

DOWNINGTOWN AREA BOARD OF EDUCATION
Administrative Office James E. Watson Staff Development Room
Wednesday, August 11, 2021
6:30 p.m.

BOARD MEETING NOTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

President Bertone called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. in the James E. Watson Staff Development Room.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

President Bertone
Director Blust
Vice President Britton
Director Ghrayeb
Director Gibson
Director Houghton
Director Kring
Director MacNeal
Director Wisdom

On a motion by Director Houghton, seconded by Director Blust, the Board, on a roll call vote, unanimously approved amending Policy 906 and 006 for this meeting to allow public comments before the meeting for one hour. Each person can speak for three minutes. In addition, public comments at the end of the meeting will be unlimited and each person can speak for three minutes.

- D. PUBLIC INPUT ON ACTION ITEMS** – The Downingtown Board of Directors encourages public comment from its citizens. Each community member may speak for a period of no longer than 5 minutes (per BP# 903). Please understand that this is not a time for dialogue with the board; rather the board will listen to all comments and consider them in further deliberations. Our individual e-mail addresses are on the website if you'd like to contact your individual board representative. We ask that you please direct complaints of a personnel nature regarding an individual employee directly to the superintendent.

Sandy D'Amico (Upper Uwchlan) – Expressed support and asked for a mask mandate.

Zoe Fontecchio (Upper Uwchlan) – STEM Academy student. Expressed support for masks.

Michelle Smith (Upper Uwchlan) – Goal and priority is students in school five days a week. Expressed support for masks.

Jennifer Tribulski (Upper Uwchlan) – Wants a safe return to school with a mask mandate.

Shannon Grady (West Pikeland) – Does not support mask mandate. Will be sending kids to school without masks.

Deb Swavely (Upper Uwchlan) – Does not support mask mandate. Questions whether districts have the authority to require masks.

Lisa Sturbridge (East Brandywine) – Expressed support for masks. Follow CDC and base decisions on recommendation of experts.

Adam Sledd (Downingtown Borough) – Choice effects other people. Expressed support of masks.

Jill Godbout (Downingtown Borough) – Expressed support for masks.

Christine Crooke (Downingtown Borough) – Follow CDC recommendation. Expressed support for masks for the safe return to school.

Christina Pelosi (West Bradford) – Does not believe district has the authority to mandate masks. Does not support masks.

Reagan Hauer (East Brandywine) – Universal masking is needed. Need virtual option for quarantined students.

Brandyn Campbell (Uwchlan) – Listen to experts. Want children in school safely five days a week. Mandate masks.

Lori Mileto (Uwchlan) – Expressed support for masks.

Tami Rossman (West Bradford) – Does not support mask mandate. Stated district does not have legal authority to mandate masks. Stated buses do not fall under public transportation and cannot mandate masks on buses.

Monica Eagles (East Caln) – No state of emergency currently therefore masks should not be mandated. Does not support masks. Wants a normal school year.

Jennifer Flannery (Uwchlan) - Relayed family experience with Covid. Expressed support for masks to keep children in school safely.

Karin Petroll (West Bradford) – Supports universal masking. Mental health issues were here long before Covid. Masks are not the cause.

Ken Ostroff (Uwchlan) – Use of masks protect others. Expressed support for masks.

Mindy Ross (West Bradford) – Want in person school for children. Supports masking for healthy and safe school year.

Melanie Lewis (West Bradford) – Questioned legal authority of district to mandate masks. This has divided community. Does not support masking.

Sarah Rogelstad (Uwchlan) – Sophomore at DHSW. Wants a normal return to school and wants to see faces of friends. Wants masking to be optional.

E. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

1. Applause!! Applause!!

National School Public Relations Association’s (NSPRA) Award

Each year, the NSPRA’s Publications and Digital Media Excellence Awards recognize outstanding education publications, e-newsletters, digital media programs, radio/TV/video programs, social media, infographics, blogs and websites.

This year, DASD was recognized with an Award of Merit (second place) for the 2019-20 annual report. Additionally, a Golden Achievement Award was presented to the CCIU for the vaccine advocacy campaign - an initiative that was created and executed as a collaboration between the CCIU, DASD, PASD, UCSD and OJR. This award recognizes exemplary work in all aspects of school public relations, communication, marketing and engagement.

Dr. Lonardi recognized Dr. Jill Whalen for achieving her doctoral degree.

