

*\*An executive session will be held on August 16, 2021 beginning at 6:00 pm to discuss legal matters and to receive information.*

### **Study Session/ Education Committee**

August 16, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

Remote Access via ZOOM

as a result of necessity due to coronavirus pandemic sanctions

**Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm**

**In attendance:** Brian Hawk, Melanie Pallone, Tara Jean Schaaf, Jeanine Hurt-Robinson, Maureen McClure, Lisa Ashbaugh, Jane Miller, Arlene Loeffler, J. Chaparro, Falco Muscante, Tammy Good, Neil English, David Zolkowski, Bob Rizzo, Tina Monroe, RJ Long, Eric Hewitt, Al Pater, J. Gonzalez, A. Entwisle, B. Huffman, D. Showater, J. Leonard. K. Wynkoop, K. Zangrille, R. Lindeman, R. Gross, S. Vespi, T. Abraham, W. Wilton, P. Tomlin, along with additional unnamed residents.

### **Presentation**

State of the District – Dr. English welcomed everyone to tonight’s Study Session and thanked everyone for attending. He mentioned that there would be great information shared during this meeting, but he asked everyone to remember that since it was a Study Session there would be no public comment or hearing of citizens. He then presented the State of the District to everyone in attendance.

### **Announcements**

Dr. English – 2021-2022 School Opening Update (Health and Safety Plan Highlights)

Delegation of Authority Letter – Department of Education

Dr. English recommended to start the 2021-22 school year with full in-person instruction and a series of mitigation strategies that include required masking indoors for all students, staff and visitors. He reviewed the rationale, other considerations, modifications, and mitigation measures with the Board. His review is as follows:

#### **Rationale:**

- This recommendation aligns with the medical community: Allegheny Health Director and Staff, the State Department of Health, and State Department of Education, the Chief of Pediatrics and Head pediatric infectious disease doctors at UPMC, the American Association of Pediatrics, and the CDC
- The vaccination is not yet available to half of our student population.
- The Delta Variant is more than twice as contagious, infecting on average 5-8 individuals per case
- Per the CDC and ACHD, students who are masked and would otherwise be considered a “close contact” **do not need to be quarantined** if within 3’ - 6’ of a COVID-19 positive individual. Not having to quarantine students gives us the best opportunity to education our children effectively
- In-person learning is the most important shared goal of our community and our educational staff
- Protects the adult population of the school and minimizes the potential need for substitutes;

- Although we understand the frustration of the mask issue, and that during the summer masks weren't universally worn, every student and staff effectively used cloth masks last year with little to no issue or concern
- The number of cases in Allegheny County is commensurate to those in the winter and spring of last year, substantial and high transmission rates.
- Even those vaccinated are being infected with the virus.
- 15% of all cases are children currently, and cases in 0-17 are on the rise
- According to reports this week from UPMC Lead Council, masks do not pose a risk to students, and reduces risks in schools, and ultimately, saves lives

#### **Other Considerations:**

- We do not want politics and controversy to interfere with re-establishing a positive culture within the school that is focused on learning. We do not want the school building itself to become a battleground for this highly politicized topic.
- While direct risk of hospitalization and death for children is low, the reality of disruption due to cases, contact tracing and quarantine is high.
- A process will be shared so that parents can submit a written request from a medical professional to address individual concerns (i.e., *if wearing a face covering would either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition or a disability*).
- To start the year, we sincerely hope that the initial masking requirement can be met with limited exceptions so that the students can experience in-person learning and continuity.

#### **Consideration to Modify Masking Requirement:**

- The recommendation for required masking is intended for the start of the year.
- As conditions and/or guidance change, we believe it may become possible to adjust the masking requirement. For example, it is possible that the decisions might be aligned to levels of transmission (i.e., low, moderate, substantial and high). It is also possible that levels of transmission could vary by K - 6 versus 7 - 12 due to the availability of a vaccine, etc. (i.e., age 11 and under).

