

# OCTORARA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Minutes of Board Meeting Held on February 12, 2024

The Work Session of the Octorara Area School Board was held in the Octorara Area Jr./Sr. High School Multi-Purpose Room on February 12, 2024.

A moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance preceded the meeting.

Mrs. Hardy read a statement from the Ganow family.

The Vice-President, Mr. Hurley, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other members present were Mr. Falgiatore, Mr. Koennecker, Mr. Lusby, Ms. Metzler, Mr. Norris, Ms. Williamson, and Mr. Zimmerman. Also present were Mrs. Hardy, Secretary; Mr. Domowicz, Business Manager; Ben Pratt, Saxton & Stump; members of the administrative team; one reporter; and three visitors.

There were no visitor's comments for agenda items only.

Under presentations, in celebration of National CTE Month, Ms. McNamara along with students, Isaac Allison, Austin Kurtz, and Salem Budzik, presented what is happening in the District's CTE Programs.

There were no information items.

Mr. Hurley presented the following items for action at the February 20, 2024 Board meeting:

- A. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the Services Proposal with Premium Power for maintenance on the District generators at a semi-annual cost of \$3,834.
- B. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the Client Assignment Confirmation with Soliant Health, LLC for Speech Language Pathologist services at a rate of \$92 per hour effective February 5, 2024 through June 5, 2024.
- C. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the 2023-2024 Agriculture and Youth grant in the amount of \$7,500 to purchase three Miller Multimatic 235 Multiprocess Welders for the Mechanical Systems Technology Program.
- D. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the 2024-2025 Legal Services Representation Agreement between Sweet, Stevens, Katz & Williams LLP and the Octorara Area School District for Special Education Services.
- E. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following bus drivers for Althouse Transportation for the 2023-2024 school year:  
Laura Hancock, Bus #17
- F. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following policies, second reading:  
101 *Mission Statement/Vision Statement/Shared Values*  
200 *Enrollment of Students*  
254 *Educational Opportunity for Military Children*  
819 *Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response*

### Resignation Approvals:

- G. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Lisa Rohrer as a long-term substitute Second Grade Teacher at the Octorara Primary Learning Center effective February 5, 2024 pending the return of Megan Clarke from Child Rearing Leave. Ms. Rohrer will return to her previous position as an Instructional Assistant at the Primary

Learning Center. (Originally approved to be a long-term substitute through the end of the 2023-2024 school year.)

- H. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Mr. Brian Hood as a Math Teacher at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective TBD. (Hired June 20, 2022)
- I. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Mr. Anthony Ross as an Assistant Football Coach at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective January 18, 2024. Mr. Ross will continue as a volunteer football coach. (Hired for the 2022-2023 school year.)
- J. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Mr. Andy Johnson as a Jr. High Track Coach at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective January 23, 2024. (Hired for the 2019-2020 school year.)

Hiring Approvals:

- K. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Mary Beth St. John as a long-term substitute Sixth Grade Teacher at the Octorara Intermediate School effective February 22, 2024 through the end of the 2023-2024 school year pending completion of employee related documents required by law and the District. Ms. St. John's rate will be \$150 per day. (Replacing Caitlin Cracchiolo who will be on child rearing leave.)
- L. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Stephanie Klingler as a Food Service Employee effective January 11, 2024 pending completion of employee related documents required by law and the District. Ms. Klingler's rate will be \$16.00 per hour for five hours per day. (Replacing Amy Bess who resigned.)
- M. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Elisa Van Zyl as a Human Resources Intern effective February 6, 2024 through June 28, 2024 pending completion of employee related documents required by law and the District. Ms. Van Zyl's rate will be \$15.00 per hour for 30 hours per week.
- N. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following Athletic Game Worker for the 2023-2024 school year:  
Sean Foster
- O. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following supplemental contracts for the 2023-2024 school year:

Christina Ruth	Head Jr. High Track Coach	4 pts @ \$620	\$2,480
Kenneth Baker	Middle School Asst Softball Coach	3 pts @ \$620	\$1,860
- P. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following change in salary due to graduate credits earned:

Allison Venini	From M+30 (\$77,569) to M+45 (\$80,499)	Step 8 to MAX
Samantha Norris	From B+15 (\$59,139) to M (\$61,203)	Step 16 to MAX
Helena Talley	From M+15 (\$68,900) to M+30 (\$70,960)	Step 13 to MAX

Under the Education Committee Report, Mr. Norris reported the meeting held on January 22, 2024 included discussion on the need for increased mental health interventions, an update on the Comprehensive Plan, winter growth testing data, and results of the K-6 Literacy Audit.

Under the Policy Committee Report, Mr. Hurley reported the committee reviewed the second reading policies on tonight's agenda. There were no changes or revision to the policies.