2. Superintendent Update – Dr. Lonardi

Dr. Lonardi presented a PowerPoint update regarding the start of school. Priority is to have K-12 students in school. Recommends masking K-12 for the start of school. Masking is required on all buses. Quarantine exception, transmission level guidelines and current county transmission levels were also reviewed.

3. Presentation: DEI Three Year Plan – Mr. Brown

Mr. Brown presented a PowerPoint of the DEI three-year plan. Reviewed data sources, cultural diversity of students, honors and AP demographics, suspension data, and cultural equity task force. Also reviewed who and how the DEI three-year plan was created. Nine goals along with goal timeline and strategies reviewed:

- Goal 1: create an inclusive, equitable, safe and welcoming district community
- Goal 2: recognize, honor and respect difference and diversity
- Goal 3: professional development and training for teachers and staff
- Goal 4: recruit, retain and increase diverse and multicultural competent faculty, staff and administration
- Goal 5: strengthen parent, guardian, and community partnerships
- Goal 6: reduce the academic achievement and opportunity gaps to maximize student success and college and career readiness
- Goal 7: strengthen connections with ESL families
- Goal 8: district organizational change and development
- Goal 9: empower all students to accomplish excellence

President Bertone read a statement on behalf of the board expressing support for the DEI program and Director Brown.

IB stats similar to the presented honors and AP demographics were requested in the Board Update.

F. REPORTS

1. Cultural Equity Report Director Wisdom
Meeting scheduled for September 27 at 3:45 p.m. Year in review is on district website. All are welcome to participate.
2. DARC Director Kring
No meeting. Golf outing scheduled for September 13.
3. Intermediate Unit Director Kring
No meeting in July. Next meeting is August 18.
4. Education Foundation Director Gibson
Meeting held August 10. Options for Nature Trail discussed. Stadium Sponsorship Agreement scheduled for approval this evening. Downtown Mobile Library pictures shown. Kindergarten Jump Start to be held this month. After school programs scheduled from October 9 through December 9. Golf outing on October 5th at Applecross. Harlam Wizards scheduled for March 24, 2022 at DHSW at 6:30 p.m. Let's Talk About It community event proposed for December 7.
5. Legislative Committee Director Gibson
No meeting. Next meeting scheduled for September.
6. Communities That Care Vice President Britton
Planning for 2021-2022 Parent Speaker Series is underway. Plans include 6-12 healthy youth peer leadership clubs, student focus conversation cafes in October and leadership summit in the spring. Next meeting scheduled for September.
7. Wellness Committee Director Ghrayeb
Youth Truth survey results to be reviewed with administrators on August 13. Annual Wellness Report is complete and will be shared with the board soon. Focus will continue on substance abuse, mental and emotional health, healthy eating and physical activity, parent engagement and staff wellness. Community connections event focusing on mental health held on Monday evening August 9th. Next meeting scheduled in September.

G. OLD BUSINESS

H. CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Director Blust, seconded by Director Kring, the Board, on a voice vote, unanimously approved the consent agenda.

1. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Board Meeting – July 14, 2021
2. Approval of Disbursements
3. Approval of Financial Reports
 - a. Treasurers Reports
 - b. Tax Reports

- c. Budget Reports
 - d. Activity Reports
 - e. Investment Accounts
4. Personnel
- a. Approval of the Personnel items
 - b. Approval for renewal of LinkedIn agreement for recruiting for 2021 - 2022 school year. This was previously approved in June 2021 for \$1625, which was for a 6-month period
Total Cost: \$3250
Contract Dates/Length: 7/1/21 – 6/30/22
Funding Source: Human Resources
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022
5. Curriculum
- a. Approval of an agreement with the CCIU for curriculum writing professional development
Total Cost: \$9,000
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 6/30/22
Funding Source: Curriculum
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022
 - b. Approval of an audit of the District’s pupil services department, including but not limited to school counseling, mental health services and social emotional learning (SEL) services and resources
Total Cost: NTE \$10,125
Funding Source: ARP ESSER grant
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022
 - c. Approval of a renewal agreement with Savvas for Algebra 2 online licenses
Total Cost: NTE \$16,000
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 6/30/22
Funding Source: Curriculum
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022
 - d. Approval of a renewal settlement agreement and release with the parents of a DASD student (#2976378185)
Total Cost: \$4,500
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 6/30/22
Funding Source: Special Education
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022
 - e. Approval of Review 360 renewal licenses for universal behavior screening
Total Cost: \$7,900
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 6/30/22
Funding Source: Pupil Services
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022

