



# South Fayette Township School District

## Committee Meeting of the Whole

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

7:30 PM

### MINUTES

The Committee Meeting of the South Fayette Township Board of School Directors was called to order at 7:34 p.m. in the Studio in the High School by President Tom Iagnemma with the Pledge of Allegiance. President Iagnemma 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:** Esther Cardillo, Rebecca Bruce, William Gray, Len Fornella, Joe Welch, Tom Iagnemma, Teresa Burroughs

**Virtual:** Jen Iriti

**Absent:** Prajakta Pantankar

**Others:** Chris Voltz, Tucker Arensberg, P.C., Superintendent Dr. Michelle Miller, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler, Director of Finance Brian Tony, Director of Finance Ryan Neely, Director of Human Resources Mike Radage, Director of Technology Rob Warfield, Superintendent's Assistant/Board Secretary Susan Vasalani

Director of Finance Ryan Neely presented information related to the Act 1 Index.

- The Act 1 Index for the 2025-2026 school year was set by the state at 5.2% for our district, meaning that the district is permitted to raise millage by up to this percent, if the Board chooses, without using any exceptions to our budget process. The Act 1 resolution going before the Board on November 26 is to not exceed that index amount.
- If the district were to raise the millage by the maximum 5.2%, it would increase the millage from its existing level of 26.7 mills to 28.088 mills.

Athletic Director Mark Keener recognized the following coaches.

- Boys Lacrosse Coach Shawn Leydig was named the PIAA/NFHS Lacrosse Coach of the Year for the 2023-2024 school year after leading the boys lacrosse team to its best season in district history, finishing as the WPIAL Class 2 runner up with a 21-3 overall record. The team won the section for the third time in four seasons and qualified for the PIAA championships for the fourth consecutive year, then reached the PIAA semifinals becoming the second different WPIAL school to advance to that round over the last seven seasons. Coach Leydig, the 2021 WPIAL lacrosse coach of the year, has spent 16 seasons as a Boys Lacrosse Head Coach, and is one of only six WPIAL coaches that earned this distinction and one of 25 coaches throughout the state.
- Boys Basketball Coach Dave Mislan will be the recipient of a Stan Musial Award on November 23, 2024, in St. Louis, Missouri. The award is defined by class, excellence, humility, and generosity. Coach Mislan will be honored along with the Lake Mary Little League World Series Champs, Salvador Perez, and others for their remarkable acts of kindness and sportsmanship.

## CONSENT AGENDA

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

Committee Meeting	Tuesday, October 15, 2024
Regular Meeting	Tuesday, October 22, 2024
Special Meeting	Wednesday, October 30, 2024

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

Athletic Fund	Mark Keener
High School Activity Fund	Ryan Neely
Middle School Activity Fund	Ryan Neely

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.

## SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS

Carolyn Potts, 291 Sygan Road. Looking over the agenda regarding item number 5 under the agenda from the business office which reads: The Superintendent and Solicitor recommend Board approval of a resolution authorizing the condemnation and fee simple of approximately 32.36 acres of the 58.9310 acres. Property owned by Dwayne F. Potts, Harveen R. Potts, Clifford R. Potts and Robert Potts, which is more fully identified as 291 Sygan Road, McDonald, Pennsylvania, with a tax parcel ID number 32G-002. I had to look up the definition of condemnation in fee simple. And this is what I have. If someone owns land in quote, fee simple, unquote, they typically have complete and total ownership of the piece of land. This is the type of ownership that typically think of about owning a home or other piece of property. So when land is being acquired in fee simple by a condemning entity, it means that the agency is acquiring all rights associated with that piece of property, and the former property owner will have no rights to the property at the end of the eminent domain action. Am I understanding that correctly? Probably so, this sounds to me like the district would like to use eminent domain to steal 32.36 acres from one of the oldest families in the district. Instead of paying them a fair price for the land. And, please, if I'm wrong, someone raise your hand and stop me and tell me I'm wrong. The district already owns 100 acres across the street that they paid 4.3 million dollars for back in 2018 that they have done nothing with. If they need more space to build, they have that at their disposal. Trying to steal land that three generations of that family still live on by using eminent domain is reprehensible in a gross abuse of power that will cost the taxpayers of this district more in the end. I urge you all to vote no because where will it end? Does it stop at the Potts farm? Does it move to the Boehmer's? Do we move to the Campbell's? How far down the street is everyone going to move?

