



**POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 19, 2023**

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 6:33 PM in the Conference Room of the Administration Building including virtual platform with President, Ms. Katina Bearden, presiding. Upon roll call, the following members attended: Mr. John Armato, Mrs. Katina Bearden, Mr. Kurt Heidel, Mr. Thomas Hylton, Mrs. Phoebe Kancianic, Mrs. Laura Johnson, Mr. Steve Kline, Mrs. Susan Lawrence and Ms. Deborah Spence. Also present were; Superintendent, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez, Business Administrator, Mrs. Maureen Oakley; Director of Human Resources, Mr. Matthew Boyer; Solicitor, Mr. Kalis.

EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF LITIGATION

Removed not Executed.

PRESENTATIONS

Oath of Office: Student Board Representatives. - Judge Palladino did a swearing in ceremony for Imani Galloway-Junior Representative and Tahj Phillips – Alternate Junior Representative.

Impact 2023 – Mrs. Bearden spoke about the \$10,000 donation formally known as the Amazing Raise. This donation was presented to the Foundation for Pottstown Education with a couple of stipulations of certain percentages had to be raised by different group challenges. Foundation for Pottstown Education helps out our community and school district with help cutting costs in different areas that are needed. The time slot to donate runs from October 1, 2023 to October 21, 2023.

MINUTES

Mrs. Oakley presented the minutes from the Regular Board meeting held on September 21, 2023 for Board approval.

LIST OF BILLS

Mrs. Johnson presented the list of bills paid from the various funds for the period of September 2023 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2023-2024-024**

TREASURER’S REPORT

Mrs. Oakley presented the Treasurer’s Report for September 2023 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2023-2024-025**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

POLICY/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – MR. KLINE

Policy/Personnel Committee met on October 5. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – MRS. LAWRENCE

Curriculum Committee met on October 5. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes.

FACILITIES/FINANCE COMMITTEE – MR. HYLTON

Facilities/Finance Committee met on October 12. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes

PUBLIC RELATIONS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – MRS. JOHNSON

Public Relations/Community Engagement met on October 12. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY LEGISLATIVE – MRS. JOHNSON

Went over Act 1 index state budget, along with other legislative but not yet finalized. Going over the new format and schedule due to the new structure change.

PSBA REPRESENTATIVE – MRS. KANCIANIC

School Leadership conference was on the 16th and 17th and Pottstown High School was represented by the Woodwind assemble. PSBA reminded us there is in-person and virtual trainings that need to be done for new (5hrs) and returning (3hrs) directors. GREATPASCHOOLS.COM is now up and running. Website shows all schools around PA and their different stories.

MCIU REPRESENTATIVE – MRS. LAWRENCE

Spoke about the \$3.5 million - five-year grant that will support the PA gifted equity initiative. Curriculum will talk about that down the line. MCIU was monitoring two school districts which are now able to manage themselves. Reminder for the Monte Carlo Night in November this will help with the MCIU Education Fund.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE – MS. ADEDEJI, MS. GALLOWAY, MS. PHILLIPS

Students gave an update on high school events (musical, homecoming spirit week) also various happenings at each of the elementary schools and middle school.

PERSONNEL

POSITIONS

Addition to Position(s)

Department Chair for the Nursing Department
Building Substitute to Edgewood Learning Center

RESIGNATIONS/TERMINATIONS

PROFESSIONAL

RATIFY JAMES MARTINEZ, TEACHER, HIGH SCHOOL, TERMINATION EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 21, 2023; HIRE DATE AUGUST 22, 2007.

RATIFY LEE WILCOX, TEACHER, MIDDLE SCHOOL, RESIGNATION EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 19, 2023; HIRE DATE OCTOBER 5, 2022.

EXEMPT

RATIFY SOPHIA DRENNEN, SOCIAL WORKER, MIDDLE SCHOOL, RESIGNATION EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 2, 2023; HIRE DATE OCTOBER 2, 2023.

CLASSIFIED

VALERIE REIFSNEIDER, ASSISTANT IT DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION, RETIREMENT EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 2, 2024; HIRE DATE SEPTEMBER 9, 1992.

BARBARA HOLLENBACH, PARAPROFESSIONAL, HIGH SCHOOL, RETIREMENT EFFECTIVE JANUARY 12, 2024; HIRE DATE AUGUST 26, 1997.

LEAVES

PROFESSIONAL

RATIFY JANE HOSPADOR, ELEMENTARY TEACHER, FRANKLIN, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA-INTERMITTENT, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 20, 2023; END DATE TBD.

NICOLE EWING, ELEMENTARY TEACHER, FRANKLIN, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA & CHILDREARING, EFFECTIVE MARCH 20, 2024; END DATE TBD.

RONNI MILLER, SECONDARY TEACHER, MIDDLE SCHOOL, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA & CHILDREARING, EFFECTIVE MARCH 28, 2024; END DATE TBD.