f. Approval of a renewal contract with Gateway Medical Associates for school and athletic physicals
Total Cost: \$20 for school physicals and \$25 for athletic physicals
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 6/30/22
Funding Source: Pupil Services
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022

g. Approval of a settlement agreement and release with the parent of a DASD student (#8364786075)
Total Cost: \$23,500
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 11/17/26
Funding Source: Special Education
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022; 2022 – 2023; 2023 – 2024; 2024 – 2025; 2025 – 2026

h. Approval of the following Family Consumer Science Curriculum Documents:
1. Grade 7 FCS
2. Grade 8 FCS
3. Everyday Foods
4. Global Foods
5. Child Development

i. Approval of the following one-time field trips:
Curricular
1. DMS, (LMS) – Grades 7-8, Ecology Club – Cape Cod Environmental Trip, Cape Cod, MA – May 20, 2022 to May 22, 2022 – 1 class day missed
2. DHSE, DHSW, STEM - Grades 9-12, French and German students – Euromix 2022, Austria, Germany, and France – June 15, 2022 to June 25, 2022 – no class days missed
3. LMS, (DMS) – Grades 7-8, French students – Quebec 2022, Quebec City, Quebec – June 13, 2022 to June 17, 2022 – no class days missed

6. Finance

a. Approval for the disposal, sale or donation of items on the attached list

b. Approval of the following Student Activity Club:

1. DHSW National Spanish Honor Society – This is a national organization. Students earn credits to be inducted at the end of the year. They are a service organization and will contribute to the school community and Latino organizations both locally and internationally. They will also provide free tutoring to West students. They may raise funds selling Pulsera bracelets

at lunches and students will also pay club dues of \$10. The funds will be used to cover the price the organization charges for induction. They will also use the funds for West staff appreciation (ex: breakfast for secretaries).

- c. Approval to exonerate the 2017-2020 tax lien balance of \$229.60 on parcel 31-04E-0032.0700. Effective the 2017 school tax year the County created the .5 acre parcel for the purpose of mapping a right of way for a road. Due to an oversight the assessment was never changed to 0 by the County
- d. Approval to file 8 property assessment appeals with the Chester County Assessment Office. In accordance with Board Policy 605.1 – District Initiated Real Estate Assessment the properties were identified as under-assessed from the 7/1/21-6/30/22 real estate sales data provided by the Chester County Assessment Office
Total Cost: \$350
Funding Source: Business Office
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022

7. Facilities

- a. Approval of an agreement with the Downingtown Community Education Foundation for the conveyance of stadium sponsorship oversight. This agreement will automatically renew at the conclusion of 5 years unless terminated by either party
Total Cost: No Cost
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 6/30/26

I. ACTION AGENDA

Curriculum Report – Director Blust

- 1. On a motion by Director Blust, seconded by Director MacNeal, the Board, on a roll call vote, unanimously approved a renewal contract with Education Consulting for Medical Assistance management services
Total Cost: \$75 per hour NTE \$45,000
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 8/30/22
Funding Source: Special Education
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022
- 2. On a motion by Director Blust, seconded by Director MacNeal, the Board, on a roll call vote, unanimously approved a settlement agreement addendum with the parent of a DASD student (#4589245213)
Total Cost: \$112,000
Contract Dates/Length: 8/12/21 – 8/30/22
Funding Source: Special Education
Budget Year: 2021 – 2022

Board Administrative Action

1. On a motion by Director Blust, seconded by Director Ghrayeb, the Board, on a roll call vote, approved the 2021-2022 ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan by a vote of 7-2, with Directors Kring and MacNeal voting no.

Dr. Reed reviewed the updated revisions to the Health and Safety Plan.

An amended motion by Director Kring, seconded by Director Gibson to remove the requirement of vaccination availability for K-6 from low and moderate range failed by a vote of 2-7, with Directors Blust, Wisdom, Ghrayeb, Houghton, MacNeal, Vice President Britton and President Bertone voting no.

J. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT REQUIRE THE ATTENTION OF THE BOARD

- K. VISITORS** – The Downingtown Board of Directors encourages public comment from its citizens. Each community member may speak for a period of no longer than 5 minutes (per BP# 903). Please understand that this is not a time for dialogue with the board; rather the board will listen to all comments and consider them in further deliberations. Our individual e-mail addresses are on the website if you'd like to contact your individual board representative. We ask that you please direct complaints of a personnel nature regarding an individual employee directly to the superintendent.

Nathan Laing (Downingtown Borough) – Expressed concern that decisions of the board effected by political bias. Requests parent choice and not co-parenting with district. Does not indorse mask mandates and identity politics.

