

NORTHERN TIOGA SCHOOL DISTRICT
110 Ellison Road
Elkland, PA 16920

Minutes – September 13, 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 7:09 PM.

Executive Session – An executive session followed the August 9, 2021 meeting for the purpose of legal and personnel issues.

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 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, Greg Cummings, Jean Kohut, Jolene Meisner, James Moyer, Jim Neal, Ben Howe (did not vote), and Kim Strauser.
Absent: Ed Bonham

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

1.5 Student/Staff Recognitions & Presentations

Tenure and Professional Contract

Korianne McManus, Autistic Support Teacher at Clark Wood Elementary School, was granted tenure and issued a professional contract.

1.6 Open Forum

Kayla Lane, Osceola, PA

Kayla Lane expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Maria Phelps, Elkland, PA

Maria Phelps expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Danielle Pierce, Westfield, PA

Danielle Pierce expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Michael Hostrander, Westfield, PA

Michael Hostrander expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

George Lockett, Westfield, PA

George Lockett expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Murray Johnson, Westfield, PA

Murray Johnson expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Laurie Lockett, Westfield, PA

Laurie Lockett expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Courtney Case, Little Marsh, PA

Courtney Case expressed concerns over the size of the kindergarten classes at Westfield Area Elementary School.

Brittany Lind, Tioga, PA

Brittany Lind expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Amanda Mummert, Knoxville, PA

Amanda Mummert expressed concerns over the size of the kindergarten classes at Westfield Area Elementary School.

Ashley Lovejoy, Tioga PA

Ashley Lovejoy expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

Josh Shumack, Knoxville, PA

Josh Shumack expressed concerns over the requirement for students to wear masks while in school.

1.7 Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by James Moyer, to approve the monthly meeting minutes from the August 9, 2021 regular meeting and the August 23, 2021 special meeting. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

1.8 Budget Transfers (Exhibit #2) - None

1.9 Approval of Bills (Exhibit #3)

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

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

1.11 Information & Correspondence

PlanCon Part H for RBW/WHS

Approval from the PA Department of Education has been received for Revised PlanCon Part H: Project Financing for the R.B. Walter Elementary/Williamson High School as outlined in Exhibit #16.

PlanCon Part H for CVHS

Approval from the PA Department of Education has been received for Revised PlanCon Part H: Project Financing for the Cowanesque Valley Junior/Senior High School as outlined in Exhibit #17.

2.0 REPORTS

2.1 Superintendent's Report

PA Graduation Requirements

Dr. Barnes shared that Act 158 allows the Secretary of Education to grant a waiver for the new graduation requirements. These requirements are set to begin with the class of 2023.

ESS

Dr. Barnes shared information on using ESS to provide substitutes for the district. Representatives from ESS will be invited to the next work session to present to the board.

ARP ESSER Funds

Dr. Barnes stated that the district is still waiting for guidelines from the state regarding these funds.

Williamson High School A-TSI

Dr. Barnes stated that Williamson will be receiving \$37,769.00 in ARP ESSER funds due to being designated an A-TSI.

2.2 Business Manager's Report

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

A motion was made by Jim Neal, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve the Payroll Rate Changes, Capital Reserve Report (August 2021 Unaudited), Financial Report (July and August 2021), Cash Investment Report (July and August 2021 Unaudited), Student Activity Report (July 2021 Unaudited), Cafeteria Bills & Report (August 2021 Bills and July 2021 Report), Transportation Changes, and Capital Projects Report (None) as outlined in the Exhibits. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Greg Cummings, to approve Lift Van Transportation Bids as outlined in Exhibit #18. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

2.3 Buildings and Grounds Report

Jeremy Freeman, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, stated that the building access project is complete and the building automation project is pending punch lists. Equipment has been installed for the radio project. We are still lacking a couple base radios. Eventually, the district will have GPS tracking capabilities as well. Jeremy and his staff are also working to repair a water leak at Westfield Area Elementary School. They hope to have the repair completed by Friday.

3.0 ACTION ITEMS

3.1 2021/2022 Co-Curricular Appointments (Exhibit #13)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve 2021/2022 co-curricular appointments as outlined in Exhibit #13. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.2 2021/2022 Substitutes (Exhibit #14)

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve 2021/2022 substitutes as outlined in Exhibit #14. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.3 Resignations

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Kim Strauser, to accept the resignations of: Cassandra Murrelle, teacher at R.B. Walter Elementary School, effective August 10, 2021; Wade Owlett, teacher at Clark Wood Elementary School, effective August 11, 2021; Jessica Cole, teacher at Cowanesque Valley High School, effective August 24, 2021; and Carol Padgett, teacher aide at Williamson High School, effective September 17, 2021, and thank them for their dedicated service. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.4 Professional Appointments (Exhibit #19)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jim Neal, to appoint:
Kathy Harlacker, Elementary Teacher, Clark Wood Elementary School, Step 1, Bachelor's Degree, effective August 23, 2021;

Jason Fry, Long-Term Substitute Learning Support Teacher, Clark Wood Elementary School, Step 1, Master's Degree, effective: August 23, 2021 in accordance with the contractual agreement between the Northern Tioga School District and the Northern Tioga Education Association as outlined in Exhibit #19. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.5 Classified Appointments (Exhibit #20)

A motion was made by James Moyer, seconded by Greg Cummings, to appoint:
Lynn Billetta, 2.5 hour per day Cafeteria Aide, R.B. Walter Elementary/Williamson High School, \$13.00 per hour, effective August 25, 2021;

