



## **POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES September 19, 2024**

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 6:30 PM in the Conference Room of the Administration Building with Vice-President, Mr. Steve Kline, presiding. Upon roll call, the following members attended: Mr. John Armato (Late 6:36), Mr. Kurt Heidel, Mr. Thomas Hylton (Late 6:34), Mrs. Phoebe Kancianic, Mrs. Laura Johnson, Mrs. Susan Lawrence, Mrs. Debra Spence. Six members present, One member absent Mrs. Katina Bearden. Two members Late. Also attending were; Superintendent, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez, Business Administrator, Mrs. Maureen Oakley; Director of Human Resources, Mr. Matthew Boyer; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

- School Opening – Already into the fifth week of school. Presented a video of highlights of each of the school's First Day.
- Superintendent Award - Lincoln Principal Calista Boyer, a PHS grad and Middle School Principal Dr. Hector Wangia were presented Superintendent Awards at the school board meeting. On September 11th, 2024, a child did not return home and was missing for many hours. With all the passion and zeal, they are known for, these two administrators searched the community, worked with the parents, investigated, and did not stop until that child was safely found!
- PSBA Honor Roll for School Board Service - Pottstown School Board members Laura Johnson and Steve Kline were recently recognized with the Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA) Honor Roll Award. The association's honor roll program celebrates school board directors for long-term service and recognizes their dedication to their local districts and communities. Board members receive no pay for their service and must be elected by their community. They are responsible for setting the goals and policies that direct staff and administration actions to help prepare the future leaders of our country. Congratulations to Mrs. Laura Johnson and Mr. Steve Kline on your five years of service. You have both given us more reason to say proud to me from Pottstown.

### **MINUTES**

Mrs. Oakley presented the minutes from the Board meeting held on August 15, 2024 Board Meeting for Board approval.

### **LIST OF BILLS**

Mrs. Johnson presented the list of bills paid from the various funds for the period of August 2024 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-018**

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mrs. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for August 2024 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-019**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **POLICY/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – MR. KLINE**

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

#### **CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – MRS. LAWRENCE**

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

#### **FACILITIES/FINANCE COMMITTEE – MR. HYLTON**

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

#### **PUBLIC RELATIONS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – MRS. JOHNSON**

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

**Montgomery County Legislative** – Mrs. Johnson – Didn't have a September meeting so there aren't any updates. Meeting will start up again in October.

PSBA REPRESENTATIVE – MRS. KANCIANIC – School Leadership Conference coming up on October 6th-8th. School Leadership and showcase awards will be shown live base on Oct 6th at 6pm. Will be voting tonight for PSBA Members. All members are unopposed that are listed on the agenda.

MCIU REPRESENTATIVE – MRS. LAWRENCE - Meeting didn't have a lot going on. Welcomed new members.

STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE - Imani Galloway talked about all the activities happening at each of the school buildings. High School students really like having the new setup for lunch time.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT – Consent topics #8 through #17 will use our team to go through them and Non-Consent topics #21 through #22.

## PERSONNEL

### RESIGNATIONS/TERMINATIONS #8

#### Professional

Meghan Waibel, SE Teacher, Middle School, resignation effective October 24, 2024; date of hire April 4, 2023.

Sadira Hueber, Certified School Nurse, Barth, resignation effective November 8, 2024; date of hire August 16, 2021.

Robelyn Habekost, Teacher, Lincoln, resignation effective October 16, 2024; date of hire March 12, 2020.

Correction: Melanie Adams, Teacher, Middle School, resignation previously approved August 15, 2024 as effective September 23, 2024, new updated effective date August 29, 2024.

#### Classified

Ratify Victor Cruz, Paraprofessional, Middle School, resignation effective August 19, 2024; date of hire February 27, 2024.

Ratify Virginia McCoy-Swinchart, Library Assistant, Rupert/Lincoln, resignation effective August 19, 2024; date of hire December 11, 2023.

