

September 7, 2021

**HANOVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

September 7, 2021

Hanover Area Junior/Senior High School
Hanover Township, Pennsylvania
September 7, 2021

NOTE: The Board of Education held this Regular School Board Meeting in person. Due to the ongoing pandemic and for the health and safety of individuals, the meeting was streamed live using the virtual platform Zoom, so that the public had the option to attend in person or participate virtually.

A Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Hanover Area School District was held on Tuesday, September 7, at 6:09 PM. The meeting was called to order by the Board Vice President, Stacy Bleich.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG

ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:

PRESENT: Stacy Bleich, Vice President; Joyce Potsko, Treasurer; Rick Stevens, Secretary; Frank Ciavarella Jr., Dr. Vic Kopko, Michael Mazur and Matthew Redick.

ABSENT: Paul Holmgren, John J. Mahle

Rick Stevens, Secretary, stated a Quorum was established for the meeting.

OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT: Mr. Nathan Barrett, Superintendent; Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor; Attorney William Finnegan, School Solicitor; Mrs. Lisa Kitchen, Administrative Assistant; and a number of citizens, via the Zoom Platform.

Attorney Jack Dean provided the following Executive Session Report: "Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act, the Board President wishes to announce that at its Regular Meeting on Tuesday September 7, 2021, the board of education of the Hanover Area School District held an Executive Session to discuss matters of employee relations, labor negotiations, threats of or actual litigation and went into a closed executive session at 5:30PM and began the public meeting at 6:05PM. The subjects discussed in executive session related solely to matters of employee relations, labor negotiations and threats of or actual litigation. Is there any public input on Agenda Items Only?"

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APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES/REPORTS:

It was moved by Mr. Ciavarella and seconded by Mr. Stevens: To approve the following minutes and accept the following reports:

- Regular Board Meeting minutes of August 3, 2021.
- Luzerne Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Regular Meeting minutes of June 16, 2021.

BOARD VOTE: YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Kopko, Mazur, Potsko, Stevens and Redick

No: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Holmgren, Mahle

Chair declared the motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Mr. Nathan Barrett, Superintendent, offered the following report:

"Yes, Madam President. I have several presentations this evening. Some of them the recognition of our retirees; I see several here this evening and then a presentation of our Excellence in Teaching. Prior to that presentation, I just want to thank this community for your support in getting the school year launched last week. It was an eventful week for the Hanover Area School District as we launched for the first time in approximately two years where we had students in the building full capacity. We had a new bus company. The Hanover Area Transportation Company did an excellent job, minor hiccups, everybody got off the ground well. Our kids were safe. Tuesday I want to thank the parents for the cooperation at an emergency situation at Memorial for their patience and understanding. Our staff did an amazing job keeping the kids safe and then again on Wednesday, the flash floods came through the region. So, I'm very thankful of our staff in every building, our administrative team, and this board of education for allowing us to move swiftly in getting our bus companies rolling and getting our kids to safety. So, I'm very appreciative of the patience of the parents. I want to let you know that the busses did run into some obstacles that were unexpected and you were very cordial in the understanding that we did run into some obstacles that were unforeseen and we really appreciate the understanding. So, I thank you for that. Other than that, we are also cooperating with the Hanover Area Police Department and our routes walking home and assuring that everything you've been seeing in the media, locally, we are recognizing that as a school district and keeping our students safety is the utmost concern so as a result, we were working with the police department today for events that took place over the weekend and we are keeping mindful of putting

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plans together in place and you will be hearing from us soon. Other than that, I'd like to move to the positive aspect of the district and to the multiple years of service to the folks sitting out in our audience this evening. I want to recognize: Mary Ellen Konetksi, she had 15 years of service within this district, but over 30 year of Educational Service. I'm just going to announce from here so everyone can hear on the camera up here. Marilyn Namey, 23 years of service in this district. And, Nancy Needle is here, 45 years of service in the Hanover Area School District. So, I'm going to move down off camera now in order to present these folks with their plaques."

