

School Board Work Session Meeting
August 1, 2023

The following members were in attendance: Bill Reddinger, Heidi Byers, Brent Wile, Anne Kopnitsky, Donald Nair, John Kimmel, John Sayers (online), Darren Bain (called in). Absent: Jason Barnett

The work session was called to order by Bill Reddinger.

Mrs. Shirey presented her board report. She is projecting 397 students for the fall. She expects the number to be over 400 with a few students filtering in. 26 students attended the in-person summer school program. Asbestos tiles have been removed from five rooms at the Intermediate School. Back to school night has been advertised on the district Facebook page. Sandor will be requested to do that again a few times before the date of August 21st. Mrs. Shirey contacted Columbia Gas about the condition of the building behind the primary school. It has been determined that the district owns the building and that any repairs will be the district's responsibility. Mrs. Shirey intends to do some repair work to the building to make it more appealing. Information was created for Kindergarten families and it will be mailed out on Monday. Mrs. Shirey and Mr. Hartle are meeting with all the new employees on August 17th and are having a new employee orientation with them. Dunkle Roofing was scheduled to come to look at the leak on the Intermediate School roof but they did not show up. Mrs. Shirey will try to contact them again. Repairs were made to the maintenance truck at Nolf Chrysler Dodge. Mrs. Shirey contacted Susan Brookman and Dr. Nancy Hager about professional development in October specializing in trauma. Back to school night is scheduled for August and she is looking forward to the upcoming school year. Mr. Reddinger asked if the building had been cleared for asbestos and she stated that Chris from Clarion Environmental had never gotten back to her. Mr. Jones had been at the Intermediate School that day with Clarion Environmental, but Mrs. Shirey was unsure what the visit was concerning. She assumed it was about the asbestos issue. She has contacted several contractors and is waiting for someone to come look at the floor. No further questions for Mrs. Shirey.

Mr. Hartle presented his board report. Summer credit recovery courses were completed on July 27th. Out of the 34 students that participated, 79% were able to pass the courses. The 2023-2024 Teacher Information Packets are ready to go for the first day of in-service. All cyber families have been contacted. A number of them will be returning to in person instruction. Parent meetings will be set up with the Go Rockets program to go over expectations. Reminders will be sent home to make sure participation is happening on Parent VUE/Student VUE before school begins. Reminders are also being sent out for students to bring back summer workbook activities so they can possibly receive rewards for their effort. CPR training is confirmed for the first Monday of in-service. Student schedules should be accessible by next week. Mr. Hartle stated that we do not have a replacement for the foreign language teacher that will be out for the full year. Parents of foreign language students were contacted and told that the options would be online through Go Rockets Programs and eAchieve Academy. Specific programs were discussed for German and Spanish courses. College course credits could also be achieved for students in specific instances through IUP. Families seem interested in the online course offerings. Mr. Hartle would like to see more participation in foreign language programs. Test results were used to set up schedules for students. Heat acclimation starts for sports on August 7th and the first official practice on August 14th. Total enrollment is at 554 students. There are five full time Go

Rocket students and ten that are going to take the one single foreign language course. No questions for Mr. Hartle.

Mr. Temchula presented his school board report. ESY was completed for the month of July. Ten students attended and progress reports were completed by the teachers. CPI training for the paraprofessionals was set for August 7th and August 8th. Mr. Temchula continues to be in contact with parents concerning student schedules/student needs throughout the summer. Materials for the two new autism classrooms have been ordered. Previously open employee positions have been filled. One position is going to be contracted through KeySolutions while the other position will be with the district. The Special Education department is full and ready to go for the upcoming school year. Mr. Temchula is planning to complete the 504 plans within the first week of school. He would like teachers to be prepared for medical/allergy needs/things of that nature. Mr. Temchula met with the school psychologist and went over timelines. They made a plan/schedule for when she comes back. She will return ten days before school starts to ensure timelines are met. No questions for Mr. Temchula.

No maintenance report was available this month. Mr. Jones has had vacation. Before vacation, he had been looking at painting the flooring, but discovered that this wasn't going to be a solution to the problem. Mrs. Shirey has taken the lead working on the flooring issues. The district feels like it has a good solution with the epoxy floors. Five rooms are going to be done, but three rooms are going to be covered by insurance from the flood. The district is hoping to eliminate asbestos in the next few years. Most of the cost will be reimbursed and the remainder will be paid out of the maintenance budget.

