

NORTHERN TIOGA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
110 Ellison Road  
Elkland, PA 16920

Minutes – March 13, 2023

**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 Treasurer, Greg Cummings at 7:02 PM.

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

1.2 Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was led by Greg Cummings.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Greg Cummings led those present in the Pledge to the Flag.

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

Administrators Present: Superintendent Barnes, Kathy VanSchaick, Dan Fie, Jess Millard, Kris Kaufman, Bill Butterfield, Daren Bryant, Cheryl Sottolano, Matt Sottolano, and Christina Fry.

Approval to Add a New Motion In Section 3.0

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve to add a new motion under section 3.0 regarding Professional Appointments. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.5 Student/Staff Recognitions & Presentations

Williamson High School – Jaylin Butler

Jaylin Butler, daughter of Jennifer and Jody Butler of Tioga, PA, is the Student of the Month for Williamson. She is involved in marching and concert band in school. Jaylin is also an active member of the 4-H County Council, and she shows cows and pigs at the

Tioga County Fair. She stays busy at home with evening chores on the family farm and by helping her parents with their maple business.

Jaylin was nominated by the English Department for her positive attitude and work ethic in classes. She is always wearing an infectious smile, and her empathy for others is endearing. Jaylin is an active participant in all of her classes and is not afraid of answering first. Teachers know that if a trustworthy and kind student is needed, Jaylin is the one to ask. She is a freshman, but she often demonstrates a maturity that makes her stand out among her classmates. Congratulations, Jaylin! You make Williamson proud, and we look forward to your next three years as a Warrior!

#### Williamson Middle School – Brylee Snyder

Williamson Middle School's student of the month is seventh grader Brylee Snyder. Brylee is the daughter of Mike and Missy Snyder of Elkland. Brylee is an outstanding student who enjoys reading and writing. She works hard and maintains a positive outlook on life. Brylee is a member of the Williamson band where she plays the clarinet. She also helps with the yearbook club. Brylee enjoys photography, especially time spent in nature. Spending time with her family is very important to her. Snowmobiling with her father and visits with her grandparents are special to her. Shopping with her mother is also a favorite pastime. In the future, Brylee is hoping to pursue a career in criminal justice or possibly become a lawyer. Congratulations Brylee Snyder.

#### Cowanesque Valley High School – Ashley Woodring

Ashley is a sophomore at Cowanesque Valley and is the daughter of Bill and Marie Woodring of Westfield. Ashley's teachers will tell you she is always helpful, positive and a good role model to everyone. She is a member of the soccer, basketball, and softball teams. She also plays travel softball, indoor soccer and is a member of the band and student council. As a member of the band, she always pushes herself (sometimes too much!) to do her best. She is extremely passionate about being successful. Outside of school and sports, she lives on a beef farm and enjoys painting, reading, and cooking. Her future plan is to become an elementary school teacher.

#### Cowanesque Valley Middle School – Bella Boom

The Cowanesque Valley Middle School teachers are pleased to announce Bella Boom as our middle school Student of the Month. She is in seventh grade and is the daughter of Daniel and Tracey Boom of Osceola. Bella is a kind, patient, well-mannered student who is a joy to be around and have in class. Outside of the classroom, she is a member of chorus and band, and she is on the Battle of the Books team. In her free time, she enjoys listening to music, playing with her niece, spending time with family, and video chatting with her friends. Her favorite thing about middle school is being able to hang out with her friends in school. Bella's favorite subject in school is science and she plans to be a veterinarian when she's older. When asked what she is most proud of this year, Bella responded, "Making the high honor roll!" Bella, we are proud of all you do in and out of the classroom. Keep up the hard work and the positive attitude.

R.B. Walter Elementary School – Lorena Potter

Lorena Potter has been chosen for student of the month! Lorena is daughter of Allison Potter and Eric Potter.

Lorena is an excellent role model for the other fourth-grade students in our school. She is a kind and supportive friend who thinks about others before thinking about herself. She is also an excellent academic student who enjoys the challenges of school. Math is her favorite subject. She enjoys a good mathematical challenge, especially the feeling she gets when she knows the right answer. She is a high honor roll student, and her grades are important to her. Lorena also enjoys gym class and the opportunity to be active and play games. Lorena is a well-rounded young lady who is every teacher's delight.