Mandy Sader. Potts is my maiden name. My family obviously still does live on the property. My husband and I are moving up there as well. It's been 80 years, literally 80 years this year that we have owned that property. We farmed it. We still farm certain things. We have animals. You know, just our future, my niece's future, my nephew's futures. This is just wrong, wrong all the way across the board, and then to turn around and threaten to do eminent domain again. Maybe, if a decent offer would have been on the table, but what was offered is absolutely ridiculous, and they ought to be ashamed. All of you ought to be ashamed, whoever is in on it. So again, like she said, I urge everybody to say no to it cause this is, it's just wrong. Wrong. Thank you.

Mr. Sader, Mandy's husband. I've been there on this farm for 30 years being married to her, and the times and the good times we've had on this farm. I was a city boy. I'm a farmer now from what I was

taught from my father-in-law, my brother-in-law. You already took five acres off of us to put in your bus garage already, which was taken by the government, and then somehow, it got turned over to you and not us. So again, this is going to be the second time. Now I feel you're stealing the property, not giving us a place to keep our families together.

Jillian Potts, 291 Sygan Road. I graduated from South Fayette in 2020. I have lived here my entire life. I grew up on that farm, and I was raised by the people in this room and at this school. I don't believe that what this proposal means reflects the integrity of this school. I don't believe that it reflects well on the school. I urge you all to vote no.

Solicitor Voltz provided clarification on the Potts property by stating the process began with the owner approaching the school district and offering to sell a portion of the property to the District. After receiving this offer, the district hired an expert for an appraisal, fair market value of that parcel, and offered that amount of money to purchase the property from the owner. The owner believes that number is too small. That is certainly his right. The district asked the owner to get his own appraisal and provide a copy of that to demonstrate that the property is worth more than what the district's appraisal says. The district was provided with no appraisal or any other documentation indicating a higher value. If the district elects to move forward under the eminent domain code, it will pay or offer to pay to the owner the amount in the appraisal. Even after it does that, the owner will have an opportunity to demonstrate that the property is worth more. The district has worked with the family from the beginning and will continue to do so.

#### **Old Business**

There was no old business discussed.

#### **New Business**

There was no new business discussed.

#### **Superintendent's Monthly Report – Dr. Michelle Miller**

1. The winter sports season started last week. Next week, we will honor the girls soccer team for winning the WPIAL championship.
2. Parent Teacher conferences will be held next week from Monday through Wednesday.
3. Veteran's Day activities included retired Marine, Paralympian, Pittsburgh resident Eric McElvenny speaking at High School assemblies. Also, second graders performed songs to honor veterans.
4. The annual Uncommon Conference was held on November 8 with more than 400 students from nearly 30 school districts.
5. World of Work training events for the region's educators will be held in December and January.
6. *US News and World Report* ranked the Intermediate School as 36th and the Middle School as 14th in the state of Pennsylvania.

#### **BUSINESS**

1. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Ryan Neely in accordance with Act 1 of 2006, for approval of the Resolution for any property tax increase for the 2025-2026 fiscal year not to exceed the District's base index of 5.2%. 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 24-02 Not to Exceed the Index.
2. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Ryan Neely for approval of Resolution 24-03 for the District to continue participating on the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Joint Purchasing Board for the 2024-2025 school year.

3. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for approval to enter into an agreement with Global Wordsmiths to provide interpretation and translation services, effective February 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026.
4. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Director of Facilities Steve Timmins for approval of placeholder to enter into an agreement for lawn and ground maintenance services.
5. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Solicitor for approval of a resolution authorizing the condemnation in fee simple of approximately 32.36 acres of the 58.9310 acre property owned by Duane F. Potts, Harvene R. Potts, Clifford Potts, and Robert Potts which is more fully identified as 291 Sygan Road, McDonald, Pennsylvania with a tax parcel ID No 327-G-002.
6. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Ryan Neely, and Director of Technology Rob Warfield for approval to enter into a 36 month agreement with DQE Communications to provide a District back-up Internet line at a cost of \$750 per month, pending service implementation.