RATIFY REGINA COLLINS, ELEMENTARY TEACHER, FRANKLIN, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA-INTERMITTENT, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 28, 2023; END DATE TBD.

ERICA FAUST, ELEMENTARY TEACHER, ADMIN-SPECIAL EDUCATION, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA & CHILDBEARING, EFFECTIVE APRIL 30, 2024; END DATE TBD.

EXEMPT

RATIFY CAROL BRIGHTBILL, TECH & INNOVATION MANAGER, ADMIN-IT DEPARTMENT, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA-INTERMITTENT, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 21, 2023; END DATE TBD.

RATIFY MELANIE GNIEWOZ, PRE-K COUNTS TEACHER, LINCOLN, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA & CHILDREARING, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 26, 2023; END DATE TBD.

RATIFY JIMAI SPRINGFIELD, ADMINISTRATIVE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, ADMIN-SPECIAL EDUCATION, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA-INTERMITTENT, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 25, 2023; END DATE TBD.

RATIFY LANIE MANOREK, MEDICAL ACCESS PROGRAM COORDINATOR, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA-INTERMITTENT, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 13, 2023; END DATE TBD.

CLASSIFIED

RATIFY SHAWN BAKER, CUSTODIAN, FRANKLIN/NORTH END, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FMLA MEDICAL LEAVE, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 21, 2023; END DATE TBD.

HEATHER O'CONNOR, PROCTOR, RUPERT, REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE, MEDICAL - NON-FMLA, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 8, 2023; END DATE TBD.

CHANGE IN POSITION/SALARY

RATIFY AYANA SINGLETON-GRAY, PROCTOR TO PARAPROFESSIONAL, \$15.50/HR., EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 4, 2023.

ELECTIONS

PROFESSIONAL

ROBERT SPEER, HE/PE TEACHER, MIDDLE SCHOOL, \$63,443/YR, EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 21, 2023, STEP9 MASTERS; REPLACING S.GAAL.

EXEMPT

RATIFY SOPHIA DRENNEN, SOCIAL WORKER, MIDDLE SCHOOL, \$65,000/YR, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 2, 2023; REPLACING C.BUTLER.

CLASSIFIED

RATIFY ERIN EMBERGER, CAFETERIA WORKER, HIGH SCHOOL, \$14.25/HR., EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 11, 2023.

RATIFY KIMBERLY GEUSS, SUBSTITUTE SCHOOL NURSE LPN, \$20.75/HR., EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 28, 2023.

RATIFY LOURDES CONTENTO, PROCTOR, BARTH, \$14/HR., EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 4, 2023.

RATIFY KELSEY SHUMAKER, SUBSTITUTE SCHOOL NURSE RN, \$25.50/HR., EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 12, 2023.

CO-CURRICULAR ASSIGNMENTS UPDATE

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the co-curricular as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2023-2024-026**

FIELD TRIPS

# Students	Conference	Date of Trip	Cost to Student	Chaperone
4	SkillsUSA Leadership Conference	11/8/23-11/10/23	\$150.00	Teri Baller

HORIZONTAL SALARY MOVEMENTS

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the Horizontal Salary Movements as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2023-2024-027**

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the Tuition Reimbursement as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2023-2024-028**

PROFESSIONAL LEAVES

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the Professional Leaves as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2023-2024-029**

POLICY

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve the Policy 006.1 and Policy 625 as presented and copies be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2023-2024-030**

- Policy 216.1 Supplemental Discipline Records - Update
- Policy 830.1 Data Governance – Storage/Security - New
- Policy 103.2 Non-Discrimination Based on Sex - Update

CONTRACTS

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the contracts as presented and copies be filed in the Secretary’s office as **Addendum #2023-2024-031**

• Cottage Seven Education	• Community Health & Dental Care, Inc.
• YMCA Greater Philadelphia	• Advanced Protection Company
• Assessment Alternatives, LLC	• The Lincoln Center Family & Youth
• 21st Century (7)	• ELA Group LLC
• The Vanguard School	

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

None

BOARD ACTION: Minutes, List of Bills

It was moved by Mr. Armato and seconded by Mr. Heidel that the Board approve the minutes from September 2023 the list of Bills for September 2023 and the Treasurer’s Report for September 2023. All were in favor. Motion carried.

