

**WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

1. Opening Activities

1.1 Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Warren County School District Board of School Directors was called to order by Mr. Mangione, President, at 6:00 p.m. in the Central Office Boardroom, 6820 Market Street, Russell, PA 16345 and via Zoom meeting.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Mangione led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Roll Call

Present:

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| Mr. Cody Brown | Mr. Paul Mangione |
| Ms. Savanna Cochran | Mrs. Mary Passinger |
| Mrs. Tammi Holden | Mrs. Stephanie Snell |
| Mr. Kevin Lindvay | Mr. John Wortman |

Absent:

Mr. Daniel Sullivan

Others Present:

Mr. Gary Weber, Superintendent; Mr. James Grosch, Director of Business Services; Mr. Eric Mineweaser, Director of Administrative Support Services; Mrs. Lynn Shultz, Director of Curriculum Instruction & Assessment; Dr. Patricia Mead, Director of Pupil Services; Mrs. Liz Kent, Supervisor of Secondary Education; Mr. Brian Ferry, Assistant Board Secretary; Mr. Rick Gignac, Supervisor of District-wide Athletics & Co-Curricular Activities; Mr. Mike Kiehl, Transportation Manager and Purchasing; Mrs. Jennifer Dilks, Coordinator of Technology; Mr. David Undercoffer, Operations Manager; Mr. Philip Heubach; Mrs. Kylie Harris, Principal; Mrs. Misty Weber, Principal; Mr. Joshua Vincent, Principal; Ms. Nova Holeva, Assistant Principal; Ms. Amy Stimmell, Principal; Ms. Lacey Schuler, Special Education Supervisor; Ms. Julia Murphy, Special Education Supervisor; Mr. Adam VanOrd, Special Education Supervisor; Mr. Joshua Cotton, Warren Times Observer; Mr. Brian Hagberg, Your Daily Local; and approximately 121 members of the public in attendance.

1.4 Reading of the Mission Statement - Mr. John Wortman

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 & Leadership - Ms. Savanna Cochran

Pennsylvania school boards are committed to providing every student the opportunity to grow and achieve. Our actions, as elected and appointed board members, ultimately have both short- and long-term impact in the classroom. Therefore, we pledge that we will...

Plan Thoughtfully

- *Implement a collaborative strategic planning process*
- *Set annual goals that are aligned with the comprehensive plans, recognizing the need to adapt as situations change*
- *Develop a comprehensive financial plan and master facilities plan that anticipates short- and long-term needs*
- *Allocate resources to effectively impact student success*

1.6 Public Comment

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| Wendy Wilcox | Youngsville | Mrs. Wendy Wilcox addressed the school board regarding the proposed closure of Youngsville Elementary School. She acknowledged the district's financial challenges but argued that Youngsville and Eisenhower schools offer equitable educational opportunities. Mrs. Wilcox questioned the rationale behind closing Youngsville, pointing out discrepancies in the \$9 million bond and \$25 million maintenance costs cited by the district. She highlighted that the maintenance estimates are based on an outdated 20-year study and suggested that Eisenhower requires comparable, if not more, maintenance. Mrs. Wilcox urged the board to stop making decisions based on past mistakes and local loyalty, and instead focus on long-term consolidation strategies that ensure educational equity and responsible use of taxpayer money. |
| Zachary Sanford | Youngsville | Mr. Zachary Sanford, a graduate, resident, and teacher at Youngsville High School, expressed concern about the school board prioritizing short-term financial benefits over long-term stability. He fears that closing grades 9-12 at Youngsville High could lead to the eventual closure of K-8, prompting district boundary changes. This could result in neighboring areas, such as Eldred County and Deerfield, shifting toward other school districts, which would cause a loss of tax revenue. Mr. Sanford argued that despite the area's current low population, future demographic shifts could make Youngsville's central location crucial for the district's stability. |
| David Meyers | Pittsfield | Mr. David Meyers, a Deerfield Township resident and head wrestling coach at Youngsville High School, raised concerns about the long travel distances students would face under a proposed plan. His son is a Youngsville student involved in various activities. He pointed out that students from areas like Grand Valley would need to travel up to 60 miles a day to reach |