No cafeteria report was available this month because there was no new information.

No business report was available due to Mrs. Reitz being on vacation. The report will be available next week upon her return.

Dr. Rupp gave her report. Ohio Electric will be there August 2nd to install the new light board in the auditorium and to look at other lighting issues. When they moved the screen, it stopped working and Penn Ohio will replace half of the cost of the screen. Johnson Controls continue to work on the damper replacements. The intermediate playground has some safety concerns with the mulch due to it being made with tires. Small pieces of wire have become an issue. The district is waiting for a letter from the company that did the mulch to verify that the mulch is safe and that the wire pieces will wear down with time. The district wants to make sure that the liability is on the company before the playground is opened. A discussion ensued about the specifics of the small pieces of wire. Teachers will be welcomed back August 21st. Several trainings will be offered to the teachers. Numerous students have decided to return to classroom instruction from the cyber school option (11 high school students, 1 elementary student, 2 anticipated graduates). Between these students and recent cyber school graduates, the district will see a savings of \$137,397.92 this school year. Students seem to be trending towards wanting to come back for classroom instruction. Upon completion of her report, Mr. Reddinger asked Dr. Rupp if she had seen a sample of the playground material that was in question. She did have a sample plus they were presented to the mulch company. They came back with metal detectors and determined that nothing could be found in the mulch. Dr. Nair asked why we went from an organic mulch to a mulch made out of tires. Dr. Rupp responded by saying that the district wasn't aware that was what the mulch was going to be made with. The board expressed serious concerns about the safety of the mulch. Dr. Rupp stated she would be persistent in following up

with the company to obtain a letter making sure that the mulch is safe before the start of school. Mr. Bain questioned if the mulch should be removed if the letter does not come before the beginning of school. Dr. Rupp said that caution tape was currently in place, but they would need to look into next steps if the letter doesn't come in time. Mr. Sayers questioned if any letter certification came with the mulch. Mulch can be certified as "playground mulch". Dr. Rupp was not aware of one, but said that she could ask for one. She said that she would follow up immediately. No further questions for Dr. Rupp.

The IU report was given by Ann Kopnitsky. There was a virtual meeting on July 20th. It was a special meeting to hire the executive director. The individual hired was Shawn Algoe. No questions or comments.

No Career Center Report was available. Dr. Rupp noted that she attended a mental health seminar that morning. Crystal Over, who is a member of our community and a nurse at the psych center, will be visiting the Career Center approximately once a week to act as a mental health professional for the students. Mr. Reddinger asked the board to make a note of doing October's board meeting at the Career Center.

Board Committee reports were presented. The Education Foundation had a meeting and was going to meet again next Monday for the first mailing after the Reunion. The District is set to get a donation. More information would be presenting itself.

Mr. Reddinger said that an executive session would be held for personnel after the meeting.

Matt Darr presented some information about the status of sports/athletes within the district. He offered a spot analysis of each individual sport for the board to review. Mr. Darr also did a small presentation about the sports officials' pay scale increase. He discussed some changes with the Coach's Handbook. The biggest change is the trainings that the coaches have to go through. The Extracurricular Handbook had very few changes, mostly just some wording variations. Mr. Darr also mentioned that Mr. Jones had sprayed the grass to deter the geese from gathering in the athletic field area. It has not helped with the issue. The Game Commission has been called and they are supposed to be sending someone. The fire company is going to hose off the concrete around the track and the track once they are gone. He would like to hear any suggestions. Mr. Sayers asked if Mr. Jones had tried the goose repellent spray because they used that previously and it worked. Mr. Darr responded that was the spray that he had been talking about previously. He is hoping that the Game Commission has some advice for them. Mr. Darr also brought up the United Valley Soccer League Field usage vote that would be taking place. Previously we rented the field for \$2,000 and it decreased to \$1,500, but that cost will go to \$0 since certain conditions were met. No further questions or comments.

No questions or comments from the public.