Ratify Patty Nazzaro, PreK Classroom Assistant, Rupert, resignation effective August 30, 2024; date of hire October 18, 2017.

Ratify David Kurtz, Virtual Learning Coach, High School, resignation effective August 13, 2024; date of hire August 16, 2021.

Ratify Deborah Sheffer, Student Proctor, Franklin, resignation effective August 22, 2024; date of hire August 19, 2024.

Correction; Lindsey Wright, Paraprofessional, Franklin, resignation previously approved August 15, 2024 as effective August 21, 2024, new updated effective date August 15, 2024.

Ratify Preference Watts-Thomas, Cafeteria Worker, High School, resignation effective September 12, 2024; date of hire December 19, 2023.

### LEAVES #9

#### Administration

Danielle McCoy, PreK Counts Coordinator, North End Learning Center, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective January 21, 2025; end date TBD.

#### Professional

Ashley Ermold, Teacher, High School, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective January 25, 2025; end date TBD.

#### Exempt

Ratify Heather Dailey, District Grant Writer, Administration Building, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective September 13, 2024; end date TBD.

Acknowledge/Ratify, Ashley Padamonsky, Teacher, Barth, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective September 3, 2024; end date TBD.

#### Classified

Susan Davis, Benefits Coordinator, Administration, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective October 21, 2024; end date TBD.

### **CHANGE IN POSITION/SALARY #10**

#### **Professional**

Correction; Lauren Schiller, Long Term Substitute to SE Teacher, Barth, \$52,919/yr., +stipend in accordance with Professional Agreement, Step 5, Bach., previously approved on May 16 as effective August 19, 2024; new updated effective date August 12, 2024.

#### **Exempt**

Ann Marie Fadden, PreK Building Substitute to PreK Teacher, North End Early Learning, \$55,000/yr., effective October 1, 2024; replacing T.Walker.

#### **Classified**

Ratify Ryan Szczepanik, Summer Cleaner to PT Cleaner, High School, \$14.25/hr., effective August 19, 2024.

Ratify Heather O'Connor, Student Proctor/Kindergarten Assistant to PT Kindergarten Assistant, Rupert, \$16.50/hr., effective September 6, 2024.

Ratify Niana White, Paraprofessional to Registered Behavior Technician, Middle School, \$23.50/hr., effective September 19, 2024.

Ratify Daitryce McDonald, PT Substitute Support Staff to FT PreK Counts Classroom Assistant, Rupert, \$16.50/hr., effective September 3, 2024.

Ratify Jacob Moser, Student Proctor, Barth to Substitute Support Staff, Administration, hourly rate per schedule, effective August 12, 2024.

### **ELECTIONS #11**

#### **Professional**

Ratify Jessica Kurtz, SE Long Term Substitute, initial assignment High School, \$251/day, effective August 12, 2024; coverage for B.Kitchen.

Ratify Miranda Perloff, Teacher, initial assignment Middle School, \$70,582/yr., effective September 3, 2024, masters, step 11; replacing M.Adams.

Correction; Sydney Ziviello, Building Substitute, Middle School, \$251/day, previously approved on August 15 as effective August 26, 2024; new updated effective date August 29, 2024.

Correction; Sunny Nelson, Teacher, initial assignment Franklin, previously approved on August 15 as \$52,892/yr., bachelors step 15, corrected salary \$54,600/yr., bachelors +15 step 4.

#### **Classified**

Ratify Deborah Wagner, PT Cafeteria Worker, Middle School, \$16.25/hr., effective August 20, 2024.

Ratify Sherry Jessee, Intervention Assistant, Franklin, \$16.50/hr., effective August 20, 2024; replacing S.Bennett.

Ratify Nannette Glaze, Secretary, High School, \$17.05/hr., effective August 22, 2024.

Ratify Barbara Glenn, Student Proctor, Franklin, \$15/hr., effective August 29, 2024.

Ratify Debra King, PT Cleaner, Rupert, \$14.65/hr., effective September 9, 2024.

