

**Avonworth School District
258 Josephs Lane
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Avonworth Board of School Directors
Minutes – Regular Meeting – April 14, 2020
Avonworth School District – Board Room & Virtually
7:30 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Beau Blaser, Mr. Patrick Stewart

MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Ms. Sandra Bolain, Mr. John Brandt, Ms. Vicki Carlson, Ms. Yu-Ling Cheng, Ms. Kathryn Monti, Ms. Kristin Thompson, Ms. Danielle White

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Thomas Ralston, Superintendent
Dr. Jeff Hadley, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Brad Waters, Director, Fiscal Management
Ms. Cindy Donovan, Board Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Mr. Jay Quinn, Parent	Mr. Mike Hall, Middle School Principal
Ms. Kelly Hansen, Teacher/AEA President	Ms. Keera Dwulit, High School Principal
Mr. Doug Haskins, Teacher/AEA V.P.	Ms. Bre Maisner, Teacher
Mr. Tim Giel, Athletic Director	Mr. Tony Giglio, Solicitor
Mr. William Andrews, Solicitor	Ms. Nancy Whyte, <i>The Citizen</i>

Call to Order

Board President, Mr. Beau Blaser, called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:34 P.M. He stated that a Personnel Committee meeting was held this evening at 6:30 PM in the Board Room and virtually to discuss personnel matters.

Visitors' Comments

Mr. Quinn asked for an update on filling the Head Boys' Varsity Basketball coaching position. Mr. Giel said four interviews had been conducted before the Governor's social distancing order went into effect. He is hoping to virtually interview other candidates by the end of the week.

Mr. Misiti of PNC Bank discussed the refinancing opportunity for the Series 2011 and 2015 Bonds (A&B).

Mr. Waters gave an update on the 2020-2021 budget. In May the Board will need to pass the Projected Final Budget and the Final Budget at the June meeting. The Governor's stay-at-home order has impacted the District's budget with savings due to no substitutes, tutors, or Alt. Ed. services being needed, utilities and outside services, and transportation. Due to the budget savings, Mr. Waters said there will be no millage increase next year.

Report of Student Representative – Ms. Kyra Carlson

No report at this time.

Report of Administration – Dr. Thomas Ralston, Superintendent

Dr. Ralston expressed pride in how everyone has pulled together during the pandemic. The custodians are diligently cleaning and sanitizing the buildings, the Food Service staff has been preparing breakfast and lunch for free and reduced families. Ms. Schad, Food Service Director, secured funding to provide breakfast and lunch for all district students. Families place their order and First Student delivers the meals to activity bus stops for parents to pick up. Secretaries are helping and our Technology team has been supporting the 1:1 environment for virtual learning. They've processed 100 tickets from student/parents and 271 from teachers, and have provided new tools for teachers. Paraprofessionals work on-line with Special Ed. teachers to support students. Our teachers' mindset of "Let's roll up our sleeves and get to it" is inspiring. Administrators' calm and supportive attitudes are appreciated. Dr. Ralston also thanked the Board for their trust and support.

Report of the Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Jeff Hadley

Dr. Hadley has applied for a PDE grant that would cover the cost of Wi-Fi hotspots for families who do not have internet. We are currently providing packets to these students. Dr. Hadley said our counselors would like to move forward with Xello which will replace Naviance. Dr. Hadley, Mrs. Dwulit and Mr. Como have been working on graduation requirements and Dr. Hadley will provide a presentation at the May Board meeting. Teachers are still training virtually for the PA Smart grant.

Mrs. Carlson said community feedback has been great about our teachers and the instruction they have been providing. Several Board members expressed the need for discussion-oriented learning to keep students engaged as they would be in the classroom.

Dr. Ralston said the State has relaxed the continuation of education for the remainder of the school year. He is holding an Administration meeting tomorrow to review a list of annual yearend events which includes transitioning events, how to support students and how the rest of the school year will look. In terms of 180 days of instruction, secondary students need 990 hours of instruction and 900 hours for elementary students. Discussed the need to run the school year until the June 5 scheduled last day or if we should consider cutting off instruction at the end of May and use the days in June for professional development instruction for staff. Members feel Dr. Ralston and the administrators understand the pulse of the school and what is needed. The Board discussed "pass/fail" grades for the remainder of the year but don't feel it is appropriate and we should keep the current grading system.

Report of the Solicitor – Mr. Tony Giglio, Esq.

Mr. Giglio gave an update on the Real Estate Tax assessment appeals. The 2020 appeals have been filed. There are 146 residential and one commercial appeal but because courts are closed due to the coronavirus, these hearings have not yet been scheduled. All but eight of the 156 residential and four commercial 2019 appeals have been settled which generated a total of \$149,000. For 2018 there were 106 residential appeals and most have been resolved for a total of \$103,000. There were no commercial appeals in 2018.

Beattie Key Notes/AIU News – Ms. Kate Monti

Ms. Monti reported there are 800 students enrolled at AWBCC for the 2020-2021 school year. Students are currently doing on-line learning. With the pandemic orders, students are missing hands-on learning and AWBCC is trying to see if students can get into the building over the summer for this hands-on experience if/when permitted. Summer camps for the younger children have been cancelled.

Motion: P. Stewart; **Second:** J. Brandt; **Motion Carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote:** *Minutes*
Ms. Bolain – Aye, Ms. Carlson – Aye, Ms. Cheng – Aye, Ms. Monti – Aye, Ms. Thompson – Aye,
Ms. White – Aye, Mr. Blaser – Aye to approve the Minutes of the March 2, 2020 Work
Session/General Purpose Meeting and the March 9, 2020 Regular Meeting.