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| | | schools far from their homes. He compared distances between various towns and schools, emphasizing the burden this plan would place on families. Mr. Meyers challenged board members to consider if they would send their own children on similarly long bus rides. |
| Harold Dunkle | Pittsfield | Mr. Harold Dunkle raised concerns about student safety in the context of school shootings. He emphasized the importance of quick emergency response times, noting that fire departments and ambulances can take significantly longer to reach some schools. For instance, it took 26 minutes for a fire department to reach Eisenhower and 12 minutes to reach Youngsville. Mr. Dunkle argued that having children in schools where emergency services can respond quickly is crucial. He also questioned the effectiveness of resource officers, pointing out that even with two officers present, a Georgia shooting still resulted in casualties. |
| Kim Angove | Warren | Ms. Kim Angove wrote a letter for Public Comment regarding high school consolidation which was read by Board President, Mr. Paul Mangione. Ms. Angove, a Warren County community member and former school board member, acknowledged the emotional and difficult nature of the board's decision. As a parent and taxpayer, she has witnessed the district's financial struggles and the decline in educational resources over time. Ms. Angove emphasized that consolidation has been avoided for decades, which worsened the district's financial situation, now nearing bankruptcy. She urged the board to act decisively and not rely on state intervention, which could result in the loss of control, educators, and programs. She encourages the board to lead the community through the necessary consolidation process. |
| Jared Villella | Warren | Mr. Jared Villella addressed the school board, urging them to base their decisions on data, facts, and reason to improve educational opportunities for all students. He emphasized the need for rational thinking and acting with a focus on equitable education across the district. Mr. Villella stressed that compassion and practicality can coexist. He refrained from further comments to respect time but requests the board approve the proposed public hearing to continue discussions aimed at bettering students' education and futures through thoughtful and rational dialogue. |
| Hank LeMeur | Warren | Mr. Hank LeMeur, president of Superior Tire and Rubber, acknowledged the board's efforts and highlighted the ongoing struggle with declining demographics and economic challenges in the region. |

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| | | As a founding board member of the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College, he cited data predicting a 3% annual population decline in Warren County over the next two decades. Mr. LeMeur stressed that the window of opportunity to address these issues is closing and believes school closures are inevitable. He commended the board for initiating the process and supports the proposal for public hearings. |
| Barb Lutton | Youngsville | Ms. Barb Lutton, expressed a desire to collaborate with the school board on school consolidation but emphasized the importance of having questions answered before decisions are made. She highlighted concerns about discrepancies in the budget and financial decisions driving the process, stating that consolidation should not be based solely on finances. Ms. Lutton, and her community, support consolidation but want it to be for the right reasons and believe Youngsville, due to its central location, is the best choice. She also emphasized the importance of safety, citing quick emergency response times as a crucial factor in their decision-making. |
| Jeff Dougherty | Warren | Mr. Jeff Dougherty, a former Warren County School Board member, expressed concerns about the current board not representing the interests of constituents outside of Sheffield. He pointed out that when school consolidation was previously discussed, board members from Sheffield felt their concerns were ignored. Now, he feels the reverse is happening, with the board prioritizing their own agendas. Mr. Dougherty highlighted financial discrepancies from documents showing that central areas are overpaying in taxes to cover deficits in outlying areas like Sheffield and Youngsville, which he believes is draining the district's resources and harming students' education. He urged the board to address these issues. |
| Tim Suyden | Youngsville | Mr. Tim Suyden, a 2013 graduate of Tidioute Charter School and current coach at Youngsville Middle High School, expressed opposition to the proposed merger of Youngsville with Eisenhower. He referenced a quote from former Superintendent Amy Stewart, who opposed sending Youngsville students to Eisenhower due to geographic impracticality. Mrs. Stewart believed it made more sense for students in the southwestern townships to attend Warren, as it is a more direct route. Mr. Suyden questioned why the Youngsville-to-Eisenhower option, which was eliminated in previous discussions, is now being reconsidered. |

