

# OCTORARA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Minutes of Board Meeting Held on January 10, 2022

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 January 10, 2022.

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

The President, Mr. Fox, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other members present were Ms. Bowman, Mr. Falgiatore, Mr. Ganow, Mr. Hurley, Mr. Koennecker, Mr. Norris, and Ms. Yelovich. Mr. Zimmerman was absent. Also present were Mrs. Hardy, Secretary; Dr. Orner, Superintendent; Mr. Curtis, Business Manager; members of the administrative team; one reporter, 16 citizens in-person and 47 citizens via Zoom.

Mr. Ganow announced the passing of Mr. Gary Wetzel, Octorara teacher and coach.

Under presentations, Mr. Curtis gave a 2022-2023 budget update.

Dr. Orner gave a Health and Safety Plan update.

Under visitor's comments for agenda items only, Kristin Weber, West Fallowfield Township, requested an end to the mask mandate and asked that we learn to live with the virus.

Darla Petty, Sadsbury Township, said there is one side and it is for the kids. She thanked the Board for their willingness to discuss an end to masking.

Dave Lapp, West Sadsbury Township, questioned the science behind masking, PCR testing, and changing information from the CDC.

Melissa Falgiatore, Atglen, discussed Board friendships in regards to her husband. She believes the Board is not listening to what is happening. She referenced the lawsuit that is coming.

Karen Williamson, Christiana, shared a story about a student in her classroom.

Molly Mastrippolito, West Sadsbury Township, said her daughter felt disciplined when she was taken out of class for not wearing a mask. She thanked the Board members and staff who support parent choice.

Melanie Schillinger, Londonderry Township, said it is difficult no matter what side you are on and believes Octorara is an amazing District. She shared information about Central Bucks School District. She asked that masking be a choice that families make.

Under information items, Ms. Melissa Fanelli will transfer from a sixth grade teacher at the Octorara Intermediate School to a guidance counselor at the Octorara Intermediate School from December 20, 2021 through approximately March 4, 2022.

Mr. Patrick Lauletta will transfer from a technology education teacher at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School to an Octorara Virtual Academy teacher effective TBD by the Superintendent.

Mr. Fox presented the following items for action at the January 17, 2022 Board meeting:

- A. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the Opt Out Resolution for the 2022-2023 budget process.

- B. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the annual fiscal audit report of the District for the year ending June 30, 2021 as prepared by the auditing firm of Herbein & Company.
- C. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve a revision to the Health and Safety Plan that replaces the current language regarding masking with the language used in the August 17, 2021 Health and Safety Plan, that masks are recommended but not required.
- D. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following policies, first reading:
  - 810.3 *District Vehicle Drivers*
  - 816 *District Social Media*
  - 818 *Contracted Services personnel*
  - 819 *Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response*
  - 822 *Automated External Defibrillator (AED)/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)*
  - 823 *Naloxone*
  - 824 *Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries*
  - 827 *Conflict of Interest*
  - 828 *Fraud*
- E. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the student activity club “Secular Student Alliance” at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School.
- F. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the student activity club “Craft Club” at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School.
- G. That the Octorara Board of School Directors extend the sabbatical leave for Mr. Nick Kluge through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. (Mr. Kluge is a learning support teacher at the Octorara Elementary School and was originally approved for a first semester sabbatical.)