LEGISLATIVE – S. Bolain/K. Monti, Co-Chairs

Motion: S. Bolain; **Second:** P. Stewart; **Motion Carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote:**
Mr. Brandt – Aye, Ms. Carlson – Aye, Ms. Cheng – Aye, Ms. Monti – Aye, Ms. Thompson –
Aye, Ms. White – Aye, Mr. Blaser – Aye to approve Items 1 and 2:

1. To move to suspend any and all policies requiring an in-person quorum for Board meetings until further notice and permit all Board members to be considered present and participate in all meetings via teleconference. This is in light of the health and safety concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus. *Suspend Policies*
2. Authorizing Administration to pay all bills in a timely manner and to take any required action necessary to be completed subject to ratification in the event that the Board is unable to hold a public Board meeting in April and/or May due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 virus. *Admin. Bill Paying Authorization*

FINANCE – D. White/P. Stewart, Co-Chairs

Motion: D. White; **Second:** J. Brandt; **Motion Carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote:**
Ms. Bolain – Aye, Ms. Carlson – Aye, Ms. Cheng – Aye, Ms. Monti – Aye, Mr. Stewart – Aye,
Ms. Thompson – Aye, Ms. White – Aye, Mr. Blaser – Aye to approve Items 1.1 through 1.6:

- 1.1 Ratify payment of General Fund bills for March, 2020, beginning with Check #48601 and ending with Check #48747 in the total amount of \$2,468,671.09. *General Fund*
- 1.2 Ratify the March, 2020 payroll in the amount of \$1,168,581.64. *Payroll*
- 1.3 Treasurer’s Report for February, 2020. *Treasurer’s Report*
- 1.4 Ratify payment of Food Service Fund checks for March, 2020, beginning with Check #2716 and ending with Check #2721 in the total amount of \$25,584.58. *Fd. Svc. Fund*
- 1.5 Ratify payment of Athletic Fund check #9095 for March, 2020 in the amount of \$120. *Athletic Fund*
- 1.6 To approve capital project payments of \$52,289.82. *Capital Project Pmts.*

PERSONNEL – K. Thompson/V. Carlson, Co-Chairs

Motion: K. Thompson; **Second:** P. Stewart; **Motion Carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote:**
Ms. Bolain – Aye, Mr. Brandt – Aye, Ms. Carlson – Aye, Ms. Cheng – Aye, Ms. Monti – Aye,
Ms. White – Aye, Mr. Blaser – Aye to approve Items 1 through 6:

Personnel, continued

1. To approve the following staff members as Summer Tutors with an hourly rate per the current AEA contract: *Summer Tutors*

Ms. Barbara Bauer	Ms. Jaclyn Keane
Ms. Kari Johnson	Ms. Adrienne Leveto
Ms. Ashley Randall	Ms. Alexis Taylor

2. To accept the Letter of Intent to Retire from **Ms. Susan Byrne**, Paraprofessional, effective June 30, 2020. *Retirement*

3. To accept the Letter of Intent to Retire from **Ms. Janet Michell Harris**, Music Teacher, effective June 5, 2020. *Retirement*

4. To rescind the motion of February 10, 2020 approving the request of **Mr. Ross Addler**, for FMLA effective March 1, 2020 through April 3, 2020. *Rescind Motion*

5. To approve **Ms. Marissa Timko** as a Grade 3 Inclusion Day-to-Day Substitute Teacher from approximately April 16, 2020 through May 29, 2020 at \$140/day with no benefits. *DTD Substitute*

6. To approve the agreement with KeySolution Staffing, L.L.C. *KeySolution Agreement*

PUBLIC RELATIONS – Y. Cheng/K. Thompson, Co-Chairs

Motion: Y. Cheng; **Second:** K. Thompson; **Motion Carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Bolain – Aye, Mr. Brandt – Aye, Ms. Carlson – Aye, Ms. Monti – Aye, P. Stewart – Aye, Ms. White – Aye, Mr. Blaser – Aye to approve Item 1:

1. To approve the updated 2019-2020 School Calendar as attached. *Calendar Revision*

ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES – J. Brandt/B. Blaser, Co-Chairs

Motion: J. Brandt; **Second:** P. Stewart; **Motion Carried by Unanimous Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Bolain – Aye, Ms. Carlson – Aye, Y. Cheng – Aye, Ms. Monti – Aye, K. Thompson – Aye, Ms. White – Aye, Mr. Blaser – Aye to approve Item 1:

1. To approve **Ms. Kelsey Fink** as Assistant Varsity Girls’ Volleyball Coach for the 2020-2021 School Year, pending requirements of the District, at a stipend according to the current AEA contract. *Asst. Volleyball Coach*

Old Business

No Old Business

New Business

Mr. Andrews noted that we can reinstate the policies referred to in Item #1 under Legislative once the Governor’s policies are lifted.

Dr. Ralston showed a video entitled #thelonelysuperintendent that he and his wife made about how much he misses the students and staff.

Adjournment

Motion: P. Stewart; **Second:** J. Brandt; **Motion Carried:** Unanimous Voice Vote to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 10:10 P.M. to an Executive Session to discuss personnel and contract matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy S. F. Donovan,
Board Secretary