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| Tom Holden | Sheffield | Mr. Tom Holden argued that the proposed school consolidation fails to consider the financial and family dynamics of many students, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds. He emphasized that community support is crucial for these students and moving them across the county would diminish that support. Mr. Holden suggested that schools can be closed without removing high schools from attendance areas, proposing alternatives like consolidating Youngsville into a K-12 school and adjusting bus routes. He questioned the benefits of high honors classes and criticizes the high costs of central office administration, suggesting that cost-cutting measures, such as having administrators take on dual roles, could be more effective. Mr. Holden emphasized that these communities and their schools are vital for supporting students, particularly in after-school activities, and argued that consolidation would harm students by taking away their community support. |
| Andrew Sokoloski | Warren | Mr. Andrew Sokolski expressed his gratitude to both the school board and the community for their input and willingness to engage in discussion. He acknowledged the complexity of the issues at hand and noted his newfound appreciation for the various perspectives. Mr. Sokolski was surprised by the openness to change he observed and emphasized the importance of working together as one community to address challenges. He highlighted the need to focus on strengthening schools, which he believes will benefit everyone, and urged against fighting. Instead, he encouraged collaboration to find a path forward, acknowledging that the process may be difficult but necessary for progress. |
| David Bauer | Sugar Grove | Mr. David Bauer expressed frustration with claims of financial problems, pointing out that the district's fund balance remains stable year after year. His main focus, however, was on declining school enrollment, emphasizing that the district's student population is not dropping as drastically as the enrollment numbers suggest. He argued that many parents are choosing to educate their children elsewhere because they have lost faith in the district, and he urged the school board to task the superintendent with investigating why this is happening. Mr. Bauer warned that unless this issue is addressed, the problem will only worsen, driving more students and families away. |
| Zachary Sanford | Youngsville | Mr. Zachary Sanford raised two key concerns regarding the potential shift of students to Eisenhower. First, he pointed out that in case of an evacuation, Youngsville is located within walking distance of a |

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| | | secure building, the Fire Hall, whereas Eisenhower does not have a similar nearby evacuation site. Second, Mr. Sanford expressed worries about Eisenhower's reliance on a well, noting that its aquifer may not be able to support a larger school population in the long term. In contrast, Youngsville benefits from a town water system, including a processing plant and sewage system, making it more sustainable for expansion. |
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1.7 Agenda Adoption

Agenda
Adoption
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors adopts the agenda dated September 9, 2024.

Motion by John Wortman, second by Cody Brown.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

1.8 Approval of Minutes - August 12, 2024

Approval of
Minutes –
August 12, 2024
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the regular meeting minutes dated August 12, 2024.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

1.9 Approval of Special Meeting Minutes - August 26, 2024

Approval of
Special Meeting
Minutes –
August 26, 2024
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the special meeting minutes dated August 26, 2024.

Motion by Mary Passinger, second by John Wortman.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

1.10 Financial Reports

Financial
Reports
Approved
7-0-1

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the Financial Reports and authorizes the release of funds in payment of the listing of bills; further, that a copy as presented be submitted for audit.

Motion by Mary Passinger, second by Cody Brown.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

Abstain: John Wortman

2. President's Statement

2.1 Reports & Information

1. IU5 - Mr. Paul Mangione

Mr. Mangione announced that Mr. Brad Whitman, Executive Director of the IU5, received a good evaluation. The IU5 is creating a director position just for early intervention because it has become such a big part of their budget. He is hopeful that it will free some time up on the Special Education side for the IU5.

2. PSBA Liaison - Mrs. Mary Passinger

Mrs. Passinger informed the board that the school district, as a PSBA (Pennsylvania School Boards Association) member, has access to 24/7 communication support through a partnership with the Communication Solutions Group at no cost. This service can assist with various issues, including physical and cyber security, personnel announcements, and handling crises or critical incidents.

