

OCTORARA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting Held on May 8, 2023

The Work Session of the Octorara Area School Board was held in the Octorara Area Jr./Sr. High School Multi-Purpose Room on May 8, 2023.

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

The President, Mr. Ganow, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other members present were Ms. Bowman, Mr. Falgiatore, Mr. Fox, Mr. Hurley, Mr. Koennecker, Mr. Norris, Ms. Yelovich, and Mr. Zimmerman. Also present were Mrs. Hardy, Secretary; Dr. Scanlon, Interim Superintendent; Mr. Curtis, business manager; members of the administrative team, and ten visitors.

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

Under information items:

- A. Sandra Evans will transfer from a first grade teacher to gifted teacher at the Primary Learning Center and Elementary Schools effective the start of the 2023-2024 school year.
- B. Shauna McAllister will transfer from a fourth grade teacher to a special education teacher at the Elementary School effective the start of the 2023-2024 school year.
- C. Suzanne Schurr will transfer from a third grade teacher to ESL teacher for grades 3-6 effective the start of the 2023-2024 school year.

Mr. Ganow presented the following items for action at the May 15, 2023 Board meeting:

- A. That the Octorara Board of School Directors elect *Matt Hurley* as Board Treasurer from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.
- B. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the resolution for the Proposed Final General Fund Budget for the 2023-2024 school year.
- C. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the list of current Class of 2023 seniors of the Octorara Area Sr. High School, having been individually considered for graduation by the Octorara Board of School Directors, contingent upon their successful completion of all local and state requirements.
- D. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the Mental Health Staffing Support with the Chester County Intermediate Unit for the 2023-2024 school year.

The following item was removed from the agenda for further examination:

- E. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the Therapy Services Agreement with Pediatric Therapeutic Services, LLC for the 2023-2024 school year.
- F. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Grant Agreement for \$2,702.76 for the purpose of purchasing water quality treatment kits, chiller, pumps, and nets for the Agriculture Program.
- G. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the donation of an AED for the athletic training room from the Peyton Walker Foundation.
- H. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the following donations/sponsorships for the OABEST Expo:
 - Null's Towing Company - \$300

OAEA - \$500
Chester/Delaware Farm Bureau – In-kind Immersion Lab
Triple Play Barn - \$200
Citadel Credit Union - \$500
Chester County Conservation District - \$300
Ironlinx Transportation – In-kind Tractor Trailer Simulator
Houghton Enterprises – In-kind Funnel Truck
Chester County Economic Development Council – \$550
Herr Foods – 1,500 bags of chips
BELFOR Property Restoration - \$1,000
Parkesburg Action Committee - \$100
Dutchland Inc. - \$500
Cope Construction Renovation - \$215
Cecil County Community College - \$100

Resignation Approvals:

- I. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept, with regret, the resignation for purpose of retirement of Ms. Vanessa Peterson as a Spanish teacher at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective June 7, 2023. (Hired August 29, 1996)
- J. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept, with regret, the resignation for purpose of retirement of Mr. Charles Graydus as an agriculture education teacher at the Octorara Jr./Sr. High School effective June 7, 2023. (Hired August 23, 2003)
- K. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept, with regret, the resignation for purpose of retirement of Ms. Lois (Penny) Wertz as a maintenance employee effective June 30, 2023. (Hired August 5, 1991)
- L. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept, with regret, the resignation for purpose of retirement of Mr. William Wertz as a maintenance employee effective June 30, 2023. (Hired March 10, 1994)
- M. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept, with regret, the resignation for purpose of retirement of Mr. Samuel London as a custodian at the Octorara Elementary School effective June 30, 2023. (Hired September 9, 1999)
- N. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Holly King as a special education teacher at the Octorara Elementary School effective June 7, 2023. (Hired November 21, 2022)
- O. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Mr. Akram Madanat as a food service employee effective April 5, 2023. (Hired February 20, 2023)
- P. That the Octorara Board of School Directors accept the resignation of Ms. Reham Madanat as a food service employee effective April 21, 2023. (Hired February 20, 2023)

Hiring Approvals:

- Q. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following professional and support staff employees for the Summer Literacy/Math/Science and Extended School Year Programs:
 - Stacie Larer, teacher, \$32 per hour
 - Shannon Owens, teacher, \$30 per hour
 - Amy Hollingworth, teacher, \$30 per hour
 - Melissa Fanelli, teacher, \$35 per hour
 - Kathryn McGinnis, teacher, \$30 per hour
 - Dominic London, support, \$22 per hour

Brianna Cortez, support, \$22 per hour
Travis Lankford, support, \$20 per hour
Matt Bruni, support, \$20 per hour
Holly Strogan, support, \$20 per hour

- R. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following changes for the Summer Literacy/Math/Science and Extended School Year Programs:

