

OCTORARA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting Held on December 6, 2021

The Work Session of the Octorara Area School Board was held in the Octorara Area Jr./Sr. High School Multi-Purpose Room and via Zoom on December 6, 2021 immediately following the Reorganization Meeting.

Under presentations, Dr. Orner presented the OASD Health and Safety Plan update followed by Board discussion. The Board proposed the following language change in Appendix B:

“Octorara will use information available every Friday from the Chester County Health Department with primarily school district numbers and secondarily on Chester County numbers to determine the incidence rate and percent positivity.”

Under visitor’s comments for agenda items only, Melanie Schillinger, Londonderry Township, commented on information sent to the School Board concerning what other School Districts are doing. She gave a listing of schools and what they are doing concerning masking.

Sue Boninu, Parkesburg, commented on masking for only 1% of our school community numbers. She questioned the mandate and how cases are recorded. She believes masking should be the students’/parents’ choice.

Matthew King, Highland Township, asked about athletics and specifically in the weight room. He trusts Mr. Fantazzi will address this.

Brittany Hopkins, Christiana, commented on the health and safety plan numbers. She believes we will never get to the lower numbers to have masks optional. She questioned the quarantining procedures.

Curt Hershey, West Sadsbury, commented on how long we are going to follow the mandate. He thinks masks should be optional. He believes he is a voice in the community.

Kate Thomas, Christiana, asked that the Board present in writing where the mandate is law.

David Raabe, Sadsbury Township, commented on the mandate. He believes the item should be tabled and go back to mask optional. He encouraged the Board to represent their community.

Dave Lapp, West Sadsbury Township, commented on the mask mandate and the loss of common sense.

Jay Lusby, Parkesburg, requested the District go back to mask optional and believes it should be a parent’s choice. He commented on an email he sent to the Board.

Anitha James, Parkesburg, said she is pro mask wearing and asked that everyone respect others.

Claire Wise, Londonderry Township, commented on the mask mandate and would like to see where in the law we have to follow the mandate.

Chuck Walcott, West Sadsbury, commented on mask wearing and respecting one another. He asked about the charts and what happens to them if the law is overturned.

There were no information items.

Mr. Fox read the following motion for Board approval at tonight’s meeting:

That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the revisions to the District Health and Safety Plan.

Mr. Norris made the motion to approve the item, second by Mr. Hurley.

Mr. Zimmerman made a motion to table the vote, second by Mr. Falgiatore. With a vote of two yes by Mr. Falgiatore and Mr. Zimmerman and six no by the remaining Board members present, the motion to table the vote failed.

With a vote of six yes and two no by Mr. Falgiatore and Mr. Zimmerman, the Octorara Board of School Directors approved the revisions to the District Health and Safety Plan including the language change to Appendix B. (Appendix A-12/6/21)

Mr. Fox presented the following items for action at the December 13, 2021 Board meeting:

- A. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the addendum to the Proposal for Support with Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health originally approved on November 15, 2021 to include ESY services.
- B. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the Lease Agreement with TP Trailers, Inc. to provide a trailer for on-site COVID testing.
- C. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the 2021-2022 Octorara Career and Technical Education Programs Occupational Advisory Committee members.
- D. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the rate schedule for Kegel Kelin Litts & Lord, LLP for January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.
- E. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the grant for \$500 from Land O'Lakes Foundation in support of the Answer Plot Community Garden Program. Funds from this grant will be used to purchase industry level materials and equipment which will help provide students with hands-on learning experiences while addressing the need for hunger relief in their local community.
- F. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following policies, second reading:
 - 807 *Opening Exercises/Flag Displays*
 - 808 *Food Services*
 - 810 *Transportation*
 - 810.2 *Transportation – Video/Audio Recording*
 - 811 *Bonding*
 - 812 *Property Insurance*
 - 813 *Other Insurance*
 - 814 *Copyright Material*

Resignation Approvals:

- G. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Kelly Cross as an Octorara Virtual Academy teacher effective January 1, 2022. (Hired August 19, 2019)
- H. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept, with regret, the resignation for purpose of retirement of Ms. Sheryl Malinics as library assistant at the Octorara Intermediate School effective January 3, 2022. (Hired August 25, 2008)
- I. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Alivia Ellingsworth as an instructional assistant at the Octorara Intermediate School effective November 30, 2021. (Hired September 20, 2021)
- J. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Christina Ruth as varsity softball coach at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective November 17, 2021. (Hired for the 2019-2020 school year)

- K. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Amber Stirling as 8th grade girls’ basketball coach and varsity track coach at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective November 23, 2021. (Hired for the 2020-2021 school year for both positions)