Mr. Donatelli answered the question posed earlier during public comment at the request of Director Wisdom as to the districts authority to consider and approve the wearing of masks. His research as of today sites section 510 of the Public School Code as well as PDE Title 22 sections 12.2 and 12.3 which give the school district the authority to approve the plan for masking as laid out earlier in the health and safety plan. He referenced various lawsuits moving through the courts in various jurisdictions that could require a relook at some point depending on their outcome.

John Nicolas (Uwchlan) – Choice has been taken from parents. Wants science and data need to back up decisions. Sent an email with science cited and received no response.

Greg Simotas (Uwchlan) – Asked that fairness and transparency be enforced for constituents and community. Same set of rules should apply to everyone. No double standards. Discussed transparency and asked why meeting videos were removed from YouTube.

Kate Kearney (West Bradford) – Expressed support for DEI and Mr. Brown. Supports masking and protecting our children.

Kate Thomas (West Bradford) – Supports DEI programs and training. Develop better resources so children know we are looking out for them.

Robin Garrett (West Bradford) – Expressed support for DEI. Encouraged all to have an open mind and to go to website and meetings to learn.

Brandi Levine (West Bradford) – Many comments this evening referred to diverse cultures but not any discussion of American culture. Discussed teaching our children American culture, American principles and teaching our children to be good citizens.

Margaret Fitori (Uwchlan) – Discussed recent suicides and effects on her children. Need grief counseling and grief coping skills. Therapist and counselors are needed for the children needing to be heard.

Christopher Bre (Wallace Township) – Discussed books listed on DEI district webpage being notable CRT books which teachers are encouraged to read. Raise our kids to love America and love each other regardless of race.

Derek Wang (East Brandywine) – STEM student. Discussed classes taken at STEM and effects on GPA. Taking electives such as Art and Band hurt GPA and ultimately ranking in class.

Sara Abena (Uwchlan) – Asked about the qualifications for board member. Discussed becoming involved and learning more about DEI.

Lakshmi Iyer (Uwchlan) – Expressed gratitude for masking decision this evening.

Ava Lichok (Uwchlan) – Expressed gratitude for masking decision, DEI program and initiatives and Director Brown.

Kathy Sotak (Uwchlan) – Does not endorse masking. They are not effective.

Danielle Fallon (Uwchlan) – Expressed sadness over the division in the community over these issues. Supports parent choice and no masking.

Kavya Rajesh (West Bradford) – Expressed gratitude for masking, and DEI programs. DEI is about being seen and belonging.

Bruce Harlan (Wallace) – Encourages schools start the day with the Pledge of Allegiance. Community should have had a say in the hiring of a DEI Director. Does not support masking. Encouraged the board to listen to everyone in the room.

Susan Kiesling (Uwchlan) – Disheartened board members did not read scientific articles provided. Does not support masking. Children need to see faces.

Denise Driscoll (Uwchlan) – Grateful for the decision of masking. Kids need to be in school.

L. INFORMATION

1. The following policies are submitted for public review and scheduled for approval on September 8, 2021:
 - a. AG Administrative Guideline: 200 Enrollment of Students
 - b. AG Administrative Guideline: 202 Eligibility of Nonresident Students

- c. 702 Gifts, Grants, Donations
- d. 712 Cooperative Playgrounds
- e. AG Administrative Guideline: 712 Cooperative Playgrounds
- f. 800.1 Electronic Signatures
- g. AG Administrative Guideline: 800.1 Electronic Signatures
- h. AG Administrative Guideline: 915 Home and School Associations
- i. 236.1 Threat Assessment
- j. 903 Public Participation in Board Meetings
- k. 006 Meetings

2. School Board Meetings

In accordance with Act 93 of 1998 (Sunshine Law), the Board of School Directors met on the following dates in executive session to discuss items in one or more of the following areas: personnel, litigation, legal matters confidential information, labor relations, school security, real estate or land acquisition.

August 4, 2021
August 11, 2021

A Special Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the James E. Watson Staff Development Room of the Administrative Office.

The next Committee of the Whole meeting is scheduled for September 1, 2021 starting at 6:30 p.m. in the James E. Watson Staff Development Room of the Administrative Office.

The next regular School Board Meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2021 starting at 6:30 p.m. in the James E. Watson Staff Development Room of the Administrative Office.

M. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Director MacNeal, the Board, agreed to adjourn at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia B. Warihay
School Board Secretary