



Board of School Directors Committee Meetings Minutes Wednesday, June 8, 2022

Generated by Renai Cardillo on Friday, June 17, 2022

Members present: Courtney Barbieri, Nick Braccio, Janet Flisak, Ken Keith, Tom Kwiatkowski, Andrew Landis, Stephen Nelson, Donna Scheuren

Members absent: Bill Brong

Others present: Lisa Ball, Todd Burns, Mike Darcy, Chad Evans (Buck County I.U.), Mike Feliciani, John Franzen, Christopher Hey, Katie Kennedy-Reilly, Josh Klimovich, Dan Phillips, Carolyn Rosenberger, Walt Salevsky, Michael Taylor, Sam Varano, and Megan Zweiback

1. Education-Personnel Committee

1.1 Curriculum Presentations

Mr. Kwiatkowski called the meeting to order at 6:43 P.M.

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Technology, Dr. Kennedy-Reilly, welcomed everyone and announced the curriculum items that would be implemented for the 2022-2023 school year. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly also noted that a brief overview would be given on High School Program of Studies for the 2023-2024 school year.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly introduced curriculum department members Dan Phillips and Carolyn Rosenberger. Mr. Phillips and Mrs. Rosenberger spoke to the development of the **Full-Day Kindergarten** program. They addressed the implications of extending the day, intentional play, and the professional development to support the program. Mr. Phillips, a former kindergarten teacher, spoke about the specifics of the program including Kindergarten Play Shop where guided play is facilitated by teachers to engage the students.

Mrs. Rosenberger spoke to the spectrum of play and how it is grounded in standards of education, where active learning is embedded in the curriculum. Mrs. Rosenberger also spoke to the developmentally appropriate skillsets for the young students.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly commented on the creation of the new curriculum for Play Shop and its objectives and standards. She noted the challenge of taking "play" and assigning themes and UBD documents for execution in the classroom. Mr. Keith asked about Play Shop and how it relates to free play. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that it is in addition to free play. Mr. Phillips noted that the addition of time will allow for planned, structured learning, allowing for critical thinking and problem solving.

Mrs. Scheuren asked about the impact of a full time schedule for kindergarten students. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly stated that there will be flexibility in the full-day program, building stamina for the students, noting that September will look different from May. Mrs. Flisak asked how the inter-personal skills of the students will be measured and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly stated that those skills will be observed during Play Shop and modeling by teacher will be instructed.

Mr. Nelson asked about the evidence that will reflect the success of full day kindergarten and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that DIBELS and other standardized testing should be reflective of learning. Mr. Nelson also expressed concern on the early lunch time schedule for younger students.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted a pilot program of moving the **Middle School Guidance Course** from 7th grade to 6th grade. Evidence and discussion with Director of Pupil Services has shown that the intent of the Guidance course; study skills, peer relationships, and the establishment of a relationship with the middle school Guidance counselor will benefit students earlier in their school career, rather than waiting until 7th grade. Guidance is a required course and will not effect student schedules.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly introduced High School Principal Dr. Varano who spoke to the addition of the High School course **Teaching Young Children**. Dr. Varano noted that this will be a dual enrollment course with Montgomery County Community College, allowing students to earn college credits. Dr. Varano noted that this new course will complement existing Child Development and Pre-School Lab courses at the high school.

High School Teacher and Career Counselor Mr. Darcy spoke to the new course **Education Internship**, reviewing the curriculum course outline and the opportunities that the course will present to students. Dr. Hey noted that some of the curriculum is direct from PDE standards and National Board of Educators. Mr. Braccio and Mr. Nelson praised the course offering.

Business Education Teacher Mr. Feliciani, and Business Department Coordinator Mr. Darcy spoke to the new course **Finance & Investing**. Mr. Darcy spoke to the precision use of EXCEL as an analytical tool supporting the learning and understanding of the stock market. He indicated that instruction will include instruction on finance and investing, as well as evaluation of stock and bond markets, real estate investments and collectible and odd commodities. The course will result in a culminating portfolio. Board members had positive comments on the new course offering.

Dr. Varano gave a brief overview of proposed changes to the High School **Program of Studies for the 2023-2024** School Year, including the immediate change to existing FBLA Leadership course which will be scaled back from a half year (semester) course to a quarter course in the 2022-2023 school year. Dr. Varano indicated that the opportunities and participation in the course have diminished over the last several years.

Dr. Varano also reviewed the following additions to the Program of Studies; *Medical Applications* (Science course 1.0 credit) providing students with hands-on medical experiences. Dr. Varano indicated that this course would support the recently discontinued NMTCC course, *Allied Health*. *Mandarin-Chinese IV* and *Heritage Spanish* (World Language courses 1.0 credit each) *Electric Guitar Building* and *Computer Programming 3* (Technology Education 1.0 credit each).

Dr. Varano also noted a change to the Wellness program that would require 1.0 movement credit to ensure more physical activity throughout high school career. He noted the addition of two new courses *Outdoor Adventure & Fitness* and *Sports Medicine* (.5 credits each). Also noted was the return of *Keeping Things Whole* (English course .5 credit) replacing *War Stories* and the addition of *Race and Ethnicity in America* (Social Studies 1.0 credit) replacing *Dynamics of Modern Conflict*.

Dr. Varano discussed the timeline which would allow for curriculum writing and development prior to the annual course selection in January. Assistant Principal and Master Scheduler Mr. Klimovich spoke to the enrollment decline in some courses and the rotation of others in an effort to keep course offerings relevant and fresh.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reiterated that additional details of all new courses would be presented in Curriculum Council.