BOARD ACTION: CONSENT

It was moved by Mr. Heidel and seconded by Mr. Armato that the following consent items #9 to #19 be approved in accordance with Policy 005, as recommended by the Board Treasurer:

Upon roll call vote, all present members voted aye for the above consent items: Mrs. Kancianic; aye, Mr. Armato; aye, Mr. Kline; aye, Mrs. Lawrence; aye, Mrs. Spence; aye, Mrs. Johnson; aye, Mr. Hylton; aye, Mr. Heidel; aye, Mrs. Bearden. Ayes: Nine. Nay: Zero. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

- Tenure Recognition: Eligible professional staff – Mr. Rodriguez
- Monthly Meeting Notice: November

FEDERATION REMARKS – Beth Yoder

School year off to a good start. Fall sports almost over. Shout out to the junior varsity and varsity girls' volleyball teams both had a win under their belts. Also shout out to the band for their commitment which shows how much the students love music. I would like to add why it is important to have music in student's life and would like to bring back general music to the middle school.

ROUND TABLE

Mrs. Kancianic – Encourage community to participate in the events the Middle School sets up to get families involved with children, school and teachers. Excited for the musical. PSMA having a vendor event with crafts and food on November 18, 2023 from 9am – 2pm.

Mr. Armato – Congratulations to volleyball teams. Great accomplishment and they are learning team work, self-discipline and setting goals.

Mrs. Lawrence – Congratulations to new student representatives. Also, I agree about trying to bring back General Music teacher back to the Middle School.

Mr. Kline – Congratulations to Volleyball teams and research has shown that individually their personal academic attendance and discipline records go up in season.

Mrs. Johnson – Congratulations to new student representatives.

Mr. Rodriguez – Thank the Board President Mrs. Bearden for traveling 2hrs to Pocono's to watch our students perform in front of State-wide Leaders. Students received two standing ovations. Very Proud. PowerSchool is in full swing. Reports cards are coming out will be different but please be patient and we will work out the kinks if any. Shout out for the Hispanic Culture Week.

Mrs. Bearden – School Band is important. Music is a good structure for students. Thank you to band members and Staff. October is cancer awareness month in addition with Spanish Heritage Month. Should go year-round not just for a month. Gave appreciation and a welcome to the new student Representatives. Parents asked for the Father/Daughter dance to be brought back as an event. Event will be for K-6th grade, November 17, 2023 at 6:30-8:30pm.

Ms. Galloway – Remind everyone about the Pink Out Game on Saturday. Will be taken donations and selling shirts. A breast cancer survivor will be there to take pictures with everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Heidel and seconded by Mrs. Johnson that the Board adjourn. All in favor. Motion Carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:27pm.


Maureen Oakley-Board Secretary



**Pottstown School District
Personnel/Policy Committee
REPORT
October 5, 2023**

Committee Members: Steve Kline, Chair; John Armato, Susan Lawrence, Deborah Spence, Katina Bearden

POLICY

Policy 216.1 Supplemental Discipline Records

- a new recommendation by PSBA to be implemented immediately for legal liability purposes regarding adherence to the rules of supplemental discipline records.

Policy 830.1 Data Governance – Storage/Security

- a new policy mandated by the Breach of Personal Information Notification Act. Provides guidelines to secure measures to protect integrity of data, as well as consequences for violation of the policy. Act 151 requires an annual review with updates from PSBA.

Policy 103.2 Non-Discrimination Based on Sex

No changes to this policy with the exception of:

- *Policy has been adapted with current PSD information*
- *Policy now includes reporting form links at the bottom*
- *New Title IX reporting isolated email that is routed to specific PSD staff*

The Committee as a whole in agreement to move the policies listed above to the Board Agenda.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Boyer made the following Personnel requests:

- Add a **Department Chair for the Nursing Department**. An interested candidate would be selected from the existing district nursing staff to advise with day-to-day operations.
- Add a **Building Substitute to Edgewood Learning Center**. This additional staff member would be beneficial to students who perform better with familiarity, in addition to accommodating staff absences throughout the district when needed.

The Committee as a whole in agreement to move the above personnel requests to the Board Agenda.

Next Meeting Date: November 2, 2023



Pottstown School District

**CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
REPORT
October 5, 2023**

(immediately following Policy/Personnel Committee meeting)

Committee Members: Susan Lawrence - Chairperson; Steve Kline, Phoebe Kancianic, Thomas Hylton, Katina Bearden

Informational Items:

Mr. Jeffreys provided an update on the Special Education Department.

Highlights included:

- Addition of a Special Education Consultant/Director at the Edgewood Learning Center.
- Stationing a tier-3 social skills curriculum (Everyday Speech) for both tier-3 and IEP students and the expanded use of Unique Learning Curriculum.
- The Paraeducators Pathway Grant from the MCIU provides opportunity for Paraprofessionals to work towards an Associate Degree.
- Restorative Practices are in place to bridge behavior and social interaction and a unified track combining both general and special education students to build collaborations.
- Building transition plans for students with IEPs who are 14 years and over for life after school.
- Adding a Gifted and Mental Health Screener to examine what barrier students are facing that prohibits their learning progress.
- Adding PaTTAN Inclusivity Initiative to help coach teachers.

