

WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2019

1. Opening Activities

1.1 Call to Order

The special meeting of the Warren County School District Board of School Directors was called to order by Mrs. Zariczny, President, at 6:04 p.m. in the Board Room of Central Office, 6820 Market Street, Russell, Pennsylvania.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Zariczny led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Roll Call

Present:

Mr. Joseph Colosimo
Mrs. Elizabeth Huffman
Mr. Jeffrey Labesky
Mr. Paul Mangione

Mrs. Marcy Morgan
Mrs. Mary Passinger
Mr. Arthur Stewart
Mrs. Donna Zariczny

Absent:

Mr. Michael Zamborik

Others Present:

Mrs. Amy Stewart, Superintendent; Mr. Gary Weber, Director of Administrative Support Services; Mr. Eric Mineweaser, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Mr. Jim Grosch, Director of Business Services (arrived 6:10 p.m.); Mrs. Melissa McLean, Secretary pro tempore; Mr. Brian Ferry, Times Observer; Mr. Shane Flannery, Technology Director, VARtek; Mr. Richard Gignac, Supervisor of District-wide Athletics & Co-Curricular Activities; and approximately two members of the public in the audience.

1.4 Elect Secretary Pro Tem

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors appoints Melissa McLean secretary pro tempore for the April 22, 2019, special board meeting.

Motion by Marcy Morgan, second by Elizabeth Huffman.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Joseph Colosimo, Elizabeth Huffman, Jeffrey Labesky, Paul Mangione, Marcy Morgan, Mary Passinger, Arthur Stewart, Donna Zariczny

M. McLean
Secretary
Pro Tem
Approved
8-0-0

The Warren County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or employment practices and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Gary Weber, Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator at 6820 Market Street, Russell, PA 16345 or (814) 723-6900.

1.5 Reading of the Mission Statement - Mrs. Marcy Morgan

The mission of the Warren County School District is to educationally empower all students to think critically and solve problems through a rigorous curriculum that will provide them with the skills necessary to graduate and pursue a career of their interest.

1.6 Reading of the WCSD/PSBA Principles of Governance and Leadership - Mr. Jeffrey Labesky

Pennsylvania school boards are committed to providing every student the opportunity to grow and achieve. The actions taken by the Board ultimately have both short and long-term impact in the classroom. Therefore, school directors collectively and individually will...

Evaluate Continuously

- Utilize appropriate data to make informed decisions
- Use effective practices for the evaluation of the superintendent
- Assess student growth and achievement
- Review effectiveness of the comprehensive plan

1.7 Public Comment

There was no public comment.

2. New Business

2.1 Hearing Officer Report

Hearing Officer
Report
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of Directors approves the hearing officer report dated April 22, 2019, Case Letter "L".

Motion by Joseph Colosimo, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Joseph Colosimo, Elizabeth Huffman, Paul Mangione, Marcy Morgan, Mary Passinger, Arthur Stewart, Donna Zariczny

No: Jeffrey Labesky

2.2 PlanCon G - Project Accounting Based on Bids - Warren County Career Center - (WCSD #1801, PDE #3908)

PlanCon G
Submission to
PDE for WCCC
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves PlanCon Part G, Project Accounting Based on Bids (bids received April 5, 2019), for submission to PDE for the project known as the Warren County Career Center Additions/ Alterations, (WCSD #1801, PDE #3908).

Motion by Mary Passinger, second by Marcy Morgan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Joseph Colosimo, Elizabeth Huffman, Jeffrey Labesky, Paul Mangione, Marcy Morgan, Mary Passinger, Arthur Stewart, Donna Zariczny

2.3 PlanCon H - Project Financing - Warren County Career Center - (WCSD #1801, PDE #3908)

PlanCon H
Submission to
PDE for WCCC
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approve PlanCon H, Project Financing, for submission to PDE for the project known as the Warren County Career Center Alterations & Additions (WCSD #1801, PDE #3908).

