

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR WORK MEETING
AUGUST 9, 2021

The Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District met in regular session on Monday, August 9, 2021, in the Central Administration Board Room as well as virtually, via Zoom. This meeting was recorded.

An Executive Session was held on August 2, 2021 to discuss personnel. This announcement is being made to be in compliance with Act 84 of 1986, Pennsylvania's Sunshine Law, as amended.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Darren Newberry, Board Vice President.

Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. McKittrick. Roll call by the secretary followed. Those Directors in attendance were:

Daniel Caton
Lesia Dobo
Lori McKittrick
Darren Newberry
Kathryn Oblak
Daniel Santia
Jeffrey Winkle (Via Zoom)
Lindsay Zupsic

Members Absent
Matthew Erickson

Also present were: Dr. Michelle Miller, Superintendent; John Salopek, Solicitor; Brooke Baker, Business Administrator; Nancy Barber, Secretary; Rob Kartychak and Michael Allison; and visitors.

At this time, Dr. Miller reviewed items that would be voted on later in the meeting.

Education/Curriculum/Instruction: Dr. Erickson, Chair; Ms. McKittrick, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Health and Safety plan update: Mandatory universal masking for all staff and students while Beaver County is in substantial or high transmission levels.

Dr. Miller explained that Beaver County is in the high rate of transmission for Covid-19. In order to keep staff and students safe and have continuity of education, the District has decided to mandate masks for everyone. She said that wearing masks will eliminate having to quarantine. Dr. Miller said that with the new mask mandate, she understands that some parents may now want to choose cyber

education. Students in grades 7 through 12 will be able to transition seamlessly. Although currently for grades K through 6, there is a 30-student limit. If, however, more students would choose the cyber option, it may take more time, as certified teachers will need to be added to accommodate the increased number of students. The District will continue to use all measures that were implemented last year to prevent the spread of Covid and to keep the focus on instruction.

Ms. McKittrick asked if there was any instance where there would be a need to close a building. Dr. Miller stated that the State nor the CDC has given guidelines on when, and if, a District should close. The information that has been received is that it is imperative that students are in school. This District will continue to consult with the Department of Health if an extraordinary circumstance should arise. Dr. Miller also noted that the Board has the ability to reverse this decision at any time.

2. Revision to the 2021-2022 calendar, moving commencement to May 25, 2022.
3. Disposal of unusable and unwanted technology devices and equipment.

Mr. Salopek asked if there was going to be an open house to get rid of unwanted electronic equipment. He also asked if there was an inventory of what was to be recycled so that Brooke could keep track of this information. He said that it is important for audit purposes to keep track of school property.

Dr. Miller said that if the Board approved the Motion, Maven Technologies, LLC has been scheduled to pick up the equipment on August 16, 2021 at no cost to the District.

Buildings & Grounds: Darren Newberry, Chair; Daniel Santia, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Ratification of proposal from Trane to provide Senior High School office chiller at a cost of \$72,471.00. ESSER funds will be used for this purchase.
2. Request from Our Lady of Fatima to use the soccer fields at the Senior High School from August 10, 2021 through November 18, 2021 on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.
3. Presentation and Discussion: Phone system replacement by Casey Kaiser.

Mr. Kaiser, Technology Director, said that the District currently owns the phone system and it is over 10 years old. Due to age, new hardware would have to be purchased to update the system at a cost of \$43,500.00 and current phones are failing at higher rates each year. In light of this, the Technology Department has done research on phone system replacement. Requirement for such a system would include the ability to call lockdowns from any phone; 911 Emergency calling; tie

into the PA system; and the ability to use phone during a power outage. Quotes were received from the following vendors: Dagostino Electronic Services; Full Service Networks; and Prime Communications. After review of each proposal, Full Service Networks was the recommendation of the Technology Director. The system will add safety and security as well as provide consistent equipment upgrades. The proposal includes the following:

- SNOM Phone System; 5 year;
- 5-year lease at a cost of \$2,419.99 per month;
- Hardware replaced at no additional cost;
- Cloud dashboard;
- \$699.94 one-time installment fee; and
- Cost will remain the same upon renewal.

Personnel: Matthew Erickson, Chair; Kathryn Oblak, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Employment of Nadia Engle, Acting Assistant Principal at Hopewell High School, beginning August 16, 2021 at a stipend of \$350.00 per day without benefits. Ms. Engle will continue in the Assistant Principal roll while the position is vacant.
2. Approval of the 2021-2022 substitute plan, including ten building substitutes at a rate of \$125.00 per day.