3. Career Center Advisory - Mr. John Wortman and Mr. Daniel Sullivan

Mr. Wortman reported that the school year at the Career Center is off to a strong start, with 382 students enrolled, marking an increase in enrollment. He expressed excitement about the growth and the many opportunities the Career Center provides for students.

2.2 Important Dates

| BOARD/COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING DATES | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | September 23, 2024 | 6:00 p.m. | Committee of the Whole Meeting | Zoom Meeting Central Office |
| 2. | October 7, 2024 | 6:00 p.m. | Board Meeting | Zoom Meeting Central Office |

2.3 Announcements

2.4 Other

3. Superintendent's Reports and Recommendations

3.1 General Comments - Mr. Gary Weber

Mr. Gary Weber briefly expressed his satisfaction with the strong start to the school year, praising both teachers and students for their efforts. He mentioned that several initiatives are in progress

3.2 Committee of the Whole Report

3.3 Other

4. New Business - Consent Agenda

4.1 Consent Agenda

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the consent agenda.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

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| Consent Agenda Approved 8-0-0 |
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Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

4.2 Signature Authorization - Warren Area High School Activity and Athletic Accounts - FIN

Signature
Authorization -
Warren Area
High School
Activity and
Athletic
Accounts
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors authorizes Joshua Vincent, Cheryl Tutmaher, Nova Holeva, and Matthew Madigan as signatories for the Warren Area High School Activity Account and Warren Area High School Athletic Account, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

4.3 Open-ended Carpenter Agreement

Open-ended
Carpenter
Agreement
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the Independent Contractor agreement authorizing Avail Construction to perform carpentry services for the District subject to the restriction the total amount paid shall not exceed \$100,000, as presented

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

4.4 Paint Disposal

Paint
Disposal
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves an estimate from EnviroServe for the removal of paint, with the total amount not to exceed \$20,000.00, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

4.5 Deiss and Halmi Proposal

Deiss and
Halmi
Proposal
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the proposal from Deiss & Halmi Engineering, Inc, in an amount to not exceed the DGS fee Schedule, for the design and submission of the Noncommunity Water System Application for the project known as the Eisenhower Water Filter Addition, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

4.6 Certificated Personnel Report - PACCA

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the Certificated Personnel Report, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

Certificated
Personnel
Report
Approved
8-0-0

4.7 Support Personnel Report - PACCA

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the Support Personnel Report, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

Support
Personnel
Report
Approved
8-0-0

4.8 Volunteer Report - PACCA

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the Volunteer Report, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

Volunteer
Report
Approved
8-0-0

4.9 New Bus Drivers - PACCA

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the list of new bus drivers, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

New Bus
Drivers
Approved
8-0-0

4.10 Athletic Supplemental Contracts and Resignations - PACCA

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the Athletic Supplemental Contracts and Resignations, as presented.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

Athletic
Supplemental
Contracts and
Resignations
Approved
8-0-0

4.11 GRANT: PCCD 2024-26 School Mental Health Safety and Security Grant (WCSD)

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors instructs the administration to develop and submit an application to the School Mental Health & Safety and Security grant for eligible physical and mental health safety projects in the Warren County School District.

GRANT: PCCD 2024-26 School Mental Health Safety and Security Grant (WCSD)
Approved
8-0-0

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

4.12 GRANT: PCCD 2024-26 School Mental Health Safety and Security Grant (WCCC)

GRANT: PCCD 2024-26 School Mental Health Safety and Security Grant (WCCC)
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors instructs the administration to develop and submit an application to the School Mental Health & Safety and Security grant for eligible physical and mental health safety projects at the Warren County Career Center.

