



# South Fayette Township School District

## Regular Meeting

### *Minutes*

Tuesday, June 27, 2023  
7:30 PM

The Regular 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 announced the Board held an Executive Session prior to the start of the meeting to discuss personnel and/or legal issues.

**Present:** Joe Welch, Tom Iagnemma, Prajakta Patankar, Len Fornella

**Present Virtually:** Teresa Burroughs, Lena Hannah, Jen Iriti, Paul Brinsky

**Absent:** Jason Olexa

**Others:** Chris Voltz, Tucker Arensberg, P.C.; Dr. Michelle Miller, Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler; Director of Finance/Human Resources Brian Tony; Assistant Director of Finance Chris Juzwick; Communications Director Patrick Harrigan; Director of Technology Rob Warfield; and Cynthia Geisler, Superintendent's Assistant/Board Secretary.

President Fornella announced the meeting is being recorded.

Brian Tony and Chris Juzwick provided the following updates regarding the 2023-2024 Final Budget:

- No revenue or expenditure changes since last week
- Budget running total and budget summary

The Business Office recommended to increase the millage by .5 in preparation for future construction project. The Board requested a 3-year budget projection based on actuals. Mr. Tony replied the projection will be provided.

#### **AGENDA APPROVAL:**

Patankar seconded Welch on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Solicitor for Board approval of the June 27, 2023, revised Regular Meeting agenda. The following new motions were received and added today:

- The Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler recommend Board approval to enter into an agreement with The Watson Institute to provide classroom planning, observation and direct consultation services, effective to July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.
- The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler, and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler recommend Board approval to enter into an Affiliation Agreement (per solicitor's review) with Walden University for students to complete their educational field experiences, effective for a five-year period beginning July 1, 2023. There will be no cost to the district.
- The Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services recommend Board approval of an Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator for the Summer STEAM Camp running from July 10-13, 2023, from 12:30 to 3:30 PM.

- The Superintendent and Elementary School Principal recommend Board approval of the resignation of a Student Monitor, effective for the 2023-2024 school year.
- The Superintendent and Intermediate School Principals recommend Board approval of the sabbatical leave of absence request for a Grade 4 teacher in the Intermediate School effective for the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year.
- The Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony recommend Board approval for the District to provide one 72-passenger school bus for the 2023 South Fayette Township Touch-a-Truck event scheduled for Sunday, July 16, 2023, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Fairview Park. The cost to the District is estimated at \$229.56, and includes driver salary/benefits and fuel.

Voice Vote – All Yes

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Welch seconded Iriti on approval of the Minutes from the following Board Meetings:

Committee Meeting of the Board	Tuesday, May 16, 2023
Regular Board Meeting	Tuesday, May 23, 2023

And on approval of the following Financial Reports which have been reviewed by the Superintendent and Secondary Administration:

Athletic Fund	Mark Keener
High School Activity Fund	Chris Juzwick
Middle School Activity Fund	Chris Juzwick
Board Summary Report (May 2023)	Chris Juzwick

And authorization for payment of monthly invoices from the General Fund for the amount of \$897,568.57 beginning with check number 74999 through check number 75229 and the Cafeteria Fund for the amount of \$45,451.88 beginning with check number 8550 through check number 8559.

Voice Vote – All Yes

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

There were no comments at this time.

**Old Business**

There was no old business discussed.

**New Business**

There was no new business discussed.

**BUSINESS OFFICE**

Brinsky seconded Welch on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony for Board approval to adopt the Final Budget for the 2023-2024 school year. The final budget revenue of \$70,549,565 and expenses of \$76,354,179 would balance with a 26.7 millage rate and borrowing from the fund balance in the amount of \$5,804,614.

Roll Call – Brinsky, Burroughs, Iagnemma, Welch,  
Patankar, Fornella – All Yes  
Iriti, Hannah – All No

Iriti seconded Brinsky on the recommendation of the School District Solicitor, the Superintendent, and Director of Finance Brian Tony for Board approval to adopt Resolution 23-01, 2023 Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion, for the District to reduce property taxes, for qualified homestead/farmstead properties by \$173.06. In accordance with the Homestead Property Exclusion Program Act (part of Act 50 of 1998) and the Taxpayer Relief Act (Act 1 of 2006) the District must reduce property taxes beginning July 1, 2023.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval of the Behavioral Health Professional Services Agreement, as approved by the Superintendent and Solicitor, between Allegheny Clinic and the District. The Clinic will provide the Chill Project by AHN for the summer ESY Program, effective July 5, 2023, through July 27, 2023.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval to enter into an agreement with The Watson Institute to provide classroom planning, observation and direct consultation services, effective to July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler, and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval to enter into an Affiliation Agreement (per solicitor's review) with Walden University for students to complete their educational field experiences, effective for a five-year period beginning July 1, 2023. There will be no cost to the district.