(Mr. Barrett left the stage to present each retiree with a plaque commemorating their years of service to the Hanover Area School District.)

"Ok, Madam Chair, I'm just going to do one more presentation. This is our Excellence in Teaching Award and their Certificates. We have Desiree Bannon here and, again, Mary Ellen Konetski."

(Mr. Barrett again left the stage to present the two Excellence in Teaching Award winners.)

Mrs. Bleich congratulated the retirees and the Excellence in Teaching winners on behalf of the board of education.

It was motioned by Mr. Redick, seconded by Mrs. Potsko: To accept the Report of the Superintendent.

BOARD VOTE: YES: Bleich, Chivarella, Kopko, Masur, Potkso, Stevens and Redick.

NO: None

ABSENT: Holmgren, Mahle

ABSTAIN: None

Chair declared the motion carried.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GENERAL:

It was moved by Mr. Ciavarella, seconded by Mrs. Potsko: To approve the following motions #1 through #3:

1. Approve the first reading of the following new/updated Board Policies as per Exhibit G-1:

006	Meetings
006-BOG-0	Publish, Post, and Notify-Board Meetings/Agendas
146.1	Trauma-Informed Approach
218.1	Weapons
218.2	Terroristic Threats

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- 236.1 Threat Assessment
- 246 School Wellness
- 247 Hazing
- 249 Bullying/Cyberbullying
- 252 Dating Violence
- 805 Emergency Preparedness and Response
- 805.2 School Security Personnel

2. Approve the following Administrative Regulations: Exhibit G-2

- 236-AR-0 Student Assistance Program
- 236.1-AR-0 Threat Assessment Intake Form
- 236.1-AR-1 Threat Assessment Checklist
- 236.1-AR-2 Individualized Management Plan
- 805.2-AR-0 School Security Personnel Training

3. Approve the Standing Orders for School Health as per Exhibit G-3.

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTION #1 through #3 ABOVE): YES: Bleich, Chivarella, Kopko, Masur, Potsko, Redick, and Stevens.

NO: None

ABSENT: Holmgren, Mahle

ABSTAIN: None

Chair declared the motions carried.

FINANCIAL:

It was moved by Ms. Potsko, seconded by Mr. Stevens: To approve the following motions 1 through 8:

1. Ratify the following PNC check register(s): (Exhibit F-1)
August 3, 2021 to August 23, 2021
2. Approve the PNC check registers of: (Exhibit F-2)
August 24, 2021
3. Elliott, Greenleaf & Dean \$4,329.00
July 2021
Invoice #159635
4. Pugliese, Finnegan, Shaffer & Ferentino, LLC \$390.00
May-July 2021
Invoice #267318

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5. Approve the Agreement between the Hanover Area School District and Children's Service Center for Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) and Therapeutic Educational Program (TEP) and the HIPPA Confidentiality Document as per Exhibit G-5.

6. Approve the agreement between the Hanover Area School District and the Educational Consortium for Telecommunications Savings (ECTS) as per Exhibit G-6.

7. Approve the agreement between the Hanover Area School District and Century Security Services for security officers at home sporting events for the 21-22 school year, as per Exhibit F-7.

8. Approve the agreement between the Hanover Area School District and Dr. Susan Warner for physician services for the 2021-2022 school year.

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 TO AND INCLUDING #8 ABOVE):

YES: Bleich, Chivarella, Kopko, Mahle, Masur, Potsko, Stevens and Redick.

NO: Kopko #1 and #2; Masur #1 and #2

ABSENT: Holmgren, Mahle

ABSTAIN: NONE

Chair declared the motions carried.

