



South Fayette Township School District

Committee Meeting of the Whole

Minutes

Tuesday, November 21, 2023
7:30 PM

The Committee Meeting of the South Fayette Township Board of School Directors was called to order at 7:43 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: Lena Hannah, Jen Iriti, Joe Welch, Tom Iagnamma, Prajakta Patankar, Alan Vezzi, Len Fornella

Present Virtually: Paul Brinsky

Absent: Teresa Burroughs

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; Middle School Associate Principal Dr. Kevin Maurer; Director of DEI Dr. Chuck Herring; Director of Curriculum Cristine Wagner-Deitch; Director of Innovation and Strategic Partnerships Dr. Matt Callison; Teachers Kristy Kay and Rick Yeager, Mackenzie Schmitz, Giuliana Pindel, Anna Munkittrick, Director of Technology Rob Warfield; and Cynthia Geisler, Superintendent's Assistant/Board Secretary

President Fornella announced the meeting is being recorded.

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
- 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
- Make a recommendation to pass the not to exceed motion on the agenda next week

Dr. Maurer and Dr. Herring reviewed the following individuals who were/will be speakers for the Speaker Series:

- ◆ Sean Gibson, celebrating his great-grandfather Josh Gibson who the MLB's MVP Trophy is named for
- ◆ Vanessa Herring, daughter of South Fayette's Dr. Chuck Herring, from hosting a local Steelers show, now hosting her own show on a national television retailer
- ◆ Noelle Conover, creator of over 40 Matt's Maker Space STEAM Labs helping a generation of tinkers to collaborate, innovate, and think outside the box, all in honor of her son Matt who passed at the age of 12
- ◆ Bill Isler, President and CEO Emeritus of the Fred Rogers Company
- ◆ Joseph Yun, AI and Innovation Architect for the University of Pittsburgh
- ◆ Jess & Jorgen Pedersen, technology and robotics investors and pioneers
- ◆ Zach Betz, South Fayette Alumnus, TEDx star and advocate for Autism Acceptance

Dr. Deichler introduced Kristy Kay, HS Phys Ed teacher and Coach of the High School Dance Program/Team and student reps Mackenzie Schmitz, Giuliana Pindel, and Anna Munkittrick who all thanked the Board; RIASEC codes contribute to various experiences on the dance field; a welcoming environment; cultural and religious dances; collaborate with other districts; held a dance clinic with 120 students attending

Mrs. Wagner-Deitch and teacher Rick Yeager presented the following regarding the Student Credit Union:

- ◆ A Visionary Credit Union on campus
- ◆ Working through logistics, insurance, bonding, outside hotspot, etc.
- ◆ Student run with credit union staff overseeing transactions
- ◆ One day/week during lunch for staff and students, in house only
- ◆ One day/week for Central Office and public
- ◆ Ties to current courses, personal finance, accounting, marketing & media
- ◆ Future internships for students/partnerships w/clubs & activities
- ◆ Money Mondays, Elementary students' opportunity to open a saving account; match for birthday

President Fornella voiced concerns regarding minors depositing/handling money, banking laws, parent concerns. Mrs. Cristine Wagner-Deitch responded she will have more information regarding President Fornella's concerns. Mrs. Iriti questioned if there will be an EPR for a District person to be involved. Dr. Yeager will volunteer and there is no intention for an EPR or club right now.

Dr. Deichler provided the following update regarding Moonshot Grants, Fly Like a Girl (FLAG), and Freight to Plate:

- ◆ Two Moonshot grants to continue funding for FLAG; opening FLAG to the region using RIASEC
- ◆ Freight to Plate separate grant to fund a food truck; 16' operational culinary kitchen for students in grades 9-12
- ◆ Freight to Farm update at November 28 meeting by Dr. Matt Callison

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Committee Meeting	October 17, 2023
Regular Meeting	October 23, 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

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 – Dr. Michelle Miller

Dr. Miller reported the following:

- ◆ Congratulated Mr. Iagnemma and Mrs. Burroughs on being re-elected to the Board; congratulated Mr. Bill Gray, Mrs. Esther Cardillo, and Mrs. Rebecca Bruce for being newly elected and will be sworn in at the Reorganization Meeting on December 4.
- ◆ Parent-teacher conferences occurring this week; appreciate parents for making time to discuss their child/ren's progress
- ◆ Congratulated all of the incredible athletes; boys golf and both boys and girls soccer had exceptional seasons; winter sports just beginning and anticipate another great season
- ◆ New Grable grant for \$120,00 to continue with the World of Work with Avonworth, Duquesne and Elizabeth Forward school districts
- ◆ Hosting TRETTC on January 15, 2024
- ◆ Holiday music program performances are underway
- ◆ Thanksgiving wishes to the Board of School Directors, administration, faculty and staff, students and their families and the entire South Fayette community.