Hiring Approvals:

- L. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Deirdre Shappell as a long term substitute Family and Consumer Science teacher at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective December 13, 2021 through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Shappell’s salary will be \$57,531 pro-rated, which is Step 18 to MAX of the Master’s scale. (Ms. Shappell is an approved substitute and is replacing Tara Murdock who will be on a sabbatical leave.)
- M. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Camryn Koennecker as a long term substitute Spanish teacher at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective November 1, 2021 through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Koennecker’s salary will be \$53,267 pro-rated, which is Step 18 to MAX of the Bachelor’s scale. (Ms. Koennecker is an approved substitute and is replacing Samantha Kelly who resigned.)
- N. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Ellen Aracil as a long term substitute reading specialist at the Octorara Elementary School effective November 22, 2021 through December 23, 2021. Ms. Aracil’s rate will be \$150 per day. (Replacing a medical leave.)
- O. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve an increase from five hours per day to 5.75 hours per day for Ms. Valerie Wilson. (Ms. Wilson is a cafeteria employee at the Octorara Primary Learning Center at a rate of \$15.00 per hour.)
- P. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following substitute teacher for the 2021-2022 school year:
Harley Ludy
- Q. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following substitute support staff for the 2021-2022 school year:
Hailey Rohrer
- R. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following supplemental contract for the 2021-2022 school year:

Shain Quigley	Girls’ JV Basketball Coach	9 pts. @ \$620	\$5,580
Kelsey Nisula	7 th Grade Girls’ Basketball Coach	4 pts. @ \$620	\$2,480
Dave Baker	8 th Grade Girls’ Basketball Coach	4 pts. @ \$620	\$2,480

Mr. Fox announced the Policy Committee did not meet tonight.

Under the Facility Committee Report, Mr. Norris said the committee discussed the trailer for COVID testing, had an IT presentation on current projects, and an athletic infrastructure update.

Under other items/concerns, Mr. Falgiatore addressed his concern with a Special Education program.

Under visitors’ comments for items in general, Matthew King, Highland Township, commented on the teacher shortage and that we are supposed to be teaching kids. He believes it is a disaster and a behavioral problem.

Sue Boninu, Parkesburg, thanked Ms. Hoskins for going above and beyond with her son. She believes the Board should do a question and answer session because she believes people who attend don’t feel like they are heard.

Under administrator comments, Ms. McNamara gave an update on Octorara Career and Technical Education Programs.

Dr. Propper gave a report on the good things that are happening at the Jr./Sr. High School and announced upcoming activities.

Dr. Orner commented on mandatory school director training through CCIU or PSBA for newly elected Board Members.

Under Board comments, Mr. Falgiatore asked that our solicitor provide what specific laws are making us have to follow the masking mandate.

Ms. Bowman thanked administration for their positive messages. She cautioned that just because someone doesn't agree with you does not mean you are not being heard.

Mr. Zimmerman commented on a positive note regarding Dr. Propper's leadership of the Jr./Sr. High School. He expressed his concern on a library book that was brought to his attention. He asked about how books are chosen to be in the library.

Mr. Fox commented on how Downingtown or Coatesville handles books like this.

Mr. Zimmerman asked if our Spanish speaking students and families have an advocate for them. Dr. Orner said Ms. Mendez is the advocate for our Spanish speaking students and their families.

Mr. Koennecker addressed the comment made by a community member regarding the Spanish teacher who is his daughter.

Mr. Norris commented on the quiet group of parents who want a different outcome regarding the mask mandate. He asked for respect for each other regardless of where one stands.

Ms. Yelovich commented on the social media attacks and the division it is causing in the community.

Mr. Fox thanked Ms. Bowman for her service as Vice-President. He also suggested that we shorten the committee meetings and bring more information to the Board meeting. Mr. Fox answered the question about how Board motions are made, discussed a Question and Answer session, and encourage community members call him to discuss the decisions the Board makes.

Mr. Fox announced the following upcoming meetings to be held:

Executive Session for Personnel, Legal, and Safety and Security – Monday, December 6, 2021 – following the Work Session in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

Finance Committee Meeting – Monday, December 13, 2021 – 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

Next regularly scheduled Board Meeting – Monday, December 13, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room/Zoom

There being no further items of business the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m. on motion of Mr. Norris, second by Mr. Hurley and approval of all members present.

This Board meeting can be viewed in its entirety on You Tube.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Curtis, Business Manager

Typed by Jill L. Hardy, Secretary Octorara Board of School Directors