



South Fayette Township School District

Committee Meeting of the Whole

Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2023
7:30 PM

The Committee Meeting of the South Fayette Township Board of School Directors was called to order at 7:39 PM in the Studio, in the High School by President Len Fornella with the Pledge of Allegiance. President Fornella apologized for the late start announcing the Board held an Executive Session prior to the start of the meeting to discuss personnel and/or legal issues.

Present: Teresa Burroughs (arrived at 7:45 PM), Joe Welch, Tom Iagnemma, Alan Vezzi, Len Fornella

Present Virtually: Prajakta Patankar

Absent: Lena Hannah, Jen Iriti, Paul Brinsky

Others: Chris Voltz, Tucker Arensberg, P.C.; Dr. Michelle Miller, Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler; Student Representative Alekyha Buragadda; Director of Finance/Human Resources Brian Tony; High School Interim Principal Dr. Patricia Smith; High School Assistant Principal Robert Butts; Teacher Emily Giovannucci; Rishika Somireddy, Varun Shiralkar, Preetam Jukalkar, Director of Technology Rob Warfield; and Cynthia Geisler, Superintendent's Assistant/Board Secretary

President Fornella announced the meeting is being recorded.

Dr. Smith proudly introduced and congratulated the following students on being selected as semifinalists in the 69th annual National Merit Scholarship competition:

- Rishika Somireddy, wants a career in electrical engineering; applying to colleges; thanked her peers and the best teachers at South Fayette
- Varun Shiralkar, wants a career in CS/physics; looking at the University of Texas at Dallas; thanked the best teachers; opportunities are endless at South Fayette
- Preetam Jukalkar, wants a career in CS or computational biology; applying to colleges; thanked South Fayette for 12 great years, an amazing place

Mrs. Burroughs arrived.

Brian Tony informed the Board of the 2023-2024 Index and Budget Timeline

- Index is 7.0% equals 1.869 mills
- Increasing millage to the index would be 28.569
- Make a recommendation in November or December to pass a motion not to exceed the index
- Due to 2024 being Leap year, the proposed final budget will need approved at the May 21 meeting and the final budget at the June 25 meeting, following the requirement of the budget needing to be available for public view 30 days prior to final approval

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Burroughs seconded Vezzi on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Solicitor for Board approval of the October 17, 2023, **revised** Committee Meeting agenda. **The following new motions were received and added today:**

- The Superintendent and Director of Technology recommend Board approval of the leave of absence request for the Help Desk Manager, effective on or about November 21, 2023.
- The Superintendent and High School Principals recommend Board approval of the intermittent FMLA leave of absence request for a Paraeducator in the High School with an effective date to be determined.
- The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of two students at Duquesne University, to complete 30 hours of field experience with an English teacher in the High School, pending receipt of required documents. There will be no cost to the District.
- The Superintendent and Solicitor recommend Board approval of the Stipulated Adjudication Agreement pertaining to a student. (needs Board action taken on October 17)

Voice Vote – All Yes

CONSENT AGENDA

1. The Board considered approval of the Minutes from the following Board Meetings:

Committee Meeting	September 19, 2023
Regular Meeting	September 26, 2023

2. The Board considered approval of the following Financial Reports which have been reviewed by the Superintendent and Secondary Administration:

Athletic Fund	Mark Keener
High School Activity Fund	Sharon Aprea
Middle School Activity Fund	Sharon Aprea
Tax Collector Reports (July 2022 – June 2023)	Kevin Biber

3. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Tax Collector Kevin Biber for Board approval of the provided list of Real Estate Refunds due to reduction in assessment and/or overpayment.
4. Expenditures were submitted for Board review to be approved at the Regular Board Meeting.