The proposed plan is to have ten building substitutes, three in the Senior High School, 3 in the Junior High School, one in each elementary school, and one dedicated to special education. Dr. Miller explained that having dedicated building subs helps eliminate having the need for day-to-day substitutes, which are difficult to find; pulling “specials” teachers at the elementary level and having fill-ins. Mr. Winkle asked what it meant by “specials”. Dr. Miller explained that specials are art, music and physical education. Dr. Miller doesn’t believe that this will totally eliminate the substitute shortage, but will ease the use of fill-ins, which costs more to the District.

3. Resignation of Britta Hedglin, BCIT teacher at the Junior High School, effective July 20, 2021.
4. Resignation of Rebecca Loeliger, bus driver, effective August 20, 2021.
5. Resignation of Peter Noyes, bus driver, effective July 22, 2021.
6. Resignation of Britta Hedglin, 1st assistant cross-country coach, effective August 10, 2021.

7. Resignation of Courtney Hunt, first grade co-chairperson. Danica Elder will continue as the first grade chairperson. Mrs. Hunt is now the Title 1 teacher at Independence Elementary School.
8. Employment of Michael Sundy, Junior High girls basketball coach, at a stipend of \$2,500.00.
9. Employment of Lauran Macon, Junior High girls basketball coach, at a stipend of \$2,500.00
10. Employment of Brian Wolfe, 1st assistant cross-country coach, at a stipend of \$4,052.00
11. Employment of Lauren Giles, substitute cafeteria, effective August 26, 2021
12. Employment of Shelly Syrko, Life Skills teacher at the Junior High School, at step 1 of the bachelors scale, effective August 23, 2021.
13. Employment of Maegan Johnson, individual paraprofessional at Hopewell Junior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances.
14. Employment of Kristy Gruber, individual paraprofessional at Hopewell Junior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances.
15. Employment of Christina Marteena individual paraprofessional at Hopewell Senior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances.
16. Employment of Amy Mineard, individual paraprofessional at Hopewell Junior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances.
17. Employment of Nancy Leonora, part-time library aide, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances.
18. Employment of John Prince, Bus Driver, effective August 2, 2021.
19. Employment of Melva Mosholder, Bus Driver, effective August 2, 2021.
20. Memorandum of Understanding with the Hopewell Education Association with respect to a personnel matter.
21. Revisions to football coaches and salaries. (Attachment)
22. Placement of Special Education teacher, Amy Shaddick, rehired on July 19, 2021, from step 1 to step 7, Bachelors, pursuant to the Mifflinburg and Penns Manor cases regarding step placement of teachers.

23. Employment of Austin Almandarez, long-term substitute at Margaret Ross Elementary School, effective August 23, 2021 through on or around October 5, 2021.

At this time, Dr. Miller began her review of those items that would be voted on at the August 23, 2021 Business meeting.

Education/Curriculum/Instruction: Dr. Erickson, Chair; Ms. McKittrick, Co-Chair

1. Senior High School Mid-Term and Final Exam schedule for the 2021-2022 school year.
2. Agreement with Beacon Light Behavior Health System (Custer City Private School) to provide educational services while students are placed at the Beacon Light facility for the 2020-2021 school year.
3. 2021-2022 Junior High School Club Sponsorships and Department Chairs.
4. 2021-2022 Senior High School Club Sponsorships and Department Chairs.
5. Grade level chairpersons for grades kindergarten through 4th grade.
6. The following students from Geneva College will complete their student teaching beginning September 14, 2021 through December 22, 2021:
 - a. Kaylee McCall, under the guidance of Susan Burak;
 - b. Angelia Duncan, under the guidance of Michele Grandovic;
 - c. Emma Boyer, under the guidance of Aubre Lindner;
 - d. Julia Riggle, under the guidance of Lauren Werner; and
 - e. Marissa Lund, under the guidance of Sarah Bober

Buildings and Grounds: Mr. Newberry, Chair; Mr. Santia, Co-Chair

1. Request of Hopewell Area Aqua Club to use the pool for practice beginning August 30, 2021, Monday through Friday from 3:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Personnel: Matt Erickson, Chair; Kathryn Oblak, Co-Chair

1. Resignation for retirement of Janet Smith, Buildings and Grounds secretary, effective October 1, 2021.
2. Resignation of Emily Collins, speech teacher, effective August 14, 2021.
3. Employment of Lisa Litzinger, substitute cafeteria, effective August 26, 2021.

Policy: Mrs. Zupsic, Chair; Mrs. Oblak, Co-Chair

1. Paid leave for staff due to Covid exposure by a student in a school setting during the 2021-2022 school year, as presented.

