

**EMERGENCY SPECIAL MEETING
WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2021, 8:00 A.M.
VIA ZOOM MEETING
www.wcsdpa.org**

1. Executive Session

2. Opening Activities

2.1 Call to Order

The emergency special meeting of the Warren County School District Board of School Directors was called to order by Mrs. Zariczny, President, at 8:16 a.m. via Zoom meeting.

2.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Zariczny led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.3 Roll Call

Present:

Mr. Joseph Colosimo	Mrs. Marcy Morgan
Mrs. Elizabeth Huffman	Mrs. Mary Passinger
Mr. Jeffrey Labesky	Mr. Arthur Stewart
Mr. Kevin Lindvay	Mrs. Donna Zariczny
Mr. Paul Mangione	

Others Present:

Mrs. Amy Stewart, Superintendent; Mr. Gary Weber, Director of Administrative Support Services; Dr. Patricia Hawley, Director of Pupil Services; Mr. James Grosch, Director of Business Services; Mr. Eric Mineweaser, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Mrs. Lynn Shultz, Supervisor of Elementary Education; Mr. Chris Byham, Solicitor; Mrs. Ruth Huck, Board Secretary; Mr. Rick Gignac, Supervisor of District-wide Athletics & Co-Curricular Activities; Mr. Michael Kiehl, Transportation and Purchasing Manager; Mr. Matt Jones, Coordinator of Grants and Foundation Development; Brian Ferry, Times Observer; and approximately 213 members of the public in attendance.

2.4 Reading of the Mission Statement - Mr. Joseph Colosimo

The mission of the Warren County School District is to support the personal and intellectual success and wellness of every student, every day.

2.5 Reading of the WCSD/PSBA Principles of Governance and Leadership - Mrs. Elizabeth Huffman

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...

Act Ethically

- *Never use the position for improper benefit to self or others*
- *Act to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest*
- *Recognize the absence of authority outside of the collective board*
- *Respect the role, authority and input of the superintendent*

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.

- *Balance the responsibility to provide educational programs with being stewards of community resources*
- *Abide by the majority decision*

2.6 Public Comment

Bonnie Glotz	Ms. Glotz stated she has no problem with students wearing masks on the bus, but thinks they should be able to take them off when they are at their desks.
Bridget Schwab	Ms. Schwab stated she is in full support of choice. She prefers to have a choice.
Fern	She stated she is in favor of the mask mandate and thinks it should be followed. Masks work and do not reduce airflow. She has panic attacks and can wear a mask.
Lacey Becker	Ms. Becker does not think someone with a medical condition should wear a mask. It has been too hot and the ventilation is not great. People have been out and about all summer with no masks, and it should be up to the parents to decide if their child wears a mask. Her son will not be wearing a mask because of a medical condition.
Jewel Rozanski	Ms. Rozanski believes the majority of parents are in favor of choice no matter what the choice is and parents are tired of being robbed of making that choice. They also understand that this is of no fault of the Board and Administration.
Catrina	She stated she is in support of the mask mandate, because she has already lost a child to COVID, and she strongly stated that sending a child to school in a mask is much more preferable than choosing a casket for your child. Urged the District to follow the mandate.
Jessica	She thanked the Board for what they do and stated that she and her daughter have panic attacks when wearing a mask. Her daughter did the hybrid learning system, and it did not go well. Her grades suffered and she was depressed. She believes this is government overreach.
Jason	He stated he is completely against the mask mandate, and it is government overreach. He offered information on studies that show any mask that is not an N95 mask will not protect from the risk of getting COVID. He offered condolences to the woman who lost her child, but studies show only 2 out of 1 million children will die of COVID, and it is ridiculous to put masks on children.
Hobart	He does not agree with the mask mandate. It is not healthy and a piece of cloth will not prevent catching a virus or cold. Governor Wolfe overstepped his bounds, and it is time to take a stand. It is parents' choice, and his children will not be wearing masks.

3. New Business

3.1 ARP ESSER Health & Safety Plan – Amended

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors immediately comply with the Governor’s and DOH mandate of August 31, 2021...

Motion by Arthur Stewart and second by Marcy Morgan

Arthur’s phone cut out, and it was not clear if he stated his entire motion.

Some questioned if it was the full motion and wanted clarification before a vote was taken.

Arthur Stewart reconnected and tried to state his motion again and the call again dropped.

Arthur Stewart reconnected and stated his complete motion as follows:

MOTION: That the Warren County School District (WCSD) immediately comply with the August 31, 2021 “Order of the Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Directing Face Coverings in School Entities” by requiring face coverings to be worn at all WCSD facilities subject to the exceptions permitted in the Order. In the event a student, staff member, visitor or other person appears upon WCSD premises without a face covering, and in the event that no exception to the Order is readily apparent (example of readily apparent exception: participant in sports activity), the person will be given one reminder of the Order requiring face coverings. In the event the person fails to then don a face covering the WCSD will assume the face covering will either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition or a disability.

