

NORTHERN TIOGA SCHOOL DISTRICT
110 Ellison Road
Elkland, PA 16920

Minutes – February 8, 2021

1.0 OPERATIONS

1.1 Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Tioga School District Board of Directors was called to order by President, Julie Preston at 7:06 PM.

Executive Session – An executive session preceded the meeting for the purpose of legal and personnel issues.

Executive Session – An executive session was held after the January 25, 2021 work session for the purpose of legal and personnel issues.

1.2 Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was led by Julie Preston.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Julie Preston led those present in the Pledge to the Flag.

1.4 Board Attendance: Board Members Present: Julie Preston, Ed Bonham, Greg Cummings, Jolene Meisner, James Moyer, and Kim Strauser. Via Zoom: Jean Kohut and Ian McLaughlin. Absent: Jim Neal.

Administrators Present: Superintendent Barnes, Kathy VanSchaick, Jeremy Freeman, Dan Fie, Amy Coots, Christina Fry, Jess Millard, Kris Kaufman, and Cheryl Sottolano. Via Zoom: Matt Sottolano.

1.5 Student/Staff Recognitions & Presentations

CV Closet Presentation

Mrs. Bonham, Family and Consumer Science Teacher at Cowanesque Valley High School, and members of her Child Development class shared information about the CV Closet initiative they have started. The program was started as a way to help meet the needs of students by providing them with items they may need but not want to ask for. Students in the Child Development class receive donations from the community including items such as clothes, toiletries, towels, pillows, etc. These items are then made available to students who need them, no questions asked. Mrs. Bonham shared the joy that this program has brought to her students and the school. Anyone who would like to donate to the program can contact the school.

School Board Thank You

In honor of School Board Recognition Month in January, Mrs. Schmitt, Social Studies Teacher at Williamson High School, shared a video that her Senior Government Class prepared to thank the school board for all of their hard work. Board members also read letters written to them by students. Students thanked board members for their dedication of time and effort and for working hard to keep students in school during the pandemic.

Student of the Month

Williamson High School – Tristan Parker

Tristan Parker, son of Tracey Parker and Kelly Stoll of Tioga, PA, is a Junior at Williamson Jr./Sr. High School and was selected as the high school Student of the Month. Tristan was nominated by the Business Department. One of the teachers that nominated Tristan had this to say, “The Business Education department nominated Tristan Parker as Student of the Month for February because of his outstanding involvement in class, commitment to his schoolwork, and overall academic results. We firmly believe Tristan will have a bright future.”

In addition to being a leader in the classroom, Tristan is an active member of the Williamson Varsity Basketball Team and a member of the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club. According to his advisor, Tristan recently placed 4th in our region in the category of Business Calculations. According to Tristan, he really enjoys being a member of FBLA because of the opportunity it presents in preparing him for his future. As an active member of FBLA, Tristan plans to pursue a career in business management.

Tristan, the faculty and staff of Williamson High School would like to congratulate you and let you know that we are very proud of you.

Williamson Middle School – Matthew Dibble

Williamson Middle School is proud to honor Matthew “Matt” Dibble as the February Student of the Month. Matt is the son of Lisa and Ronald Dibble, of Tioga. He is also a cousin of Jessica and Michael Watters who are his guardians. Matt has a younger cousin who is like a brother to him, Charles Watters. The family resides in Elkland.

Matt loves the outdoors, especially hiking. Matt also enjoys riding 4-wheelers and quads. One of his favorite outdoor sports activities, which has become a summer job for Matt, is flagging at local dirt bike tracks. Matt enjoys interactions with all the youth participants on the track and truly enjoys the direct contact he has assisting the youngest of the dirt bikers.

During the summer of 2019, Matt helped at his church’s Vacation Bible School (VBS). The memory of his past experience as a participant, was the driving force for his commitment and enthusiasm to this program. Post-Covid19, Matt would like to assist again at VBS.

Matt is an active member of his Williamson Middle School class and was a member of the Gaming club. Matt’s future aspiration is to join the United States Air Force and become a Load Master or a Military Police Officer. Williamson Middle School is very proud to recognize Matthew Dibble as the February Student of the Month! Congratulations Matt!

Cowanesque Valley High School – Stevia Swimley

Stevia is a senior at Cowanesque Valley and is the daughter of Thomas and Erin Swimley of Knoxville.

Stevia is a conscientious, hard worker who strives to do her best and does excellent work. The teacher who nominated her said, I admire her for being her own person and caring about important causes that interest her. She is always respectful and a joy to have in class. Stevia has been very involved in Student Council, attending many state and district conferences. She is also a member of National Honor Society, Battle of the Books, and a recipient of the Unsung Hero Award for her work with the Serenity Scholarship. She is a member of the volleyball and softball teams and most recently was selected to receive the Everyday Hero Award. After high school she plans to attend college but has not decided on a major.