Transportation: Dan Santia, Chair; Dan Caton, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Agreement with Frye Transportation for consulting services for the training and transition of the District's Transportation Director, effective August 24, 2021 through August 23, 2022.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

Effective January 1, 2021, community members have the ability to sign up to be recognized during the Visitor's Section of a live Zoom meeting. The individual must also have a device that specifically states his/her name in order to be recognized. Written questions will no longer be accepted. When recognized, the individual will need to state his/her name and address and will have 3 minutes to make a statement and/or ask a question to the Board. The time will begin when the individual begins speaking. This time limit will include a possible response by the Board.

A response may be given during the meeting, however, it is also possible that no response be provided during the virtual meeting. The Board will instruct the Superintendent, the Business Administrator and/or the Solicitor to either respond to the inquiry or do further research and report back to the Board and/or the resident. For any question that requires a response, the District will contact the individual directly to respond or will share responses at the following Board meeting.

Additionally, if a community member wishes to speak during this additional time, the community member must request to speak in the chat box. The Board President will ask for comments in the order in which the community member requested to speak. The individual must have a device that specifically states his/her name in order to be recognized. When recognized, the individual will have 3 minutes to make a statement and/or ask a question to the Board. The time will begin when the individual begins speaking. This time limit will include a possible response by the Board. A maximum of thirty minutes total will be reserved during the meeting for community members who request to speak in the chat room.

Megan Smith, 3003 Crissman Drive, Aliquippa

Ms. Smith stated that she has two children in the District with health concerns. She asked if there were separate Covid-19 guidelines for students with disabilities. Dr. Miller said circumstances such as this are decided on a case-by-case basis and that parents should reach out to the building principal or Dr. Lynn Utchell, Director of Special Education.

Jeanette Miller, 2905 Brodhead Road, Aliquippa

Ms. Miller was supportive of the mask mandate. She stated that her child would feel safer with everyone wearing masks. She believes that moving forward, mask protocols should be consistent. However, if mask requirements should change, she asks that the District have flexibility to move students to the cyber program. Dr. Miller said that last year the District relied on the PA Department of Health and the CDC for mask guidelines and the rate of transmission, which was updated weekly. This year, however, data on transmission rates are given daily, which often leads to conflicting recommendations. Dr. Miller suggested administration review the data, but not to rush changing protocols. Mr. Newberry stated that the Board will update the mask policy at the August 23, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Miller asked when the Parent Portal would open. Dr. Kartychak stated that it is anticipated to open August 18, 2021.

Amy Kelly, 1203 Connecticut Street, Aliquippa

Ms. Kelly is the PTA President for Margaret Ross Elementary School. She stated that while the PTA is thought of as moms who plan parties and host the bookfair, they actually have a greater purpose, and that is to advocate for every child. She is personally advocating for masking for everyone in school while in substantial or higher. She stated that we need to make it as hard as possible for the Departments of Health & Education to take away our fun, as they are the ones that get to decide that we have too many cases and must switch to virtual learning. She said that if you want your kids to go to a dance, attend a sporting event, or take an afterschool class, masking is a minor inconvenience to have a great school year.

Jen Parrish, 751 Davis Road, Aliquippa

Ms. Parrish asked if the District had taken into consideration those families that don't wish to wear masks and how rates of transmission are determined. Dr. Miller stated that the CDC defines the percentage of positivity and the number per 100,000 incident rate. Ms. Parrish advocated for parents to be able to decide if their child should have to wear a mask or not. She believed it difficult for some students to wear their mask for the entire day. Dr. Miller and Mr. Newberry said that face shields are also permissible. Dr. Miller said that state and governmental agencies had left it up to local districts to decide their mask policy and that it would be a liability to the District should a staff member or student get sick from an individual not wearing a mask.

Carla Buxton, 841 State Route 18, Aliquippa

Mrs. Buxton advocated for staff and students to wear face masks. She asked that the District continue to follow CDC guidelines. She believes that it will help protect younger students who are not eligible to receive the vaccine. Mrs. Buxton said that the District uses many measures to protect students such as fire drills, ALICE training and monitoring visitors. Masks are just another level of protection for students and staff.

June Wulff, 1504 Maratta Road, Aliquippa

Ms. Wulff thanked the Board for continuing to have Board meetings via Zoom. She advocates for the District to be proactive and follow CDC recommendations on students and staff wearing masks. She believes this is an important step in protecting our community from the transmission of Covid-19.

Colleen Olson, 2900 Kane Road, Aliquippa

Ms. Olson also agrees that the District should follow CDC guidelines for wearing masks. She would also like to see the District expedite the process for moving children to cyber if that is their choice based on mask requirements.