Superintendent’s Monthly Report provided by Dr. Kristin Deichler, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Deichler reported the following:

- Dr. Miller attending the meeting virtually; currently in Washington DC at Digital Promises League of Innovative School fall convening
- October 11 showcased the District focusing on CS pathways and innovative programming to three schools, Elizabeth Forward, River Valley, and Quakertown; visited all four schools and various STEAM and CS classrooms and met with eight educators
- October 25 “Launch” to showcase three of our most recent innovative programs, cybersecurity classes and program, Esports competitions, and Fly Like a Girl (FLAG) drone program; overview of each program and tours of the learning spaces; sign up form on the website
- This month focused on preparing students for emergency situations; parents should receive an email outlining what students will experience; schools identified as an ALICE certified school district, very proud of this distinction and committed to the safety of our students and staff

- Dr. Miller and Student Representative Alekhya Buragadda co-facilitated the first Student Superintendent Advisory Council meeting; included introductions, explanations of purpose and gathered feedback on AP testing and the creation of the 2024-2045 school calendar; additional meetings being planned

BUSINESS OFFICE

President Fornella announced all motions that need action taken will be voted on at the end of the meeting.

1. The Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Maintenance Manager Athan Tsourekis recommend Board approval of the quote from Arbon Equipment Corporation for the replacement of the loading dock levelers at both the High School and Middle School. The total cost of \$21,662.00 includes the remediation work to the masonry structure at the Middle School. The costs will be funded by the maintenance contingency budget. **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
2. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony for Board approval to authorize budget transfers as necessary beginning retroactive to October 1, 2023. If any transfers are necessary after the fiscal year end, appropriate detail will be supplied to the Board for ratification.

PERSONNEL

1. The Superintendent, Director of Finance/HR Brian Tony, and Facilities Director Steve Timmins recommend Board approval to hire Josh Wasserman as the Custodial Shift Manager, effective pending receipt of required documents and reference checks, at a salary of **\$57,500**, prorated for the 2023-2024 school year. **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
2. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval to hire Eileen Schmidt as a Classroom Paraeducator in the Intermediate School, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 school year, at the probationary rate of \$16.09 per hour. After completion of a successful probationary period, the rate will be \$20.11 per hour. This position is due to a retirement. **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
3. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of the resignation of Daxa Patel as a Food Service employee in the High School effective retroactive to October 13, 2023. **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
4. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of the following (call as needed) substitute teachers and support personnel, pending receipt of required documents, for the 2023-2024 school year: **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
 - Kelly Keller, Nurse
 - Abbigale Alauzen, Grades PK-4
 - Delany Mangis, Pre-Service/Early Childhood/PK-4
 - Smitha Philip, SmartStart, Paraeducator at the rate of \$12.50 per hour, Personal Care Paraeducator at the rate of \$13.50 per hour, and Clerical at the rate of \$11.00 per hour
 - Ranjani Bora, SmartStart, Paraeducator at the rate of \$12.50 per hour, and Personal Care Paraeducator at the rate of \$13.50 per hour
 - Breanna Snyder, Pre-Service, Mid-Level Math 4-8

- Melissa Drake, Elementary K-6/Mid-Level Science 6-9
 - Daxa Patel, Student Monitor at the rate of \$10.00 per hour
 - Devon Strimel, BCIT PK-12
5. The Superintendent and High School Assistant Principal Robert Butts recommend Board approval to hire Zaina Kennedy as a High School Building Substitute teacher effective retroactive to October 4, 2023, at the rate of \$150.00 per day. **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
 6. The Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, Head Varsity Wrestling Coach Rick Chaussard recommend Board approval of the following, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 season: **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
 - Kenneth Smith, Assistant Varsity Wrestling Coach
 - Jared Walter, Assistant Varsity Wrestling Coach
 - Jason Cardillo, Volunteer Assistant Varsity Wrestling Coach
 - Keith Lau, Assistant Jr. High Wrestling Coach
 7. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of following EPRs effective for the 2023-2024 school year:

Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – Middle School Best Buddies, 23-24 school year
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – High School Science Bowl, 23-24 school year
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – High School Student Government, 23-24 school year
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – High School Spanish Club, 23-24 school year
Substitute Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – High School Drama Club, 23-24 school year
Substitute Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – High School Art Club, 23-24 school year
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – Intermediate School Lion Hearts, 23-24 school year
High School Musical Sound Manager
High School Musical Costume Design Manager
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – Middle School Drama Club, 23-24 school year
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – Middle School Chorus, 23-24 school year
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – Middle School Musical, 23-24 school year