Ratify Lynn Gibson, Intervention Assistant, Lincoln, \$17/hr., effective September 10, 2024; replacing A.Voynar.

Ratify Ileanna Scavello, Registered Behavior Technician, Edgewood Learning Center, \$23.50/hr., effective September 12, 2024.

Ratify Donna Hultz, Intervention Assistant, Rupert, \$16.50/hr., effective August 12, 2024.

Ratify Ruth Rosado-Rivera, Student Proctor, Barth, \$15/hr., effective September 18, 2024.

Jennifer Ellis, PreK Counts Classroom Assistant, North End Learning, \$16.50/hr., effective September 23, 2024.

### **PROFESSIONAL LEAVES #12**

Building	Name	Conference Title	Conference Location	Dates to Attend	Expenses	Cost
Admin	Laura Johnson	PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference	Kalahari, Poconos	10/6/24-10/8/24	District Budget	\$1,029.00
HS	Liane Heivly	PACTA Workshop for School Counselors	State College, PA	10/3/24-10/4/24	Dept Budget	\$471.00
HS	Kevin Pascal	2024 PCEA Conference	State College, PA	10/17/24-10/18/24	Dept Budget	\$727.00
Admin	Shannon Kroemmelbein	2024 MCIU Special Education Leadership Conference	Skytop, PA	10/23/24-10/25/24	Dept Budget	\$200.00
HS	Ronald Davenport	PBEA	Hershey, PA	11/21/24-11/22/24	Perkins Grant Funding	\$400.00

### **FIELD TRIPS #13**

# students	Conference	Conference Location	Date of Trip	Cost to Student	Cost to District - substitutes	Chaperone(s)
5	State Skills USA Leadership Conference	Gettysburg, PA	11/13/24-11/15/24	TBD	\$420.00	Mike Hewitt & Teri Baller

### **POLICY #14**

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve the Policy 218.2 as presented and copies be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-020**

- Policy 218.2 – Terroristic Threats - Update

### **CONTRACTS #15**

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the contracts as presented and copies be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-021**

- Austills 24/25yr
- New Story Agreement 24/25yr (5)
- The PA School for the Deaf 24/25yr

### **SETTLEMENT OF PER CAPITA/OCCUPATION TAX #16**

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve to move forward with the Settlement of Per Capita/Occupation Tax as presented and copies be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-022**

### **HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN #17**

The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the Health & Safety Plan as presented with no changes at this time and copies be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-023**

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

**In-Person** – None

**Virtual** – None

**Written** - None

### **BOARD ACTION: Minutes, List of Bills & Treasure's Report**

It was moved by Mr. Hylton and seconded by Mr. Heidel that the Board approve the minutes from August 2024 the list of Bills for August 2024 and the Treasurer's Report for August 2024. All were in favor. Motion carried.

### **BOARD ACTION: CONSENT #8 thru #17**

It was moved by Mr. Heidel and seconded by Mrs. Lawrence that the following consent items #8 to #17 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: Mr. Armato; aye, Mrs. Spence; aye, Mrs. Lawrence; aye, Mr. Kline; aye, Mr. Heidel; aye, Mr. Hylton; aye, Mrs. Johnson; aye, Mrs. Kancianic; aye, Mrs. Bearden; absent. Aye: Eight. Nay: Zero. Absent: One. Motion carried.

#### **NON-CONSENT: PERSONNEL: ELECTION #21**

Ratify Viviana Miguel, Paraprofessional, Lincoln, \$16.50/hr., effective August 12, 2024.