During her free time, Lorena likes to be outdoors. Her favorite activity is being at the lake with her family. She loves animals and has 2 cats, 3 cows, and a rabbit. In the future, she would like to become a police officer because she knows she would be great at helping others. Congratulations Lorena!

Clark Wood Elementary School – Chole Allen

The Clark Wood Elementary School would like to congratulate Chloe Allen for earning the distinction of "Student of the Month" for the month of March. Chloe is a fifth-grade student in Mrs. Harlacker's homeroom class. She is the daughter of Jeffrey Allen and Tiffany Stone of Osceola as well as Sara LaPoint and Roland Monroe of Tioga. Chloe was chosen as student of the month because she consistently demonstrates the RAMS positive behavior expectations. She shows respect by being polite, using good manners, and using kind words. She acts safely in all areas of the school. She makes responsible choices by staying organized and prepared. Even during her basketball season, Chloe made sure that her assignments were completed on time and done to the best of her ability. She also shows pride in her school by participating in Student Council activities.

Chloe's classmates use the words "helpful", "kind", and "caring" to describe her. These same qualities show in the activities that she pursues outside of school. She attends church regularly and has participated in the school's Good News Evangelism club. Chloe loves horses and has attended a summer camp at Triple D Horse Farm. Her favorite movie is "Stitch" and she has her bedroom decorated with characters from the movie. When she is home, she enjoys playing with her brothers and sisters. Every teacher wants students like Chloe in his/her classroom. We are very proud of her and honored to have her represent our school.

Westfield Area Elementary School – Claire Hess

The Westfield Area Elementary School Student of the Month is Claire Hess. Claire, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader, is the daughter of Tuck and Vanessa Hess. She resides on her family farm with her parents, three brothers, and a sister. Claire plays softball for the Knoxville Tigers and basketball at WAES. She is a member of the ski club, student council, chorus, and is going to Song Fest. In her free time, she enjoys playing with the baby farm animals, cooking and baking, and playing with her brothers. Claire's teachers describe her as a hard-working student that always has a positive, can-do attitude! She is always willing to help others anytime there is a need! Claire is very conscientious with her schoolwork. She is

compassionate and puts the needs of others ahead of her own. We are proud to have Claire Hess as our March Student of the Month!

#### Recognition of District and Regional Band and Chorus Students

Students from Cowanesque Valley High School and Williamson High School were recognized for their accomplishments with District and Regional Band and Chorus this year. Dr. Barnes acknowledged the students and thanked them and the teachers for all of the hard work and dedication they put toward their accomplishments.

From Cowanesque Valley High School: Judah Mummert plays the euphonium and received the highest in his section while attending District Band. Shayn Johnson plays the guitar and attended the PMEA District 8 Modern Band Festival. Evan Zinck attended District Chorus as a Bass 2. Bryson Fuhrer attended District and Regional Chorus as a Tenor 2.

From Williamson High School: Thomas Brown and Stephen Hepfer attended District Chorus as Tenor 2. Robin Weir plays the clarinet and attended District and Regional Band. Savanna Slaymaker plays the flute and attended District and Regional Band. Darby Crance plays the trumpet and attended District Jazz Band.

#### 1.6 Williamson High School Jazz Band Performance – Music in Our Schools Month

The Williamson Jazz Band performed for the Board in honor of Music In Our Schools Month. Dr. Barnes thanked them for the incredible performance.

#### 1.7 Open Forum

##### Bob Goodrich, Osceola, PA

Mr. Goodrich gave a recognition to the Jazz Band and complimented their performance. He also made a statement of recognition to the district employees who devote their time and lives to help the students succeed. He reminded everyone of the senior projects and said there are (2) two municipalities who need technology help archiving data. Mr. Goodrich stated he would be sending a letter to Dr. Barnes with more information. He also offered a prayer.

