it makes it very challenging for us to document those particular cases without having a paper trail. We have decided at this point to be as transparent as possible and as cases are confirmed by families, staff members, students, whoever it may be, we are adding them to our tracker. We will from time to time continue to point you to that tracker for any updated information. We did run into a time where we were waiting for confirmation for several cases as this pandemic picked up and things started to spike and I think everybody got overwhelmed. So, we now are caught up. We did return to school today after a little bit of a probable weather issue yesterday. School went off without a hitch today. We are hopeful we can continue into Christmas and hold our in-person brick and mortar school and engage our children and support our online learners. Those things can change and shift at any moment. We currently have signed an attestation form that basically is clarity on the new guidelines put out by the PA Department of Education when closures will be recommended. That form then holds our district to those numbers. Those numbers are very, very clear in that matrix. Our high school is considered to be one of the larger schools, over 900 children are enrolled in that school. Then our other schools fall into the medium realm. So, those cases are based on the size of those schools on whether or not schools need to be closed due to active Covid cases. Meaning after 14 days the rolling total, those cases fall off every 14 days. If we have more than say 10 cases at the high school or up to 10 cases at the high school, within a 14-day period, those active cases would result in us closing our high school for up to three to five days. Our middle school and both our elementary schools have six cases. We are monitoring this closely. We do have a few active cases at this time, but nothing that would meet that threshold or even close at this time. We are expecting a pickup from Thanksgiving from gatherings, parties, things of that nature, and we will be in touch as we continue to monitor this difficult time. So far, so good. We were happy to connect with our students after the holidays and encourage quite a few of them for a quite a few of them that chose not to log on when we did virtual. So, I encourage all students, all families, when we exercise virtual learning in a synchronous model where your teachers are zooming with you, please. Please log on and stay engaged during those days. We will continue to do our very best which is not the best scenario with our online learning, asynchronous platform and at the end of every nine weeks, have the opportunity for either go to online learning or return to the brick and mortar building. That seems to be a whole lot. I would like to wish everybody a safe holiday break here coming up in just a few short weeks and we will be back together come January hopefully with some positivity. Thank you.

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

for the month of October 2020. Seconded by Mr. Filotei.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Hearing of Citizens** – None

**Minutes** – Mr. Filotei moved to approve the minutes of the Open Agenda Meeting of October 21, 2020 and Regular Meeting of October 28, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Hampton.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

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

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

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

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Transfer** – Mr. Filotei moved to approve the budgetary transfer as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Sturgess.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

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Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**MOU –** Mr. Poston moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for an Early College Program with Community College of Allegheny County. Seconded by Mr. Filotei. Dr. Holtzman explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Proposal** – Mr. Filotei moved to accept the proposal from Penn State Greater Allegheny Workforce Development Center. Seconded by Mr. Poston. Dr. Wanzo explained.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Days** – Mr. Filotei moved to acknowledge moving in-person instruction to virtual learning days on November 23, 24 and 25, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Poston.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Policies** – Mr. Poston moved for second reading and Board adoption of the following policies:

#237 – Pupils – Electronic Devices

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

Seconded by Mr. Filotei.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

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Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

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**Attestation** – Mr. Filotei moved to ratify the Attestation Ensuring Implementation of Mitigation Efforts. Seconded by Mr. Hampton.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Plan** – Mr. Filotei moved to approve the winter continuation of sports and activities plan. Seconded by Mr. Hampton.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Resolutions** – Mr. Poston moved to approve Resolutions #1246 and #1247 – student discipline. Seconded by Mr. Filotei.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Green Sheets** – Mrs. Sturgess moved to approve the personnel recommendations (green sheets). Seconded by Mr. Filotei.

PROFESSIONAL:

Board action to approve that the resignation date of Brennan McMahon will be 11/9/20.

To be hired:

\*\*Amanda Durham Special Education Teacher, East End Academy, effective

(B. McMahon) 11/9/20. Step 1M Salary $42,378.00 (pro-rated)

\*Amy Banks School Nurse, Districtwide, 12/8/20.

Step 1B Salary $41,778.00

Leave of Absence:

Alexandria Billy Elementary/Secondary Guidance Counselor, East End

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Academy, unpaid leave of absence effective approximately

12/18/20. FMLA

Erika Skraitz Mathematics Teacher, Founders Hall, unpaid/paid leave

of absence effective 11/18/20. FMLA

To be hired: long term substitutes:

Kyler Maddigan Mathematics Teacher, Founders Hall, effective 11/20/20

(E. Skraitz) Rate of pay will be $100/day + benefits and increase to

$125 on the 61st day

\*Courtney Tirpak Elementary/Secondary Guidance Counselor, East End

Academy, effective approximately 12/18/20. Rate of pay

will be $100/day + benefits and increase to $125 on the

61st day

To be hired: extra-curricular activities for the 2020/2021 school year:

Carolyn Carreiro Producer of Musical – High School $2,604.98

Tina Bieda Audio Visual – McClure $869.29

Michael Tomaino Audio Visual – Twin Rivers $869.29

To be hired: extra-curricular athletics for the 2020/2021 school year:

