

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT
2229 East Buck Road
Pennsburg PA 18073

BOARD WORKSHOP
February 25, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The Board Workshop of the Board of School Directors of the Upper Perkiomen School District was called to order by President Melanie Cunningham, at 7:03 p.m. as a virtual meeting.

The following Board members attended: Melanie Cunningham, Stephen Cunningham, Dr. Kerry Drake, Mike Elliott, Dana Hipszer, Judy Maginnis, Keith McCarrick, and Peg Pennepacker. Absent member was: Raeann Hofkin. Administration in attendance were: Allyn Roche, EdD., Andrea Farina, EdD., Sandra Kassel, Kimberly Bast, Doug Kenwood, Rob Carpenter, EdD., Bobby Kurzweg and Georgiann Fisher. Others in attendance were: Kyle Somers, Phil Detwiler, Gene Dolloff, Courtney D'Aversa, Anthony O'Hara, and Jake Engle.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Stephen Cunningham, seconded by Keith McCarrick, to approve the **January 28, 2021 Board Workshop Minutes** (Attachment A). Motion carried; all voted aye.

PRESENTATIONS

a. Review of the Revised CDC Guidance for K-12 Schools and Potential Next Steps for UPSD Focused on Increasing In-person Instruction - Dr. Roche and Dr. Farina

Dr. Roche presented updated PDE and DOH Guidance information regarding the district and the continuing COVID-19 procedures and protocols, he said this is important information to refer to as it is information that has been provided and updated since summer. Dr. Roche shared information on the revised CDC operational strategies and steps for safe school reopening. He explained the mitigation efforts and exclusion and quarantine.

Dr. Farina presented the numbers on the current enrollment data and methods of instruction for Upper Perkiomen and showed slides with the impact of increased in-person time for all the schools.

Dr. Roche talked about additional considerations to increase in-person learning while maintaining 6-foot distance and discussions that were had during the task force meetings.

Phil Detwiler, UPEA representative, showed a slide of what the UPEA is advocating for. He stated six items: staff to have the opportunity to be vaccinated, maintaining six feet, mandatory mask policies, community being in the moderate range for at least three consecutive weeks, have UPSD maintain the virtual option for students to the end of the year, and the virtual Wednesdays must remain in place for deep cleaning.

Dr. Roche provided clarifications for less than six feet. Mr. Somers added for clarification that the decision on how many days the students return to school is fully within the discretion of the Board to determine the number of days that school is open for all students. The Board had questions and a discussion was held with Administration and Mr. Somers.

b. Update and Progress on the Program Review and Consideration for Implementation of Full Day Kindergarten - Dr. Farina and Mrs. Bast

Mrs. Kim Bast and Dr. Andrea Farina talked about all the factors that have been considered and evaluated to put the program in place. Facilities, finances, transportation and personnel were all discussed in the budget total.

c. Spring Athletics Discussion and Review of the Revised Health & Safety Plan - Mr. Kurzweg and Dr. Carpenter

Mr. Kurzweg and Dr. Carpenter talked about the success of the Winter Athletic program due to all participants complying with the Health and Safety Plan and following the guidelines. They presented the Updated Health and Safety Plan and talked about the updated mask mandate for Spring Athletics. New sport specific guidelines were discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Gene Dolloff, Upper Hanover Township, expressed his concerns about the students not being in school full-time and shared his displeasure with the teacher union representative's comments.

Courtney D'Aversa, Pennsburg, said she is excited about the district implementing Full-Day Kindergarten and thanked everyone for investing the time and resources in supporting the endeavor.

Anthony O'Hara, Upper Hanover Township, shared his thoughts on the students not being in school and commented about the surrounding districts being in school.

PERSONNEL

Motion by Stephen Cunningham, seconded by Keith McCarrick, to approve the **Personnel Report**:

a. **RETIREMENTS**

- i. **Keith Leamer**, submitted his intent to retire from the District at the conclusion of the 2020-2021 School Year.

Melanie Cunningham, Dana Hipszer, Mike Elliott and Stephen Cunningham reflected on the many events, morning stretches, Gym classes and coaching experiences that Mr. Leamer has organized and has been such a huge part of throughout his career at Upper Perkiomen. It was said that he has been a tremendous role model for so many and everyone wished him well on his retirement.

b. **APPOINTMENTS**

i. **SUPPORT STAFF**

1. **Ethel McGowan**, Registration and Transportation Administrative Assistant to be hired subject to review of employment history and required credentials at \$12.60/hour, effective date to be determined.
2. **Cathie Hill**, current district employee, appointed to full time Administrative Assistant position at Marlborough Elementary, effective January 25, 2021.
3. **Amanda Gatto**, current district employee, appointed to the 190 day- Administrative Assistant position at Hereford Elementary, effective February 1, 2021.

c. **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

- i. **Jennifer Hart**, approve Maternity Leave, beginning on or about April 11, 2021 continuing on Family and Medical Leave, through the end of the 2020-2021 School Year.
- ii. **Gisele McCabe**, approve Family and Medical Leave, beginning February 16, 2021 , continuously until March 16, 2021 and intermittently thereafter for up to 12 weeks (60 working days).

