



**POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 21, 2024**

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, November 1, 2024 at 6:30 PM in the Conference Room of the Administration Building with President, Mrs. Katina Bearden, presiding. Upon roll call, the following members attended: Mr. John Armato, Mrs. Katina Bearden, Mr. Kurt Heidel, Mr. Thomas Hylton(late), Mrs. Phoebe Kancianic, Mrs. Laura Johnson, Mr. Steve Kline, Mrs. Susan Lawrence, Mrs. Spence. Eight members present. Also attending were; Superintendent, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez, Business Administrator, Mrs. Maureen Oakley; Director of Human Resources, Mr. Matthew Boyer; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis.

PRESENTATIONS

Acknowledge/Award was given for the Buddy Bench Donation from one of our ninth-grade students, Felicia Fry. This project was part of Felicia's Girl Scout Silver Award. A video was played showing the Buddy Bench at each of the District's schools.

MINUTES

Mrs. Oakley presented the minutes from the Board meeting held on October 17, 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 October 2024 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-032**

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Johnson presented the Treasurer's Report for October 2024 to be approved as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-033**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

POLICY/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – MR. KLINE

Policy/Personnel Committee met on November 7th. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – MRS. LAWRENCE

Curriculum Committee met on November 7th. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes.

FACILITIES/FINANCE COMMITTEE – MR. HYLTON

Facilities/Finance Committee met on November 14. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes

PUBLIC RELATIONS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – MRS. JOHNSON

Public Relations/Community Engagement met on November 14th. Committee report is attached to the Board minutes.

Montgomery County Legislative – Mrs. Johnson

We kind of debriefed from the election specifically from the state level. Possible changes coming to Erate depending on what the supreme court decides about how that is funded. Legislative breakfast is scheduled for April 25th all are welcomed. Press conference immediately after.

PSBA REPRESENTATIVE – MRS. KANCIANIC

Delegate assembly was held on November 2nd. The Legislative platform was adopted, you can read the entire platform on the my psba portal. January is School Director recognition month which PSBA suggests is the perfect time to readapt the principles of governance and leadership. February PSBA will be offering an interactive event called Building Stronger School communities through civil discourse. Register on the portal however it is not free.

MCIU REPRESENTATIVE – MRS. LAWRENCE

Covered lots of different things. One of them is regarding the Erate which may not be funded which means we would lose that funding. The State hasn't given all the money for the Early Intervention Program it's been held up and they keep saying it's coming. It was recommended that people should reach out to different people in the state to help them understand what Early Intervention Program really is and does. Coming in February from the 4th to the 7th PD is having their annual conference and registration is open.

STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE – Imani Galloway, Aliyas Hudson

Gave an update on the activities that are happening at each of the schools. High School had its first Football PBIS Positive Behavior. Students received an award for Outstanding Behavior. Shopping trip with Dr. D'Annibal. HOSA went to each of the elementary schools to show students how to properly wash your hands. Skills USA went to their first leadership conference of the year. National Honor Society inducted eighteen new inductees. DECA inducted twenty-four students into DECA. Aliyas invited all Board Members to the Holiday Band and Choir concert on December 11th at 7pm. Middle School had multiple field trips. Community engagement hosted several activity nights to foster in caring school community and strengthening family connections. Franklin had spirit week, and tree planting ceremony on the 21st of November. Winter Concert is on December 10th at 1:45pm and 6:30pm. Rupert on November 26th will have their Rockstar assembly. December 3rd, 4th & 5th their having Friends of Holiday shop. December 12th Holiday Concert other events also. Barth had multiple events happening, the tree planting ceremony November 13th. December 16th Winter Concert at 1:30pm and 6pm, also there were other events mentioned. You can look at each school calendars to see all events going on for each month.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT - Consent topics #8 through #16 will use our team to go through them. Non-Consent items – none.

PERSONNEL

RESIGNATIONS/TERMINATIONS

Professional

Ratify Christopher Mundiath, Building Substitute, High School, resignation effective November 5, 2024; date of hire March 11, 2024.

Sunny Nelson, Teacher, Franklin, resignation effective December 21, 2024; date of hire August 12, 2024.

Jennifer Sherman, SE Teacher, High School, resignation effective January 10, 2025; date of hire October 11, 2021.

Laura Evans, SE Teacher, High School, resignation effective January 17, 2025; date of hire April 24, 2017.