#### 1.8 Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the monthly meeting minutes from the February 6, 2023 Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting, the February 13, 2023 Regular Board meeting, and the March 8, 2023 Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting. James Moyer brought it to the Board's attention there was an error in the February 13, 2023 Regular Board meeting minutes. Section 3.2 Substitutes did not pass. Julie Preston abstained from voting. There were (4) four affirmative votes. This required affirmative votes from the majority of the entire Board (9 members). The meeting minutes will be corrected to reflect this, and the Substitutes from the February 13, 2023

Board meeting will be placed on the April 11, 2023 Regular Board meeting agenda for approval. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.9 Budget Transfers (Exhibit #2)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve budget transfers as outlined in Exhibit #2. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.10 Approval of Bills (Exhibit #3)

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve bills as outlined in Exhibit #3. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.11 Facility Use Permits & Conferences (Exhibits #4 & #5)

1.12 Information & Correspondence

## 2.0 REPORTS

2.1 Superintendent's Report

EITC Contributions:

Dr. Barnes received an e-mail from Kristin Hamilton stating the district will be receiving \$33,333.00 as part of the EITC funding. Mr. Butterfield and Mr. Sottolano each shared with the Board their intentions of what they would like to spend this money on.

Mr. Butterfield handed out a slide show for the Board members to view. He stated the Boss laser has been really awesome to use and is being utilized for various projects. He would like to use some of the funds to purchase a new Tig welder, (5) five more kits for the Robotics class, and a nail gun. Mr. Butterfield also let the Board know there was \$1,200.00 raised from the raffle on the hunting shed/blind.

Mr. Sottolano presented a packet of itemized list of items for this school year and for next school year. He noted there are items listed which would be utilized for various departments in the school: Drones and included programming and coding; bigger plasma table and another plasma cutter, which includes training as well; a 3D printer for technology classes, and prosthetic hand kits, used in science classes, and aquarium replacement for the fish being raised.

2.2 Business Manager's Report

Monthly Reports – (Exhibits #6 (None), #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Ben Howe, to approve the Capital Reserve Report, Financial Report, Cash Investment Report, Student Activity Report, Cafeteria Bills & Report, and Transportation Changes as outlined in Exhibit #7, Exhibit

#8, Exhibit #9, Exhibit #10, Exhibit #11, and Exhibit #12. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

2023/2024 Budget Update

Kathy VanSchaick provided a budget update , which included the following information:

- **Act 1 Budget Timeline**

**May 31, 2023** – Adopt Proposed Final Budget

**June 30, 2023** – Adopt Final Budget

- **Preliminary Budget Revenue Information**

No Tax Increase - \$28,304.00 in new money

Adjusted Index is 6.1% for Northern Tioga which equates to 1.171 mills or approximately \$666,979.00 in increased tax revenue

2017-18 Increase was 1.78%. Less than adjusted Act 1 Index of 3.6%

2018-19 Increase was 2.69%. Less than adjusted Act 1 Index of 3.5%

2019-20 Increase was at the adjusted Act 1 Index of 3.4%

2020/21 – No Tax Increase

2021/22 – No Tax Increase

2022/23 – Increase was 4.0%. Less than the adjusted Act 1 Index of 5%

- **State Budget for 2023/24**

Governor Shapiro presented his proposed budget on March 7, 2023. Included in his proposal:

Basic Education Funding \$567 million increase, being distributed through the BEF formula

Special Education Funding \$103.8 million increase

\$100 million in school safety and security grants for physical safety through PCCD

\$100 million in school mental health support grants

\$100 million school environmental repair and improvements grants

\$38.5 million for free breakfasts and free lunches for reduced-price students

What does the PROPOSED budget equate to for Northern Tioga?

---Basic Education Funding increase \$1,191,264 over 2022/23 allocation (the reality of seeing this amount is very slim)

---Special Education Funding increase \$153,922 over 2022/23 allocation

- School Based Mental Health Support Grant \$121,403
- No amount yet for school safety and security grants
- No Increase in Ready to Learn Block Grant
- Vocational Educational Funding increase \$3,959
- No longer eligible for Perkins Funding decrease \$30,100

**Important to remember that this is a PROPOSED budget.**

PASBO will be presenting a review of the budget on March 14---hoping to get additional information.