Motion by Arthur Stewart, second by Marcy Morgan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Joseph Colosimo, Elizabeth Huffman, Jeffrey Labesky, Paul Mangione, Marcy Morgan, Mary Passinger, Arthur Stewart, Donna Zariczny

2.4 Budget Discussion

A. Amy reviewed questions from Board Members and reviewed answers

- (1) Garbage - last bid was done in May of 2015 (handout 2.4 Budget B); nothing was added to adds/cuts about waste disposal.
- (2) Kelly Services (handout 2.4 Budget C) - District brought Kelly Services back on board after the ACA was passed due to the cost of the medical insurance and tracking required; last time there was a full study, it would have been more money for the WCSD to have the services vs. Kelly.
- (3) Athletic Question - There is a dollar figure to fully fund athletics the way that it is on the books today, and it would be an additional \$260,000; there are expenditures missing that we might not have on our books (booster dollars are not included in these figures).
 - Discussion regarding the fact that different schools fund differently based on what choices they make, and the original add/cuts decision.
 - What does it look like from a financial picture if the District said it was going to annually fund coaches and buses; what is that annual obligation; what does it cost to provide the base program without the extras?
 - Amy: the "pay to participate" goes into the school budget and then is used for athletics; the Athletic taskforce wanted the "pay to play" fee to go back to feeder programs for the District to take back the elementary; would need to be added to the "adds" list.
- (4) Field trips and (5) athletic transportation were other questions were discussed.
 - Field trips -- Amy noted that most think of trips such as Port Farms, etc. which are almost exclusively paid for by PTO funds; district money is only spent on field trips when Eric Mineweaser organizes and all kids go; the rest of the line item (Row 28) is primarily PMEA, Marching Band, etc.; if we send, we send all kids.
- (5) Athletic transportation - the District spends \$203,000 primarily on transportation. When a team goes beyond a normal season, then it comes out of the Central Office budget, there is a line item in the budget.

Mary Passinger: would like to add an item under cuts to take into consideration eliminating Eric Mineweaser's former position (Supervisor of Elementary Education). She would at least like to know what it would save the District.

- Amy Stewart directed the Board to the Cut Sheet where there is a cut for an assistant principal on the sheet; the amount of savings would be comparable to the Supervisor of Elementary Education.

B. Amy Stewart reviewed the add/cuts document line by line, reviewing the content beginning with the cuts:

- (1) Line 5: Title I - keep within the boundaries of the grant.
- (2) Line 6-9, all go together: moving grades 6-8 from YEMS to YHS; the savings that can be captured; approx. 7 classrooms can move over.
- (3) Line 10: has a comparable line on the add sheet; this one is already done, but wanted to reflect it in the budget on the adds/cuts sheet; those people have already been hired; district is saving the outsourcing amount, and then incurring the cost on the add side.
- (4) Line 11 (Eric): result of declining enrollment, can cut ELA (at SAMHS) and Social Studies (at EMHS);

- Mrs. Passinger questioned what that means to the school, what teachers are being asked to teach, how many kids, and how many preparations?
- Staffing was discussed - administration looked at staffing per policy guidelines regarding class sizes. They were to staff K, 1 and 2 with no more than 22 per class; staffing 3, 4, and 5 with no more than 30 per class; and to use 30 per class for secondary classes as well.
- Mrs. Passinger also expressed concern about eliminating teachers. There was discussion regarding shifting regular classroom teachers to virtual academy.
- Mrs. Stewart discussed enrollment with YHS having 66 students in 9th grade, there are 77 students in 11th grade (a decrease of 17); EMHS having 65 in 9th grade and there 76 students are in 10th grade, 72 in 11th grade 72 in twelfth grade, again a decrease; SAMHS having 30 students in 9th grade, in 10th grade 46, and 11th grade 44 and 12th grade 50; WAHS having 149 in 9th grade, 173 in 10th grade, 189 in 11th grade, and 12th grade 176 students, and in all cases classes across the District are losing enrollment.
- Mrs. Passinger asked what the long term plan is as enrollment keeps dropping;
 - Mrs. Stewart shared some resources are centralized and no one ever complains there is only one welding shop, etc.
 - What is known is that one school is not going to work; it's not an option.
 - One big take away from the NSBA is a more standards based education – academics will function in a smaller environment where kids are working in multiple levels in classrooms.
- Mrs. Passinger asked if there was any discussion about specializing the schools, possibly creating magnet schools;
 - Mrs. Stewart's concern was the cost of transportation would be a deterring factor.
 - The District will have to be strategic about where and what specializing takes place and the smaller schools will have to be reinvented.
- Mr. Colosimo - agrees with a lot of Mrs. Passinger's points but would lean towards supporting distance learning over virtual. He is concerned students are looking up answers on their devices for tests, and suspects students are not doing their best, and are not doing their own work. He feels the push for virtual takes away options for all students.
- Mrs. Passinger questioned why there was a move away from distance learning;
 - Mrs. Stewart stated distance learning doubles staff because both classrooms have to be staffed, and it has to be synchronous or at the same time.
 - Mr. Weber addressed concerns of students not doing the work themselves on virtual stating the online teachers are face-to-face with students and can assess if they know content, and there will continue to be improvement moving forward.
- Mrs. Passinger questioned if students can have a discussion with each other when doing virtual;
 - Mr. Weber stated that is one of the goals for the long planning.
- Mrs. Passinger wants to provide students the best and feels sitting them in front of a computer causes them to miss the component of talking to each other, class discussion, etc.;