#### **NON-CONSENT: PSBA OFFICERS ELECTIONS #22**

- President: Sabrina Backer
- Vice-President: Matt Vannoy
- Eastern Zone Representative: Holly Arnold
- Insurance Trust Trustee: Seat 1: Nathan G. Mains; Seat 2: Richard Frerichs; Seat 3: William S. LaCoff
- Forum Steering Committee: Betsy Gates, Mary Dougherty (2)

#### **HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS (limited to the non-consent items):**

In-Person – None

Virtual – None

Written – None

#### **BOARD ACTION-NON-CONSENT: PERSONNEL: ELECTION #24**

It was moved by Mr. Armato and seconded by Mr. Heidel that the Board approve the Personnel: Election as presented.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was recorded as follows: Mr. Armato; aye, Mr. Heidel; aye, Mr. Hylton; aye, Mrs. Kancianic; aye, Mrs. Johnson; aye, Mr. Kline; aye, Mrs. Lawrence; aye, Mrs. Spence; abstain, Mrs. Bearden; Absent. Ayes: Seven. Nay: None. Absent: One. Abstain: One. Motion carried.

#### **BOARD ACTION-NON-CONSENT: PSBA OFFICERS ELECTIONS #25**

It was moved by Mrs. Kancianic and seconded by Mrs. Lawrence that the Board approve the PSBA Officers Elections as presented.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was recorded as follows: Mrs. Spence; aye, Mrs. Lawrence; aye, Mrs. Kancianic; aye, Mr. Hylton; aye, Mr. Armato; aye, Mr. Heidel; aye, Mrs. Johnson; aye, Mr. Kline; aye, Mrs. Bearden; Absent. Ayes: Eight. Nay: Zero. Absent: One. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS** – Mr. Heidel discussed the approval from PIAA for Girl Flag Football for the 24/25 school year. District 12 has thirty-one in the Philadelphia area and District 1 has eleven in the United States. The game would have eight vs eight no contact sport. Will speak with Mr. Baker at the October Committee Meeting to solicit more information and an interest survey to be an extracurricular club.

#### **INFORMATION**

- Monthly Meeting Notice: October – Mrs. Oakley

**FEDERATION REMARKS** – Ms. Miller gave a report about all elementary buildings. They are working on Social Emotional Learning. Brushing up on problem solving skills and working on being kind and respectful in school and outside on the playground. High School new Lunch & Learn Program is showing a positive reaction and good potential to having it. Also, gave a lot of dates for upcoming events happening at the High School with the Students.

#### **ROUND TABLE**

Mrs. Kancianic – No

Mrs. Spence – Positive things in the Community. Happy about the school year, and the good changes happening. Talked about her events and findings in the Community. Gave a note that about kindness is a thing to do and invite them in.

Mr. Armato – Spoke about the Montco360 Program, check email and school platforms about this program. Attended the Latin Festival great example of our Community being inclusive and family oriented.

Mr. Heidel – No

Mrs. Lawrence – High School students using the Early College Program at Montgomery Community College. It's our biggest class yet, I enjoy having them there.

Mr. Hylton – Attended the Pottstown Council Meeting (virtually). Wanted to make the Board aware of the discussion about the Rickett Center and the five-year contract being up for renewal.

Mrs. Johnson – Super impressed with the Lunch & Learn Program. Made note of the art work that is displayed in the Board room, is a great idea.

Mr. Kline – No

Mr. Rodriguez –No

Mrs. Bearden – Absent

**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 7:19pm.

  
Maureen Oakley-Board Secretary



**Pottstown School District  
Personnel/Policy Committee  
REPORT  
September 5, 2024**

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

**POLICY**

**Policy 218 – Student Discipline.** PSBA recommendation to update mandated policy. Edits to student discipline annotations relating to school code and updates to current school code terminology. Committee under agreement to review current student demographics, discipline statistics etc. before moving this policy forward at the next Committee meeting.

**Policy 218.1 – Weapons.** Possessions of weapons in a school setting and a threat to safety, prohibited by law. The policy language on incident reporting to law enforcement and PDE update to reflect the current School Code provisions. After discussion on what is considered a weapon, Committee under agreement to review policy 218.1 language and revisit at next the Committee meeting.

**Policy 218.2 - Terroristic Threats.** Changes to existing policy (student with a disability, pending evaluation, district to comply with state and federal laws...) annotations and language alignment. Agreement to move forward to the Committee as a whole.