Motion carried; all voted aye.

ACTION ITEMS

- a. Motion by Stephen Cunningham, seconded by Mike Elliott, to approve a **Full-Day Kindergarten program to begin at the start of the 2021-2022 school year**. Motion carried; all voted aye.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Special Education & Pupil Services Committee – Judy Maginnis
Judy Maginnis reported that at the last meeting members of this committee and the members of the Curriculum & Instruction committee as well as several other board members met for a combined meeting. An update about the instructional programs was given including special education, the hybrid program, the UPOLA program and future virtual options. They also presented summer programming ideas and plans. Mrs. Maginnis reported that they were given a sneak peek at the Full-Day Kindergarten presentation. The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2021.
- b. Curriculum & Instruction Committee – Dr. Kerry Drake
Mrs. Maginnis gave the report about the combined meeting with the Special Education & Pupil Services Committee update. The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2021.
- c. Extracurricular Committee – Peg Pennepacker
Peg Pennepacker reported that invited guests who attended were Amy Lychock, High School Student Council advisor, Kathleen Rambo and Cheryl Stotsenburg, Co-Advisors of the Middle School Student Council, and also several students from the high school and middle school student councils. They presented on the many events and activities held by student council and some of the donations they have made to the schools and organizations as an outcome of the events. Ms. Pennepacker reported that Mr. Kurzweg spoke to the committee about the possibility of adding a NFHS camera system to the pool area. The next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2021.
- d. Facilities Committee – Melanie Cunningham
Melanie Cunningham reported that they talked about Full-Day Kindergarten, the drainage issues at the High School varsity softball field, the kickoff for the GESA project, the cistern in front of the high school, and the Keeny Stadium signage. Mrs. Cunningham said that in new business the committee went over the every two year police memorandum of understanding, a risk assessment, the track take-off board, hail damage, and the 4th & 5th Grade Center busses and cars. The next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2021.
- e. Finance Committee – Melanie Cunningham
Melanie Cunningham reported that the committee discussed charter school and the costs being over budget, the tax collection of the per capita tax, and the revenues. The next meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2021.
- f. Policy Committee – Peg Pennepacker
Peg Pennepacker reported that the committee is continuing to go through the 200 series of policies. Ms. Pennepacker said the meeting was dedicated to an in-depth discussion around Policy 227 and encouraged the Board to review the policies as the committee works through them. The next meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2021.
- g. Western Montgomery Career & Technology Center – Stephen Cunningham
Stephen Cunningham reported that students will be participating in testing to prepare for their certifications and the Skills USA competition.

h. Montgomery County Intermediate Unit – Judy Maginnis

Judy Maginnis said that at the last Intermediate Unit meeting the Director of the IU, reported that the IU continues to facilitate county wide Superintendent meetings and they are hoping to have discussions on how to safely hold some school spring activities. Mrs. Maginnis said they had a discussion on the recently released federal statement on standardized assessments. The next Board meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2021.

i. Legislative Liaison Report – Peg Pennepacker

Peg Pennepacker reminded everyone that March 22 is Virtual Advocacy Day. Ms. Pennepacker reported that the President of PSBA presented testimony to the House Education Committee regarding the educational and financial impacts that the pandemic has had on schools. She said Senate Bill 73 was introduced, more than 370 school boards across the state have now adopted PSBA's resolution calling for meaningful charter school funding. Mrs. Cunningham said she signed a Charter school form and asked Dr. Roche to share that in the Board update.

j. Upper Perkiomen Education Foundation – Mike Elliott

Mike Elliott reported that a meeting was not held and he did not have any new information to report.

k. Regional Planning Commission Representative – Dr. Kerry Drake

Kerry Drake reported that at the meeting they discussed the Comprehensive Plan, Green Lane Borough and the Lion's Club making repairs at Isaac Smith Park, a potential for a WaWa at the Northgate development and UP Chamber of Commerce Perk Up nominations for small businesses.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jake Engle, Upper Hanover Township, talked about the students being in a hybrid model instead of full-time based on the numbers and distances and said he hopes that the Board takes everything into consideration to bring the students back to school.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mike Elliott said how everyone is putting a lot of time and effort into the planning for all instructional models and said how a good thing happened tonight with the approval of Full-Day Kindergarten.

Kerry Drake said how excited he is about approving the Full-Day Kindergarten and it was an honor to work with everybody to accomplish that.

Keith McCarrick reminded everyone that all the committee meetings are available to view and that it is very helpful to watch them.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Stephen Cunningham, seconded by Mike Elliott, to **adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.** Motion carried; all voted aye.

Sandra M. Kassel, Board Secretary