Jill Bright will transfer from a teacher to a substitute teacher at \$30 per hour
Val Brucherri will transfer from a teacher to support staff at \$22 per hour

- S. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following substitute teachers for the 2022-2023 school year:

Kaci McIlmoyle, Elementary Education
Hailey Rohrer, Elementary Education (60 Credits)
Sarah Boyer, Elementary Education

- T. That the Octorara Board of School Directors approve the following summer interns at a rate of \$8.25 per hour:

Savannah Fitzgerald – Agriculture/Animal Care
Cowan Hahn – Technology
Sarah Watson – Technology

Under the Education Committee Report, Mr. Fox reported on the meeting held on April 24, 2023. The committee had an NCEE (National Center on Education and the Economy) follow-up discussion, and updates on the Jr./Sr. High ATSI Plan, peer tutoring, and the Point Partnership.

Under the Facility Committee Report, Mr. Norris said the committee discussed lights and curtain replacement in the auditorium, HVAC controls for the PLC and Jr./Sr. High, athletic field project, HVAC replacement at the PLC and OIS, Homeland Security modular classroom update, and pedestrian crosswalks proposal.

There were no other items/concerns or visitors' comments for items in general.

Under administrator comments, Mr. Dikun announced the Elementary School had three teams that included 16 students participate in the Envirothon at Hibernia Park on April 26. The students have been preparing since January and did well in the competition. He congratulated the students for their accomplishments and thanked Ms. Weaver and Ms. McDermott for working with the students.

Ms. Lease reported kindergarten screenings will be completed on Thursday, May 11. There will be an incoming kindergarten parent session on May 25 at 6:30 and a program for Spanish speaking families at 7:15. The K-6 Art Show held last week was well attended.

Dr. Haller reported on the OIS students attending the Envirothon competition. The Envirothon is an environmental education program designed to foster stewardship and understanding of local and worldwide ecosystems. He congratulated the OIS teams for their hard work and great representation and thanked Mr. Duggan for working with the students.

Ms. McNamara announced the NOCTI testing is completed with 91% of the students taking the test scoring competent or advanced on the written portion and 90% scoring competent or advanced on the performance portion of the test. She gave an update on happenings in the CTE Programs. She announced the OABEST Expo will be held on May 20.

Dr. Propper reviewed the year-end activities in the Jr./Sr. High School with June 7 being the last day of school and graduation for the class of 2023.

Dr. Scanlon thanked the Board, staff, parents and students for the warm welcome he has received. He has visited all the buildings and has witnessed caring individuals working with students including kindergarten students being motivated to learn, fifth grade students' presentation of a food web, and a day long Mock Congress in the Jr./Sr. High School. He also enjoyed lunch with students and met Cider the therapy dog. Dr. Scanlon announced year-end activities and gave a history of Teacher Appreciation Week. He thanked the teachers and the staff for making a difference in the lives of students on a daily basis.

Under Board comments, Mr. Ganow announced the solicitor said there were several court decisions in the last week. "It is important, at this stage of the litigation, the Court is required to accept everything Mr. Miller says as 100% true – even if it isn't. In other words, when a defendant files a motion to dismiss, the defendant must show that – even assuming everything the plaintiff says is completely true – the plaintiff still can't make out a legal claim.

Despite the District having to meet that very high standard, the 120 legal claims raised against various District personnel by Mr. Miller, the Court granted the District's motion to dismiss 114 of the claims. More importantly, the Court also expressly ruled that policy 903 is constitutional.

As the Court points out in its Memorandum, the District did not move to dismiss Mr. Miller's six remaining legal claims. Thus, the only surviving claims Mr. Miller has left are the handful of claims the District has not yet specifically challenged."

Mr. Fox thanked the retiring teachers for their service.

Mr. Falgiate said that is not a final order from the Court. There is still an appeal process and the lawsuit is still ongoing even those it has listed as dismissed for some of the items.

Ms. Bowman thanked the retiring custodians and teachers for their work and thanked the teaching staff in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week. She expressed her concern with Mr. Falgiate continuing to advocate that our staff, Mr. Curtis, Dr. Propper, and Mrs. Hardy pay for the legal costs associated with the lawsuit out of their own pockets. She said the rest of the Board honors District contracts and protects the employees.

Mr. Ganow announced there was an Executive Session for Personnel held at 6:40 tonight in room 102 at the Jr. High School.

Mr. Ganow announced the following meetings to be held:

Finance Committee Meeting – Monday, May 15, 2023 – 6:00 p.m. in room 102 at the Jr. High School

Next regularly scheduled Board Meeting – Monday, May 15, 2023 – 7:00 p.m. in the Jr. High School Multi-Purpose Room

There being no further items of business the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m. on motion of Mr. Hurley, 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill L. Hardy, Secretary
Octorara Board of School Directors