\*Hailey Morgart Assistant Swimming Coach $3,206.13

Volunteers: extra-curricular athletics for the 2020/2021 school year:

\*Ron Bishop Assistant 9th grade boys basketball coach

\*Troy Brown Assistant 7/8 grade boys basketball coach

Changes to the substitute list:

Additions:

\*Nina Beech School Nurse

SUPPORT STAFF:

Board action to terminate the following employees immediately:

Employee No. xxx-xx-4055

Employee No. xxx-xx-3865

Retirement: effective 1/4/21

Maria Golembiewski Instructional Assistant, Twin Rivers Elementary School

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Resignation:

Tayla Rouse Instructional Assistant, Twin Rivers Elementary School,

effective 11/20/20

To be hired: effective immediately:

Kristi Glemba Pandemic Health Specialist

(new position) Step 1 Salary $30,000.00 (pro-rated)

Leave of Absence:

Edie Barnett General Worker, Food Service Department, High School,

Unpaid leave of absence effective 11/16/20 through 3/1/21.

Wilhemina Goodlow General Worker, Food Service Department, Twin Rivers

Elementary School, unpaid leave of absence effective

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

Beverly Tima Nurse Assistant, extension of unpaid leave of absence to an

undetermined date (not to exceed 1 year)

Changes to the substitute lists:

Additions:

\*Bridgette Batch Instructional Assistant

\*Sarah Sparico Nurse Assistant

\*David LaRotonda Custodian

\*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. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

Sturgess

Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**Agreement** – Mrs. Sturgess moved to approve the settlement agreement with employee #5420408. Seconded by Mr. Poston.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Filotei, Mr. Hampton, Mr. Lopretto, Mr. Poston, Mrs.

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Excused. Mr. Donato, Mr. Kondrosky

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Athletic** – James Brown/Ivan Hampton – We had our meeting November 24th and discussed Mr. Kiss’s meeting with winter coaches and the impact of the virus and all the people of all ages and the steps being taken to prevent the spread that will be wearing of a mask at all times, during practices, and when competitions are possible including workouts in and out of competitions. Social distancing when possible. Any training equipment must be sanitized after use. Practice times when using the same facility will be spread out to allow social distancing. Concession stands will be closed. Prepackaged food and drinks may be served outside of the concession stands. Any traveling out of state by sports members will have to be reported to the AD or high school principal. Home events, all participants will receive and allow two family members to attend. There will be no visiting. The 9th grade, middle school and junior high there will be no students at the events. Junior varsity and varsity teams will be permitted two tickets per family. I hope I’m not forgetting too much.

**Buildings & Grounds** – Steve Kondrosky/Mindy Sturgess – Mr. Lopretto – I talked to Mr. Kondrosky today. He was unable to attend. He said he will give a double report next month. So, we’re in trouble.

**Community Relations/Cultural Diversity** – Mindy Sturgess/Ivan Hampton – Mrs. Sturgess reported. Dr. Wanzo and I met yesterday with representatives from Penn State and an outside agency to discuss diversity planning and inclusive practices for the district. Our next step and I mentioned this in our meeting earlier, we would be looking to, my fellow Board Members, to develop a statement. If we’re going to do this, it requires a 100% commitment beginning at the Board level and trickling down to Administration, teachers, community members and students. So we really wanted it to be something meaningful that will take a commitment from professional development and a financial standpoint to the greatest extent that we are able to and Dr. Wanzo has indicated that we do have that commitment. Our next step will be scheduling a workshop for Board Members to get some background information on what diversity and inclusion mean, learning a lot from what our counterparts at Penn State Greater Allegheny have done and once that is completed, we will begin to determine the next step. We also talked about the mentoring program that Dr. Wanzo mentioned earlier which is really going to look at improving relationships for students that may have been marginalized in the past or are at risk for dropping out or not passing or getting into trouble in school, so that position will be coming up soon, so we are looking for a really good fit for our school district, our community and our kids. These are really

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promising activities that I am excited to take on and be a part of. It’s new for me, but I’m excited for the learning that will take place and I hope all of you are as well. That concludes my report.

**Education/Legislation/Policy** – Diane Elias/Mindy Sturgess – Mrs. Sturgess reported. The Legislation Committee was postponed today. We will be meeting in January and I believe we will be looking at student data. That concludes my report.

**Finance/Grants/Outside Funding** – Diane Elias/James Poston – Mr. Poston reported. Our meeting is postponed until January.

**Personnel** – Mindy Sturgess/Steve Kondrosky – Mrs. Sturgess reported. The committee met on November 25th to discuss those personnel items on this evening’s green sheets. That concludes my report.

**Safe Schools** – James Poston/David Donato/Thomas Filotei – Mr. Poston reported. The same, we’re postponed until January.

**Solicitor’s Report** – No report. Just wish everybody happy holidays.

**Correspondence** – None

**New Business** – None

**Adjournment** – 7:30 PM – Mr. Poston moved for adjournment. Seconded by Mr. Filotei.

Voting aye. All Members present.

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

Joan Wehner, Business Manager/Board Secretary