

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT
2229 East Buck Road
Pennsburg PA 18073

January 13, 2022

The regular meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Upper Perkiomen School District was called to order by President Judy Maginnis, at 7:00 p.m. at the Upper Perkiomen Middle School auditorium.

The following Board members attended: Raeann Hofkin, JP Prego, Dana Hipszer, Mike Elliott, Judy Maginnis, Peg Pennepacker, Melanie Cunningham, Emily McCormick, and Keith McCormick. Administration in attendance were: Allyn Roche, EdD., Andrea Farina, EdD., Daniel Direso, and Georgiann Fisher. Others in attendance were: Kyle Somers, Enoc Padilla, Bob LaSalle, Chris Lash, Vicki Lightcap, Jeff Borchelt, Rachel Kalbach, Nicole Benning, Geoff Wilson, Jessica Gallagher, Jennifer Beltz, Mary Cannon-Orehowsky, and Jessica Kuntz.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Maginnis spoke about the goal for everyone is for students to get the best education possible and how even though people have differing opinions that can be achieved by working together. Mrs. Maginnis asked to have peaceful, respectable dialogue and reminded everyone that the evening is for a business meeting. President Maginnis said that if the meeting is not kept in order she will recess the meeting to regain calm. Public comments will be kept to two minutes and the microphone will be shut off at that time. Mrs. Maginnis reminded speakers that the public comments section is not a question and answer period and recommended people use the Board communication line, but to make sure to leave contact information if anyone would like a response.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Roche wished all a Happy New Year and said it was great that school is still in in-person instruction and hopes it will continue that way through the year.

Dr. Roche congratulated Peg Pennepacker on being awarded the Thomas E. Frederick Award of Excellence at the National Athletic Directors Conference in December. Ms. Pennepacker was recognized for her 36-year career in public education including 26 years in athletic administration.

Dr. Roche reminded everyone that the Great Kindness Challenge will be the week of January 24-28, 2022.

Dr. Roche talked about the impact of COVID at Upper Perkiomen schools and gave kudos to all staff for continuing to step-up and adjust to the changing environment and that the goal is to continue with in-person instruction each and every day.

Dr. Roche shared photos that were submitted from families on the snow day. Dr. Roche talked about the different options for weather related or emergency days as in, traditional snow day, no school, a flexible instructional day or a virtual instructional day. Dr. Roche also said delays are still something that the district can still utilize.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD

Enoc Padilla announced dates for upcoming mid-term exams, end of marking periods, an In-Service Day and report card distribution.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT/SUNSHINE ACT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Somers went over the latest legal developments in the Supreme Court case and the masking order with the Acting Health Secretary. The decision with regard to masking returned to the local school district level. Mr. Somers reported that the Pennsylvania School Boards Association's, advocacy on the issue was that they were requesting that the decision was best left to local schools. Mr. Somers said that in terms of Upper Perkiomen School District, when the

district most recently revised it's Health and Safety Plan it addressed the scenario under which the Acting Secretary of Health order was voided. The plan read that depending upon the level of community spread within the community that would dictate whether or not there is masking. Mr. Somers said it is important to note that federal legislation, commonly referred to as ESSER funds, has said that the requirement to receive funds is for school districts to develop a Health and Safety Plan, so every school district throughout the Commonwealth has adopted a Health and Safety Plan. The Plan needs to address certain issues, such as cleaning of school buildings, air filtration, contact tracing, and face coverings, but does not say that face coverings are required or optional just that a policy needs to be in place. Mr. Somers said that in regards to Board authority, they have wide authority to decide what they are going to require.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Keith McCarrick, seconded by Mike Elliott, to approve **the agenda**. Motion carried; all voted aye.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Somers reminded that the length of speaking time is two minutes and that a sign will be held up to give the speaker warning with 30 seconds left.

Bob LaSalle, Hereford Township, UPEA President, Teacher, expressed how the UPEA members support the current masking policy and would like to maintain safe in-person instruction.

Chris Lash, Marlborough Township, spoke on behalf of Youth Lacrosse and said how organizations do not have funds and would like for the motion on the facility rentals to pass.

Vicki Lightcap, Pennsburg, said the decision of the Health and Safety Plan should be given back to the parents and asked for a roll call vote on the Health and Safety Plan motion.

Jeff Borchelt, Red Hill, said masking should be optional and that healthy kids are being sent home and missing educational time and also wanted a roll call vote.

Rachel Kalbach, Red Hill, expressed concerns about children quarantining and said that the same people are coming to the meetings and said they will stop showing up.

Nicole Benning, Red Hill, feels that masks do not stop COVID and that the masking policy is just to get ESSER funds.