8. The Superintendent and Middle School Principals recommend Board approval of the intermittent leave of absence request for a Grade 7 ELA teacher in the Middle School with an effective date to be determined.
9. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of a student at Point Park University, to complete student teaching, pending receipt of required documents, with a Grade 1 teacher in the Elementary School, from January 9, 2024 through February 28, 2024 and with a Special Education teacher in the High School from February 29, 2024 through April 19, 2024. There will be no cost to the District.

10. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of a student at Duquesne University, to complete 30 hours of field experience, pending receipt of required documents, with a Social Studies teacher in the High School. There will be no cost to the District.
11. The Superintendent and Director of Transportation recommend Board approval to hire a school bus driver, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 school year.
12. The Superintendent, Athletic Director, and Head Girls Volleyball Coach recommend Board approval of the resignation of a Volunteer Assistant Girls Varsity Volleyball Coach and as an Assistant 7th/8th Grade Girls Volleyball Coach, effective retroactive to October 5, 2023.
13. The Superintendent, Athletic Director, Head Varsity Baseball Coach recommend Board approval of an Assistant Varsity Baseball Coach, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 season.
14. The Superintendent and Director of Technology recommend Board approval of the leave of absence request for the Help Desk Manager, effective on or about November 21, 2023.
15. The Superintendent and High School Principals recommend Board approval of the intermittent FMLA leave of absence request for a Paraeducator in the High School with an effective date to be determined.
16. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of two students at Duquesne University, to complete 30 hours of field experience with an English teacher in the High School, pending receipt of required documents. There will be no cost to the District.

EDUCATION

1. The Superintendent recommends Board approval for Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist and teachers Jessica Slencak, and Katie Caprio to attend the AASA Learning 2025 Site Visit Cajon Valley Unified in San Diego, California, to learn about their implementation of the World of Work, from Wednesday, November 15, 2023 through Friday, November 17, 2023. The costs include travel, lodging, and meals will be funded by the AASA Learning 2025 grant with any additional funds from the 2023-2024 budget. **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
2. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval to conduct the Extended School Year (ESY) program in the summer of 2024. The program will run Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., beginning July 1, 2024, through July 25, 2024. The District will be closed July 4, 2024. The cost of the program will be included in the 2024-2025 budget.
5. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler, and Director of Finance Brian Tony for Board approval of the following trial clubs effective for the 2023-2024 school year:
 - Writing Club – High School
 - Esports – High School

- Esports – Middle School
- Girls Who Code – Middle School
- Competitive Dance Coordinator

TRANSPORTATION

There were no items discussed.

ATHLETICS

1. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Girls Varsity Basketball Coach Bryan Bennett for Board approval to permit the Girls Junior Varsity and Varsity Basketball teams to travel to Charleston, South Carolina to play in a girls' basketball tournament. The team will depart South Fayette tentatively on Wednesday, December 27, 2023 and tentatively return on Saturday, December 30, 2023. Appropriate adult to student ratios for supervision will be assured by the administration. There is no cost to the District.
2. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Wrestling Coach Rick Chaussard for Board approval for the Varsity Wrestling team to travel to Erie, PA to compete in a wrestling tournament being held at Cathedral Prep High School. The team will depart South Fayette tentatively on Friday, December 15, 2023 and tentatively return on Saturday, December 16, 2023. Appropriate adult to student ratios for supervision will be assured by the administration. There is no cost to the District.

CONSTRUCTION

1. The Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony recommend retroactive Board approval for DRAW Collective to submit Requests for Proposal (RFP) for Land Survey, Phase 1 Environmental, Wetland Delineation & Preliminary Grading Analysis from the following civil engineering companies:
 - Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.
 - Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.

The Board briefly discussed and agreed to approve the above motion tonight.