## **PERSONNEL**

Gray seconded Welch on the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Dr. Arleen Wheat as a consultant through Special Education Consulting Group, LLC, to serve as Interim Director of Student Support Services at the rate of \$50.00 per hour until the position is filled, pending receipt of required documents.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and High School Principal Dr. Natasha Dirda for Board approval of the resignation of a High School Teacher, effective November 22, 2024.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist for Board approval to hire a Building Substitute for the 2024-2025 school year at the rate of \$150 per day, retroactive to November 13, 2024.

And on the recommendation of The Superintendent and Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist for Board approval of the resignation of a Student Monitor.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist for Board approval for a Duquesne University student to complete two practicums (25 hours each) with Elementary School Teachers from November 27, 2024, through December 19, 2024.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of the following leave of absence requests.

- Elementary School Teacher, effective on or around January 3, 2025
- Elementary School Paraeducator effective on or around December 23, 2024
- Intermediate School Paraeducator effective on or around January 6, 2025

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Food Services Nicolle Pleil for Board approval of the intermittent FMLA request of a Food Service Worker.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Food Services Nicolle Pleil for Board approval of the resignation of a High School Food Services Worker, effective November 11, 2024.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval to hire a Classroom Paraeducator at the Elementary School pending receipt of required documents, effective date to be determined, 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 Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval of a Secondary Mathematics Teacher of Record for a student enrolled in cyber school, effective for the 2024-2025 school year. The teacher will be paid 1.0 hour per week at the rate of \$43.50 per hour.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Transportation Brandon Soubie for Board approval to hire a Substitute Bus Driver at the rate of \$20.00 per hour, effective date to be determined, pending receipt of required documents.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Transportation Brandon Soubie for Board approval to hire a substitute bus aide at the rate of \$8.65 per hour, effective date to be determined, pending receipt of required documents.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of following EPRs for the 2024-2025 school year.

High School MiniThon	
Elementary School Kids of Steel Coach	
Intermediate School Specials Teacher Teaching More Than 7 Classes	
High School Webmaster	
Middle School Musical - Sound	
Middle School Musical - Lighting	

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval for two Slippery Rock University students to be Student Teachers from January 21, 2025 through May 8, 2025, pending receipt of required documents.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval for a PennWest student to complete a School Counselor internship with an Elementary School Counselor from January 13, 2025, through March 6, 2025, and an High School Counselor from March 7, 2025, through April 28, 2025.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of (call as needed) Substitute Teachers, pending receipt of required documents, effective for the 2024-2025 school year.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Swimming Coach Todd Clark for Board approval of a Volunteer Assistant Swimming Coach for the 2024-2025 season, pending receipt of required documents.

Voice Vote - All Yes

1. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, Head Football Coach Marty Spieler, Head Volleyball Coach Scott Sundgren, Head Boys Golf Coach Bob Ruffolo, Head Boys Soccer Coach Rob Eldridge, Head Girls Soccer Coach Nick Rosser, Head Girls Golf Coach Rocky Violi, Head Cross Country Coach Joe Winans, Head Girls Basketball Coach Bryan Bennett, Head Cheerleading Coach Maggie

Conosciuto, Head Girls Tennis Coach Victoria Chagnon, for the following compensations for the fall 2024 season.

### **Football**

Head Coach	Marty Spieler	\$11,975.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Alex Dennison	\$6,000.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Chris Saluga	\$5,400.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Bruce Fronk	\$6,000.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Ryan Faraci	\$5,400.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Tom Stilley	\$5,400.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Garrett Sekanick	\$5,000.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Vincent Ziccardi	\$5,400.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	TJ Matraschia	\$5,400.00
Head 7/8th Grade Coach	Rick Chaussard	\$3,900.00
Assistant 7/8th Grade Coach	Wesley Chappel	\$3,900.00
Assistant 7/8 th Grade Coach	Josh Patterson	\$3,900.00
Assistant 7/8 th Grade Coach	Trevor McIntyre	\$2,220.00

### **Girls Volleyball**

Head Coach	Scott Sundgren	\$8,645.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Danielle Rudolph	\$700.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Riley Pawlosky	\$4,400.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Justine Yanosik	\$4,100.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Micki Cerchairo	\$1,900.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Morgan Ziolkowski	\$3,400.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Casey Holp	\$1,500.00

### **Boys Golf**

Head Coach	Bob Ruffolo	\$5,835.00
Assistant Coach	Shane Coyne	\$3,070.00

### **Boys Soccer**

Head Coach	Rob Eldridge	\$8,645.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Joe Luxbacher	\$7,600.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	James Kita	\$5,220.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Nolan Levine	\$7,555.00
Head 7/8 th Grade Coach	William Finnerty	\$5,475.00

