



**POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 17, 2020**

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 7:00 PM via virtual communication with President, Mrs. Amy Francis presiding. Upon roll call, the following members attended via virtual communication: Mr. John Armato, Ms. Katina Bearden, Mrs. Bonita Barnhill., Mr. Thomas Hylton, Mrs. Laura Johnson, Mr. Steve Kline, Mrs. Susan Lawrence, and Mr. Raymond Rose. Also present were Superintendent, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez; Business Administrator, Mrs. Maureen Jampo; Director of Human Resources, Dr. Deena Cellini; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis; Student Board Representative, Kishan Patel. Joining the meeting was Federation Vice-President, Mr. Robert Decker.

OATH OF OFFICE

Judge Palladino administered the Oath of Office to the newly appointed Student Board Representative for the Junior Class, Mr. Jimi Chavalaporn.

PRESENTATION

Montgomery County Democratic Committee: Outstanding Women Elected Leaders Award

Mr. Armato was pleased to recognize two Pottstown Women Elected Leaders as recipients of this award: Mayor Stephanie Henrick and Mrs. Amy Francis. Mrs. Francis has served on the School Board for 14 years and has supported and guided numerous initiatives within the community and school district. Her leadership as a School Board Director has developed a culture on the Board that promotes a professional focus and a true desire to be centered on student achievement.

Superintendent Update

Mr. Rodriguez presented a December District Pandemic update. Vaccinations and rapid testing are positive signs for the beginning of the end of the pandemic. Transmission rates have increased during the month of December. PDE Closure Guidelines vary in accordance with the number of students present versus number of transmissions. The proposed Phased Re-entry Plan is possible hybrid schedules for the High School and Middle School. Proposed Elementary Schools is a schedule for synchronous virtual groups. Parents have the option to stay virtual. The District has PPE supplies and the cleaning systems are working effectively. The District will continue to maintain regulations to social distance, wear masks and wash hands.

COMMUNICATION

Senator Casey: Education Funding Letter - Mr. Rodriguez shared a letter from Senator Casey regarding education funding, the impact created by the coronavirus and the implementation of the CARES Act to provide financial support during the pandemic.

MINUTES

Mrs. Jampo presented the minutes from the Board meeting held on November 19, 2020.

LIST OF BILLS

Mr. Kline presented the list of bills paid from the various funds for the period of November 2020 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2020-2021-049**.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Kline presented the Treasurer's Reports for November 2020 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2020-2021-050**.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

POLICY/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – MRS. BARNHILL

The Committee met virtually on December 3. Two policies were reviewed and recommended for Board approval as presented on tonight's agenda. The committee was in favor of retiring nine policies (prior format) that are covered by other PSBA format policies and covered in guidelines and agreements. The Administration presented two personnel items for information purposes: 1) the AFJROTC program looks to dismantle, created by the absence of candidates for instructors and low enrollment. 2) Return of some furloughed cafeteria workers to fill time slots need to make breakfasts and lunched for students.

CURRICULUM /CO-CURRICULAR COMMITTEE – MRS. LAWRENCE

The Committee met virtually on December 3. Mrs. Kolka gave the committee an overview of the Chapter 4 Academic Standards and Assessment update as of September 2020. Both elementary and Secondary levels will experience changes in science standards. Implementation of the changes will effective July 1, 2024.

FACILITIES / FINANCE COMMITTEE - MR. HYLTON

The Committee met virtually on December 10. Congratulations were extended to the new Franklin Elementary Head Custodian, Tonya Brown. The committee was in favor to move forward with the remediation plan at Edgewood to address the asbestos in the building. The remediation plan is presented on tonight's agenda for Board approval. Mrs. Jampo gave an overview of the Pa. Dept. of Auditor General's Performance Audit for the period of 2014 to 2019 and an update on the current local revenues for 2020/2021 budget. The overall increase (property taxes, EIT and transfer taxes) is \$416,081 above the projected budget revenues. Board approval items for tonight's agenda include Special Education contracts and Act 93, Exempt and Support Staff equity plan for 2021.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – MR. ROSE

The Committee met virtually on December 10. The Committee was pleased to recommend Jimi Chavalaporn, as the Student Board Representative to be sworn in at tonight's Board meeting. The Committee shared information on various services and opportunities for family engagement in the community. Mrs. Johnson gave a presentation on fair funding factors and how the state distributes Education funding. The district is underfunded by approximately \$11.5 million.