Motion by Cody Brown, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

5. Items Removed for Separate Action

6. Future Business for Committee Review

7. Other

7.1 2024-2025 Memorandum of Understanding - Bureau of Career and Technical Education Assistance Program

2024-2025 Memorandum of Understanding - Bureau of Career and Technical Education Assistance Program
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the 2024-2025 Memorandum of Understanding Between the Warren Area Vocational Technical School and the Bureau of Career and Technical Education for Participation in the BCTE Technical Assistance Program as presented.

Motion by Mary Passinger, second by Cody Brown.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

7.2 Youngsville Middle/High School (grades 9-12) and Sheffield Area Middle/High School (grades 9-12) School Closure Public Hearing

Mr. John Wortman urged his fellow school board members to vote in favor of a significant proposal, calling it a historic opportunity to improve the Warren County School District. He emphasized that by voting "yes," they could resolve a 40-year-old argument that has harmed education in the county. Mr. Wortman highlighted the potential for creating educational equity, offering better courses and extracurriculars, and ensuring fiscal responsibility to prevent future financial difficulties. He encouraged everyone to come together to shape the future of the school district and thanked them for their consideration.

In a letter read by Mr. Mangione, Mr. Sullivan expressed his concerns about the focus on finances in the school board's discussions, emphasizing that while financial considerations are important, they should not be the sole factor in decision-making. He cautioned against repeating past mistakes that set the Warren County School District up for failure. Mr. Sullivan questioned whether the proposed closure of Youngsville High School and the relocation of students to Eisenhower would truly benefit the district in the long run. He highlighted that the district is already losing students to alternative forms of education, such as cyber, charter, and

homeschooling, and urged the board to consider what these alternatives offer that the district does not. Mr. Sullivan also raised concerns about safety, transportation times, and the need for more discussion before making such a significant decision. He ultimately stated that he would vote against the motion to close schools at this time.

Mrs. Stephanie Snell urged the board to slow down the decision-making process, expressing concern that the focus had shifted too quickly to Eisenhower as the solution after hearing about bonds. She felt that financial considerations were being prioritized over the well-being and safety of the students. Mrs. Snell asked for more information and suggested regrouping, emphasizing that things were moving too fast. She proposed tabling the current discussion, having further talks in committee, and revisiting the issue next month to ensure a more informed decision.

Mr. Wortman respectfully disagreed with the idea of delaying the decision, emphasizing that the issue has been discussed for 40 years and a motion to table it would only postpone necessary actions. Mrs. Snell expressed her disagreement with the current plan, stating that while she supports taking action, she prioritizes the well-being of students, particularly ensuring they have access to water and aren't subjected to two-hour bus rides. She criticized the decision to focus on Eisenhower because of financial bonds, arguing it makes no sense. Mrs. Snell raised concerns about the lack of clarity regarding the future of Youngsville, especially for 6th to 8th-grade students, and questioned whether it's feasible to keep a school open for only 152 students. She emphasized the need for clear answers and facts before making decisions, stating that it's not about delaying but making informed choices.

Mr. Wortman reminded the board that the motion being approved tonight is simply to hold a hearing, not to make a final decision. He emphasized that discussions and conversations can continue afterward. While acknowledging that there are many issues to address, Mr. Wortman stressed the importance of ensuring all students are in the best position for the next school year.

Mrs. Mary Passinger, a longtime educator and parent in the district, emphasized her deep commitment to the students of Warren County, having taught, tutored, and worked in various roles within the district for over 30 years. She stressed that while financial considerations are important, the primary focus should be on the students and the quality of their education. Mrs. Passinger expressed concerns about the limited course offerings in different schools, particularly in areas like foreign language, where some schools only offer one or two years of Spanish, while others provide four years. She noted that many colleges require four years of language study, and reducing course options harms students. Mrs. Passinger argued that combining schools could expand academic choices, which is crucial for providing students with the best possible education. She urged the board to carefully consider what they are offering students, rather than focusing solely on where the education is provided.