### **Girls Soccer**

Head Coach	Nick Rosser	\$8,645.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Jayna Fittipaldo	\$6,000.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Sabrina Bryan	\$4,500.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Camille Holzschuh	\$3,850.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Alexzandria Rosser	\$3,000.00
Head 7/8 th Grade Coach	Nicole Bianco	\$5,000.00
Assistant 7/8 th Grade Coach	Sarah Pruss	\$3,500.00

### **Girls Golf**

Head Coach	Rocky Violi	\$5,835.00
Assistant Coach	Matt Bacco	\$3,070.00

### **Cross Country (Boys/Girls)**

Head Coach	Joe Winans	\$7,220.00
Assistant Varsity Coach	Julia Denison	\$2,732.50

Head 7/8th Grade Coach	Matt Timcheck	\$2,732.00
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**Girls 7th and 8th Grade Basketball**

Head 7th Grade Coach	Keith Froelich	\$3,800.00
Head 8th Grade Coach	Garrett Del Re	\$4,000.00

**Girls Tennis**

Head Coach	Victoria Chagnon	\$4,970.00
Assistant Coach	Alexis Podgorski	\$2,520.00

**Assistant Athletic Directors**

Matt Bacco should receive half of his pay in December 2024 which is \$2,732.50 (half of \$5,465.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Olesia Stasko should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$2,732.50 (half of \$5,465.00). The other half will be paid in June 2024.

**Cheerleading**

**Competitive Cheerleading**

Maggie Conosciuto should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$1,207.50 (half of \$2,415.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Liz Frambes should receive half of her full pay in December 2024 which is \$1,000.00 (half of \$2,000.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Amanda Furgiuele should receive half of her full pay in December 2024 which is \$500.00 (half of \$1,000.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Kelsey Deutsch should receive half of her full pay in December 2024 which is \$500.00 (half of \$1,000.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

**Team Cheerleading**

Maggie Conosciuto should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$3,490.00 (half of \$6,980.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Kelsey Deutsch should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$1,750.00 (half of \$3,500.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Liz Frambes should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$500.00 (half of \$1,000.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Amanda Furgiuele should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$1,520.00 (half of \$3,040.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Laura Nagel should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$1,000.00 (half of \$2,000.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

Stephanie Harris should receive half of her pay in December 2024 which is \$1,000.00 (half of \$2,000.00). The other half will be paid in June 2025.

## **EDUCATION**

Bruce seconded Cardillo on the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval for Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler and Director of Innovation and Strategic Partnerships Dr. Matt Callison to attend the 2025 ASU+GSV Summit in San Diego, California, from April 6, 2025, through April 9, 2025. The cost of registration will be covered by a scholarship.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and High School Principal Dr. Natasha Dirda for Board approval for High School Teacher Tara Surloff to participate in Classrooms without Borders in Israel from December 2, 2025, through December 9, 2025. There will be no cost to the District.

And on the approval for the Superintendent to attend SuperCourageous at Deloitte University: The Leadership Center from February 21, 2025, through February 23, 2025, in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Miller received a scholarship to attend this leadership opportunity. The cost of travel is included in the 2024-2025 budget.

Voice Vote - All Yes

1. 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 2025. The program will run Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., beginning July 7, 2025, through July 24, 2025. The cost of the program will be included in the 2025-2026 budget.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

There were no items discussed.

## **ATHLETICS**

Fornella seconded Welch on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Indoor Track and Field Coach Scott Litwinovich for Board approval for the Girls and Boys Varsity Indoor Track teams to travel to the following indoor track meets. The school district will supply transportation to and from the meets.

- Spire (Geneva, Ohio) - December 13, 2024, February 1, 2025, February 8, 2025
- Youngstown State University - January 11, 2025, January 18, 2025, February 8, 2025, February 15, 2025

Voice Vote - All Yes

1. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Athletic Director Mark Keener for Board approval of the Athletic Booster guidelines.
2. 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 from March 13, 2024, through March 17, 2025, tentatively. There will be no cost to the District.
3. The Board considered 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 Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to play in a softball tournament from March 20, 2025, through March 24, 2025, tentatively. There will be 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



for the Varsity Boys and Girls Indoor Track and Field teams to travel to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to participate in an indoor track tournament from January 25, 2025 to January 26, 2025. There is no cost to the District.

5. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Cheerleading Coach Maggie Conosciuto for Board approval for the Varsity Competitive Cheerleaders to travel to Orlando, Florida, to compete in the UCA High School Nationals in Walt Disney World from February 6, 2025, through February 11, 2025, tentatively.
6. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Athletic Director Mark Keener for Board approval for Freshman Adriana Romanelli to participate in Individual Gymnastics in the WPIAL and PIAA under South Fayette's name. Her mother Jody Romanelli would be her coach and there will be no cost to the district. Her parents are responsible for all transportation and documentation. This would be in effect for the 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 school years.

## **CONSTRUCTION**

1. The Board considered the authorization for Civil & Environmental Consultants (CEC) to perform an initial Geotech investigation for the K-2 and Maintenance/Bus Facility.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. First reading of Policy 915: School-Affiliated Organizations/Booster Groups
2. Second reading of Policy 913: Non School Organizations/Groups/Individuals

## **SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS**

Molly Mehok, 22 Lawford Road. I've been a paraprofessional in the district for 10 years. I have a master's degree in education and an active teaching certificate in social studies and English. I have worked in all four buildings in the district, and in every type of classroom setting as student needs have changed. Over the last decade I was shifted to where I was needed. I accepted each change with stride, as all paras are expected to do. Practically a new job with new challenges every year or months or day, depending on student needs. I have a comprehensive understanding of the vast demands of the paraeducator jobs in our district. As of this year, there are now 53 paraeducators working in our district. This speaks for the changing dynamic of the special education field. In my 10 years here, I have worked in life skills and autistic support, learning support, and regular education classrooms. I have worked the extended school year program in the summer as a para or as a teacher. I have worked with students with autism, ADHD, emotional behavioral diagnosis, cerebral palsy seizure disorders, specific learning, disability, other health impairment, speech and language impairment, and many, many more. Some behaviors that I've worked with in the classrooms are hitting, kicking, screaming, crying, toileting, bathroom accidents, eloping, refusals, destruction of school property, aggression towards others, self-harm, nonverbal hair pulling, and again, many more. Here are just a few things that I do in my day as a para. I provide IEP data and input, co-teach, attend IEP parent meetings, complete online medical billing, perform building duties, collaborate with teachers on adapting tests and lessons, ensure proper supports are in place and student needs are met, manage behaviors across all school settings, provide one on one support when students are struggling, run small group instruction, ensure students are included throughout the day with same age peers, foster independence, support medical needs, respond to crisis calls, and again much more. We support every part of our students' day from when they get off the bus to when they get back on. We manage their feelings, academics, social skills, organization, activities of daily living and safety. We do all of this in one school day, with on average, 15 min of prep time and an unpaid 30 min lunch. Did you know that our paraprofessionals are paid two different rates? Personal Care Assistants currently make a

dollar and 84 cents more than a classroom paraeducator. I was a classroom para for the first seven years in the district, and then was changed to a personal care paraeducator just three years ago. The only thing that changed in my daily job was being hands on with toileting. Thinking back on the most challenging days of being a para, they were not the days that I had been assigned in a PCA role. Toileting a student is not the only difficult part of a paraeducator's job. Each para role has its own challenges. No two positions are the same. Just because the challenges of each role are different does not mean any position is undeserving of equal pay. I have continued to do this job because of a commitment to the students district and the educational profession. I know that South Fayette's paraprofessionals share this dedication. As you cannot do this without the dedication and heart for the students, and our job paraprofessionals need equal pay and our South Fayette support staff needs a fair and equitable contract. Thank you.