Cowanesque Valley Middle School – Savanna Wilkinson

The Cowanesque Valley Middle School teachers are pleased to announce Savanna Wilkinson as our middle school student of the month. She is in seventh grade and is the daughter of James and Mariah Wilkinson of Little Marsh. Savanna is a hardworking and conscientious student. She is willing to ask for help and seek clarification when she needs it. She puts a great amount of effort into all of her classes and assignments. She is a pleasure to have as a student. Savanna plays the clarinet in band and is a member of 4-H. She shows horses and has shown sheep in the past. She bought her horse Rain when she was 10. Someday, Savanna would like to become either a teacher or a veterinarian, and we think she would be great at either one!

R.B. Walter Elementary School – Walker Hyde

Walker Hyde is the son of Victoria Hyde and David Wilcox of Tioga, PA. He is a fifth-grade student at R.B. Walter and is consistently on the high honor roll. Although he excels in all subjects, he enjoys science the most. Walker also participates in chorus. Outside of school, Walker's interests center around spending time with his family as well as participating in sports - wrestling, football, and baseball. Walker's teachers describe him as a well-mannered, conscientious student who is helpful and caring to his peers. He describes himself as trustworthy, hardworking, and always willing to help out wherever he can. The faculty and staff at R.B. Walter are very proud to honor Walker Hyde as their student of the month.

Clark Wood Elementary School – Max Millard

Max Millard is a fourth-grade student at Clark Wood Elementary School. Max is the son of Amy and Jess Millard of Osceola. He is active in soccer and baseball. He always completes his schoolwork and participates in class. Max cares deeply about his academic success and it shows in his daily work. Max is a good friend to his classmates and goes above and beyond to support them in school. He has a ready smile, a good story, and a great sense of humor. He is a big football fan and enjoys watching and discussing the games. Max has a bright future due to his big personality and his willingness to work hard. We are very proud of you.

Westfield Area Elementary School – Elizabeth Mascho

The Westfield Area Elementary School Student of the Month is Elizabeth Mascho! Lizzy, a 5th grade, honor roll student, is the daughter of Kari Mosso and Jamie Mascho. She is involved in the WAES band, where she plays the trumpet. Lizzy is also involved in 4H and

takes horseback riding lessons. In her free time, she enjoys playing outside, raising her chickens, and playing with her little sister. Lizzy's teachers describe her as a fantastic student that is very helpful to her teachers and her peers! Lizzy has a positive attitude and is very determined to do her best. When she is not busy reading her favorite book series "Heartland" she enjoys spending time with real horses. She also has a love for her ducks and chickens. Her teachers enjoy hearing about her crazy chicken stories. Lizzy has a passion for school and for learning! WAES is proud to have Elizabeth Mascho as our student of the month!

1.6 Open Forum

Bob Goodrich, Osceola, PA

Mr. Goodrich offered a prayer.

Chris Collum, NTEA President

Chris Collum addressed the board regarding the use of Flexible Instructional Days (FID) this year and to clarify the stance of teachers on the use of these days. He stated that many teachers have no issue with the use of FID but do have concerns with whether they need to report to work in-person on these days. As a professional, Mr. Collum stated that he knows other professionals in the community. As a result of COVID, many jobs have transformed allowing employees to work from home some of the time. He stated that he knows people in the community who are allowed to work from home on days when there is inclement weather. Mr. Collum stated that the work teachers do on remote learning days can be done from home. Teachers can create and post assignments online and communicate with students from home. Many teachers are already doing these things from home. Principals can view everything that teachers are doing online in real time which allows teachers to be held accountable for their time on remote days. Mr. Collum said that there are some arguments against allowing teachers to work from home on remote instruction days. It creates a slippery slope. Some jobs, such as those of custodians and maintenance, cannot be done from home. Another argument is that not all teachers have the capability to work from home. Mr. Collum stated that other teachers should not be held back because of the few that cannot work from home. The last argument is that taxpayers may frown upon teachers working from home. If this is a concern, Mr. Collum said FID should not be used.

1.7 Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to approve the monthly meeting minutes from the January 11, 2021 regular meeting and the January 25, 2021 work session. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.8 Budget Transfers (Exhibit #2)

A motion was made by Greg Cummings, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to approve budget transfers as outlined in Exhibit #2. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.9 Approval of Bills (Exhibit #3)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Ed Bonham, to approve bills as outlined in Exhibit #3. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.10 Facility Use Permits (None) & Conferences (Exhibits #4 & #5)

1.11 Information & Correspondence

Ethics Statements

As required by law, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania “Statements of Financial Interest” have been distributed to all Board members, administrators, and the superintendent. These must be completed and returned to the Board Secretary prior to the May 1st deadline.

2.0 REPORTS

2.1 Superintendent’s Report

Professional Development Day

Dr. Barnes shared that the Professional Development Day on Friday, February 5th was a good day. The district was happy to have some organizations from the community and board members join the training as well. The administration will be discussing how to implement what was learned in the training. Dr. Barnes thanked the board for feeding staff lunch on this day.

PSBA – Governing Board

Dr. Barnes congratulated Board President, Julie Preston, on becoming a member of PSBA’s Governing Board.