**PERSONNEL**

- **Draft/ Proposal for Review - Increase Tuition Reimbursement for Support/Exempt Staff**  
Raise Support Staff tuition reimbursement to match collective bargaining agreement. Aimed to benefit those pursuing a P.A. teaching certificate. Proposal high-lights specific tuition reimbursement stipulations, parameters and time lines. Move to the Committee as a whole.
- **Kindergarten Schedule** – Mr. Rodriguez spoke on the new plan to start Kindergarten classes during the summer so they are ready to begin the first day of school with the other grades. Plan to commence next school year 2025-2026. Motion to move to the Committee as a whole.

**Informational Items**

- Dr. D’Annibale, Ms. Leibold and Mr. Rodriguez addressed Valedictorian/Salutatorian concerns and a need to review effects on students. New proposed ideas on how to better celebrate high performance students under consideration.
- Ongoing review of district ELL and PMS Special Education student caseload numbers as they relate to staffing. To be addressed at future Committee Meetings.

**Next Meeting Date: October 3, 2024**



Pottstown School District  
**CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**  
**REPORT**

September 5, 2024

*(immediately following Policy/Personnel Committee meeting)*

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

**Informational Items**

**PreK Counts 2023/2024 Highlights - D. McCoy**

"A good foundation for Kindergarten is a good foundation for every grade that follows", D. McCoy. Rebid year for PreK Counts grant of \$2,620,600 equaling 262 Pre-k students. Benchmark tools implemented to measure student achievement and growth with Kindergarten Readiness and standards identified by PDE (e.g. colors, shapes, lower case upper case, position words, writing their names). Benchmark testing: 92% growth in literacy and 82% growth in math (due to starting with higher math skills). The new playground is a great success. Pre-K room at the High School, old playground used there able to take on 20 additional pre-k students at the HS. Clinical hours for ECE high school students. Field trip Merry Mead Farms and Barnyard in Collegeville. Visiting farm animal activity where students were able to interact with farm animals. Kindergarten readiness boot camp occurred, two weeks before the start of school. Multicultural Day was a success, bringing family and students together to learn and engage in a variety of cultures including, African, Native American Heritage, South American and Italian Art. Foods from Liberia, Haiti and Puerto Rico were tried. Stories were read in both English and Spanish.

Mr. Oxenford provided a **Summer Curriculum Project Recap**: 59 staff members participated in the summer work. The focus included Math module assessment building, text dependent analysis, study sync alignment, social studies writing, and Dr. D'Annibale worked on curriculum writing with the HS ELA department. Work was also completed through the Music department and school counselor. For TDA work, they developed benchmark monitoring, Gr. 3-8 goals. Administrators participated in a Steels in-service workshop in June. Continual professional workshops will be held throughout the school year. MCIU K-12 New science standards workshops planned. Math Curriculum K-12 alignment (math module content) led by Mr. Decker.

**New Teacher Orientation** – Aug 6,7,8. Total of 37 new teachers. 14 different presenters. PowerSchool training, laptops received, retirement planning, Federation and meeting mentors.

**August In-Service** – Over four days. Staff are in their buildings, getting ready and meeting new staff. Reunification training, emergency response/CPI and family engagement phone calls (e.g. 3,277 phone calls). 09/13 next full in-service day baseline starts the year with assessments so that curriculum is delivered in a data driven manner.

**Montco360 Startup** – Partnership with Montco. Mr. Bachman works with 18 middle school students. Encourages a foundation of teamwork, dependability and resilience. Students are challenged and therefore learn and exercise problem-solving skills.