MINUTES

Motion by Keith McCarrick, seconded by Emily McCormick, to approve the **December 6, 2021 Reorganization Board Meeting Minutes** and the **December 6, 2021 Regular School Board Meeting Minutes**. (Attachment A&B). Motion carried; all voted aye.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

A. School Director Recognition Month

Dr. Roche announced that in honor of the commitment and time that School Board members volunteer on behalf of the Upper Perkiomen schools and community, January is designated School Director recognition month. Dr. Roche talked about how the work of the nine public servants is vital to the success of students and schools. He said that the work is both complex and diverse and has been made more challenging due to the pandemic and the related issues affecting the well-being of the students and families. Dr. Roche explained that Board service is unpaid and school directors are often motivated to pursue the role out of a desire to benefit their community.

Dr. Roche asked Enoc Padilla, student representative, to present the School Board members with a certificate of recognition on their commitment to the students and families of the Upper Perkiomen community.

B. Revised Health & Safety Plan Presentation

Dr. Roche and Dr. Farina reviewed the revisions to the Health and Safety Plan and the updated data and incident numbers. The bulk of the plan is consistent with the plan approved on September 9, 2021. Dr. Farina went over the sections where there are revisions to quarantining, close contacts, household contacts and testing options. Dr. Farina shared the quarantine guidance for close contacts if masking is required and if masking is optional.

C. Board Policy Revisions – First Reading (Attachment C)

i) No. 810 – Transportation

Dr. Farina explained that the policy was revised in 2010 and it was realized that the policy needed some clarity. Dr. Farina talked about the revised language that will provide clarity in the policy about the transportation to daycares.

Ms. Pennepacker asked the Board members to take the time to read the revised policy before it goes to vote.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Professional Development Workshop for Secondary Professional Staff from Nov. 19, 2021.

A link was provided in the Board update and the issue is resolved.

NEW BUSINESS

A. PERSONNEL REPORT

Motion by Keith McCarrick, seconded by Melanie Cunningham, to approve the **Personnel**

Report as presented:

i. **RETIREMENTS**

1. **Anita Lashaw**, Food Service Worker, submitted her intent to retire on December 15, 2021 at the end of the 2021-2022 school year.
2. **Lorraine Nelson**, Food Service Worker, submitted her intent to retire on December 15, 2021 at the end of the 2021-2022 school year.

ii. **RESIGNATIONS**

1. **Matthew Burbano**, Long Term Substitute Teacher, resigned his position with the district, effective December 23, 2021.
2. **Nicholas Serano**, part-time Custodian, resigned his position with the district, effective December 23, 2021.
3. **Diane Linden**, Food Service Worker, resigned her position with the District, effective December 31, 2021.
4. **Julie West**, Assistant Food Service Worker, resigned her position with the District, effective January 17, 2022.

iii. **APPOINTMENTS**

1. **PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

- a. **Olivia Reichley, Long Term Substitute Teacher** for the Upper Perkiomen Middle School, continue in current assignment for the second semester of 2021-2022 school year, at Bachelor's, Step 1.
- b. **Amber Elsner, Long Term Substitute Special Teacher** for the Upper Perkiomen High School, continue in current assignment for the second semester of 2021-2022 school year, at Bachelor's, Step 1.
- c. **Colin Moyer**, Long Term Substitute Teacher for the High School beginning January 10, 2022 through the end of the 2021-2022 school year at Bachelor's Step 1, prorated.

2. SUPPORT STAFF

- a. **David Thomas**, full-time Maintenance Mechanic, to be hired effective date to be determined, subject to review of required employment history and clearances at \$22.00/hour.

3. SUPPLEMENTAL POSITIONS:

Area	Position	Name	Schedule	Salary
Middle School	TSA Advisor	Rich Kressly	A (50%)	\$1080.50
Middle School	TSA Advisor	Richard Staniec	B (50%)	\$864.50
High School	Assistant Baseball Coach	Rich Kressly	A (50%)	\$2043.00
High School	Math Curriculum Asst.	Caren Miller	A	\$2535.00
High School	Tutoring Club	Michelle Stone	B (50%)	\$612.00

iii. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

1. **Kathleen Rambo**, approve extension to unpaid Child Rearing Leave for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.
2. **Meredith Wickard**, approve extension to unpaid Child Rearing Leave for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.
3. **Christa Sostarecz**, approve Maternity Leave/FML, expected to commence on May 18, 2022, and continue for 6-8 weeks, Family and Medical Leave to continue for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.
4. **Rachel Schmeckenbecher**, approve Family and Medical Leave from January 19, 2022 through approximately March 2, 2022.
5. **Katherine Perkins**, approve Child-Rearing Leave, beginning on January, 3, 2022, and continue for 6 weeks, Family and Medical Leave to continue until March 29, 2022 and unpaid leave until the end of the 2021-2022 school year.
6. **Morgan Sassa**, approve 6-8 week unpaid leave expecting to begin on or about May 1, 2022.

Motion carried; all voted aye.