Exempt

Correction: Carol Brightbill, Tech & Innovation Manager, Administration, updated retirement effective July 1, 2025, previously approved as effective April 15, 2025.

Classified

Ratify Tamara Turner, PT Cafeteria Worker, High School, rescinded offer effective October 18, 2024; date of hire October 18, 2024.

Ratify Shannon Harp, Paraprofessional, Edgewood, resignation effective November 6, 2024; date of hire February 5, 2024.

LEAVES

Professional

Acknowledge/Ratify Michael Freed, Teacher, Middle School, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective October 28, 2024; end date TBD.

Deborah Wilson, Teacher, Middle School, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective January 3, 2025; end date TBD.

Allison Steck, Teacher, Rupert, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective May 19, 2025; end date TBD.

Exempt

Acknowledge/Ratify Christine Dise, PreK Teacher, Franklin, request for leave of absence, covered by FMLA, effective October 29, 2024; end date TBD.

CHANGE IN POSITION/SALARY

Professional

Ratify Alanna Jessee, Building Substitute to SE Long Term Substitute, Lincoln, effective October 28, 2024; replacing R.Habekost.

Ratify Curtis Flewelling, to Building Substitute, Edgewood, effective November 11, 2024.

Ratify Britney Oxenford, Reading Olympics Coordinator, District, effective October 29, 2024; replacing K.Neitz.

Ratify Naif Littles, Building Substitute to Long Term Substitute, Middle School, effective November 7, 2024.

Classified

Ratify Ellen Strouse, Cafeteria Worker, High School, chg to hours, effective October 28, 2024.

ELECTIONS

Professional

Ratify Ryan Sternberg, Long Term Substitute, initial assignment Middle School, \$251/day, effective November 5, 2024; coverage R.Miller.

Ratify Holly Trump, Building Substitute, initial assignment Franklin, \$251/day, effective November 12, 2024; replacing A.Jesse

Correction; Jackson Goslin, Teacher/Band Director, initial assignment High School, \$51,611/yr., previously approved on October 17 as effective November 18, 2024; new updated effective date November 11, 2024.

Alyssa Dlut, Long Term Substitute, initial assignment Middle School, \$251/day, effective December 2, 2024; coverage M. Freed.

Classified

Ratify Darlyn Nieves, Student Proctor, Franklin, \$15/hr., effective November 11, 2024; replacing D.Sheffer.

Ratify Veronica Scott, Part-Time Cafeteria Worker, \$16.25/hr., effective November 12, 2024; replacing P.Watts-Thomas.

After-School Academic Program - Middle School (grant funded)

After School Program Coordinator - Rebecca Keown \$35/hr.

After School Program Teachers, \$35/hr.

Kristen Yingling
Ginger Angelo
Riley Mintzer
Angela Wagner
Jessica Ruff
Celeste Baumgardner (substitute)

After School Program Assistants, current hourly rate/no stipend.

Rebecca Blanchard
Niana White
Tiffany White
Kelly Ortlip
Anne Graveline

PROFESSIONAL LEAVES

Building	Name	Conference Title	Conference Location	Dates to Attend	Expenses	Cost
Admin	Erin Schwenk	PASBO	Hershey, PA	3/11/25-3/14/25	Grant Funded	\$1,080.44
HS	Theresa Baller	PACTA Education & Workforce Development Symposium Registration	Hershey, PA	2/13/25-2/14/25	Perkins Grant Funding	\$780.00

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 #2024-2025-034**

- Policy 103 - Nondiscrimination in School & Classroom Practices - Update
- Policy 103.1 - Nondiscrimination – Qualified Students with Disabilities – Update
- Policy 103.2 - Non-Discrimination Based on Sex – Update
- Policy 104 - Nondiscrimination in Employment Practices – Update
- Policy 214 - Class Rank – Update
- Policy 218 - Student Discipline – Update
- Policy 218.1 - Weapons - Update

BID AWARD: MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILLER REPLACEMENT

Bid Awarded – gem Mechanical \$879,800

RESOLUTION TO LIMIT PROPERTY TAX 2025-2026 (CONSENT)

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the Resolution to Limit Property Tax 2024-2025 as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-035**

SUBSTITUTE TAX COLLECTOR APPOINTMENT 2025 (CONSENT)

The Board Secretary recommends the Board approve/ratify the Substitute Tax Collector Appointment 2024 as presented and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as **Addendum #2024-2025-036**

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

Virtual – None

Written – None

In-Person – Kiersten Cruz (Coach Soccer), Kimberly Chhern (Student Soccer), Rania Aitlqol (Student Soccer), Ebony Brown (spoke on behalf of her coach Kate), Tiffany Hall (Parent of Field Hockey Student). All of them spoke about the concerns and benefits of having grass fields verses turf fields. Also, would like to start a youth program for soccer to teach the students at a younger age and be able to get more experience before they hit the Middle and High school sports.