- Mr. Weber stated there is room for growth and administration is working together to address those exact concerns within the parameters of the current virtual program.
 - Mr. Colosimo – indicated that he would like to see a discussion of closing YHS take place during the 2020-21 budget; we have no kids, and the trend [decline in enrollment] is not changing; we cannot take any more building renovation debt on beyond the Career Center;
 - Mr. Stewart question the exact nature of the assignment that Mr. Colosimo was asking administration for: the closure of YHS - send to YEMS; or close YHS, disperse student body, and send to other schools.
 - Mr. Colosimo clarified that he was interested in closing YHS and dispensing students to EMHS and WAHS.
 - Mr. Stewart add that he was interested in taking a look at putting all the students at the existing YEMS facility.
 - Mr. Stewart shared his belief that administrators don't have enough planning time as it is, and would like to know where this is going to happen in an organized fashioned. As an example, he feels that High School Reform keeps being put off because the administrators don't have the time and opportunity to do the things that they need to do.
 - Mrs. Zariczny stated that she and Mrs. Stewart have been working with PSBA to schedule some dates in the form of Board Retreat and Comprehensive Plan to have a discussion about where we are going in the future, and what our options look like moving forward.
 - Mrs. Stewart acknowledged that all the planning needs to come together, everything is in separate lanes, and it never comes together -- the State has everything in separate lanes, and does not want them to mingle together; on Ed. Reform we're really getting into the instructional pieces of where we are and what we need to do; we need to look at Policy 2930 which determines how many classes we offer, and to how many people.
 - Mrs. Stewart noted most of the teacher cuts line up with attrition.
- (5) Line 12, Elementary Tutoring: over the last couple of years, the district has not been able to expend all of the dollars because we often pull tutors (Title I) to do this work due to a teacher shortage.
- (6) Line 13: This cut would put classrooms at the levels we staff with; we can give up three due to attrition; Mrs. Stewart noted that the lower student/teacher ratio numbers we can have at K, 1 & 2, the better;
- Mrs. Huffman requested that any additional information and backup data be passed out at the same time, so that it can be immediately referenced.
 - Mrs. Stewart discussed Handout 2.4 Budget D1 and 2.4 Budget D2 -- Option #1 looks like how we have classes this year; keeps the staffing standards the same.
 - Mrs. Passinger stated that she thinks that most teachers would rather the textbook budget be cut and/or postponed.
 - Mrs. Stewart noted that that would result in a 1-time savings, kicking the can down the road; whereas keeping your FTE's inline will keep you saving over time.