ACTION ITEMS

- A. Motion by Keith McCarrick, seconded by Melanie Cunningham, to approve **the revised UPSD Health and Safety Plan (Attachment D)**. ROLL CALL VOTE: Cunningham – yes, Elliott – yes, Hipszer – yes, **Hofkin – no, McCarrick – no**, McCormick – yes, Pennepacker – yes, Prego yes, Maginnis – yes. Motion carried.
- B. Motion by Keith McCarrick, seconded by Mike Elliott, to approve **an exemption from all space rental and weeknight custodial fees that would otherwise be imposed by Board Policy No. 707 and its accompanying Administrative Regulation for the facilities use requests that were submitted to the District by:**
- i. Upper Perkiomen Take-Down Club (Three Saturday Requests Dated 10/18/21)
 - ii. Upper Perkiomen Youth Lacrosse (Request Dated 10/27/21 – Marlborough Elementary)
 - iii. Valley Soccer Club (Request Dated 12/8/21 – Marlborough Elementary)

iv. Upper Perkiomen Youth Field Hockey (Request Dated 12/9/21 – 4 & 5 Grade Center)
Approval of these facilities use requests will be subject to the availability of District staff to provide adequate supervision and custodial support as well as facility availability and blackout dates.
ROLL CALL VOTE: Elliott – yes, Hipszer – yes, Hofkin – yes, McCarrick – yes, McCormick – yes, Pennepacker – yes, Prego – yes, Cunningham – yes, Maginnis – yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Keith McCarrick, seconded by Melanie Cunningham, to approve **Action Items C, D, and E:**

- C. Motion to approve **Waiver of Formal Hearing Agreements for students** whose names are on file in the Office of the Superintendent.
- D. Motion to approve the **Agreement with Malvern Academy** (formerly *Progressions*) at the rate of \$200.00 per day for the 2021-2022 school year. (Attachment E)
- E. Motion to approve the **Agreement for Gas Transportation Service with PECO for interruptible natural gas service at Upper Perkiomen Middle School.** (Attachment F)
The new TS-I rate will save the District approximately \$12,000 per year.

Motion carried; all voted aye.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Motion by Melanie Cunningham, seconded by Emily McCormick, to approve the **payment of bills, in the amount of \$1,716,812.91 from the General Fund.** Motion carried; all voted aye.

Motion by Emily McCormick, seconded by Melanie Cunningham, to approve the **payment of bills in the amount of \$239,780.47 from the Capital Funds.** Motion carried; all voted aye.

Motion by Melanie Cunningham, seconded by JP Prego, to approve the **Per Capita Exonerations.** Motion carried; all voted aye.

NEW FOLLOW UP ITEMS

Mrs. McCormick asked about the time the Middle School front doors open, and that has changed to 7:20.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Geoff Wilson, Pennsburg, asked for choice to be given to parents.

Jessica Gallagher, Marlborough Township, said Board members were not wearing masks in public.

Jennifer Beltz, Marlborough Township, had concerns about quarantining, masks, and literature in the schools.

Mary Cannon-Orehowsky, Hereford Township, asked where the information to opt out of Keystone testing was and had questions on the masking.

Nicole Benning, Red Hill, had concerns about a picture of Board members without masks.

Vicki Lightcap, Pennsburg, asked about the ESSER funds and when the Health and Safety Plan will be over.

Rachel Kalbach, Red Hill, asked why student's school district emails were blocked from parents.

Jessica Kuntz, Red Hill, asked about vaccination statuses and thought one policy for all would be easier.

BOARD COMMENTS

Raeann Hofkin talked about raising awareness to human trafficking. Mrs. Hofkin thanked the Mrs. Maginnis for her free time by not being assigned to any committees.

JP Prego addressed Mrs. Hofkin's comments and actions at the December 6th Board meeting and how the comments and actions are not acting in the best interest of the district and need to end.

Dana Hipszer expressed that Mrs. Hofkin's comments at the December 6th put herself in a bad situation and the Board could not move forward with committee assignments.

Mike Elliott said you cannot talk disrespectfully about the holocaust and that you cannot make light of that situation.

Emily McCormick expressed her displeasure at Mrs. Hofkin's protesting at the Middle School concert.

Keith McCarrick wanted to talk about the kids everyone is here to support. He shared many accomplishments that students at the Western Center have recently achieved.

Melanie Cunningham said right now the goal is to keep kids in school and the situation is the best it can be.

Judy Maginnis addressed the audience and said she understands that the public feels they are not heard. Mrs. Maginnis had been hopeful earlier in the year that this would have been the time to make masks an option but it is not, and encouraged people to still continue to come to meetings and that she is listening.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Melanie Cunningham, seconded by Mike Elliott that **the meeting be adjourned at 9:20 p.m.** Motion carried; all voted aye.

Daniel C. Direso, Board Secretary