Voice Vote – All Yes

## **PERSONNEL**

### **New motions from the June 27, 2023 Executive Session agenda.**

Welch seconded Burroughs on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of the revised salary of Master's Step 1 rate of \$52,250 for Courtney Chiurazzi, Special Education Permanent Substitute teacher in the Middle School. Ms. Chiurazzi was approved at the June 20, 2023 meeting at an incorrect Master's Step 1 salary.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval of Mindy Pillar as an Extra-curricular Personal Care Paraeducator for the Summer STEAM Camp running from July 10-13, 2023, from 12:30 to 3:30 PM, at the rate of \$21.96 per hour.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist for Board approval of the resignation of Jane Vennum as a Student Monitor, effective for the 2023-2024 school year.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Intermediate School Principals for Board approval of the sabbatical leave of absence request for Molly Kurnal, Grade 4 teacher in the Intermediate School effective for the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year.

Voice Vote – All Yes

## **EDUCATION**

Iriti seconded Hannah on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist for Board approval of the revised report cards for the Elementary School effective for the 2023-2024 school year.

Voice Vote – All Yes

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Patankar seconded Hannah on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony for Board approval for the District to provide one 72-passenger school bus for the 2023 South Fayette Township Touch-a-Truck event scheduled for Sunday, July 16, 2023, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Fairview Park. The cost to the District is estimated at \$229.56, and includes driver salary/benefits and fuel.

Voice Vote – All Yes

## **ATHLETICS**

There were no additional items discussed.

## **CONSTRUCTION**

There were no items discussed.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Welch seconded Hannah on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval of the revised 2023-2024 school calendar. The revision is due to Kennywood Day being moved to June, the Prom being earlier in May, and other additional clarifications.

Dr. Miller added the overwhelming request was to end the school year earlier.

Voice Vote – All Yes

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

Mrs. Geisler read the following email public comment:

To the South Fayette School Board,

My name is Pia Kool, and I recently graduated from the South Fayette School District.

I sincerely request the following public comment to be taken into consideration for the upcoming school year and many more to come.

As a student who has firsthand seen the highly competitive and ambitious school environment that the South Fayette School District boasts, I have come to the understanding that this environment not only fosters phenomenal student performance but also subjects students to extreme amounts of stress.

I plead, not only as a student but as a fellow peer to all students residing in the district, that the school board take the following actions to reduce student stress and improve the school environment as a whole:

1) Mandating that there is no summer work over summer break (something our neighboring school district, Upper St. Clair School District, has already done)—by removing summer work requirements over the break, not only will students be able to pursue enriching activities that they were unable to during the school year, but they will also get to spend time with family and friends without any restrictions. Teachers and professors will also get more time to do the same and have more time to put toward plans for the upcoming school year rather than putting so much time toward answering inquiries or grading summer work.

2) Mandating limits on homework and tests: in the Western Allegheny School District, there have been limits on homework mandating that students in grades 7 to 9 and grades 10 to 12 do not spend time on homework exceeding 90 minutes and 2 hours, respectively, including the time that students may spend in preparation for exams or tests a week or two prior to their exams; this will not only limit the amount of

stress students are facing, allowing them to perform better on exams, homework, and other assignments, but will also allow teachers to not be grading such an excess of homework and exams and ensure that they have more time to focus on other materials of student importance.

3) Removing mandates for students to take AP exams for every single AP class they have taken so that they can not only save money on each exam but also focus more time and energy on only taking AP exams that their colleges of choice require (thereby reducing their stress and allowing them to also not be stressed for other school responsibilities that appear during the final quarter of the school year such as final exams, final papers, as well as SAT and ACT exams)

I sincerely thank the South Fayette School Board for giving the community an opportunity to voice our views for the benefit of our students and our school district.

I truly hope that the Student Board is able to take action on behalf of our students in order to ensure their well-being, utmost happiness, and best possible school performance.

Respectfully,  
Pia Kool

**Solicitor's Report**

Mr. Voltz had nothing to report.

**Board Comments**

There were no comments at this time.

**BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee Report**

President Fornella had nothing to report.

**President Len Fornella**

**South Fayette Foundation**

Mr. Brinsky reported the golf outing is on July 17.

**Paul Brinsky**

**PSBA/Legislative Committee Report**

Mrs. Hannah shared information regarding SB795 School Vouchers and asked Board members to reach out to Senator Robinson and Representative Ortity to vote no regarding the bill.

**Lena Hannah**

**Parkway West**

Mr. Iagnemma had nothing to report.

**Tom Iagnemma**

**SHASDA**

Mr. Welch had nothing to report.

**Joe Welch**

Welch seconded Brinsky to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 PM.

Voice Vote – All Yes

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Cynthia Geisler, Board Secretary