Motion by Arthur Stewart and seconded by Jeffrey Labesky

AMENDMENT TO MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Stewart and agreed to by Mr. Labesky to add “that any person that is asserting an inability to wear a face covering because of a medical or mental condition is not required to provide a doctor’s or other’s proof.

Call the Question

MOTION: It was moved by Arthur Stewart to Call the Question and seconded by Jeffrey Labesky that the Board of School Directors act on the APR ESSER Health & Safety Plan as amended by Arthur Stewart’s motion.

Calling the Question Failed 4-5-0
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Final Resolution: Motion Failed

Yes: Arthur Stewart, Elizabeth Huffman, Jeffrey Labesky, Kevin Lindvay,

No: Donna. Zariczny, Joseph Colosimo, Paul Mangione, Marcy Morgan, Mary Passinger

Calling the Question failed and Board discussion continued. Following discussion the motion as made by Arthur Stewart and the agreed upon amendment by Jeffrey Labesky was acted upon.

MOTION: That the WCSD immediately comply with the August 31, 2021 “Order of the Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Directing Face Coverings in School Entities” by requiring face coverings to be worn at all WCSD facilities subject to the exceptions permitted in the Order. In the event a student, staff member, visitor or other person appears upon WCSD premises without a face covering, and in the event that no exception to the Order is readily apparent (example of readily apparent exception: participant in sports

Arthur Stewart's
amended motion
Failed
4-5-0

activity), the person will be given one reminder of the Order requiring face coverings. In the event the person fails to then don a face covering the WCSD will assume the face covering will either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition or a disability and that any person that is asserting an inability to wear a face covering because of a medical or mental condition is not required to provide a doctor's or other's proof.

Final Resolution: Motion Failed

Yes: Arthur Stewart, Elizabeth Huffman, Jeffrey Labesky, Kevin Lindvay,

No: Mary Passinger Marcy Morgan, Donna. Zariczny, Joseph Colosimo, Paul Mangione

3.1 ARP ESSER Health & Safety Plan (as originally presented on the agenda)

ARP ESSER Health
& Safety Plan (as
originally
presented)
Failed
3-5-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the revised ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan, as presented.

Motion by Marcy Morgan, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Failed

Yes: Mary Passinger, Donna Zariczny, Marcy Morgan,

No: Joseph Colosimo, Elizabeth Huffman, Jeffrey Labesky, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione

Not Present at Vote: Arthur Stewart (Mr. Stewart left the meeting prior to the vote at approximately 9:05 a.m.)

Mr. Byham stated that whether the Board of Directors amends its Health & Safety plan or not, the mandate usurps the plan, and the District must follow the mandate. The Order goes into effect on September 7th regardless.

Mrs. Stewart stated that students coming to school without a mask will not be admitted to a classroom. There is an exemption process that was used all last year and will be used again.

Mrs. Huffman stated we are faced with very difficult decisions and financial implications. As she has watch the Zoom chat she sees that we are dividing ourselves as united front and community. She asked everyone to be supportive and patient and do what you feel is best for your loved ones. Please be kind, and please be respectful. This is an extremely hard position that not just the school board members but we as citizens of the United States and even what is going on in the world. We are doing our very best, and she hopes parents would teach their children about all the things going on and to be very supportive. She agrees with the arguments put forth today, but please remember we need to stand together and try to find the best way to move forward through this pandemic.

Mrs. Stewart stated that in her position she is obligated to enforce the order and commented that the Governor was very clear in his announcement of the new mandate that he is ready to shut down schools that do not comply with the order. Mrs. Stewart also stated that the administration and Board have worked 198 percent this past year to keep the doors open for students and will do everything in their power to again make sure schools are open this year and that is what we will fight for.

3.2 Other

Mrs. Zariczny announced an executive session was held prior to this meeting to receive information from the solicitor.

Mrs. Zariczny thanked those who attended and participated in the meeting, stating she appreciated the discourse and hearing the different points of view without name calling or animosity. Without consensus by the Board on a motion, the mandate will still go into effect as stated by the Solicitor. If anyone has question, please reach out to the Office of Pupil

Services and to get direction regarding waivers. The administration has been working diligently throughout COVID to try to answer questions and get information to where it is needed. She also gave appreciation to the Board, administration, school staff, parents and students for their efforts during a very difficult year and a half. It is not over and we are still being told what to do, and we are just going to move forward wishing a good and productive school year to everyone.

4. Closing Activities

4.1 Adjournment

MOTION: It was moved by Joseph Colosimo and seconded by Mary Passinger that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth A. Huck, Board Secretary