

WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2021

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 8:00 a.m. via Zoom meeting.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Zariczny led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 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; Mrs. Ericka Alm, Principal; Ms. Betsy Cummings-Sobkowski, Assistant Principal; Mr. Joshua Vincent, Principal; Mrs. Misty Weber, Principal; Mr. Brian Ferry, Times Observer; and approximately 125 members of the public in attendance.

1.4 Reading of the Mission Statement - Mr. Jeffrey Labesky

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

1.5 Reading of the WCSD/PSBA Principles of Governance and Leadership - Mr. Arthur Stewart

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...

Govern Effectively

- Adhere to an established set of rules and procedures for board operations
- Develop, adopt, revise and review policy
- Align decisions to policy

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.

- Differentiate between governance and management, delegating management tasks to administration
- Allocate finances and resources
- Ensure compliance with local, state and federal laws

Mrs. Zariczny announced the Board held executive sessions on Monday, October 4, 2021 and Wednesday, October 6, 2021, to receive legal advice from its solicitors.

1.6 Public Comment

Bridget Schwab	Ms. Schwab stated children are going through many challenges because of COVID-19 and their education is being stripped from them. How many times will we do the same thing expecting different results before calling it insanity? With the Health and Safety Plan, this is the same thing that was done last year and are there any true successes? Our children have lost trust and a sense of security in their schools. The biggest loss of all is an immeasurable amount of education. She quoted the First Amendment of the Constitution. She sent informational links to all of the Board members showing adverse effects of wearing masks. She was disappointed that six of the Board members caved to the pressure of the mask mandate. She will give her students a fighting chance and take them out of the Warren County School District.
Jewel Rozanski	Mrs. Rozanski thanked the Board and stated the members have been courageous and did the job they were elected to do representing the constituents, and tried to get what 470 other school district did by not forcing student to be labeled with a diagnosis and to be able to breath unhindered. She took time to read the complaint and the judge’s order and has many questions. She believes that no matter what side of the issue people are on, each could pose the exact same arguments for their beliefs. Had the District not given parents a choice, the arguments would be exactly the same. She would welcome both sides to sit down for a civil conversation. She asked for clarification on the statistics mentioned in the lawsuit and would like answers to end the debate once and for all. Ms. Rozanski stated she and everyone else wants this to end. She wants children to be able to play together, to be friends together, the community to come together, and she wants every single parent to be the village in which the children deserve to be properly raised.
Amanda Lindemuth	Ms. Lindemuth thanked the Board members for their service to the Warren County Community. She stated that each ESSER Plan should be tailored to the unique needs of each local education agency and schools must take into account public comment related to the development and revision of the plan and thanked the Board for that opportunity today. She asked that the WCSD not follow the PA Health Secretary’s order as based on past rulings for the order, because it has not been legally enforceable. Secondly, if the school district feels they must follow the order, then she requests the District follow the order and not add to it. According to this order, exemptions are allowed for any teacher or child, student, staff, or visitor regardless of vaccination status that fits into any of the eight exemption categories. They are available on the PA Health Department website. In these categories, it does not require

	a doctor’s exemption, or disability exemption. Requiring a signed doctor’s note adds to the order. She asked the Board to take into account public comment from the past, as well as, today.
Gracie Gatto	Ms. Gatto stated she is a junior at Warren Area High School and she is frustrated with how masking and quarantining is affecting students’ education. They are not learning as much as they should for many reasons. Teachers have to remind students to wear their masks properly; student debates on masking happen often; students have to sit in the auditorium and learn on their own when teachers are not available, and this happens daily. The fear of being quarantined causes her anxiety, and many of her friends feel the same way. The quarantine protocols are not the same for everyone. Students with medical exemptions from masks are criticized and questioned. Her education is very important to her, therefore she has started the enrollment process for PA Cyber school. She would like to return to Warren Area High School when education is the priority again. She asked that the Board make this happen soon.
Jamie Scott	Mrs. Zariczny call on Jamie several times and asked her to use the reaction button but did not get a response.

2. New Business

2.1 Rescission of Reducing Discipline for Mask Violations on District Transportation

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors rescinds its motion 2.23 Reducing Discipline for Bus Mask Violations approved August 30, 2021, during its special meeting and reinstates its discipline policy for violations of the mask mandate while riding district transportation.

Motion by Marcy Morgan, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

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

Rescission of Reducing Discipline for Mask Violations on District Transportation Approved 9-0-0

2.2 Rescission of Motion 7.15 of September 13, 2021

MOTION: That the Board of School District rescinds motion 7.15 of September 13, 2021, regarding mask exceptions.

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, Kevin Lindvay

Rescission of Motion 7.15 of September 13, 2021 Approved 9-0-0

2.3 ARP ESSER Health & Safety Plan

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

Motion by Mary Passinger, second by Marcy Morgan.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

ARP ESSER Health & Safety Plan Approved 9-0-0

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

2.4 Legal Counsel

Legal Counsel
Retained –
Burns White
Attorneys at
Law
Approved
9-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors retains Burns White Attorneys at Law as legal counsel.

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, Kevin Lindvay

2.5 Other

3. Closing Activities

3.1 Adjournment

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors retains Burns White Attorneys at Law as legal counsel.

Motion by, Joseph Colosimo second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth A. Huck, Board Secretary