1.2 Comprehensive Plan Update

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly introduced Mr. Chad Evans, Supervisor of Educational Learning at the Bucks County Intermediate Unit indicating that Mr. Evans has been assisting in the Comprehensive Planning process. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that the Comprehensive Plan is a continuous process used by PDE to ensure that all students are achieving at high levels. Every Local Educational Agency (LEA) is required to submit their plan every three years.

The importance of establishing a Steering Committee that includes a diverse group of stakeholders is critical to the success of the plan. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly indicated that the current committee is comprised of teachers, principals, administrators, school board members, parents, students and community members. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly shared information from the most recent Comprehensive Plan and priority areas. Those areas of focus were highlighted in a slide listing the successes including ALICE Informed Training, Bullying Prevention, Computer Science K-12, English Learners Programs, Gifted Programs, Inclusive Practices, MAP Growth Measures, Partnerships to Learning and Restorative Practices.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly stated that the Comprehensive Plan for years 2022-2025 has the objectives to analyze data for strengths and weaknesses and set priorities for goals, establishing plans to achieve those goals. The timeline for the plan began in Fall 2021 and the submission of the plan is scheduled for Summer 2022.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted the subcommittee's action development is guided by positive impacts to the whole child, the whole school and the whole community. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly thanked everyone for their participation in the process and commented on the worthwhile contributions and the learning that occurred. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that the Comprehensive Plan would be posted to the school district website for public review and presented to the Board for a vote at its August Action Meeting.

Mr. Kwiatkowski thanked the Curriculum team for their presentation and adjourned the meeting at 9:00 P.M.

2. Finance Committee

2.1 Approve 2021-2022 Budget Transfers

Mrs. Scheuren called the meeting to order at 9:09 P.M.

Director of Business Affairs Mr. Taylor announced the standard request to transfer funds from one budget account to another to correspond with actual spending.

The Committee agreed to move agenda item forward for action.

2.2 Approve Contract Amendment and Resolution with Portnoff Law Associates

Mr. Taylor stated that Portnoff Law Associates guidelines for the collection of delinquent real estate taxes was changing and fees would be charged directly to the delinquent property owner and not to the district. The change in guidelines requires an amendment to the current agreement.

The Committee agreed to move agenda item forward for action.

2.3 Capital Equipment Procurement Procedure

Mr. Taylor presented a review on the draft procedure to establish a Facilities Capital Equipment Procurement program. Mr. Taylor reiterated that the program would be a comprehensive plan of asset management and a proactive approach to the maintenance and replacement of school district equipment.

Mr. Taylor reviewed an equipment list and proposed purchases. A brief discussion occurred about the purchase of equipment and associated costs. Mrs. Scheuren thanked Mr. Taylor for the information presented and expressed concern about the absence of Operations Committee Chairperson Mr. Brong, during an Operations and Facilities discussion.

It was decided that the implementation of an equipment procurement procedure has been tabled at this time.

2.4 2022-2023 Final Budget Update

Dr. Hey thanked Ms. Ball and Mr. Taylor for their work on the budget, noting the decrease in the deficit. Dr. Hey indicated that conversations with local legislators regarding the State budget, continue, but there is no new information at this time.

Mr. Taylor reviewed a budget presentation and indicated the adjustments made since the May 11 meeting; staff retirements resulting in reductions to salaries and benefits. He also noted the assessment changes and Homestead Subsidy from the State. Also included are projected increases for real estate transfer taxes and earnings on investments.

Mr. Taylor reviewed the items that are still under consideration during budget development; state revenues which could include an increase in Basic Education Funding, Special Education Funding and additional retirements and staffing adjustments.

Mr. Taylor shared a slide that depicted budget considerations with a increase in millage and tax increases with several percentage scenarios. The slide also showed a percentage basis use of fund balance.

Mr. Taylor presented a slide that reflected the Act 1 Index versus the SASD Index History for 8 years. With the exception of the 2018-2019 school year, the SASD has been substantially lower than the Act 1 Index. A comparison chart of local area school district tax increases was shared to reflect the average millage increase in a 10 year period.

Mrs. Scheuren thanked Mr. Taylor for the presentation and noted aloud, the current deficit of \$1.9M. Mrs. Scheuren commented on state funding decisions during an election year and asked that everyone be open to the possibility of waiting to pass a budget, that would benefit the community. Mrs. Scheuren also recalled last years budget process and the deficit of years past. She also spoke about conscious awareness to the public, noting the Souderton Area Board of School Directors is a group that has never over taxed its community.

Mrs. Scheuren also spoke to concerns that would maintain our favorable credit rating and the impact to the fund balance account. Mrs. Scheuren noted current inflationary circumstances, the consideration for construction projects, full-day kindergarten and the possibility that there may be an increase in taxes needed to create a balanced budget.

Mr. Kwiatkowski and Mr. Nelson also expressed concerns about the impact of credit rating in the event that fund balance is utilized to balance the budget. Mrs. Flisak expressed concerns about the current economic environment and acknowledged that we may need to increase taxes to maintain programs.

Several Board members agreed to wait and work through the budget process with the State, before simply passing a budget.

Mrs. Scheuren adjourned the Finance Committee Meeting at 10:24 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Taylor".

Michael Taylor, C.P.A.
Board Secretary / Director of Business Affairs