- **Federal Revenue**

No projections for 2023/24 yet

- **Expenditure Information – that is known at this time**

---BC/BS Increase at 4.3% average -- increase of approximately \$217,037.00

---PSERS Retirement Rate is 34.00%, down from 35.26% last year. This is the first decline in the Employer Contribution Rate in more than a decade. Please note that employer contribution rates are projected to increase in the following fiscal year and beyond. By 2025/26, we will have surpassed the 2022/23 rate of 35.26%. Estimated projections are listed below:

2024/2025 – 34.73%  
 2025/2026 – 35.49%  
 2026/2027 – 36.15%  
 2027/2028 – 36.67%  
 2028/2029 – 37.21%  
 2029/2030 – 37.77%  
 2030/2031 – 38.35%

---Salary Increase for Professional Staff is approximately \$534,334

---Support Contract is under negotiations.

- **Next Steps**

Continue to review expenditures and revenues and update projections

## 2.3 Buildings and Grounds Report

Daren Bryant, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, provided a handout to the Board, and gave a general update on the following items:

5-Year Budget: This is in progress, and the Buildings and Ground Committee will be discussing these items at their next meeting.

3-Year Contract from NRG: This contract has been received and is on the Board Agenda for approval.

Westfield Area Elementary School Hot Water Project: This is almost complete. Water softener system to finish, and should be complete by March 17, 2023

Cowanesque Valley High School: Budgeted equipment is ordered and should be delivered soon.

Water issue at Westfield Area Elementary School and Cowanesque Valley High School: Leak in a water line located in the baseball field of Cowanesque Valley High School. It was not necessary to dig up the field to make the necessary repairs.

## 2.4 Grant Update

Kris Kaufman, Principal of Academic Affairs, provided a report with updates to the board. This coming Spring will be a busy time for federal programs. The ESSER report was submitted before the March 9, 2023 due date. They are now working on ESSER monitoring and ESSA monitoring. The funding adjustment was received for federal programs for ESSA programming which was an increase of \$5,000.00.

Professional Development for SEL Training: Eight social skills will be worked on with faculty and staff during 2023/2024 school year. Mr. Kaufman expressed it will be important to present this to the Board as this program is developed.

Summer School: There are some agenda items for approval for the 2022/23 summer program. This will be the last year all funding is provided for all expenses. Mr. Kaufman stated there will be some funding available next year, but not to cover all expenses.

Community Care Initiative: Program is up and running, and is running well, in all buildings. 27 at RBW, 30 at CWES, and 30 at WAES. The kids are excited, and it is going well.

## 3.0 ACTION ITEMS

### 3.1 2022/2023 Co-Curricular Appointments (Exhibit #13)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by James Moyer, to approve 2022/2023 co-curricular appointments as outlined in Exhibit #13. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.2 Retirements

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Ben Howe, to accept the intent of retirement of Carol Button, teacher aide at the R.B. Walter Elementary School, effective June 30, 2023 and Lori Carpenter, teacher aide at the Williamson High School, effective



June 6, 2023, and thank them for their dedicated service. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.3 Substitutes (Exhibit #14)

A motion was made by Ben Howe, seconded by James Moyer, to approve 2022/2023 substitutes as outlined in Exhibit #14. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.4 Classified Appointments (Exhibit #15)

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Ben Howe, to appoint Franklin Nudd, custodian, Williamson High School, \$15.81 per hour, effective February 14, 2023; Rachael Heuer, 4.00 hour per day instructional aide, R.B. Walter Elementary School, \$14.14 per hour, effective February 17, 2023; Sara LaPoint, 2.75 hour per day cafeteria aide, R.B. Walter Elementary School, \$13.34 per hour, effective February 21, 2023; Donna Musto, 3.50 hour per day cafeteria aide, Cowanesque Valley High School, \$13.34 per hour, effective February 27, 2023 in accordance with the contractual agreement between the Northern Tioga School District and the Northern Tioga Education Support Professionals as outlined in Exhibit #15. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.5 Resignation of Superintendent

A motion was made by Jim Neal, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve the resignation of Superintendent Dr. Diana Barnes from her position effective June 30, 2023. Voice Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.6 Superintendent Appointment