Tara May, 420 Meeting House Road. I'm going to be speaking tonight as a food service employee. Since we last met, we have served thousands more breakfasts and lunches. In addition, we have had to prepare food for several events. All the events are held at the high school studio, therefore, the high school staff is made to prepare the food. While also working our regular jobs. We do this at no additional pay increase. Yet there are times we are working double or triple what our jobs require. These are some of the additional functions that have occurred since the beginning of the school year. To start, we prepared and fed the entire district to kick off the school year. However, the Food Service Department was not able to take part in this event because we had to work it. We have prepared pizzas for student advocacy on multiple occasions. We prepared and set up the desserts for the Superintendent meeting. We prepared and set up food and drinks for the new student breakfast, and the Parkway breakfast, where the students met with the high school leaders. We had to prepare food and come back in to work and serve the food for the Hall of Fame induction event. We've also had to come back to work so that we could help in the concession stand for all home football games. We were made to work on a scheduled day off to prepare and serve food for the October summit. In addition, we have had to come back to work to prepare food for the school board meetings. Most recently, we prepared and served food for over 400 additional students from 30 different districts from the Uncommon Conference. When we get back to school after Thanksgiving break on December 3rd, we have to prepare both breakfast and lunch for the World of Work event. In addition to the World of Work event, we have to prepare pizza with chips and drinks for another event. On December 4, the World of Work event continues which we have to prepare breakfast sandwiches for, and then for lunch we have to prepare chicken parm, a large salad, rolls, drinks, and desserts. On December 13th, we have another event where we have to prepare breakfast sandwiches and drink for. On December 14th which is a Saturday, we will be required to come in and prepare and serve breakfast for the Santa breakfast. On February 19th, we have another event that we'll be providing a breakfast and lunch for. We will have another event sometime in February for French Day, where we have to make and provide a lunch for approximately 200 additional people. We also have random groups of unexpected visitors that show up randomly at the end of the day that we have to have lunch for. Most of these events are taking place while we are trying to do our regular jobs. When we are being made to prepare these foods from doing what they, excuse me, when we are being made to prepare these foods, and have to set up for the event that is taking staff away from doing what they are supposed to be doing, and makes things more difficult for those that are left behind, especially if we are short staffed also. Every year before the holidays, the high school staff, with help from two or three other food service employees from other schools are made to come in early, set up, prepare, and keep things filled for the staff staff breakfast. Yes, that's right, I said staff breakfast. Yet the entire staff is not able to attend the breakfast because we are made to work it. We don't even have time to eat, because we need to quickly, and I mean quickly, clean up and start preparing lunch for the rest of the day. Many of the other food service employees do not attend the breakfast because they feel bad that we have to work the event. These types of functions will continue to happen throughout the school year as a reminder as food service employees. We were made to come in and work in very close proximity to each other, to prepare and pass out all the free meals for families to pick up while we were in lockdown during Covid. Two years ago, when we had a power outage, we were made to prepare pasta and pizza with a gas stove, but with the power out. We had no ventilation in the High School. This caused a strong gas odor, and many of us did not feel well the rest of the day, and even into the next day. It is now two

months since I last spoke with you, and we still have no contract. Our union negotiation team has been working diligently to get the support staff a fair and equitable contract. Every canceled and missed meeting sends the message that we are not a priority, and makes us feel disrespected. Our frustration and morale are hitting rock bottom. This is the season of hope, and it is our hope that you will negotiate a fair and equitable contract. It would be great if we could get a signed contract in the next few weeks, so that we could receive our back pay right before the holidays, making them a little brighter for us and our families. Thank you for your time.

Sophia McNavish, 102 Hastings Avenue. I am a para at the Intermediate School, and I attended the University of Pittsburgh, and I earned a bachelor's of Science in psychology, with a minor in fine arts. I supported myself all through college, working at a pizza shop where I was a manager, making \$21 an hour. I now make \$20.11. I have worked with children for 14 years. After college I worked at the Watson Institute working with children that have autism and behavioral challenges. Working at this school was a great experience for me, making me realize that I truly love working in special education, overcoming challenges as well as working through them. I left due to low wages. I currently have three jobs. I'm a paraeducator, I work the front end at a restaurant, and I'm currently on the call list for custodians to pick up an extra shift just to make ends meet. There are multiple days in the week where I work 14 to 16 hour days just to pay my bills. This does not allow me to show up as my best every day for my students. This is my 3rd year working at South Fayette. However, my wages are still not sustainable for the world we live in. Now I am newly married, and I look forward to having a family in the near future, but with what the district is proposing for wages, I will not be able to do so with taking home only about 800 per two week pay. I make a difference every day, and I see it in the children I work with. The teachers see it, my principals see it. They compliment me on how I handle students, behaviors, and navigate the best plan for them. The teachers and students could not make it through their school day without paraprofessionals. I know that my coworkers, what my coworkers and I do is a critical part of South Fayette's excellence in education, but I do not believe that some of the Board members see that. I know that my coworkers and I are worthy of equal pay and a well deserved contract that is fair.