Under the Facility Committee Report, Mr. Zimmerman reported the committee discussed the five-year lease for modular classrooms at the Chester County Training Facility, district water system including testing of district wells, fence installation at the OES playground, plaster replacement in the Sr. High hallway, HVAC technician needs, underground oil storage tanks, welding classroom work, Jr. High cafeteria floor replacement, OIS cafeteria heating system repair or replacement, and the purchase of glycol for the boiler system.

Under other items/concerns, Mr. Hurley led the discussion on filling the vacant Board position. He read the following process:

“Our School Board is required under Pennsylvania school code to fill Mr. Ganow’s seat on our Board of Directors. Following a procedure that is common to districts across the state, the Board will accept letters of interest accompanied by a resume from Octorara School District residents, then appoint a community member by majority vote to fill the vacant seat. In your letter of interest, please include name, address, phone and email address.

We are required to appoint a new School Board member from the same region in which Mr. Ganow served - Region 2, which includes Sadsbury Township in Lancaster County and West Fallowfield Township in Chester County.

Interested community members who live in this region should send information to School Board Secretary Jill Hardy at [jhardy@octorara.org](mailto:jhardy@octorara.org) by Friday, February 16 at noon.

It is our intent that our School Board will conduct interviews with community members who have submitted materials during our regular School Board meeting on Tuesday, February 20 at 7 p.m. in the Octorara Jr/Sr High School Multi-Purpose Room.”

Mr. Falgiatore questioned having a stand-alone event instead of interviewing candidates prior to the Regular Meeting on February 20. He asked if there were other platforms used to advertise other than the website.

Mr. Norris questioned how it would be different if the interviews were held on another night. He said the community is aware of it and can come to the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> and sit through the process. The process isn’t going to change.

Mr. Lusby expressed his concern that the interviews not be rushed and allow applicants to share their thoughts.

Ms. Williamson reviewed the times Dr. Leever sent out for the interviews.

Under visitors’ comments for items in general, Lisa Bowman, West Fallowfield Township, acknowledged Mr. Ganow’s service to the community, the District, and the Board. Ms. Bowman was honored to serve with Mr. Ganow for 18 years on the Board. Mr. Ganow’s commitment to public education, the students in the District, and the community is commendable. She said Mr. Ganow shared his faith – not in public pontificating and prayers, but through his actions. Ms. Bowman said the District will miss Mr. Ganow and she will miss him as her friend.

Under administrator comments, Ms. Lease announced kindergarten registration for the 2024-2025 school year is open. There will be a kindergarten workshop tomorrow evening. She thanked Mr. Smith and the football players for helping with the open gym for incoming kindergarten students that was held on Saturday.

Mr. Peticca announced events happening in the Jr/Sr. High this week that include a winter celebration for work done in the second marking period, Jr. High Honor Roll assembly and CTE presentation, Sr. High Honor Roll breakfast, and Jr. High and Sr. High dances. He reported Cassidy Jeffries and

Taylor Orner will be competing in Girls' Wrestling Sectional Competition at Susquenita High School on February 16.

Dr. Tachau announced students are working hard on the production of the musical "Annie" which will be held February 29 through March 2. She reported the "Read Across America" celebration will begin on March 4 with Read Across America Literacy Night to be held on March 7.

Under Board comments, Ms. Williamson thanked Ms. McNamara for her work with the CTE Programs.

Mr. Norris concurred with what Ms. Bowman said regarding Mr. Ganow. He said Mr. Ganow had the ability to be larger than life and he will miss him.

Mr. Zimmerman said Mr. Ganow's passing has hit hard because he was a person to look up to. He was a nice person who was not afraid to say what he thought. The way Mr. Ganow lived life to the fullest is something he wants to strive for. He said he will miss Mr. Ganow and his leadership.

Mr. Koennecker said he will miss his friend, Mr. Ganow, who had a servant's heart and quick wit. The community is hurting over this loss.

Mr. Hurley said there is not much more that can be said about Mr. Ganow. He was a wonderful man and will be missed in this room, in the District, and in the community because he impacted many lives.

A Memorial Service will be held for Mr. Ganow on Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. in the auditorium at the Octorara Sr. High School.

Mr. Hurley announced the following meetings to be held:

Finance Committee Meeting – Tuesday, February 20, 2024 – 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

Next regularly scheduled Board Meeting – Tuesday, February 20, 2024 – 7:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

Education Committee Meeting – Monday, February 26, 2024 – 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

There being no further items of business the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m. on motion of Mr. Norris, second by Mr. Koennecker and approval of all members present.

This Board meeting can be viewed in its entirety on [www.youtube.com/user/OctoraraAreaSD](https://www.youtube.com/user/OctoraraAreaSD).

Respectfully submitted,

Jill L. Hardy, Secretary  
Octorara Board of School Directors