PERSONNEL:

It was moved by Mr. Masur, seconded by Ms. Potsko: To approve the following motions 1 through 12:

1. Approve Tenure for the following Professional Employees:

Jared Jones
Melissa Kravulski
Maureen Lisman
Jill Prawdzik
Amy Viti
Alexandra Yanik

2. Approve the following Mentor Teachers for the 2021-2022 school year:

Nicole Hummer
Amy Cody
Courtney Paden
Alexandra Yanik
Renee Benavage
Erica Greco

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Alicia Kole
Dawnette Dreyfus

3. Appoint the attached list of Co-Curricular and Department Chairpersons for the 2021-2022 school year as per Exhibit P-3.
4. Ratify the appointment of the attached list as Crossing Guards at a rate of \$50.00/day, for the 2021-2022 school year as per Exhibit P-4.
5. Motion to ratify the appointment of Karen Muldoon, R.N., as Certified School Nurse at a salary of B, Step 1, \$60,228, effective August 24, 2021.
6. Approve the request of Elbros Samkough, Social Studies teacher, to take November 10th and November 12th, 2021 off as UNPAID Days as per exhibit P-6.
7. Approve the request of Alita Soulsby, Guidance Counselor, to carry 25 sick days from the Riverside School District, as per the Public School Code, Exhibit P-7.
8. Approve the re-assignment of Jeffrey Urbanski to Custodial Position #1 at Lyndwood Elementary School as per the HAESPA Contract.
9. Motion to ratify the appointment of Robert Swartz as per diem cleaner at a rate of \$10.00/hour.
10. Accept the resignation of Katherine Healey, Head Softball Coach, as per exhibit P-10.
11. Approve the Family & Medical Leave (FMLA) for employee #30988
12. Appoint/ re-appoint the following Extra-Curricular Personnel, for the 2021-2022 school year:

Nicholas Griffin	Assistant Jr. High Soccer	\$750.00
Shaun Jones	Junior-High Football	\$2,689.00
Brandon Chafin	Junior-High Football	\$2,689.00

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 - #12 Above):

YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Kopko, Masur, Potsko, Stevens and Redick

NO: Stevens #5

ABSENT: Holmgren, Mahle

ABSTAIN: 0

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NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

FUTURE MEETINGS:

September Work Session: Tuesday, October 5, 2021

September Regular Meeting: Tuesday, October 5, 2021

Public Comments:

Ms. Bleich, Board Vice President, asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to address the Board.

Sarah Miscavage addressed the Board of Education in person.

"I was wondering why we haven't tried Lake Lehman's approach, as far as like the COVID policies. We see a school district that went to school this whole entire time, and that's our main objective, right—to keep kids in school full time. So why are we doing something so different something that hasn't like had very good results last year. I realize now you're making kids carry shields from class to class. Why wouldn't the teachers switch classes and the students just stay put where they are. This way when a kid does come up hot for Covid, if they do, you can better contact trace. I just think there's a more efficient way to do things without making kids do what we're doing."

Mr. Barrett replied: "Ok. Like I mentioned at the last meeting, I don't know if you were at the last meeting, but I am more than happy to sit with you, if you want some input, meet with you, talk with you over the phone, whatever it might be, if you have recommendations. I have taken what I feel is the strongest approach. I've taken every medical recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health and I have followed them precisely."

Miscavage: "Who recommended the shields and why aren't other districts trying them?"

Barrett: "I'm not sure and I don't look at other districts."

Miscavage: "Well where did you get your information from?"

Barrett: "I got the information about desk shields from last year. Because every added layer that I put in between one kid to another, it's just one more layer of protection."

Miscavage: "Who is most affected by this virus, according to the CDC?"

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Barrett: "I am not a medical professional. So I just know that I need to prevent transmission (Miscavage: "How come you guys don't have the same shields...")
Barret: "Could you let me finish or no? You asked me a question." (Miscavage: "Oh, I'm sorry.") Barrett: "So, what I'm doing is putting added layers between one kid to another within a classroom. So this year, we did take the Lake Lehman approach. We did come back full capacity. We have kids in the classroom, so that's why I feel the added layers between students is paramount at this point because of the fact that we are no longer taking the social distancing approach. So, for me, the closer they are and beyond the 15 minutes of accumulated time near one another is when you see most of the transmission taking place. So, as a result, me putting barriers between kids whether it be through a mask or a desk shield, I feel every layer is one more insurance policy to ensure that I don't send a kid home sick when you sent him or her healthy. I don't want to return a kid home differently than when you sent them here."