- (7) Line 14, Career Center: There are 2 programs that have the numbers to go part-time; we can shift some work around - proposing that we assign the co-op work to one of the teachers (with a part-time program) half-time.
- (8) Line 15, Capital Reserve: Ms. Stewart noted that Dr. Kennerknecht could delay a storage building at Eisenhower; and delay the LED light project at WAHS (parking lot) by contributing less to Capital Reserve.
- (9) Line 16: This work is done, and there are the recommendations.
- (10) Line 17: There is a line item in the textbook budget to get a steady flow of instruments.
- (11) Line 18: no increase for athletics.
- (12) Line 19: would increase the number of kids in classes.
- (13) Line 20-22: addresses teachers at the secondary level; social studies at WAHS & music district-wide (YEMS move to YHS saves periods of music; Sheffield does not have enough kids for senior band or choir); math teacher (more difficult decision) from YEMS/WAHS split; science from EMHS.
- (14) Line 23: additional \$50,000 coming out of tutoring.
- (15) Line 24, Dean of Students: Mrs. Stewart noted that when administration sits down and talks to Principals about what is keeping them busy, they find that day-to-day discipline is keeping people busy; this position has been valuable; as we add SRO time, we find we're saving our Principals time; as we add Social workers it saves times; we're not asking for a lot of administration time [in this budget] because the supports we are adding are working.
- (16) Line 25, non-essential supplementals: Administration would determine these in conversation with Principals; some are necessary, i.e. crossing guard; there are things that we don't have to (clubs, etc.); if a club is meeting in advisory and not outside of school, that's different.
- (17) Line 26, after school bus runs: Mrs. Stewart shared with the board that this concerns her more for 21st Century than it does for the sports; will really prohibit who is going to be able to be in the program.
- (18) Line 27, 4-day school week: It was noted that at a recent NSBA conference, this was discussed by other districts as a way to entice teachers to come to the District;
 - The union would have to okay; would most likely have to be for another academic year and not current budget season.
 - Mrs. Stewart noted that the other places that are doing the 4-week are geographically large, and rural.
- (19) Line 28-29, field trips and athletic transportation: Discussed previously in the agenda.
- (20) Line 30, custodial equipment and vents on chimney: This level of cuts would push the purchase of custodial equipment, and repairing the vents on the chimney at Beaty.
 - Mrs. Stewart noted there used to be a time where no one could agree on anything on a building, and many were in disrepair; the district was nothing but reactive. The district is currently in a more proactive phase/approach.
- (21) Line 31, eliminates elementary tutoring: admin does not want to see this under any circumstance; would destroy what is happening in K, 1 & 2 with MTSS and tiered instruction; and have a detrimental effect on the progress being made in ELA.
- (22) Line 32, half-day kindergarten: District does not support; would be a huge detriment.

- Mrs. Stewart commented that Kindergarten registration numbers change on a daily basis. Administration works closely with community partners to continue to monitor the number and adjust accordingly.

(23) Line 33: Added this evening; elimination of an administrative position (Supervisor of Elementary Education).

Mrs. Zaricznyz inquired if it was necessary to add Youngsville High School to the cuts list so that it could be looked at the following budget year. Recognizes that there is information that the Board needs to make a decision.

- Mrs. Stewart stated that Norbert is working on next phase of Master Facilities Plan and recommended waiting until that was completed to make a decision.
 - Dr. Kennerknecht stated that he believes that that deliverable will be ready approximately in September of 2019.
- Mrs. Zaricznyz suggested that in the meantime, administration pull together dates from a Pennsylvania Department of Education standpoint to see what the district needs to do by law to close a building, and by what date so as to not lock ourselves out of a decision.
- Mr. Colosimo asked for clarification on the difference in requirements between closing a school, and repurposing it;
 - If teaching is conducted in a building, then we would not need to follow formal building closing procedures.
- Mrs. Stewart confirmed the two tasks that the administration has been charged with (in regards to YHS);
 - Looking into the feasibility of closing YHS and sending students to EMHS and WAHS;
 - Feasibility of getting all of the students to YEMS.
- Mr. Colosimo stated that he was clarifying that shifting grades did not require a formal school closure process through PDE;
- Mrs. Stewart clarified that there is currently no deliverable on this item until the processes mentioned earlier in the meeting are completed.

C. Amy Stewart continued the review of the add/cuts document line by line, reviewing the adds (Attachment 2.4 Budget A2):

- (1) Line 4, OT/PT: This add already done, and approved by Board; administration wanted to show it for full transparency.
- (2) Line 5, add virtual: Administration would like to convert, on the cut side, a social studies and math position into virtual because that is what is needed; would like to slide 2 FTE's to virtual.

The two adds mentioned above, in green, are those recommended by administration. The rest of the document the rest shows where the administration would want things to go if money were suddenly readily available.