#### **Other Mitigation Measures:**

- Home Morning Health Checklist (continued encouragement of staying home when ill, and monitoring symptoms carefully)
- Buses (windows open; masking required; increased ridership; seating charts; parental help if possible; State mandate)
- Classrooms (desks in columns and rows to maximize physical distancing without impacting the educational program; desks facing forward; teacher zone encouraged; availability of sanitizing; seating charts for contact tracing)
- Enhanced ventilation and air quality still a focus
- Classroom and District cleaning and disinfecting protocols still a focus area, and delineated in the District Health and Safety Plan
- Physical distancing maximized in the cafeteria to keep students and staff safe, seating charts for contact tracing, and protocols to avoid quarantine
- Visitors and Volunteers limited during the school day with masks required
- Ample cleaning and disinfecting materials available to keep spaces safe
- Athletics/Activities - Masking required indoors other than active competition; masking outdoors when not actively engaged, masks optional with focus on physical distancing in outdoor spaces; limited use of locker rooms
- Mask optional during outside classes or mask break times
- The encouragement of vaccinations

Dr. English was also happy to report that our application was approved by the State Department of Education in terms of being granted temporary provisions for the 2021-2022 school for online instructional days to count toward the State mandates for instructional hours. He then moved to the discussion and review of potential motions for the next Regular Voting Meeting.

### **Discussion/Review of Potential Motions for Approval for Regular Voting Meeting**

#### **Personnel**

- We have worked hard to make sure our staff rosters are complete and ready for the upcoming school year. There will be a number of long term substitutes being presented for approval: Biology, Special Education, Elementary, along with Art.
- Two teachers will be listed for approval to achieve professional status. We will then issue permanent contracts to them thereafter.
- Two positions have been filled for the granted funded (\$30,000) academic coach positions, the high school has final interviews in the upcoming week, and may be included in next week's voting agenda as well.
- You will be voting to approve the resignation of one of our paraprofessionals, and a furlough as well.
- As many of you know, our current Assistant Principal, Mr. Long, submitted his letter of resignation on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. He is taking a Junior High Principal position at Northgate. Per school code, the District reserves the right to hold employees for 60 days. The posting of the new position closes by midnight tonight, and we will begin paper screenings this week. We thank Mr. Long for his service to our District, and wish him great success in all of his future pursuits. He will be missed, but we will most certainly choose an outstanding candidate to replace him. More to come there.
- You will be voting to approve a paraprofessional hire for next week as well.
- Sabbatical Early Return – Memorandums of Understanding - We are happy to report that two of our teachers are returning early from their scheduled sabbaticals. The Memorandums of Understanding have been included in your study packets, to be voted on next week.
- Student Teacher – MAT Social Studies - We will be recommending a University of Pittsburgh student teacher to work under the direction of Mr. Ken Kubistek. This placement is a part of the Master of Arts in Teaching requirements.
- Precision Substitute Approvals - We will be asking for the approval of substitute teachers for the 2021-22 year.

- Bus Driver/Van Driver/Aide – Allegheny Transportation – retro to 20-21 and current for 21-22 - We will be asking for the approval of 1 driver/1 aide for the 20-21 year along with bus and van drivers and aides for the 21-22 year
- Supplemental Athletic Approvals – You will be voting to approve the Girls Basketball JV Head Coach; Golf Volunteer, Baseball Assistant Coach, Boys Basketball Volunteer, Football Volunteer positions for the upcoming year. There may be some additional athletic supplementals and additional information may be included next week as clearance and health packets are submitted.
- Supplemental Musical Approval – 2020-21 – You will be voting to approve the Musical Pit Director from the musical for last year as well.
- Supplemental REA Approvals: Verner Safety Coordinator, Asst. Band Director We will be asking for a number of supplemental approvals for athletics, the musical, and the REA, including the Verner Safety Coordinator, and the Assistant Band Director. There may be, once again, additional items for next week, depending on the information we receive.
- Superintendent Evaluation 2020-21 – Dr. English thanked to board for completing his formal evaluation from the 2020-2021 school year. As he has stated previously, he feels that it has been an honor to serve the District in this capacity, and he will continue to do everything he can to serve the communities of Verona and Oakmont with great pride and diligence, for as long as we will have him. Much appreciated.