Miscavage: "Can I speak? But, you're not addressing the fact that kids are getting up and moving which means that it's more easily contracted, right?"

Barrett: "Well, that's what the mask is for."

Miscavage: "Right, but, why are they carrying shields on top of it. Wouldn't it make more sense for teachers to move from class to class instead of children carrying what they are carrying and going to the locker?"

Barrett: "It's a trifold shield that closes up and they put it with the rest of the books that they are carrying. It's not a rigid barrier, I don't know what the impression you have of it is. It folds, not much bigger than their books and it goes right with them under their arms with the rest of their books."

Miscavage: "But isn't that carrying germs that was just at the desk? You folding it up, putting it under your arms and going to your next class. Wouldn't it make more sense for the teachers to move around and keep the kids where they are so that if some child becomes Covid Positive, you know exactly who was around each person?"

Barrett: "In theory, we did consider that and the reason being is because every teacher has an individual computer within their room. So their files are there so to move, we had teachers that were lugging computers—desktop computers—from class to class. So, there are variables that are unforeseen and I do understand, and what I want to do is point out that I would make the offer again to meet with you and discuss this. This Board makes policies. I don't want to waste much more of their time and do this in public so if you have recommendations, I would be glad to consider them. I met with two parents after last month's meeting and took what they had into consideration and implemented some stuff, so."

Miscavage: "Don't you think this is...we just had trouble speaking to each other with the mask on. Don't you think that the kids are have trouble hearing their teachers and seeing the school board with the added shield?"

Barrett: "I didn't have any difficulty."

Miscavage: "You said that you couldn't hear me."

Barrett: "I couldn't hear what the last name was, to spell it."

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Miscavage: "Oh, I thought it was because of the mask. I'm just worried that our kids aren't going to have that."

Barrett: "So, if you want to meet right after we get off stage here, I can take your information, I can call you tomorrow and we can make a time?"

Miscavage: "Can I just ask who made all these decisions as far as the recommendations? Like, where do you get your information?"

Barrett: "I did. I made all the recommendations."

Miscavage: "Do the teachers get to have any input on what's done? Like do they get a vote and can parents get a vote? Can you guys include us on the next few steps that you take and is it our goal to stay open the entire time or... I want to know where you're going with that."

Barrett: "It is our goal to stay open that's why I'm adding layers of protections between one student to the next. And, the teachers they have a lot of responsibility already. I didn't want to add the safety piece to it. So, I take that full responsibility."

Miscavage: "I think that's awesome. But, don't you think the teachers might have more input. Like they can see where it's not working and maybe where it could be better. I feel like if they had some input, maybe we can all work together to come to a better..."

Dr. Kopko interjected: "Sarah, Sarah, if I may. This was heavily, heavily researched by the administrative staff, not just at our school, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the CDC. And I can assure you that we, as a board, asked many of those questions and administrative staff, led by Superintendent Barrett, reviewed everything, including what others are and are not doing. And, I can say, at this point in time, we are comfortable with all the research that was done. This was not an ideal situation, this is an imperfect situation, but we are going to fight through this as best as we can and through our research, do our homework, we are going to make this work as best as we can and we have all the confidence in the world in Superintendent Barrett and his staff."

Miscavage: "I appreciate that and I think you guys are doing your best, but I have one more question. You guys are all in the age group, I am in the age group where this virus affects me and affects all of you the most. Why aren't there dividers up though all of you?"

Barrett: "Good question. For me, my job is to protect your kids."

Miscavage: "But not all of you?"