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 October 2024 the list of Bills for October 2024 and the Treasurer's Report for October 2024. All were in favor. Motion carried.

BOARD ACTION: CONSENT #8 thru #16

It was moved by Mr. Heidel and seconded by Mr. Kline that the following consent items #8 to #16 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. Kline; aye, Mrs. Lawrence; aye, Mrs. Kancianic; aye, Mrs. Spence; aye, Mrs. Johnson; aye, Mrs. Bearden; aye, Mr. Armato; aye, Mr. Heidel; aye. Mr. Hylton; aye. Aye: Nine. Nay: Zero. Absent: Zero. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

- Five-minute Information item: aerial photo – Mr. Hylton presented an aerial photo and spoke about the different areas of the map from years ago back then and compared to how it is now.
- 2024 Board Reorganization Meeting: Mrs. Bearden
Thursday, December 5 – In-Person
6:30pm
Administration Conference Room
- Monthly Meeting Notice: December – Mrs. Oakley

FEDERATION REMARKS – Mr. Rodriguez spoke for the Federation on their regards due to a personal situation their normal representative could not be here. I was asked to invite you to their annual holiday celebration on Friday, December 13th at 3pm. It is at a local facility Manatawny Still Works.

ROUND TABLE

Mrs. Spence – Had a personal experience with the Community. Very excited to announce her niece with special needs was helped and admitted into an independent living group home. She will get all those life skills she never got all her life.

Mrs. Kancianic – Attended the Pottstown Schools Music Association Vendor Event. Went off without a hitch, it was our third go around second Fall one. We're going to stick to the fall one, the students performed this event is kinda unique to Pottstown not a lot of vendor's have the students perform at the event.

Mr. Heidel – Happy Thanksgiving everybody it's going to be very truncated Holiday season.

Mr. Armato – Observed the Tree planting at Franklin Elementary. Attended the Community leadership meeting earlier this month a lot of things going on in the community is discussed but more importantly it gives us the opportunity to talk to and engage with the community about what's going on in the Pottstown School District. Which allows us to simply tell our story about the Quality and Outstanding educators and students in our School District.

Mr. Hylton – None

Mrs. Lawrence – Today is child grief awareness day. Shout out to any kid who's dealing with some of that.

Mr. Kline – None


Mrs. Johnson – Coaches and students left but wanted to say Thank you to them for coming out and how powerful it is to hear multiple people speak and bring several people with them to show their support.

Mr. Rodriguez – Pottstown High School Staff and students yesterday and I attended a financial reality fair that was very well done and was well received by students. Literally playing the game of life. Students are starting to understand going to college and the cost between Montgomery County Community College for two years and then transfer to a four-year college. ESL Awards wanted to congratulate the students for making excellent growth in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Conferences we did differently this year virtually and in person. We had excellent attendance.

Mrs. Bearden – Wished the veterans a post Happy Veterans Day. Financial piece was one of my wishes, loved hearing the students talk about financial literacy. Appreciative for the parents and the students and the teachers who are participating in the events that our district is hosting and glad that the parents are able to come out and meet the teachers and ask the questions and get information to advocate for their children.

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 7:50pm.


Maureen Oakley-Board Secretary



**Pottstown School District
Personnel/Policy Committee
REPORT
November 7, 2024**

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

Presentation: Career Video 2024 – available on Pottstown School District website and various social media platforms. Highlights career and technical education along with academic programs. New staff members share thoughts and experiences in becoming an educator in the Pottstown District.

POLICY

PSD Policy 103 Nondiscrimination in School and Classroom Practices (164007821.1)

Reviewed by law solicitors Fox Rothchild, PSBA meshed into Fox Rothchild policy adaptation, removed gray areas, added language and made it more user friendly on Title IX actions. Guideline Sections are embedded into the policy and attached reporting forms with emailing reporting options.