Next Meeting: October 3, 2024





POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**Facilities/Finance Committee REPORT**

Thursday September 12, 2024  
6:30 PM virtual

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - None

**PRESENTATION:** Bruce Christman from EI Associates reviewed a presentation update of the Feasibility Study. The breakdown of Facilities, Demographics and Educational Program looked at all school buildings and the District Administration building. PDE updated enrollments will be released in October, and the data will be updated. Bruce gave an overview of sustainable energy and net zero projects that could be considered in new construction or existing buildings, and explained the grant funding opportunities such as the Infrastructure Act and Solar for school grants that can be obtained to offset project costs. The consensus of the group was to move forward with the study focusing on the District Administration and Edgewood since they have the highest sq footage repair costs, looking at all sustainable and environmentally friendly options as well as grant funding.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - None

**FACILITIES** – Mr. Willauer

Facility Update

- Edgewood's existing vinyl fence in front of the building around the playground has been replaced with a heavy gauge aluminum fence which is more secure.
- District wide security camera upgrades are in full motion being replaced and are funded by the PCCD Security grant.

**FINANCE** – Mrs. Oakley

Board Approval Items:

- Contracts: Austill's 24/25, New Story Agreement 24/25yr (5), The PA School for the Deaf 24/25yr
- Settlement of Per Capita/Occupation Tax Resolution - Annual resolution for Substitute Tax collector for the Pottstown School District, must be exonerated from the balance of uncollected Per Capita and Occupation Taxes for the 2023 Tax Duplicate.
- Acknowledgement of Health & Safety Plan - recommend to put this on agenda just in consideration due to the grants we are still using for the Health and Safety plan and are able to update the plan if we need to.

**INFORMATION**

- PSBA Officers Election – President, Vice President, Eastern Zone Representative, Trustees (3 seats), Forum Steering Committee (two candidates).
- Athletic Field Study Update: Will bring back updated information at the October meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

Next meeting: October 10, 2024



**POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Public Relations & Community Engagement Committee**  
**REPORT**

**September 12, 2024**

Immediately following the Facilities/Finance Committee

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

**The Value of Co-Curriculars**

Mrs. Johnson opened the presentation with a current list of co-curriculars in the district encompassing a wide variety of seasonal activities, clubs and community partnership. An emphasis was made on the continued effort to explore different opportunities that may enrich the student learning experience.

Mr. Armato shared his philosophy on Co-Curriculars and highlighted the *Value of Co-Curriculars*, with an emphasis on all activities purposely supporting the academic mission of Pottstown School District: *prepare each student, by name, for success at every level*. Mr. Armato differentiated between extra-curricular (not necessary) vs. co-curricular (an extension of learning outside the classroom setting). A strong component of Co-Curriculars (both athletic or non-athletic) is reinforcing the value of individual and team building. Developing the ability to communicate well, building and demonstrating resilience, working well with others, supporting mental health, self-esteem and self-regulation of emotions. Over a period of years, the PSD academic mission, supported through three areas: discipline, attendance and academic performance, measured students who participated in co-curricular activities vs. students who did not. The students participating in co-curriculars continuously demonstrated overall higher levels of success and achievement. The developmental benefits of co-curriculars in building a stronger relationship between educators and students outside of the classroom setting was also emphasized.

**The Anxious Generation, J. Haidt and Smart Cell Phone Discussion**

Mrs. Johnson presented on 'The Anxious Generation', written by Jonathan Haidt. The book opened an exploration on the rise of the use of smartphones amongst youth and the effects of social media trends on mental health and social development. Mrs. Johnson shared a chart depicting the rapid teen adoption of smartphones (In 2011, 13% of teens had a smartphone, by 2016, that number increased to 79%) promoting easy access to the internet and social media. A correlation was made between the use of smartphones and the exposure to social media with a growth in anxiety and depression amongst youth. An increase in youth suicide, non-suicidal self-harm rates, loneliness and sleep deprivation were also noted. As a result, a discussion was held around the question, "How can digital health and wellness be promoted in PSD?". Best practices were explored: including the removal of cell phones from the classroom, working collectively to encourage smart cell phone usage, promoting different ways to model healthy behaviors and social media habits and promoting a PSA educational piece for staff, students and parents and community members.

**Updates**

Family Advisory Committee Update (M. Jackson) – Family Bingo Game Night (76 participants) was successfully held on a weekend. Community Engagement will be held every other month.

Next Meeting Date: October 10, 2024