

# Regular School Board Meeting

March 12, 2024

A regular meeting of the Redbank Valley School Board was held on March 12, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the Redbank Valley High School. The following members were in attendance: Chris Merwin, Heidi Byers, Chris Adams, Kevin Johnson, Bill Reddinger, John Kimmel, John Sayers, Brent Wile, and Matt Confer.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by John Kimmel to approve the minutes of the Board Meeting on February 12, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Mrs. Shirey had nothing to add to her report.

Mr. Hartle had nothing to add to his report. Dr. Rupp brought up a discussion of the Root Cause analysis with the board. The three main focuses are curriculum alignment, assessment practices, and student engagement. New textbooks have been ordered for grades K-8 in order to focus on curriculum alignment. Dr. Rupp said that student engagement is an issue that needs work. Students are often rushing through tests and not taking their time/focusing. She further discussed ways to improve these three main focus areas within the student body.

Mrs. Byers asked Dr. Rupp questions about the new math curriculum. Mrs. Byers and Dr. Rupp went on to further discuss/encourage collaboration between everyone in the school district. Additional discussion ensued with the board concerning the current math curriculum. Mr. Johnson questioned how valuable test scores were in measuring academic success in the classroom. He wondered if there were other ways to assess the student's proficiency instead of a standardized test. Dr. Rupp relayed that she thought there were many ways to assess student's success outside of the testing. She mentioned grading, attendance, student's taking college/weighted courses, etc. She also stated that the district was adding in analytics tools that would help seek out students that were at risk academically. Dr. Rupp doesn't like to focus on the standardized test scores, but warned that the district could be put into corrective measures if it doesn't meet criteria. No further questions.

Mr. Temchulla had nothing to add to his report.

Mr. Rapp had nothing to add to his report. Dr. Rupp added that there was an approval to replace the steps and door at the little league field behind the primary school. The total cost will be \$1850. Ryko Construction will be completing the work.

Mr. Reitz had nothing to add to his report.

Mrs. Reitz gave the Business Manager's Report. Mrs. Reitz stated that she is still working on the AFR for the 22-23 school year. She talked to the auditor today and she is coming a day next week. She is hopeful to get the AFR completed by the end of the month. She attended the PASBO Conference last week in Hershey. She thought it was a good experience with lots of information and networking. There were over 200 new members in attendance this year. She continues to work hard on getting through the budget. A few board members asked Mrs. Reitz questions about a recent CD/interest. No further questions.

Dr. Rupp gave her report. The students will be presenting "The Wizard of Oz" this week. She has been hearing good things about the musical and encouraged attendance. The policy updates are almost complete. There were a few questions with the policies so the 900's will likely be tabled for now. They will be reviewed at a later date. Some of the board members toured the primary building and the little league fields. The next tour will be March 25<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm at the Intermediate building. The Mental Health Grant and the Police Officer Grant were both approved. The Competitive Grant was applied for in the amount of \$246,000. The grant covers level one needs

such as bollards, fencing at the intermediate school, exterior doors, interior door locks, etc. The district is assembling a team to apply to the Farm to Table Institute. However, only one school district from Western Pennsylvania will be approved. Mr. Sayers questioned Dr. Rupp about the fencing that she had previously referenced and where it was located. She stated that the fencing was located along the wooded area of the playground. No further questions.

Mrs. Byers had nothing to add to the Career Center Report.

Mr. Confer had nothing to add to the Intermediate Report.

Dr. Rupp spoke about the Board Committee Report. The Education Foundation had a meeting yesterday to discuss fundraising. They thought about starting small with events such as summer movie nights. There is some interest in getting a long term plan together for a future golf outing. They continue to look for volunteers to help with these events. No further questions/comments.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Darr spoke about the baseball field situation. He gave a brief history of the baseball program/playing fields. He went into further detail explaining the poor conditions of the infield at Alcola Park. With several fair events taking place on the field, the condition of the playing surface has greatly deteriorated. Casey Sturgeon spoke on what actions could be taken to make the field a better surface for game play. He explained measures that had been taken at the Little League field that could possibly assist in making the Alcola Park field better. Mr. Sturgeon believes there is a clay-based product that could be purchased to be used on the field to significantly improve the conditions. Several local residents are willing to donate their time/equipment to help maintain the field if this product is purchased. Mr. Darr proceeded to explain multiple potential options to the board concerning this situation. He discussed the possibility of moving the games and practices to neighboring schools, but warned of the cost of this action. He emphasized that the number one priority is keeping the kids safe. Mr. Merwin questioned what the condition was of the outfield at Alcola. Mr. Darr said that the outfield wasn't great, but it had been seeded. It will also need rolled. Mr. Sayers had some questions for Mr. Sturgeon regarding the clay product that he was suggesting. Mr. Sayers emphasized how many man hours it takes to maintain the fields on game days. Mr. Merwin questioned Mr. Sturgeon about how much of the clay-based product that the district would need to purchase. Further board discussion ensued about the topic. Mr. Reddinger stated that the issue would be addressed later on in the agenda.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

The second reading of policies 901-902, 904, 906-911 (910 attachment) were tabled in order to have extra time to work on them. Therefore Item #12 was pulled from the Agenda. These will be revisited at a later date.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayers to approve the second reading of Policy 210 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The first reading of policies 912-918 were tabled in order to have extra time to work on them. Therefore, Item #14 was pulled from the Agenda. These will be revisited at a later date.