BUSINESS OFFICE

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

1. The Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony recommend retroactive Board approval to purchase a new Box Truck for Food Service and general deliveries around campus and for use by the Little Green Machine, at a Co-Stars price of \$72,586. The cost will be shared between Food Service and the Little Green Machine. **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**
2. In accordance with Act 1 of 2006, the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony recommend Board approval of the resolution for any property tax increase for the 2024-2025 fiscal year not to exceed the district's base index of 7.0%. A copy of the approved resolution will be filed with the Pennsylvania Department of Education in accordance with the provision of Act 1 of 2006. By doing so, the Board adopts Resolution 23-03 Not to Exceed the Index.
3. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony for Board approval of Resolution 23-04, for the District to continue participation in the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Joint Purchasing Board for 2023-2024 school year.
4. The Board consider the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to provide access to written translation through an AI portal to support non-English speaking parents and families effective for one year beginning January 10, 2024. The cost is a one-time annual fee of \$500.

PERSONNEL

1. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler and Administrators recommend Board approval to hire Natasha Dirda as the High School Principal at the salary rate of \$135,000, prorated for the 2023-2024 school year, with an effective date to be determined, in accordance with the Act 93 Agreement. **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**
2. The Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler recommend retroactive Board approval to hire Tara Savisky as a Classroom Paraeducator in the Middle School, effective November 13, 2023, at the probationary rate of \$16.09 per

hour. After completion of a successful probationary period, the rate will be \$20.11 per hour. **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**

3. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval to hire Katlyn Ross as a Long Term Substitute Guidance Counselor in the Elementary School, pending receipt of required documents, effective on or about December 11, 2023, at the rate of \$160.00 per day. **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**
4. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval to revise the salary for Maureen Kings, Permanent Substitute Guidance Counselor in the Middle School, to Master's +45 Step 1 rate of \$54,500, prorated, effective retroactive to October 30, 2023. **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**
5. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of the following (call as needed) substitute support personnel for the 2023-2024 school year: **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**
 - Melinda Weishner, Food Service at the rate of \$9.25 per hour
 - Leslie Willetts, Bus Aide at the prevailing rate of \$21.32 per hour
 - Asra Syeda, Bus Aide at the rate of \$21.32 per hour
 - Bhagya Chekka, Student Monitor at the rate of \$10.00 per hour, Clerical at the rate of \$11.00 per hour, Paraeducator at the rate of \$12.50 per hour, and Personal Care Paraeducator at the rate of \$13.50 per hour
6. The Superintendent and Administrators recommend Board approval of following EPRs for the 2023-2024 school year: **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**

Mentor Teacher for Katelyn Ross	Molly Kuczinski
High School Speech & Debate Club	Mary Quirk
Nurse – Middle School Mini MiniThon – effective February 23, 2024	Misty Menarcheck
Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator – HS Powder Puff Football, effective November 15	Angela Vogel

7. The Superintendent and Director of Food Service Tricia Wood recommend Board approval to hire Gina Montani as Food Service employee, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 school year, at the probationary rate of \$12.61 per hour. After completion of a successful probationary period, the rate will be \$15.76 per hour. **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**
8. The Superintendent and High School Principals recommend Board approval of the resignation of Meghan Schneider as a High School Building Substitute. Ms. Schneider's last day worked will be November 29, 2023. **(needs Board action taken on November 21)**
9. The Superintendent and Elementary School Principals recommend Board approval to hire an Elementary Building Substitute teacher, effective for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.
10. The Superintendent and Intermediate School Principals recommend Board approval of the leave of absence request for a Grade 3 teacher in the Intermediate School, effective on or about December 21, 2023.