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors, in accordance with Section 780 of the School Code, directs the administration to advertise a public hearing regarding the closure of the high school portion (grades 9 through 12) of the Sheffield Area Middle/High School and the high school portion (grades 9 through 12) of the Youngsville Middle/High School due to factors including declining enrollment and budgetary constraints and to afford the students with improved course offerings and educational opportunities; with the impacted Sheffield students to be re-assigned to the Warren Area High School and the impacted Youngsville students to be assigned to Eisenhower Middle/High School. The hearing shall be held on October 2nd, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Warren Area High School and shall be advertised by the Board Secretary in the Warren Times Observer at least 15 days prior to the date of the hearing.

Motion to
Table
Failed
3-5-0

MOTION TO TABLE: It was moved by Stephanie Snell and seconded by Tammi Holden to table the motion for further discussion and gathering of information.

Motion to table took priority, was voted on, and failed.

Yes: Savanna Cochran, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

No: Cody Brown, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors, in accordance with Section 780 of the School Code, directs the administration to advertise a public hearing regarding the closure of the high school portion (grades 9 through 12) of the Sheffield Area Middle/High School and the high school portion (grades 9 through 12) of the Youngsville Middle/High School due to factors including declining enrollment and budgetary constraints and to afford the students with improved course offerings and educational opportunities; with the impacted Sheffield students to be re-assigned to the Warren Area High School and the impacted Youngsville students to be assigned to Eisenhower Middle/High School. The hearing shall be held on October 2nd, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Warren Area High School and shall be advertised by the Board Secretary in the Warren Times Observer at least 15 days prior to the date of the hearing.

Motion by John Wortman, second by Mary Passinger.

Final Resolution: the original motion was voted on and passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman

No: Savanna Cochran, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

7.3 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) Cohort 11 Program Renewal Agreement

21st Century
Community
Learning Centers
(21CCLC) Cohort 11
Program Renewal
Agreement
Approved
8-0-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) Cohort 11 Program Renewal Agreement, as presented.

Motion by Mary Passinger, second by Kevin Lindvay.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell, Tammi Holden

7.4 Contractual Salary Adjustments

Contractual
Salary
Adjustments
Approved
7-1-0

MOTION: That the Board of School Directors approves salary adjustments for the Superintendent, Board Treasurer, and Act 93 Certificated/Act 93 Non-Certificated employees in the amount of 2.7 percent and the Board Secretary and Administrative Support employees in the amount of 3.2 percent based on the PSBA market adjustment with increases retroactive to July 1, 2024.

Motion by Mary Passinger, second by Kevin Lindvay.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Cody Brown, Savanna Cochran, Kevin Lindvay, Paul Mangione, Mary Passinger, John Wortman, Stephanie Snell

No: Tammi Holden

8. Closing Activities

8.1 Public Comment

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| Tom Holden | Sheffield | Mr. Tom Holden expressed his frustration with the narrow focus on closing only two schools, arguing that there are other potential closures and realignment options to consider. He suggested that there are opportunities for saving money, such as administrative cuts and redistributing students to nearby schools like Youngsville. Mr. Holden warned that the district's current actions, especially targeting smaller schools, are pushing more students toward cyber schools, which results in further financial losses for the district. He urged the board to explore broader options for cost savings and avoid decisions that could drive more students away. |
| Julia Foster | Russell | Mrs. Julia Foster expressed strong frustration and anger toward the board, accusing them of lying and covering up for Mr. Weber regarding her husband's dismissal. She claimed that the board is doing a disservice to students and criticized the process by which her husband lost his job, citing inappropriate questioning of students. Mrs. Foster asserted that the board is untrustworthy regarding her husband's situation. She stated that she and her husband plan to fight the matter and hold the board accountable for breaking their oaths. |
| Paige Stover | | Ms. Paige Stover commented the district is financially struggling and suggested closing schools, while agenda item 7.4 approved raises for employees. |
| Rick Hutley | Youngsville | Mr. Rick Hutley reflected on past school realignments, noting that Youngsville lost students from nearby areas like Wrightsville, Lottsville, and Bear Lake, which significantly reduced its graduating class size. However, he pointed out that, despite these changes, Youngsville recently graduated more students than Eisenhower. He argued that more people are staying in areas closer to Youngsville and questioned the logic of closing the school, especially given its central location in the county and proximity to emergency services. Mr. Hutley criticized past decisions to prioritize renovations at Eisenhower over Youngsville and emphasized that it is a long distance to travel to Eisenhower. He expressed that a better decision should have been made earlier. |
| Wendy Wilcox | Youngsville | Mrs. Wendy Wilcox stated she has reviewed data provided by the school district regarding student capacity. The district's capacity for both the elementary and high schools combined is 1,806 |