BOROUGH LIAISON - MR. ROSE

Highlights from the December Borough Council meetings include approval of a warming center at the former St. Aloysius School, a tax increase of 2.9% and permission granted to local businesses to erect tents for indoor dining at Smith Plaza and Parking Lot 2.

STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVES - KISHAN PATEL AND JIMI CHAVALAPORN

Mr. Patel reported nine students placed at the DECA virtual competition and will be attending the virtual state competition. He recognized several student athletes that received honorable mention in football and boys and girls soccer. Darius Smallwood was named Cross Country Runner of the Year.

Mr. Chavalaporn congratulated Kishan Patel for his acceptance to Duke University. Mr. Patel was granted a full scholarship through the Questbridge National College Match. Musical rehearsals will begin virtually next week. The musical is scheduled to perform on March 15, 2021.

Both student representatives met with administrators to share their perspectives on hybrid scheduling.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT - MRS. BARNHILL

No report

MCSDL / PSBA REPRESENTATIVE – MRS. JOHNSON

PSBA has extended an invitation to all School Board Members to participate in a virtual round table discussion on advocacy.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS

Mr. Rodriguez presented the consent items for Board discussion and approval. Administrators reviewed the consent items presented for Board approval.

HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS (general and consent items)

Matthew Galamba, resident, spoke in support of the AFJROTC program. He asked that the administration pursue the Air Force to fill the instructor vacancy. The program is a great benefit to future cadets and a great asset to our country.

Dana Braunsberg, resident, spoke in support of the AFJROTC program. As a former participant in the program, she stressed the vital component the program played in her life. Former graduates of the program are exploring ways to fill the instructor vacancy.

BOARD ACTION: Minutes, List of Bills, Treasurer’s Report

It was moved by Mrs. Barnhill that the Board approve the minutes from the Regular Board meeting held on November 19, 2020, the List of Bills from the period of November 2020 and the Treasurer’s Report for November 2020. Ayes: Nine. Nays: None. Motion carried.

BOARD ACTION: CONSENT

It was moved Mr. Hylton and seconded by Ms. Bearden that the following consent items be approved in accordance with Policy 005, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools:

PERSONNEL

RESIGNATIONS/TERMINATIONS

Exempt

Ratify Roger Gauert, JROTC Instructor, High School, resignation effective November 6, 2020; hire date May 20, 2019.

Classified

Raphael Hueber, Part-time Elementary Cleaner, Barth Elementary, resignation effective December 23, 2020; hire date January 14, 2020.

LEAVES

Administrative

Ratify Mary Ellen Urquhart, Assistant Business Manager, Administration Building, request for leave of absence covered by Family Medical Leave Act, effective December 2, 2020; end date tbd.

Ratify Cheryl Morett, Director of Special Education, Administration Building, request for leave of absence covered by Family Medical Leave Act, effective December 1, 2020; end date tbd.

Professional

Ratify Elizabeth Pickar, Elementary Teacher, Franklin Elementary, request for leave of absence covered by Family Medical Leave Act, effective November 23, 2020; end date tbd.

Classified

Ratify Amy Nagle, Paraprofessional, Middle School, request for leave of absence covered by Family Medical Leave Act, effective December 11, 2020; end date tbd.

Correction: Ratify Narjiss Boudadi, Paraprofessional, Middle School, request for leave of absence covered by Family Medical Leave Act, effective date December 9, 2020, end date tbd.

CHANGE IN POSITION/SALARY

Classified

Ratify Tonya Brown, from Custodian 1 to Head Custodian, Franklin Elementary, effective November 19, 2020, \$17.19/hr (replacing J. Angstadt).

Ratify Diane Marcheskie, from Student Proctor to Full-Time Secretary, High School, effective December 1, 2020, \$14.04/hr (replacing J. Friend)

ELECTIONS

Professional

Stephen Siever, Secondary Teacher, initial assignment to be Pottstown High School, effective date pending receipt of PDE Certification, \$55,000/yr, Step 12-Std (replacing E. Jarett).