11. The Superintendent and Intermediate School Principals recommend Board approval of the leave of absence request for a Grade 5 teacher in the Intermediate School, effective on or about March 5, 2024.
12. The Superintendent and Intermediate School Principals recommend Board approval of the extension of current sabbatical leave of absence request for a Grade 4 teacher in the Intermediate School effective for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year, pending receipt of required documents.
13. The Superintendent and Facilities Director recommend Board approval of the FMLA leave of absence request for a Custodian in the High School, with an effective date to be determined.
14. The Superintendent and Director of Transportation recommend Board approval of the resignation of a Bus Driver effective retroactive to November 1, 2023.
15. The Superintendent and Director of Transportation recommend Board approval of the resignation of a Bus Driver effective retroactive to November 9, 2023.
16. The Superintendent and Director of Finance recommend Board approval of the retirement/resignation of the Director of Food Service, effective June 30, 2024. The employee has been employed by the District since October 2002.
17. The Superintendent recommends Board approval of the retirement/resignation of the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board Secretary. The employee's last day worked will be July 5, 2024. The employee has been employed by the District since September 2006.
18. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent recommend Board approval for a student from Slippery Rock University, to complete student teaching with a Phys Ed teacher in the Middle School, effective January 16, 2024 through May 2, 2024, pending receipt of required documents. There will be no cost to the District.
19. The Superintendent, Director of Finance, and Facilities Director recommend Board approval of the revised Substitute Custodian rate, effective December 1, 2023.
20. The Superintendent and Athletic Director recommend Board approval of the resignation of the Head Varsity Football Coach effective for the 2024-2025 season.
21. The Superintendent and Athletic Director recommend Board approval of a Head Coach for Unified Bocce effective for the 2023-2024 season.
22. The Superintendent, Athletic Director, along with Head Football Coach, Head Volleyball Coach, Head Boys Golf Coach, Head Boys Soccer Coach, Head Girls Soccer Coach, Head Girls Golf Coach, Head Cross Country Coach, Head Girls Basketball Coach, Head Cheerleading Coach, and Head Girls Tennis Coach recommend Board approval of the compensations for the following positions for the fall 2023 season:

Football

- Head Coach
- Assistant Varsity Coach
- Assistant Varsity Coach
- Assistant Varsity Coach
- Assistant Varsity Coach

Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Head 7/8th Grade Coach
Assistant 7/8th Grade Coach
Assistant 7/8th Grade Coach
Assistant 7/8th Grade Coach

Girls Volleyball

Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach

Boys Golf

Head Coach
Assistant Coach

Boys Soccer

Head Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Head 7/8th Grade Coach

Girls Soccer

Head Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Head 7/8th Grade Coach
Assistant 7/8th Grade Coach

Girls Golf

Head Coach
Assistant Coach

Cross Country (Boys/Girls)

Head Coach
Assistant Varsity Coach
Head 7/8th Grade Coach

7/8th Grade Girls Basketball

Head 7th Grade Coach
Head 8th Grade Coach

Girls Tennis

Head Coach
Assistant Coach

Assistant Athletic Directors

Cheerleading

Competitive Cheerleading

Team Cheerleading

EDUCATION

1. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Innovation and Strategic Partnerships Dr. Matt Callison for Board approval of the Educational Project Agreement with Carnegie Mellon University for a potential project with South Fayette High School and high school students who elect to participate, effective January 2024 through August 2024. There is no cost to the District as the \$85,000 participation fee is waived. *(pending revisions as identified by the solicitor)*
2. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval of the College in High School Enrollment Agreement with Point Park University effective retroactive to October 10, 2023. There is no cost to the District. *(pending revisions as identified by the solicitor)*

TRANSPORTATION

There were no items discussed.