Old Business:

Mr. Reddinger asked if there were any questions or comments about the paving project at the primary school. Dr. Rupp said that she had spoken with Roger Hillard today and asked him when the paving work would be done. Mr. Hillard stated that he told the paving company that he would like the work done before school starts due to the traffic congestion in the area. They have until Sept 29th to get everything done. He said that they have until August 21st, and if it is not completed, then the work will be done on a Saturday.

Mr. Reddinger asked the board if there was any issue of just repairing the holes in the front drive of the high school instead of paving the whole drive. Mr. Bain asked what the cost difference was between repairing and paving. Repair is \$5,600 and replacement is \$19,190. Mr. Bain stated that if budget permits, he would be in favor of the replacement since it's a long term repair, and the repair cost was already 25% of the replacement cost. We have reached out and not received any other bids.

New Business:

Mr. Reddinger asked if anyone had any questions about new business on the agenda. Mrs. Byers questioned on some of the policies and whether they are new or being updated. Policy 616 was updated based on the recommendation of Dale Kirsch, the retired business manager that is helping Mrs. Reitz. This update will allow the business manager to have the discretion to review the invoices and determine if they need paid before the Board approves the expenses. Other policies were discussed.

Mr. Bain revisited the geese issue and suggested that the school look into ultrasonic deterrent devices in order to eliminate the issue. Mr. Bain also questioned why we budget money for project work but we always do repair work. He feels that money would be better spent to completely fix an issue instead of temporarily repairing it. Dr. Rupp said that it was Amos Rudolph's opinion that a fill and seal would be the best option for the district to proceed with in this instance.

Mr. Reddinger asked if there were any questions or comments on the bus/van driver's list. The board commented that they have yet to receive Valley's list of drivers.

Mr. Reddinger asked if there were any questions or comments about the consideration to approve the MOU with Riverview IU #6. Dr. Rupp commented that the district is down to five students being placed out. The District used to be in higher double digits before we started taking back classrooms.

Mr. Reddinger asked if there were any questions or comments regarding removing Cheryl Motter from all bank accounts and official documents while updating the accounts to reflect the new business manager, Rochelle Reitz. Dr. Rupp stated this approval was needed in the minutes to make changes to some bank accounts.

Dr. Rupp commented on the motion to restructure the payments to Cyber Charter Schools. This was recommended by Dale Kirsch and it was a good idea so the district can keep track of these expenses and make sure that they are legitimate.

Mr. Kimmel raised concerns about the public misunderstanding the concept of employee salaries vs. total cost to the district which includes their benefits/insurance. Dr. Rupp commented that a family plan could add approximately \$30,000 to a person's salary number.

Mr. Reddinger questioned Item #42 on the agenda asking what exactly the individual would be monitoring. Mrs. Shirey stated the person would just be another set of eyes to monitor students' arrival in the morning and to ensure that things run smoothly.

Mr. Reddinger questioned Item #43 on the agenda asking what the district would do with this additional social worker when the grant money ran out. Dr. Rupp said that this was something that would have to be figured out so that the district could maintain the best level of service to the students. The district has to continue to search for grant opportunities.

Mr. Reddinger brought up the possibility of having student representatives for the school board if any individuals were interested.

Mr. Wile brought up the issue concerning West Penn Power and tree removal. West Penn Power is willing to come and cut the trees down for the district. The district would just be responsible for removal of the downed trees. Mr. Wile would like an answer from the board about the offer so he can contact West Penn Power and proceed with the situation. Dr. Rupp questioned what kind of time frame would be involved. Mr. Wile said he was told that they would be very flexible about it. Mr. Darr questioned the removing of certain trees because they buffer light and noise for a few of the houses in vicinity of the football field. Mr. Reddinger also questioned if the board has an estimate from any companies for the removal of the downed trees. Dr. Rupp said that they had not obtained an estimate yet. Mr. Reddinger proposed it be put on the agenda for next week's meeting so action could be taken. A majority of the board also agreed that the tree removal shouldn't happen until the completion of the fall sports season. Mr. Bain suggested taking action and getting some estimates to get the process moving.

The Work Session was adjourned at 7:29pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rochelle Reitz

Rochelle Reitz
Board Secretary