Cindy Dusday, 4178 Battle Ridge Road. As a school board member, you represent the community and act for the benefit of all as a taxpayer that you represent, I commission you to move on behalf of our support staff. They deserve a good contract, they are dedicated, and many are members of this community. The fact that they pay the most for healthcare is dishonorable, absolutely dishonorable. They need to be well compensated for their work. It is shameful that the Board has not made their negotiations a top priority, and their contract is not settled. Do better.

Leslie Willits. I am speaking as President of the South Fayette Educational Support Professionals. This is the 3rd time that I'm addressing the Board as a whole regarding our negotiations. What could I say tonight that has not been said before? We're underpaid, overcharged for insurance. The community supports us. We stand in solidarity. What can I say? At the last meeting the Board commented that you are negotiating with us, the support union, in good faith for a fair and equitable contract. Negotiating in good faith by definition means to communicate honestly, fairly, and sincerely to reach a mutual, acceptable outcome. It requires both parties to respect each other and work together to achieve a beneficial result. Scripture states faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen. The South Fayette Educational Support professionals have and will continue to bargain in good faith. We exhibit respect by showing up at every meeting on time. Our asks are very fair and reasonable and always presented with honesty and the highest respect. You know there's a lot of emotion. There's a lot of frustration. This is not our South Fayette way. This is not the way of tradition, our pride and our excellence. So tomorrow is National Educational Support Professional Day. It's part of national educational week. What better way to show your appreciation than to give us healthcare that we can afford with our families, and a fair contract. So, in closing in good faith, with the assurance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen, we do negotiate in good faith with truth and respect and with the motive of the betterment for all, all our district, our community, every custodian maintenance, mechanic, driver, aid, food service, employee, tech, monitor and paraprofessional that deserve a living wage and affordable health care.

John Mark Petrillo, 121 Hoover Street, Bridgeville, emailed: I'm a proud graduate of South Fayette School District class of 1976. In January 2003, I was hired as a custodian by Mr. Gene and Maria Brewer. I've worked for the South Fayette School District going on 22 years and I am currently the building representative for custodial services. I'm writing today because I am deeply concerned about the current conditions affecting custodial staff, particularly as we face five months without a contract. My questions to you are what steps will be taken to ensure increased wages. That custodial staff can't afford to live on with the cost of inflation and changes and our medical insurance premiums in the future. What is being done to address the understaffing crisis, with five custodial positions currently vacant? The custodial staff are overworked, enduring, physically demanding conditions that resemble working like mules with no relief or end in sight. This is taking a toll on morale and health. We are already aware of one staff member who suffered a stroke, and I fear more such incidents could occur. It is critical that the administration understands the strain that we are under, and the urgency of addressing these issues with an acceptable and respectful contract. We need fair wages, benefits, adequate staffing, and respect for our strong union to represent us effectively. Many of us are growing increasingly frustrated, and feel that our patience is wearing thin. I urge the Board to act swiftly and consider the wellbeing of the hardworking, custodial staff, bus drivers, paraeducators, food service workers, and maintenance staff, who all play a vital role in maintaining the district's facilities. We are the lowest paid, yet pay the highest percentages in health care benefits. We have an opportunity to correct this in our negotiations. I invite you all to come, work a shift in the elementary school to see if the conditions we are to see the conditions we are presently working in. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Teal Maxwell, 804 Station Street, Sturgeon, emailed: I am a personal care paraprofessional at South Fayette School. This is my third year working for the district. I live in the district and have children in the district. I work a second job three days, 4 nights a week, and weekends. I am in support of our South Fayette educational support professionals. I support our union 100%. We stand in solidarity for competitive wages and healthcare benefits. We are the lowest paid, yet pay the highest percentages in health care benefits. We have an opportunity to correct this in bargaining. We deserve a fair and equitable contract for Thanksgiving.