Dr. English then moved onto Board Governance.

### **Board Governance**

- Discussion – Future Board Meeting Structure – Dr. English recommended to the Board that meetings be kept virtual for the near future, and be reassessed as the health crisis continues to bend and flex.

Dr. English then gave a review of the policies that will be presented for approval at the Voting Meeting. We will be presenting Policy 236.1 Threat Assessment for the first reading. This is a new policy. Policy 209 has been updated to include a section on health monitoring. Hazing Policy 247, Educator Misconduct Policy 317.1 and Policy 824, Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries have been updated to include Title IX information. Policy 803 School Calendar and Policy 332 Working Periods have been updated regarding PDE Instructional Days/Hours with implications related to COVID-19. Lastly, Policy 904 Public Attendance at School Events and Policy 907 School Visitors have been updated to include the limitation of attendance at school events and school visitors to protect the health and safety of our students, staff, and public.

- Board Policies – Second Reading – Policy 249, Bullying/Cyberbullying

- Board Policies – First Reading – Policy 209, Health Examinations/Screenings; Policy 247, Hazing; Policy 317.1, Educator Misconduct; Policy 332, Working Periods; Policy 803, School Calendar; Policy 824, Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries; Policy 904, Public Attendance at School Events; Policy 907, School Visitors; Policy 236.1 Threat Assessment
- 2021-2022 Budgetary Outline & Game of Chance – Riverview Music Boosters Association – Dr. English mentioned that we are working on the budgetary outlines for the 21-22 year. The Riverview Music Boosters information was included in the packets this week. Additional should be included in next week’s packet.
- 2020-2021 Budgetary Outlines – Jr/Sr High PTO, Raider Athletic Booster Association – Dr. English mentioned that the Board will be asked to approve the final paperwork submitted for the Jr-Sr HS PTO and the Raider Athletic Booster Associations
- Textbook Disposal – Outdated History and Sociology - Finally, Dr. English mentioned that there are approximately 130 books will be listed for disposal on next week’s agenda.

## **Education**

Athletic Handbook Amendment – Dr. English shared that over the summer, a parent and the administrators updated the Riverview Good Citizenship Pledge. As a result, you will be voting on the amendment to the athletic handbook delineating that change.

Dr. English then reviewed the annual agreements that were included in the Study Session packets. He mentioned that the Waterfront Learning Agreement is to provide online educational services, with our teachers serving as the teachers of record, to families that choose for a 100% virtual option. This option is asynchronous and will extend through the end of the year.

### **Agreements/Contracts/Resolutions:**

- Watson Institute, The Education Center – Sewickley for 21-22 year
- Allegheny Intermediate Agreement Dart lease agreements – 2021-22 year
- Letter of Agreement – UPMC – Western Psychiatric Hospital – SAP services
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit Waterfront Learning Agreement
- Wm. McKinley Citizens Center, Inc. – Soccer Agreement

Following the review of the contracts and agreements, Dr. English turned the meeting over to Ms. Good to review the business and finance items.

### **Business/Finance:**

- School Nutrition Program – Food Supply and Costs – Ms. Good mentioned that the letter wasn’t in the board packet and she would get it to them for review. Basically, the letter was informing schools that manufacturers of foods made for school cafeteria were experiencing delays and schools we see rising costs and shortages with certain foods due to the Pandemic.