COVID Vaccine

Dr. Barnes stated that she does not have any updates on when the COVID vaccine will be available. Tioga County continues to get few doses of the vaccine. The Department of Health will be sending out weekly updates regarding the vaccine.

Audit Report for July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020 (Exhibit #16)

A motion was made by Ed Bonham, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to approve the school district local audit report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020 as outlined in Exhibit #16. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

Maintenance of Effort Letter

Dr. Barnes asked Dan Fie to explain to the board what maintenance of effort means. Mr. Fie said it looks at money spent on programming from one year to the next. If there is a drastic decrease in spending, it can affect the district’s eligibility for funding. Dr. Barnes shared that a letter from the Division of Federal Programs stated that the district has maintained effort from one year to the next.

District Update

The District Update was made available in the usual format.

2.2 Business Manager's Report

Monthly Reports – (Exhibits #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12, #15)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Ed Bonham, to approve the Payroll Rate Changes, Capital Reserve Report, Financial Report, Cash Investment Report, Student Activity Report, Cafeteria Bills & Report, Transportation Changes, and Capital Projects Report as outlined in the Exhibits. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

2021/22 Budget Update

Kathy VanSchaick, Business Manager, shared the Governor's proposed 2021/22 budget with the board. Kathy and Dr. Barnes noted that the recommendation from state organizations is to not use these estimates for our budget and to continue to follow the state budget process as there are many questions on the details of how future funding may be impacted by the Governor's proposal.

2.3 Buildings and Grounds Report

Jeremy Freeman, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, reported that the secure entrance project is progressing. The secretary at Clark Wood Elementary School is now able to work from her desk. They will now move on to Westfield Area Elementary School.

3.0 ACTION ITEMS

3.1 2020/2021 Co-Curricular Appointments (Exhibit #13)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Ed Bonham, to approve 2020/2021 co-curricular appointments as outlined in Exhibit #13. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.2 2020/2021 Substitutes (Exhibit #14)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to approve 2020/2021 substitutes as outlined in Exhibit #14. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.3 Resignation

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Jean Kohut, to accept the resignation of Peggy Short, Family and Consumer Science Teacher at Williamson High School, effective January 15, 2021, and thank her for her dedicated service. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.4 Special Sick Leave (Exhibit #17)

A motion was made by Ed Bonham, seconded by Jean Kohut, to approve the attached staff members for Special Sick Leave in accordance with the Special Sick Leave Guidelines approved by the Board at the October 12, 2020 meeting as outlined in Exhibit #17. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.5 Second Reading and Final Adoption of Policies (Exhibit #18, #19, #20, #21, and #22)

A motion was made by Jolene Meisner, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve the second reading and final adoption of proposed changes to the following policies:

#332 - Working Periods (Exhibit #18)

#803 - School Calendar (Exhibit #19)

#113.1 - Discipline of Students With Disabilities (Exhibit #20)

#113.2 - Behavior Support (Exhibit #21)

#113.4 - Confidentiality of Special Education Student Information (Exhibit #22)

Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.6 Temporary Suspension of Policy #217 – Graduation (Exhibit #23)

A motion was made by Ed Bonham, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to temporarily suspend Policy #217 – Graduation for the class of 2022 regarding the section noting that the Board shall award a high school diploma to every student enrolled in this district who meets the requirements for graduation established by this Board as outlined in Exhibit #23. Due to the pandemic, some students will not be able to complete community service hours. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.7 Approval of IU 17 Budget (Exhibit #24)

A motion was made by Jolene Meisner, seconded by Greg Cummings, to approve the 2021/22 IU 17 General Operations Budget as outlined in Exhibit #24. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.8 Approval of New Courses

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to approve the following new courses:

Hospitality and Design

Grades 10-12

Students will be introduced to a variety of careers directly aligned with the Hospitality and Design Industry. Students will participate in event planning and interior design/decorating skills practice. They will also develop key employability skills related to these industries.

Weight Training and Fitness

Grades 11-12

This course is intended to provide students an opportunity to learn principles and concepts of weight training and fitness activities. It will provide a more in-depth look at joint mobility, stability, neuromuscular stimulation, and nutrition. Proper weight room etiquette, safety, and leadership will also be incorporated.

All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.9 Additional Vacancies During February

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to approve the Superintendent to interview and offer positions to top ranking candidates for any teacher or classified vacancies that may occur between the February and March Board meetings. Those recommendations will be made to the Board at the regular March meeting. (This will eliminate the need to convene a special meeting.) All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS

5.1 Future Board Meetings

An executive session for purposes authorized by the Sunshine Act may be held between tonight and the next Board meeting.

Board Work Session – February 22, 2021, 6:00 PM
Regular Board Meeting – March 8, 2021, 7:00 PM

5.2 Committee Meetings

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jolene Meisner, to adjourn. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

Adjournment was at 8:39 PM.

Alyson Yerrick
Board Secretary

All documents as attachments to the minutes not contained herein are maintained in a separate file located in the Superintendent's Office.