Novel Recommendations (PHS) - K. Knowles / R. Oxenford

Ms. Knowles, High School ELA Teacher presented two novel recommendations for Committee consideration: 1) *A Long Way Gone*, Ishmael Beah and 2) *Long Way Down*, Jason Reynolds. Ms. Knowles gave an overview of both novels and provided examples of how content and writing techniques align to the High School Curriculum and Comprehensive Plan. Both novels also support the 'Portrait of a Graduate' initiative with both critical thinking and cultural awareness.

Mr. Oxenford explained the cost of both novels amounted to \$649.25, with plans to include them into novel studies for the second semester.

Committee as a whole agreed to move this request to the Board Agenda.

Next Meeting: November 2, 2023



POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Facilities/Finance Committee
REPORT

Thursday October 12, 2023
6:30 PM virtual

Members: Thomas Hylton- Chair; John Armato, Steve Kline, Kurt Heidel, Laura Johnson, Katina Bearden (absent)

FACILITIES – Mrs. Oakley

Facility Update:

- High School Sewer Line - repeated back-ups, anticipating a summer project to install additional cleanouts.
- Middle School fire alarm panel - replacement during holiday break, current panel can no longer be repaired as parts are no longer available.
- Field lighting for the Band at the High School – underground wiring deteriorated as it was not installed into conduit.
- NELC playground - estimate completion next week.
- NELC old equipment structure to be moved to the High School Courtyard for use by the Pre-K classroom.
- Athletic Field Complex Repair & Upgrade Proposal Next Steps: Installation of 2 turf fields, pathways, netting, drainage upgrades, resurfacing of tennis and track surfaces for all athletic fields was estimated at \$10.7M, these costs were averages and additional testing will be required to provide an accurate project scope and costs. Project could be partially completed with ESSER Funds and Capital Projects Improvement Funds.
- Athletic Field Professional Services Feasibility Testing: Geotechnical testing (Kleinfelder Inc. \$8,400), Surveying (Land Grant Surveyors \$6,600) & Schematic Design (ELA Sport \$10,000) Totaling \$25,000.00 recommended for Committee Approval.

FINANCE – Mrs. Oakley

Board Approval Items:

- Cottage Seven and Lincoln Center Special Education Tuition Placements
- Community Health and Dental Care
- YMCA Greater Philadelphia
- Advanced Protection Contracted Services
- Assessment Alternatives – Contracted Psych Services

Next meeting: November 9, 2023



POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Public Relations & Community Engagement Committee
REPORT

October 12, 2023

Committee Members: Laura Johnson, (Chair); Katina Bearden, Kurt Heidel, Phoebe Kancianic

Guest Presentations

Elks Programs

Mr. Klause spoke on the Elks Drug Awareness Program (D.A.P.) The Elks are committed to eliminating the use and abuse of illegal drugs in society. The Elks are holding a ‘Be Kind to Your Mind, Live Drug Free’ campaign, starting on January 6, 2024. Depending on their grade level, students can participate by entering yearly contests to design a poster, write an essay or create a video. The Elks also provide speakers, pamphlets and scholarships are available to PSD students.

Foundation for Pottstown Education

Mr. Rusiewicz gave a slide presentation on the Foundation for Pottstown Fundraising Campaign. The IMPACT campaign contains seven focus areas, including career, technology and education. With a yearly goal of \$100,000, the Foundation is holding the \$10K dollar challenge (if 100% of Foundation Board, School Board and District Employees and 75% of alumni contribute, a \$10K will be released). Franklin is looking to put in a junior book nook to entice students to read more (reading to service dog). Funds to be distributed for art and library equipment and supplies.

Discussion

Mr. Rodriguez led a proactive discussion about behavior at after-school events. Behavioral issues rise when students are unaccompanied by parents/adults, heightening concerns around safety. A suggestion for tighter restrictions on unchaperoned students to be in place.

Update

Mr. Rodriguez showed a pie-graph depicting that 70% of parents signed the Chromebook Responsibility Agreement. Many parents also participated in the Chromebook insurance option. Chromebook damage has declined since the ‘You Break It, You Buy It’ program has been in place.

Safe Arrival Update- Starting October 16, parents will have more options to turn in an approved note for absences through a secure website portal (Safe Arrival Update) or a telephone call.

Fall Community Engagement Slideshow - Mr. Armato shared photo slides highlighting family/students and staff engaging in the Barth Picnic, Girl’s Volleyball Game, “Paint the Pumpkin”, Band Cavalcade and “Lincoln Walk to School Day”.

Advocacy

Ms. Johnson spoke on current advocacy forums:

- POWER Interfaith event – (at PHS), a great turnout at the people’s hearing advocating for full and fair school funding.
- BEFC written public comments. Provides Board Members an opportunity to write to the Commissioner (closing the funding gap in P.A.) Link to be sent to Board Members.

Next Meeting Date: November 9, 2023