PSD Policy 103.1 Nondiscrimination - Qualified Students with Disabilities (164007843.1)

A similar adaptation as Policy 103 with the addition of reporting changes and reporting forms.

PSD Policy 103.2 Non-Discrimination Based on Sex (164007846.1)

Similar adaptation as Policy 103 with addition of reporting changes and reporting forms

PSD Policy 104 Non-Discrimination in Employment Practices (164007850.1)

Meshed with PSBA regulations. Fox Rothchild entered clarifiers and annotated with both Policy 103.2 and 103.3. Guidelines added for complaint and incident procedures, employee third parties and appeal process included.

PSD Policy 103, 103.1, 103.2 and 104 motioned to Move to the Committee as a Whole.

PSD Policy 214 - Class Rank

Previous languages crossed out and new proposed new languages were added. “Class rank will only be calculated at the end of the last semester of a student’s senior year”

PSD Policy 218 - Student Discipline

Revisited from the September meeting no major changes made. The language on incident reporting to law enforcement and PDE was updated to reflect the current School Code terminology. Legal citations to the new sections of the School Code were also added.

Policy 218.1 - Weapons

Same incident reporting procedures as Policy 218

PSD Policy 218 and PSD Policy 218.1 motioned to Move to the Committee as a Whole

PERSONNEL

MS Cross Country/Add a MS Cross Country 25-26 School Year - Mr. Baker

- Review from last meeting. Information on the conclusion of season
- HS Team 8 students, 4 boys and 4 girls (an increase from previous year)
- 24 Sixth Graders expressed interest in Cross Country
- Recommendation of a MS Cross Country Coach Starting 25-26 School Year

Girls Flag Football

- PIAA officially sanctioned Girls Flag Football as an official sport in Pennsylvania.
- Philadelphia Eagles offered funding Spring 2025 incentive (coach funding and training, supplies and uniforms).
- 31 students showed interest (14 freshman, 7 sophomores, 3 juniors and 7 seniors).
- Approximate cost to the district with offset is \$5K.

Coverage PreK Counts Coordinator Leave – Mr. Boyer

- Place a coverage teacher on assignment with a supplement of \$20.00/day, estimated leave time from January 21 - March 25.
- LTS Art Teacher – PHS with 90 days to start until the regular Art Teacher returns from leave.

Support & Exempt Staff Reimbursement – Mr. Boyer

- Move from a current tuition reimbursement of \$3,100 to \$6,100 or equivalent of current collective bargaining. New tuition reimbursement increase will require a two-year service commitment.
- Application support and exempt staff reimbursement would be in place.

All Personnel items motioned to be moved to the Committee of the Whole.

Informational Items

PA Student Teacher Support Program – fully invested in the program and the application and ACH funds have been approved.

Title IX Policy and Procedures – information and reporting forms are available electronically on the PSD website.

Next Meeting Date: December 5, 2024



Pottstown School District
**CURRICULUM
COMMITTEE REPORT**
November 7, 2024

(immediately following Policy/Personnel Committee meeting)

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

Informational Items

Pottstown Children's Discovery Center Video – Highlighting a new community partner, PSD students engaging and learning different hands-on STEM concepts in a fun, adult supervised and led discovery center.

Special Education Update - W. Jeffreys

SSIP (State Systemic Improvement Plan – improving outcomes for students with IEPs, larger graduation rates for students with IEPs. Discipline, Attendance and Grades (using ORACLE) that is reported to the State. Graduation rates have improved over the last school year.

An update provided on Edgewood Learning Center. Including the use of Restorative Practices and a School Wide Behavior Support Program which has shown improvement in student attendance and grades.

Comprehensive Plan (touchpoints) - R. Oxenford

- State mandated every 3 years, large scale diagnostic testing.
- A 63-page in-depth new plan to be presented in March 2025.
- MTSS framework, Readiness for College, Education Strategies, Evidence Based Curriculum.

PHS New Course Overview DRAFT- R.Oxenford

Replacing the current Introduction to Engineering Course to a grant based New Drone Course (2025-2026).

21st Century Cohort 12 Grant Update - R.Oxenford

Previously denied, in October 2024 Cohort 12 through an appeal was awarded. As a result, the Summer 2025 program will run through this \$350,000 a year grant.

Personal Finance Update - R. Oxenford

In current operation, but will be in full effect with the State approved curriculum and certified teachers in Finance in Summer 2026.