Mandy, Evans, 326 Magnolia Street, Sturgeon, emailed: My husband and I have raised our family in this district for 22 years this June. I was a stay at home mom. For 13 of those years, I started my career as a kindergarten Reading Room Paraeducator in 2016, making this my ninth school year as a South Fayette employee and ESP union member. I have a bachelor's degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and 18 years of experience working with children. Under Dr. Miller's leadership. I feel that South Fayette has a better focus on family than ever before. In fact, that's why I'm unable to attend this meeting in person tonight as our first son has his final wind ensemble concert at WVU. Even though we are a family first district, I knew I needed to make my voice heard on the subject of negotiations for our ESP contract. First, I feel that all paraeducators should be paid the same rate. Both the personal care paraeducator and the classroom paraeducator play critical roles for our students in their daily education. Currently there is almost a \$2 pay difference between the positions due to the percentage increases over the years, making it seem that one paraeducator role is of more importance than the other. I highly disagree, as both classifications of paraeducators are vital and significant to individual students. As a classroom paraeducator, I would like to give you a snapshot of my role. I am responsible for supporting the teaching of our youngest lions how to read. Using the Orton Gillingham approach. I have been trained for 45 hours along with three Reading Specialists and two other Reading Paraeducators to be able to effectively implement this approach. Taken from the IMSE website, Orton Gilliam is a highly structured approach that breaks reading and spelling down into smaller skills, involving letters and sounds, and then building on these skills over time. It was the first approach to use explicit, direct, sequential, systematic, systemic, multisensory instruction to teach reading which is not only effective for all students, but essential for teaching students with dyslexia. Using this method, I co-teach alongside the Reading Specialist as well as independently run small groups in the kindergarten classrooms. I have a direct influence on our young learners. Brains as new pathways are created and connections are strengthened in order to become efficient readers, teaching students to read, assisting students in the classroom and supporting a student's emotional and educational needs are just as important as toileting

needs. We deserve equal pay. Secondly, I carry the health care for our family of four. South Fayette has invested in our families, the families of the ESP union by word only. The lowest paid members of the school district pay the most into our health care. There is a huge difference when you make one of the lowest hourly rates and pay 20% into healthcare as opposed to making a bigger salary and paying 12% into health care. I think it is time to put your words into action by respecting our families and providing a fair healthcare proposal. Last, it is my hope that you see how influential every single member of our support staff is to our students. The support staff deserve so much more than you are currently offering. Please look at us as individuals and families, not as numbers. We deserve a fair and equitable contract.

Nicole Smith, 209 4th Street, Houston, emailed: I am a current personal care paraeducator at South Fayette Elementary School. I am willing to support our union in its entirety as we fight for a fair contract. Union strong. Thank you for your time.

Eizabeth Mary, 4256 Battle Ridge Road, McDonald, emailed: I am a parent in South Fayette School District who is being treated for pneumonia and unable to attend this evening's meeting. I'm writing to express my support for a fair and decent contract for South Fayette education support professionals. Our family recently relocated because of this superb school district, and we pay premium taxes. We expect the staff to be appreciated and fairly compensated. Such efforts benefit our kids and the school district as a whole.

Shelly Clevenger, 1312 Sandstone Drive, emailed: I worked in the high school cafe for 15 years. Over the last five years, the cafeteria has been responsible for a lot more functions and food than ever before. Functions that have been happening during the hours. The cafeteria workers are feeding the students while we have always gotten it done. Sometimes it can be done at the expense of the kids. Kids have had to wait for their pizza a few times because I was making pizza for a function for administration. The cafe workers and other school staff rock. They work extremely hard, to be sure, to have all the options they do. I would go home completely exhausted most days, and full of sweat, because I wanted to make sure everything I could do to be sure the kids got what they deserved. While also doing these other functions, we would get very short notice of some of these functions, but we always adjusted and made sure to get everything done. Over several years I applied and interviewed for several secretarial jobs within the district, and never received the position. I think South Fayette should really try hard to hire from within. It is very disheartening to know that I worked there for so long, and they didn't see my value as an employee to hire me for one of these positions. I have an associate's degree and work history that shows office experience. I've had to leave the district to get this type of job as have other cafeteria workers in the past. I just wanted to share my experience working in the district and show support for my former coworkers. They deserve to earn a living wage, and not to have to pay the highest premiums for their family's insurance. Thank you. And please consider settling with the union as they are still working every day and doing their jobs.

Melanie Klein, emailed: I just started working at South Fayette as a food service worker and having to drive from Weirton, West Virginia. Yes, I said it. Weirton, West Virginia, working four hours, only getting \$339 for every 2 weeks while paying bills and all. It's sad that someone there has to travel because you guys can't get help. Do better and pay us correctly. Thank you for your time.

Fornella seconded Gray to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.