Jessica Kachur, 2.25 hour per day Cafeteria Aide, R.B. Walter Elementary/Williamson High School, \$13.00 per hour, effective August 25, 2021;

Catherine Cole, 5.5 hour per day Special Education Teacher Aide, Clark Wood Elementary School, \$16.23 per hour, effective September 7, 2021. (Previously a 4.0 hour per day instructional aide at Clark Wood Elementary School.);

Calli Cody, 5.5 hour per day Special Education Teacher Aide, Williamson High School, \$13.80 per hour, effective September 17, 2021;

Melissa Cody, 4.0 hour per day Special Education Teacher Aide, R.B. Walter Elementary School, \$13.80 per hour, effective September 17, 2021 in accordance with the contractual agreement between the Northern Tioga School District and the Northern Tioga Education Support Professionals as outlined in Exhibit #20. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.6 Principal of Academic Affairs Appointment (Exhibit #21)

A motion was made by Jim Neal, seconded by Kim Strauser, to appoint Kristopher Kaufman to the position of Principal of Academic Affairs effective September 20, 2021 at a salary of Level 8 of the current Act 93 agreement as outlined in Exhibit #21. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.7 Approval of Increase in Hours

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by James Moyer, to approve increasing the following teacher aide hours: Megan Buck, Williamson High School, from 6.5 to 6.83 hours; Alicia Sherman, Williamson High School, from 6.5 to 6.83 hours; Amanda Kerr, Clark Wood Elementary School, from 6.5 to 6.83 hours. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.8 First Reading of Policies (Exhibit #22)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Kim Strauser, to approve the first reading of proposed changes to Policy #903 – Public Participation in Board Meetings as outlined in Exhibit #22. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.9 Second Reading and Final Adoption of Policies (Exhibits #23, #24, #25 & #26)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the second reading and final adoption of proposed changes to the following policies:

#218.1 - Weapons (Exhibit #23)

#218.2 - Terroristic Threats (Exhibit #24)

#218.3 - Discipline of Student Convicted/Adjudicated of Sexual Assault (Exhibit #25)

#314 - Physical Examination (Exhibit #26)

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

3.10 Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plans (Exhibit #27)

A motion was made by Kim Strauser, seconded by Jean Kohut, to approve the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plans for Clark Wood Elementary School, R.B. Walter Elementary School, and Westfield Area Elementary School as outlined in Exhibit #27. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.11 Approval of Letter of Agreement (Exhibit #28)

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Jim Neal, to approve the Letter of Agreement between the district and Old Dominion University for a period of three years as outlined in Exhibit #28. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.12 Approval of Increase in Substitute Teacher Aide & Cook Rate

A motion was made by Greg Cummings, seconded by Jean Kohut, to increase the substitute teacher aide and cook rate from \$7.25/hour to \$10.00/hour. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.13 Principal's Special Request

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by James Moyer, to approve Mr. Kaufman, Principal of Williamson High School, to use up to \$1,000.00 from his Principal's Special Request Fund to apply towards incentives for the PBIS program. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.14 Discussion and Voting for 2022 PSBA Officers

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by Jim Neal, to vote for the following candidates for 2022 PSBA officers: President Elect: David Schaap, Vice President: Allison Mathis, PSBA Insurance Trustees: Richard Frerichs, William LaCoff, and Nathan Mains, School Board Secretaries Forum Steering Committee: Jennifer Davidson, Deana Lancenese, and Bethanne Zeigler. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

3.15 Additional Vacancies During September

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

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Discussion of Field Trip – Matt Sottolano

Matt Sottolano shared that due to out-of-country field trips being rescheduled as a result of Covid, some students who had signed up to attend the trips are no longer in school. These students are wondering if they can still attend the trips. Dr. Barnes noted that these trips are not sponsored by the school. She will check with the district's solicitor to see if these students can attend.

4.2 Class Size Policy

Mrs. Sottolano, Principal of Westfield Area Elementary School, expressed concerns over the size of her kindergarten classes. She stated that there are 24 students in each class. She asked the board to re-evaluate the district's class size policy that allows this many students in one class. Mr. Millard, Principal of Clark Wood Elementary School, agreed with Mrs. Sottolano's concerns.

A motion was made by Greg Cummings, seconded by Kim Strauser, to hire 5.5 hour per day teacher aides for kindergarten classrooms with more than 22 students. Roll Call Vote. The motion was defeated with Jean Kohut, Jolene Meisner, James Moyer, and Jim Neal casting negative votes.

A motion was made by Jean Kohut to hire an elementary teacher for Westfield Area Elementary School. The motion was defeated for lack of a second.

A motion was made by Greg Cummings, seconded by Jean Kohut, to hire one full-time teacher aide for the kindergarten classrooms at Westfield Area Elementary School and one full-time teacher aide for the kindergarten classrooms at Clark Wood Elementary School. These aides are to perform kindergarten duties only. No other duties are to be assigned. Roll Call Vote. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

4.3 Retirement

A motion was made by Jean Kohut, seconded by James Moyer, to accept the retirement of Scott Tanner, custodian at Clark Wood Elementary School, effective December 2, 2021 and thank him for his dedicated service. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

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.

Regular Board Meeting – October 11, 2021, 7:00 PM

Board Work Session – October 25, 2021, 6:00 PM

5.2 Committee Meetings

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Jim Neal, seconded by Jean Kohut, to adjourn. All votes were affirmative. The motion carried.

Adjournment was at 9:07 PM.

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

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.