Cora Harmon, Long Term Substitute Teacher, (floater), effective January 4, 2021, \$194/day; end of date to be end of 2020/2021 school year.

Hannah Robinson, Long Term Substitute Teacher, (floater). effective January 3, 2021, \$194/day; end date to be end of 2020/2021 school year.

Allison Collins, Long Term Substitute Teacher, (floater), effective January 13, 2021, \$194/day; end date to be end of 2020/2021 school year.

21st Century After School Tutoring Program, (funded by 21st Century Grant)

Laurie Gresko, Co-coordinator, effective December 1, 2020, \$30/hr

FURLOUGH CHANGES

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve/ratify the furlough changes of those employees who have returned to either partial or full hours from previous furlough status” and a copy be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2020-2021-051**.

POLICIES

The Superintendent recommends the Boar approve the following policies and copies be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2020-2021-052**:

- Policy 008: Organizational Chart
- Policy 204: Attendance

CONTRACTS

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve/ratify the contracts as presented and copies be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2020-2021-053**:

- New Story Schools
- New Story Schools

EDGEWOOD ASBESTOS REMEDIATION PROJECT

Motion to approve the Edgewood Asbestos Remediation Project as presented. Funds, not covered by the CARES Grant, to be reallocated from the 2021-2022 building maintenance project budget and a Copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2020-2021-054**.

ACT 93, EXEMPT & SUPPORT STAFF COMPENSATION PLAN 2020-2021

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the Act 93, Exempt & Support Staff Compensation Plan 20-21 as presented and copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2020-2021-055**.

**Upon roll call, all members present voted aye for the above consent items. Ayes: Nine
Nays: None. Motion carried.**

INFORMATION

- School Board Workshop: January 14, 2021 6:30 pm
- School Board Regular Meeting: January 21, 2021 7:00 pm

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mr. Decker congratulated Jimi Chavalaporn, Junior Student Board Representative and Mrs. Francis, a recipient of the Montgomery County Democratic Committee's Outstanding Women Elected Leaders award. He thanked Mr. Rodriguez for sharing his District update. The professional staff expresses concerns about moving to a hybrid system. The District has experienced successes with virtual learning attributed to the District's stance to remain virtual at the opening of the school year. Concerns focus on COVID transmission, disruption to educational processes and successes. Consistency and stability are crucial to the education processes.

ROUND TABLE

All Board Members extended their congratulations to the newly appointed Junior Student Board Representative, Jimi Chavalaporn and to Mrs. Francis, recipient of the Montgomery County Democratic Committee's award of Outstanding Women Elected Leaders.

Mrs. Johnson encouraged everyone to support the local businesses.

Mr. Kline thanked Mr. Rodriguez for the district update.

Mrs. Lawrence was in agreement with Mr. Decker's comments to stick with one plan. She recognizes nothing is perfect.

Ms. Bearden wished everyone a safe, happy holiday.

Mrs. Barnhill encouraged everyone to follow the quarantine guidelines during the holiday.

Mr. Rose echoed Mrs. Johnson's comment to support the local businesses.

Mr. Chavalaporn thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as a Student Board Representative. He is honored to be a part of process.

Mr. Patel congratulated Mrs. Francis and Mr. Chavalaporn. He looks forward to working together.

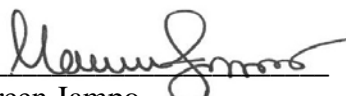
Mr. Armato stated he is grateful for the PSD team, focused on student achievement. He thanked all the staff and wished everyone a happy holiday.

Mr. Rodriguez thanked the public for their comments regarding the JROTC program. He stated the District does not want to lose the program. He welcomes the search for a new instructor. He congratulated Jimi Chavalaporn and commended him on his accomplishments. Mr. Rodriguez was ecstatic to hear Kishan Patel's acceptance to Duke University and proud to be witness to two Questbridge National College Matches in his career at PSD. He congratulated Mrs. Francis and wished everyone a happy holiday.

Mrs. Francis thanked everyone for their support and kind words. It has been a pleasure to serve the District and thanked everyone for being a team. She looks forward to smooth 2021 year and happy holidays.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Barnhill and seconded by Mrs. Johnson that the meeting adjourns. All were in favor. None opposed. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.



Maureen Jampo
Board Secretary