Resignation Approvals:

- H. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Sandy Affourtit as a cafeteria employee effective October 22, 2021. (Hired August 16, 2021)
- I. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Stormy Umble as a cafeteria employee effective October 13, 2021. (Hired October 18, 2021-started employment September 27, 2021)
- J. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Mr. Jeff Milligan as varsity girls’ soccer coach effective December 19, 2021. (Hired for the 2019-2020 school year)

Hiring Approvals:

- K. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Karlie DeCola as a long-term substitute sixth grade teacher at the Octorara Intermediate School effective December 20, 2021 through approximately March 4, 2022 pending completion of employee related documents required by law and the District. Ms. DeCola’s rate will be \$150 per day. (Replacing Melissa Fanelli who transferred.)
- L. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve Ms. Rhonda Stoltzfus as a long-term substitute math teacher at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective January 3, 2022 through May 16, 2022. Ms. Stoltzfus’ salary will be \$53,267 pro-rated. (Ms. Stoltzfus is an approved substitute and is replacing Katherine Westervelt who is on sabbatical leave.)
- M. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the extension of Ms. Caitlyn Cressman as a long-term substitute learning support teacher at the Octorara Elementary School through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Cressman’s salary will be \$53,267 pro-rated. (Ms.

Cressman was originally approved through January 17, 2022 and is replacing Nick Kluge who is on sabbatical leave.)

- N. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the extension of Ms. Amber Lowe as a long-term substitute guidance counselor at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School through February 14, 2022. (Ms. Lowe was originally approved through January 14, 2022 and is replacing a medical leave.)
- O. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following substitute teachers for the 2021-2022 school year:
  - Angela Christou, 60 Credits
  - Jule Ann Wakeman, Emergency Permit
- P. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following supplemental contract for the 2021-2022 school year:
  - Catherine Smith     Mentor Amanda Hegarty                     1.3 pts. @ \$620     \$806

Under the Finance Committee Report, Mr. Hurley said the committee discussed the 2022-2023 budget, the 2020-2021 Audit Report, and the possibility of changing the District bonding agency in the coming months.

There were no other items/concerns.

Under visitors' comments for items in general, Melissa Falgiatore, Atglen, asked for a report on the Special Education Department and discussed the use of air scrubbers.

Matthew King, Highland Township, said four students received the Keystone Degree at the PA Farm Show today.

Under administrator comments, Ms. McNamara said she will be reporting on the students who won the Keystone Degree next month when she gets detailed information.

Ms. Lease reported on kindergarten orientation programs. She thanked Ms. Mittman for facilitating a Martin Luther King program to share coloring books with local senior centers. Ms. Lease announced Himat Sadek will be working with struggling students two days a week.

Dr. Haller announced over 50 students have signed up to be on one of two OIS Envirothon teams.

Dr. Propper commended the students in the music department for their excellent performances in the winter concerts. He will honor Mr. Wetzel at next week's meeting.

Dr. Orner thanked Mr. Curtis for his work on the 2022-2023 budget process. She said the District has used three weather days written into the calendar. If future weather days are needed, the next five will be Flexible Instruction Days (FID). If all FID days are exhausted, Thursday, April 14 will be used as a weather day, then emergency instructional time will be used to be able to end the 2021-2022 school year on June 8, 2022.

Under Board comments, Mr. Norris said the CDC is still recommending the PCR test. He said it is unfair to the superintendent and the work she has to do to go back to the August Health and Safety Plan.

Mr. Falgiatore said it is the Board's decision to carry out the Health and Safety Plan. He said if the Board tells the Board of Health the District is going back to mask optional, no laws are being violated.

Mr. Fox thanked the students for the steps they are taking to keep quarantine levels low. He said the taxpayers of the District will bear the legal cost of any litigations brought against the District.

The following executive sessions were held:

January 3, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. for personnel and security

January 10, 2022 at 6:50 p.m. for legal

The following meetings will be held:

Executive Session for Personnel – Monday, January 10, 2022 – following the Work Session in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

Policy Committee Meeting – Monday, January 17, 2022 – 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room (No Facility Committee Meeting in January)

Next regularly scheduled Board Meeting – Monday, January 17, 2022 – 7:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room/Zoom

Education Committee Meeting – Monday, January 24, 2022 – 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

There being no further items of business the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m. on motion of Mr. Ganow, second by Mr. Hurley and approval of all members present.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jill L. Hardy, Secretary  
Octorara Board of School Directors