ATHLETICS

1. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Baseball Coach Ken Morgan for Board approval for the Boys Junior Varsity and Varsity Baseball teams to travel to Tampa, Florida, to play in a baseball tournament. The team would depart from South Fayette, tentatively on Thursday, March 21, 2024, and tentatively return on Monday, March 25, 2024. Students will be responsible for all school work during their absence. Appropriate adult to student ratios for supervision will be assured by the administration. There will be no cost to the district. The tentative itinerary is attached.
2. The Board consider the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener and Head Girls Varsity Softball Coach Olesia Stasko for Board approval for the Girls Varsity Softball team to travel to Cocoa Beach, Florida, to play in a softball tournament. The team would depart South Fayette, tentatively, on Friday, March 15, 2024, and tentatively return on Wednesday, March 20, 2024. Students will be responsible for all school work during their absence. Appropriate adult to student ratios for supervision will be assured by the administration. There will be no cost to the district. The tentative itinerary is attached.
3. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Indoor Track and Field Coach Scott Litwinovich for Board approval for the Varsity Boys and Girls Indoor Track and Field teams to travel to State College, Pennsylvania, Friday and Saturday, January 5-6, 2024, to participate in an indoor track tournament. Students will be responsible for all school work during absence. Appropriate adult to student ratios for supervision will be assured by the administration. There is no cost to the District.
4. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Indoor Track and Field Coach Scott Litwinovich for Board

approval to permit the Girls and Boys Varsity Indoor Track teams to travel to the following indoor track meets. Appropriate adult to student ratios for supervision will be assured by the administration. The District will supply transportation to and from the meets:

Spire (Geneva, Ohio)

December 8, 2023
February 4, 2024

Youngstown State University

January 13, 2024
January 20, 2024
February 10, 2024
February 17, 2024

CONSTRUCTION

There were no items discussed.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Board reviewed the DRAFT 2024-2025 Academic Calendar (vote at Reorganization Meeting)

1. The Superintendent and Solicitor recommend Board ratification of the following motions that were approved at the October 17, 2024 Committee Meeting of the Whole:
 - a. The motion to approve DRAW Collective to submit Requests for Proposals for a Land Survey: Phase 1 Environmental, Wetland Delineation & Preliminary Grading Analysis
2. The Superintendent and Solicitor recommend Board ratification of the following motions that were approved at the October 24, 2024 Regular Meeting:
 - b. The motion to hire Daxa Patel and Deepa Mohandass as Student Monitors in the Intermediate School, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 school year at the probationary rate of \$12.22 per hour. After completion of a successful probationary period the rate will be \$15.27 per hour.
 - c. The motion to hire Carolina Cappetta as an Intermediate School Building Substitute teacher, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2023-2024 school year, at the rate of \$150.00 per day.
 - d. The motion to accept the quotation from Civil and Environmental Consultants to perform land surveys for the master plan as presented in the amount of \$101,000.
3. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Solicitor for Board approval of the first reading of revised Policy 204 Attendance.

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS

There were no comments at this time.

Iriti seconded Vezzi on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony for retroactive Board approval to purchase a new Box Truck for Food Service and general deliveries around campus and for use by the Little Green Machine, at a Co-Stars price of \$72,586. The cost will be shared between Food Service and the Little Green Machine.

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

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Iagnemma seconded Iriti on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler and Administrators for Board approval to hire Natasha Dirda as the High School Principal at the salary rate of \$135,000, prorated for the 2023-2024 school year, with an effective date to be determined, in accordance with the Act 93 Agreement.

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

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Welch seconded Vezzi on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for retroactive Board approval to hire Tara Savisky as a Classroom Paraeducator in the Middle School, effective November 13, 2023, at the probationary rate of \$16.09 per hour. After completion of a successful probationary period, the rate will be \$20.11 per hour.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval to hire Katlyn Ross as a Long Term Substitute Guidance Counselor in the Elementary School, pending receipt of required documents, effective on or about December 11, 2023, at the rate of \$160.00 per day.

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And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and High School Principals for Board approval of the resignation of Meghan Schneider as a High School Building Substitute. Ms. Schneider’s last day worked will be November 29, 2023.

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

There were no comments at this time.

Voice Vote – All Yes

President Fornella welcomed and commented it will be a thrill to have Ms. Dirda as the new High School Principal. Ms. Dirda is thrilled, honored and blessed to join the team and to have Mr. Butts part of the High School team, thank you.

Patankar seconded Iagnemma to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM to enter into another Executive Session to discuss personnel and/or legal issues. President Fornella announced no votes will be taken following Executive Session.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Cynthia Geisler, Board Secretary