MISCELLANEOUS

6. The Superintendent and Solicitor recommend Board approval of the Stipulated Adjudication Agreement pertaining to a student. **(needs Board action taken on October 17)**
7. **The Superintendent and Solicitor recommend Board approval of the Stipulated Adjudication Agreement pertaining to a student. (needs Board action taken on October 17)**
8. Consider the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval to endorse the following as PSBA candidates: *(information provided)*
 - Allison Mathis as 2024 President-Elect (one-year term)
 - Sabrina Backer as 2024 Vice President (one-year term)
 - Karen Beck Pooley as 2024-2026 PSBA Treasurer (three-year term)

- Marsha Pleta as 2024-2026 Western Zone Representative (three-year term)
- Erik Meredith as 2024-2025 Section W3 Advisor (two-year term)
- PSBA Trustees (two candidates for three-year terms)
 - Marianne Neel
 - Michael Faccinetto

Welch seconded Vezzi on the motion to amend the agenda to add the Construction motion for RFPs to be approved at tonight's meeting.

Voice Vote – All Yes

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS

There were no comments at this time.

Iagnemma seconded Welch on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Maintenance Manager Athan Tsourekis for Board approval of the quote from Arbon Equipment Corporation for the replacement of the loading dock levelers at both the High School and Middle School. The total cost of \$21,662.00 includes the remediation work to the masonry structure at the Middle School. The costs will be funded by the maintenance contingency budget.

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS ON THE ABOVE MOTION.

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Vezzi seconded Burroughs on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance/HR Brian Tony, and Facilities Director Steve Timmins for Board approval to hire Josh Wasserman as the Custodial Shift Manager, effective pending receipt of required documents and reference checks, at a salary of **\$57,500**, prorated for the 2023-2024 school year.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval to hire Eileen Schmidt as a Classroom Paraeducator in the Intermediate School, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 school year, at the probationary rate of \$16.09 per hour. After completion of a successful probationary period, the rate will be \$20.11 per hour. This position is due to a retirement.

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And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of the following (call as needed) substitute teachers and support personnel, pending receipt of required documents, for the 2023-2024 school year:

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- Abbigale Alauzen, Grades PK-4
- Delany Mangis, Pre-Service/Early Childhood/PK-4
- Smitha Philip, SmartStart, Paraeducator at the rate of \$12.50 per hour, Personal Care Paraeducator at the rate of \$13.50 per hour, Clerical at the rate of \$11.00 per hour
- Ranjani Bora, SmartStart, Paraeducator at the rate of \$12.50 per hour, Personal Care Paraeducator at the rate of \$13.50 per hour

- Breanna Snyder, Pre-Service, Mid-Level Math 4-8
- Melissa Drake, Elementary K-6/Mid-Level Science 6-9
- Daxa Patel, Student Monitor at the rate of \$10.00 per hour
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SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS ON THE ABOVE MOTIONS.

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Welch seconded Vezzi on the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval for Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist and teachers Jessica Slencak, and Katie Caprio to attend the AASA Learning 2025 Site Visit Cajon Valley Unified in San Diego, California, to learn about their implementation of the World of Work, from Wednesday, November 15, 2023 through Friday, November 17, 2023. The costs include travel, lodging, and meals will be funded by the AASA Learning 2025 grant with any additional funds from the 2023-2024 budget.

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS ON THE ABOVE MOTION.

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Welch seconded Vezzi on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony for retroactive Board approval for DRAW Collective to submit Requests for Proposal (RFP) for Land Survey, Phase 1 Environmental, Wetland Delineation & Preliminary Grading Analysis from the following civil engineering companies:

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- Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS ON THE ABOVE MOTION.

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Welch seconded Vezzi on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Solicitor for Board approval of the Stipulated Adjudication Agreement pertaining to a student.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Solicitor for Board approval of the Stipulated Adjudication Agreement pertaining to a student.

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS ON THE ABOVE MOTIONS.

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Iagnemma seconded Vezzi to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 PM.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Cynthia Geisler, Board Secretary