- (3) Line 6, Career Counselor: we need someone to help kids figure out what they want to do when they grow up; we a counselor to spend some dedicated time with kids; there is a guidance counselor at the Career Center, but we would want them to spend dedicated time with 8th and 9th graders; this would be a district-wide counselor

- (4) Line 7, Safety Coordinator: Act 44 fell on June 30, and the district had to have a Safety Coordinator – Mrs. Stewart designated herself as Safety Coordinator; Mrs. Stewart noted that between Mr. Boyd Freeborough (Quality Assurance Supervisor), Mike Kiehl (Supervisor of Transportation and Purchasing), Melissa McLean (Information Specialist, Buildings & Grounds), Matt Jones (Grant Writer) and herself, more than 1 FTE of all of those people is being put forward to this task; the mandates are unbelievable; the district is getting these items done because we will not let kids not be safe; hiring a dedicated person would save time and free up the aforementioned people to work on more curricular things.
- (5) Line 8, Social Worker: we have 1 now, and it has been a huge in helping; in Act 44, the recommendations that they recommend in staffing, recommends that we have 17 social workers, and we have 1; this is definitely a need.
- (6) Line 9, Virtual Academy: Mrs. Weber, Principal of Virtual Academy, would wish for a Math and Social Studies teacher first; Science would be the second choice to add as it's harder to fill, and administration realizes that we can only go so far.
- (7) Line 10-11, Groundskeeper & Custodians: these positions were cut in the first round of deep cuts; restoring them would make a world of difference in how we maintain our buildings.
- (8) Line 12, fully funding athletics:
 - Jeff Labesky would like to disagree with that number; Sheffield was asked to provide \$25,000 every year, and that doesn't appear to be happening at other schools; this was originally presented as a "fill-the-gap" and feels that the community has done enough; each year we are losing programs, and that number should be less than \$100,000 if that's what the schools are giving; we are paying taxes on something that is supposed to be funded by the school district; the boosters groups are being put through the ringer; the pay-to-play money should be going to athletics (pay-to-play is around \$60-\$70); Mr. Labesky stated that he feels that the emergency is over, and it doesn't make sense that we're still asking a booster group to continue to do this down the road; the math doesn't add up;
 - Discussion continued regarding the costing out of athletics and the donations for the sports boosters and parent organizations throughout the county;
 - When administration costed out these items, they factor in all of the services which are currently being done by volunteers, as if those would no longer be done by volunteers, but paid instead;
 - Additional discussion occurred regarding possible future funding streams and opportunities for athletics. Mrs. Zariczny suggested that administration might want to look into advertising at fields and/or gyms to offset costs in the future;
 - Mr. Stewart: is it possible that we can fund the \$262,090 and then if Boosters wants to continue to trade their volunteerism, it could wipe out the pay-to-play; my proposal is going to provide for no outlay of cash from booster groups, just send someone to volunteer -- run the clock, etc.
 - Mr. Colosimo stated that he would like to fully fund education before we fully fund athletics
 - It was determined that the original line item would remain on the document as is, and the Personnel Athletic and Co-Curricular Activities Committee would be charged with discussion the modification(s) of the administration of the program. Mrs. Stewart will modify these tonight, and then get them back from the Board by the first thing on Wednesday

Mr. Grosch reviewed millage documents and the "Sandbox" document to familiarize the Board with the formats. The documents will continue to change throughout the budget process. Administration anticipates having more finalized numbers and information available next week

Mrs. Stewart re cut sheet and philosophy with the colors; green is the district's recommendations; blue is willing; if you're looking into the orange, one of the easiest things to pull out of there is going to be the secondary option #2 (there are a lot of things in orange that we don't want to do

2.5 Other

- Mrs. Zariczny presented a letter in support of the Cherry Run Project to be delivered prior to the comment period deadline.

MOTION: That the Board of school authorizes the Board President to send the letter to the Allegheny National Forest regarding the Cherry Run Project.

Mr. Labesky requested that a similar letter be drafted for the Hector Falls Project which will be forth coming in the next few months.

Motion by Arthur Stewart, second by Marcy Morgan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Joseph Colosimo, Elizabeth Huffman, Jeffrey Labesky, Paul Mangione, Marcy Morgan, Mary Passinger, Arthur Stewart, Donna Zariczny

- Mrs. Passinger presented essays from sixth grade students at Eisenhower on why sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students should be allowed to have recess.
- Mr. Labesky asked administration to bring forth, at the next committee meetings, the feasibility of drug testing for the workforce of the Warren County School District in light of the incident last week.

3. Closing Activities

3.1 Adjournment

MOTION: It was moved by Joe Colosimo and seconded by Marcy Morgan that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa A. McLean, Secretary pro tem

Comment Letter to ANF for Cherry Run Project Approved 8-0-0