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by James Moyer, to appoint and elect Kristopher Kaufman as Superintendent for a 3-year term starting on July 1, 2023 with a starting salary of \$120,000.00 as outlined in the contract. Roll Call Vote. Jean Kohut casted a negative vote. All other votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.7 Approval of Summer School Grades 7-12

A motion was made by Ben Howe, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the 2023 summer school program for credit recovery for grades 7-12. A student may take up to 2 courses and the course work will be paid with ARP/ESSER, Summer School Program Set Aside Grant funding. Transportation will be provided from the high schools to the administration building. Transportation is also funded through the ARP/ESSER Set Aside Grant. Guidance counselors will notify eligible students. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.8 Summer School Teacher / Aide Compensation

A motion was made by Ben Howe, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the compensation for 2023 summer school teacher(s) at per diem rate for 3 weeks to be paid by ARP/ESSER Summer School Program Grant funding. A summer school aide will be paid for 3 weeks at the employee's hourly rate paid by ARP/ESSER Summer School Program Grant funding. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.9 Principal's Special Request

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve Mr. Sottolano, principal of Cowanesque Valley High School, request to use \$2,775.00 of his principal's special request account to support student rewards, field trips, and a deposit on next year's first day guest speaker. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.10 Approval of 2023/2024 School Calendar (Exhibit #16)

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the 2023/2024 school calendar with Labor Day, December 22, December 29, Good Friday, and Easter Monday as official local school district holidays per BEC 24PS15-1502 as outlined in Exhibit #16. Voice Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.11 2023/24 Yearbook Quotes (Exhibit #17)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve the 2023-24 yearbook quotes for Cowanesque Valley High School and Williamson Jr/Sr High School, Jostens, in the amount of \$68.00 per book as outlined in Exhibit #17. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.12 Approval of MOU Between NTSD and NTEA and Employee #2917 (Exhibit #18)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Ben Howe, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Northern Tioga School District and the Northern Tioga Education Association and Employee #2917 as outlined in Exhibit #18. Roll Call Vote. Jean Kohut casted a negative vote. All other votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.13 Approval of 3-Year NRG Contract (Exhibit #19)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the 3-year contract between NRG Controls North, Inc. and Northern Tioga school District as outlined in Exhibit #19. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

### 3.14 Approval of Bradford-Tioga Head Start MOU (Exhibit #20)

A motion was made by Jim Neal, seconded by James Moyer, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Bradford-Tioga Head Start and Northern Tioga School District as outlined in Exhibit #20. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.15 Approval of NPRC Dual-Enrollment Agreement (Exhibit #21)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the agreement between Northern Pennsylvania Regional College and Northern Tioga School District as outlined in Exhibit #21. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.16 Approval of Cowanesque Valley High School Bathroom Renovation Bids (Exhibit #22)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the Cowanesque Valley High School Restroom Renovation Bids as outlined in Exhibit #22. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.17 Additional Vacancies During March

A motion was made by Ben Howe, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve the Superintendent to interview and offer positions to top ranking candidates for any teacher, classified, or Act 93 vacancies that may occur between the March and April Board meetings. Those recommendations will be made to the Board at the regular April meeting. (This will eliminate the need to convene a special meeting.) Voice Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.18 Professional Appointments (Exhibit #23)

A motion was made by Jim Neal, seconded by James Moyer, to appoint Jessica Rogers, Elementary Teacher, R.B. Walter Elementary School, Step 1, Master's Degree. Education: Mansfield University, May 2015. Effective March 14, 2023, pending Act 24 and Act 168 clearances; Jamie McCormick, Elementary Teacher, R.B. Walter Elementary School, Step 1, Master's Degree. Education: Walden University, June, 2015. Effective August 21, 2023, pending Act 24 and Act 168 clearances in accordance with the contractual agreement between the Northern Tioga School District and the Northern Tioga Education Association as outlined in Exhibit #23. Roll Call Vote. 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 – March 27, 2023, 6:00 PM  
Regular Board Meeting – April 11, 2023, 7:00 PM

**6.0 ADJOURNMENT**

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

Adjournment was at 8:18 PM.

The board convened for an executive session at this time for legal and personnel issues.

Kelly Sherman  
Board Secretary

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