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by Chris Merwin to approve the RIU6 2024-2025 budget as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by John Kimmel to renew the agreement with Interstate Maintenance as presented. Mr. Sayers commented that he would like to see these jobs advertised to the public. Mr. Reddinger and Dr. Rupp stated that they are being advertised regularly. Mr. Sayers also questioned if there would be any contract buy out fee for the individuals currently working. Dr. Rupp said the company was contacted today and there would be no fee if a contract was terminated. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayers to approve the tax waiver for property #24-062015 in the amount of \$214.86. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by Chris Adams for consideration to approve the 9<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to Washington DC on November 6 – 8, 2024. Total cost to the district for substitutes is \$877.14. Due to the trip being so close the election, the date of this trip will be flexible. An amended motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by Kevin Johnson for the consideration to approve the 9<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to Washington D.C. on a date to be determined. Motion carried unanimously. Then a motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by John Sayers to change the language. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by Chris Merwin for consideration to replace the door and steps at the Little League field behind the Primary School. Total cost is \$1,850. Motion carried. Brent Wile abstained from the vote.

### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayersto approve the February 2024 Treasurer's Report, the General Fund expenditures in the amount of \$1,496,328.54, and the February 2024 Cafeteria Fund Expenditures in the amount of \$59,328.72. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by John Sayers to change the agreement with Bridge Builders for the general scholarship endowment from \$30,000 to \$20,000. Motion carried unanimously.

### **PERSONNEL**

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by John Kimmel to approve Beth Layton to attend the Penn-DEL AER conference on April 24-26 in Harrisburg and for Carlee Slater to attend the 2024 PA PSHA Convention on April 10-12 in Pittsburgh. Cost paid by Title 2A is \$826.37. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by Brent Wile to hire Laura Neiswonger as the Business Operations and Transportation Administrator at a salary of \$38,000. Annual cost to the district is \$69,456.90. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by Chris Merwin to hire Corrie Shoemaker as the Junior High Assistant Volleyball Coach. 57 points at \$45.50. Total cost to the district is \$2,593.50. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by John Kimmel to approve the resignations of Dan Ion (Boys JH Basketball Assistant), Amy Twigg (Girls JH Basketball Head Coach), Mike Fricko (Girls JH Basketball Assistant Coach), Emmanuel Marshall (Head Boys Basketball Coach at conclusion of the season). Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayers to approve the hiring of Mike Rearick and Casey Sturgeon as softball coaches at no additional cost to the district. Coach Miller and Coach Sherry will divide their pay into the four positions. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayers to hire volunteer coaches – Jared Kespelher (Volunteer Track), Scott Gourley (Volunteer Track), Alan Clouse (Volunteer Baseball), Mac Minich (Volunteer Baseball), Samantha Leasure (Volunteer Softball), ToriLynne Nelson-Hetrick (Volunteer Softball), Justin Yeaney (Volunteer Softball), Lisa Bowser (Volunteer Softball), Cari Darr (Volunteer JH Volleyball), Tessa Shick (Volunteer JH Volleyball). Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by John Kimmel to hire Chandra Crissman as a 4.5 hour food handler position at a rate of \$11.24 per hour. Total annual cost to district is \$10,257.66. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by John Sayers to hire Colleen Kiehl as a 2.5 hour cafeteria aide at a rate of \$11.24 per hour. Total annual cost to district is \$5,698.70. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by Chris Adams to approve the Act 93 Agreement for the Business Operations and Transportation Administrator position as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by Heidi Byers to pay Laura Neiswonger a differential payment of \$180.88 for 30 hours of work in the new position. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by John Kimmel to approve Michael Shaffer as a paraprofessional at an hourly rate of \$10.95 per hour. Total annual cost to the district is \$42,635.52. Mr. Shaffer will be shifting to the district payroll. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by Kevin Johnson to hire Macie Boozer as a 200 day HS Secretary at a rate of \$12.24 per hour, pending clearances. Total cost to the district is \$30,037.60. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADDITIONAL BOARD ITEMS:**

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by John Sayers to take care of the necessary corrections to the Alcola baseball field. Motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Mr. Darr reminded the Board about the musical this weekend and asked everyone to come out and support the kids. He also commented on the great atmosphere of the basketball playoff games over the weekend. He believes that everybody really enjoys the games being live streamed and said that Mr. Fricko hopes to expand on that next year. Mr. Darr also said that the trainer has approached him about his future at the school. The trainer hopes to be hired on full time instead of being an hourly rate when needed. He is willing to work under the same situation next year if full time employment isn't an option. Mr. Darr will come back with some numbers for future discussion.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by John Kimmel to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rochelle Reitz*

Rochelle Reitz  
Board Secretary