Lori Watters, 3279 Bradbury Drive, Aliquippa

Mrs. Watters asked for an update on new band uniforms. The current uniforms are 16 years old and are tattered and torn and some can't be repaired. She said, as the face of the District, she believed that this should be a priority. Students should feel pride in their school while performing. Mr. Newberry said that he agreed with her, but, unfortunately, they were cut from the budget. The Board said that they will consider the purchase next year.

At this time, Mr. Winkle returned to Education/Curriculum/Instruction.

Education/Curriculum/Instruction by Lori McKittrick, Co-Chair**MOTION #1**

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Lesia Dobo, to approve the Health and Safety Plan update: mandatory universal masking for all staff and students while Beaver County is in substantial or high transmission levels. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #2

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve the revision to the 2021-2022 District calendar, moving commencement to May 25, 2022. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance

MOTION #3

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve of the disposal of unusable and unwanted technology devices and equipment, at no cost to the District. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance

Buildings and Grounds by Dan Santia, Co-Chair**MOTION #4**

By Dan Santia, seconded by Kathryn Oblak, to approve the ratification of proposal from Trane to provide Senior High School office chiller at a cost of \$72,471.00. ESSER funds will be used for this purchase. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #5

By Dan Santia, seconded by Lori McKittrick, to approve the request from Our Lady of Fatima to use the soccer fields at the Senior High School from August 10, 2021 through November 18, 2021 on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Personnel by Kathryn Oblak, Co-Chair**MOTION #6**

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lesia Dobo, to approve the employment of Nadia Engle, Acting Assistant Principal at Hopewell High School, beginning August 16, 2021 at a stipend of \$350.00 per day, without benefits. Ms. Engle will continue in the Assistant Principal roll while the position is vacant. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #7

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve the 2021-2022 substitute plan, including ten building substitutes at a rate of \$125.00 per day. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

APPROVAL OF GROUPED ITEMS**MOTION #8**

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve items (1) through (9) as presented in accordance with School Board's agreement for grouping items in a single motion. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

1. Resignation of Britta Hedglin, BCIT teacher at the Junior High School, effective July 20, 2021.
2. Resignation of Rebecca Loeliger, bus driver, effective August 20, 2021.
3. Resignation of Peter Noyes, bus driver, effective July 22, 2021.

4. Resignation of Britta Hedglin, 1st assistant cross-country coach, effective August 10, 2021.
5. Resignation of Courtney Hunt, first grade co-chairperson. Danica Elder will continue as the first grade chairperson.
6. Employment of Michael Sundry, Junior High girls basketball coach, at a stipend of \$2,500.00.
7. Employment of Lauran Macon, Junior High girls basketball coach, at a stipend of \$2,500.00.
8. Employment of Brian Wolfe, 1st assistant cross-country coach, at a stipend of \$4,052.00.
9. Employment of Lauren Giles, substitute cafeteria, effective August 26, 2021.

MOTION #9

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve the employment of Shelly Syrko, Life Skills teacher at the Junior High School, at step 1 of the bachelors scale, effective August 23, 2021. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #10

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lesia Dobo, to approve the employment of Maegan Johnson, individual paraprofessional at Hopewell Junior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #11

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lori McKittrick, to approve the employment of Kristy Gruber, individual paraprofessional at Hopewell Junior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #12

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve the employment of Christina Marteena, individual paraprofessional at Hopewell Senior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #13

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lori McKittrick, to approve the employment of Amy Mineard, classroom paraprofessional at Hopewell Senior High School, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #14

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve the employment of Nancy Leonora, part-time library aide, effective August 23, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #15

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve the employment of John Prince, Bus Driver, effective August 2, 2021. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #16

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve the employment of Melva Mosholder, Bus Driver, effective August 2, 2021. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #17

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lesia Dobo, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Hopewell Education Association regarding an employment matter. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #18

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Dan Caton, to approve the revisions to the football coaches and salaries. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #19

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve the placement of Special Education teacher, Amy Shaddick, rehired on July 19, 2021, from step 1 to step 7, bachelors scale, pursuant to the Mifflinburg and Penns Manor cases regarding step placement of teachers. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #20

By Kathryn Oblak, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve the employment of Austin Almandarez, long-term substitute at Margaret Ross Elementary School, effective August 23, 2021 through on or around October 5, 2021. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

Before the close of the meeting Mr. Winkle thanked Dr. Miller for her time, dedication and hard work, as this would be her last meeting. Mrs. Oblak thanked her for moving the District forward and Mr. Caton and Mrs. Dobo wished her well at South Fayette.

Upcoming School Board Meetings

August 23, 2021, Regular Business Meeting will be in person and held virtually.

MOTION by Dan Santia, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, that the meeting be adjourned. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Mr. Newberry adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Darren Newberry, Board Vice President

Nancy Barber, Secretary