- Substitute Rates – Custodial, Paraprofessional, Substitute Secretary – Ms. Good mentioned that Precision suggested that the District increase the custodial rate last year during Covid in an attempt to increase substitute bodies. Linda and I reviewed the paraprofessional and secretary rates and they haven't been increased in a long time. We were recommending to increase these two positions as well as we struggled to obtain paraprofessional substitutes as well and increasing the rate may help.
- A La Carte Prices – Ms. Good mentioned that approved the a la carte prices is an annual requirement. The prices did not increase.
- Vacant Lot, Borough of Oakmont – Ms. Good mentioned that Mr. Moorhead from Oakmont was asking to purchase a vacant property adjacent to his home on Valley Street. An appraisal was completed and value was stated at \$1,200. The borough was adopting a resolution to permit this sale. The county was adopting a resolution to permit this sale. I would recommend the District to move forward and permit the sale as well. At the very least the property would be back on tax rolls and producing some tax revenue. Ms. Good asked Mr. Muscante to go over the process with the board.
- Borough of Oakmont, Delinquent Properties- Ms. Good mentioned that she and Dr. English met with Scot Foci, Borough Manager and a Borough Council member recently. We discussed some delinquent properties for the borough. The borough wanted to see if the District was willing to create a joint letter and share in the postage cost, to send a mailing to owners of homes adjacent to a vacant and delinquent property to see if we could encourage some purchases. The board agreed to do so.
- Borough of Oakmont Invoices – Ms. Good explained that the Borough wanted to revisit the discussion of invoices from April/May 2020. The board did not agree to pay them. The decision was to remain that our contract states we pay for use only.
- Ratify Penn National Tax Collectors' Bond - \$1,645.00 – Ms. Good explained this is a tax collector bond that we pay annually for Rich Leah.
- Limbaugh Agreement – Ms. Good mentioned that this agreement was up for renewal. Limbaugh services our HVAC units. They do a great job and are cost effective. They work well with our architects and other contractors. We are not recommending to rebid this service. We are in the process of negotiating a renewal with them for another 3-5 years. It will be on agenda for approval in August or September.
- Volunteer Insurance – Ms. Good state the Mr. Dinnin presented her with a new type of policy. \$25,000 coverage for a premium of \$650. He thought it was a good product since the District has a lot of volunteers in the athletics department. The board was not interested. They agreed to review it again next school year since it was required.
- Verizon/Consolidated Communications – Verner Copper Conversion – Verizon will be replacing lines at Verner in September after school. No cost to the district and no down time. Both Mr. Rizzo and Mr. Pater are aware to accommodate them on the selected date.

- Ratify Pay Applications – East West Manufacturing & Supply Co., Inc. #1 \$542,745.00 and #2 \$313,902.00; Pennsylvania Roofing Systems #2 \$294,203.70 and #3 \$166,716.90; R.A. Glancy & Sons, Inc. #2 \$43,380.00 and #3 \$448,289.06
- Change Orders – Approve Merit Electrical Group, Inc. EC-03 \$62,299.76
- Ratify Change Orders – East West Manufacturing, HC-04 \$1,335.00, HC-05 \$1,016.00, HC-06 \$1,976.00, HC-07 \$1,657.00, HC-08 \$11,916.00, HC-09 \$1,208.00; Pennsylvania Roofing Systems, Inc. RC-02 \$8,714.41; R.A. Glancy & Sons, Inc. GC-08 \$1,433.85, GC-09 \$4,959.38, GC-10 \$3,617.38, GC-11 \$3,034.31, GC-12 \$28,176.79, GC-13 \$13,489.71, GC-14 \$3,031.24, GC-15 \$5,376.93, GC-16 \$5,500.80, GC-17 \$1,081.53, GC-18 \$4,046.14; Merit Electrical Group, Inc. EC-02 \$539.61;
- Budgetary Transfers – Ms. Good explained that budgetary transfers are done annually to comply with the school code requirement. Specific lines within the budget cannot be in deficit.
- Budget Discussion – Ms. Good mentioned that Act 1 timeline for 2022-2023 was published. Act 1 index will be released in September. We will go over this in more detail at the October finance committee meeting.

**Adjournment** 9:59 pm

*An executive session was held from 9:59 pm to 11:06 pm to discuss legal matters and to receive information.*