Montco360 Video – will be on the next Committee Meeting Agenda.

Next Meeting: December 5, 2024



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

Thursday November 14, 2024
6:30 PM virtual

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

FACILITIES – Mr. Willauer

Presentations: EI Associates (Feasibility Study Update)-Bruce Christman presented a Feasibility Study Update.

If the district wanted to look at renovation options for the administration building and Edgewood the total project costs could be netted with operational savings to show the net budget impact. The administration building has an operational cost of \$166.70 per square foot and Edgewood \$167.70 per square foot.

Facility Update

- MS & Edgewood Playground Update - showed an outline of the overview of the Middle School and Edgewood playground updates that started back in February. The Borough approval and permitting moved slower than anticipated. The district met with the Borough on grading permits, erosion and sediment plans. Also received some clarity on the application process of the different avenues since we hit a roadblock. Resubmitted application, will keep you updated as things come in..
- MS Chiller Bid Award-bid opening this past Tuesday, had six bids total. The lowest bid came in at \$879,800 by GEM Mechanical. Recommend moving forward with the Chiller Replacement, everyone agreed.
- HS Weight Room Progress-showed pictures of pre construction, and final pictures of complete renovation.
- Tree Project Update / Planning Events-shared pictures of our tree project, work is going very quick at the campuses. Had two planning events, one at Barth and one at Lincoln with student involvement. Students were able to get their hands dirty and learn about all the vital roles trees play in our environment. Another planning event scheduled for Franklin. So far work has started at Barth, Lincoln, Franklin, Edgewood and the Middle School has begun. Off to a great start for Fall.
- ELA Athletic Field Study Update-met up with the ELA at Edgewood and Franklin just to assess any feasibility of adding plain areas at either Edgewood or Franklin. Once they have any information going forward on that they will be sharing that with everyone.

FINANCE – Mrs. Oakley

Board Approval Items:

- Resolution to Limit Property Tax 2025-2026 - Act 1 Budget Resolution – Base Index at 4.0%; PSD adjusted index at 5.8%; resolution limits raising taxes (if Board chose to do so) not to exceed 5.8%.
- Substitute Tax Collector Appointment 2025 - standard appointment naming substitute tax collector.
- Policy 918 Title I Parent & Family Engagement will be discussed at the Policy Committee Meeting on December 5, 2024.

INFORMATION

Next meeting: December 5, 2024



POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Public Relations & Community Engagement Committee
Report

November 14, 2024

Immediately following the Facilities/Finance Committee

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

Presentations

Charter Costs/Advocacy - Mrs. Oakley presented a Charter School Impact Update slide-show depicting cost change reflecting new State legislation. The 2024-2025 Charter Spend by Vendor Annually was reviewed (noting Brick and Mortar School costs, i.e. Collegium and Renaissance and Cyber Charter savings), Special Education (\$34,538 tuition), Special Education Cyber (\$27,199 tuition) and Regular Education (\$11,865 tuition) enrollments. A discussion was held on funding reform and fluctuating Charter School costs.

Mrs. Johnson presented the following Fall 2024 Events:

Trunk or Treat - A great turn out from parents, students and teachers. Follow Pottstown School District on various social media accounts to view photos and all the fun.

Middle School Pep Rally- many photos online depicting a great opportunity for co-curriculars to be showcased, participation in games, and ceremonies held to recognize student achievement.

Veteran's Day – a video was shared to recognize and pay tribute to those who gave so selflessly of their lives and service. Mr. Ted Novak, an Army Veteran decorated with 2 Purple Hearts for his contribution serving in the war, was interviewed by Superintendent Rodriguez. Mr. Novak is a Pottstown resident and Pottstown High School graduate from the Class of 1941. Thank you for your service, Mr. Novak!

Updates and Discussion - Mr. Rodriguez

Virtual Days/ Snow Days Zoom Video– spoke on the Winter Season and the FID or Flexible Instruction Day process (mandated Pennsylvania School Code) and changes made since. FID is now replaced with Virtual Days with current law updates. Mr. Rodriguez provided an online navigation of Virtual Day information and requirements found on the District website for parents and students to follow.

Parent Teacher Conferences were both successful and well attended (an attendance count will be provided at next month's meeting)

A black and white aerial photo of Pottstown in the 1920's (provided by Mr. Hylton) was showcased.

Other Business

FAC Update - live comments provided by local community members.

Next Meeting Date: December 5, 2024