Kopko: "Well, you can walk into Walmart, too and you see people without masks. You know our main goal here as a Board and as Superintendent, now I'm not speaking for him, is to protect our children in every possible way that we can. And, we are comfortable with the research we have done in conjunction with other entities who were working through this. Again, it's not a perfect situation, but we are doing the best we can, we are going to be diligent and we're going to follow exactly what we are supposed to. And, if there's any changes after that, it's

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a fluid situation, Superintendent Barrett is on it, and we will react if and when it's appropriate."

Miscavage: "I just think there's a lot of holes in it. There's a lot of gaps."

Barrett: "Thank you."

Ms. Bleich asked if anyone else wished to address the board.

Mrs. Kitchen, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, noted that there was a resident named Tyler on the virtual platform Zoom, that wished to address the board.

Tyler: "It's a little difficult to hear what you guys are saying, but I did make out that there was some research done by the actual members of the school board. My question would be what studies have they actually seen and followed in order to recommend that these children some of them 4,5,6 years old should be wearing masks all day long. None of the other polices seem to make sense. The kids are sitting 4, 5 deep in a seat on a bus and they are covering their faces all day at school. Some of the kids have already had Covid-19 and there have already been studies that show T-Cell Memory and other things like that being more effective than the vaccine itself in the older people. So I just want to know what actual studies have been viewed by the school board."

Barrett: "Tyler, if I could clarify, the school board did not conduct any studies nor do any research. They had tasked myself and my administrative team to do so and everything that we had implemented has been in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health. We have not created anything on our own, we have not reinvented the wheel and everything you see as far as a policy and procedure or a mandate has been strictly in accordance, especially with Governor Wolfe's mandate that began today."

Tyler: "Has there been any type of discussion about going against that mandate?"

Barrett: "Never."

Dr. Kopko: "And the reason you can't is that it would affect, at some point, I think, funding to this school, the health of children, of everyone's child and the answer is doubled up by what Superintendent Barrett has said."

Tyler: "From what I can see there is absolutely no health risks that are really posed to younger children, that this is mainly asymptomatic for the younger generations, which is obviously a blessing, but it's like everybody's focusing all this attention on policies or mandates where they shouldn't belong. Like it's not effective, we already know it's not effective, we're forcing children to cover up their faces and stunting any type of growth they can get from learning from the facial features of others etc, etc. And it doesn't make sense and I'm just trying to have somebody make it make sense for me."

Barrett: "I appreciate that Tyler, thank you, very much."

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Melissa Williams was next on Zoom to address the Board.

Williams: "Hi, how are you? I had called and I had spoken with Hollie for Transportation. My two high school kids, the bus that they are on, drops them off in front of the Lyndwood School. Hollie informed me that it is supposed to be a double run bus. And what's happening is there's these kids are all piling on the bus and some kids are standing. And I've already called the school; I don't know what to do. Once the bus is full they are supposed to leave, and like what are you supposed to do, tell them you have to wait for the bus to come back? And, Tyler's right there are 4 and 5 kids to a seat. I've seen it myself. This has not been an issue in the past. Why are we having kids sitting 4 and 5 in a seat on a bus?"

Barrett: "What bus number is it?"

Williams: "Bus 142, I believe."

Barrett: "Ok, that will be rectified. Thank you for bringing that to our attention.

Williams: "Ok, thank you."

Mrs. Miscavage: "So, is there anyway we can all vote on this at some point? Like can parents be asked, like is there a Covid Group that decides what rule goes where?"

Barrett: "Right now there is a mask mandate implemented by the state. The entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, every school district, every classroom has masked students. So I don't know what you are referring to, but I would be glad to sit with you. If you have recommendations that you feel could make life more comforting for your children, I would be glad to take it into consideration and bring it back to this board of education, most certainly. Again, I did it two times after the last meeting and I would be glad to do it again."

Miscavage: "Thank you."

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Mr. Redick, seconded by Mr. Stevens: To adjourn the Regular School Board Meeting at 6:36PM.

ATTEST:  _____, Secretary
Rick Stevens
Hanover Area School Board