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| | | <p>students, but there are currently only 675 students in the district, with 757 attending both schools. The Eisenhower complex and Youngsville combined can accommodate 1,432 students. Mrs. Wilcox argued that in terms of fiscal responsibility, closing the Eisenhower complex and consolidating all students at Youngsville would be the most logical choice. She noted that improvements are budgeted for Eisenhower over the next seven years, and requests a detailed cost breakdown for those updates. She believes the cost of improving Eisenhower could be comparable to the \$25 million estimated for other improvements and would like to know the exact figure.</p> |
| Garret Smead | Sheffield | <p>Mr. Garrett Smead shared an emotional reflection, expressing his deep connection to Sheffield, where he has lived his entire life. He graduated from Warren Area High School in 2014 and began his coaching career at Sheffield High School, where he spent seven years gaining valuable experience. He thanked Tom for the opportunity to coach with him and mentioned that his best friend, Tim, also began his coaching career at Youngsville High School. Mr. Smead expressed his sympathy and support for the parents and communities of both Youngsville and Sheffield.</p> |
| Zachary Sanford | Youngsville | <p>Mr. Zachary Sanford urged the board to consider the long-term impact of their decisions, particularly regarding potential school closures. He acknowledged the district's financial challenges but emphasized that 10 years is a short period in the grand scheme. Mr. Sanford encouraged the board to focus on long-term financial outcomes rather than short-term savings. He warned that closing Youngsville could have severe long-term effects, potentially leading to the eventual loss of K-8 and 9-12 programs. Although this may take decades, he stressed that the long-term consequences would be devastating.</p> |
| Kelly Sullivan | Youngsville | <p>Mrs. Kelly Sullivan expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to share her public comment via Zoom. She mentioned that she had heard from many people and described a recent community meeting that she attended as very positive. The meeting was not focused on specific schools but rather on the overall well-being of the Warren County School District. Mrs. Sullivan emphasized that the consensus from the discussion was concern for the entire district, with a focus on positivity. She encouraged the board to consider all</p> |

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| | | input and maintain a positive approach moving forward. |
| Jim Swearington | Youngsville | Mr. Jim Swearington questioned the board's plan for moving Youngsville High School students and specifically asked where grades 6 through 8 would be relocated. He expressed strong concern about the idea of moving them to the elementary school, calling it a "death trap" due to its current condition. Mr. Swearington warned that bringing the elementary school up to code would cost millions of dollars. |
| David Meyers | Pittsfield | Mr. David Meyers acknowledged the difficult position the board is in, making decisions about the district's future. He emphasized that the focus should be on the future of students, not just finances. Mr. Meyers highlighted the uncertainty faced by students in outlying areas, who have dealt with the ongoing threat of reconfiguration and consolidation for decades. He recalled a plan proposed in December 2011 that called for maintaining two high schools in the district, but the board abandoned it due to a charter school application. He criticized the uneven distribution of resources, noting that Eisenhower received \$14 million in renovations and Warren Area High School received \$41 million, while Youngsville hasn't seen significant upgrades in 40 years. Mr. Meyers urged the board to make a common-sense, fiscally responsible decision that they won't regret in the next 10 years. |

8.2 Executive Session

8.3 Adjournment

MOTION: It was moved by Mary Passinger that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Taylor M. Trisket, Board Secretary