

McKeesport Area School District
Regular Board Meeting
November 18, 2009

Presiding Lori Spando, President

Date, Time, Place Wednesday, November 18, 2009, 7:30 PM, Board Room,
Administration Building, 3590 O'Neil Boulevard,
McKeesport, PA 15132.

Opening Exercises Ms. Spando called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM,
Followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

Present James Brown
Joe Chiaverini
David Donato
Chris Halaszynski
Steve Kondrosky
Joe Lopretto
Lori Spando
Barb Stevenson
Wayne Washowich

Others Present Dr. Michael Brinkos, Superintendent
Dr. Timothy Gabauer, Assistant Superintendent
David M. Seropian, Business Manager/Board Secretary
James Humanic, Director of Human Resources/
Assistant to the Business Manager
George Gobel, Solicitor

Board President's Remarks – I have no remarks.

Superintendent's Report – Thank you, Madame President, I do have a few remarks. I would like to inform the community first of all that the Allegheny County Health Department will be working collaboratively with McKeesport Area School District to offer H1N1 vaccinations. This clinic will be offered this Saturday, November 21st, and it will be offered at the gymnasium at the high school from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM. I will have information on Ms. Decker's desk, I will pass it over to her, if anybody would like gather this information before they leave today. We do encourage everyone to get their young children inoculated and also the high risk

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individuals and the priority groups and all who should be inoculated and also it's on our web site. I would also like to inform everybody present tonight that Mr. Pierce will be doing a presentation to the Board following the conclusion of this meeting in regards to the building projects and what we're looking at for the Cornell project. I would encourage anybody who would like to hear what Mr. Pierce has to say to stay around after tonight's meeting. It might be a very interesting discussion on what he is proposing. Finally, as is happening across the state in November, we do what is known as a changing of the guard. Because we have some individuals who will be leaving us this month at their last Board meeting and we also have individuals who will be joining us next month as new Board members. It is often bittersweet to say good bye to people that we work closely with for so many many years. As everybody knows, those that sit at this table as Board members, often it's a very thankless job. It's a volunteer job and people do a lot of work and a lot of good things for kids. This evening I would like to recognize the individuals who are leaving and have done a fine job on this Board. First one would be Ms. Spando and all of the Board leaving will be getting a plaque this evening and it basically says we are presenting this plaque in recognition of their leadership, faithful service and dedication to the children of McKeesport Area School District and the time that they have served. The first one I would like to recognize is Madame President, Lori Spando, who has served from 2000-2009. Also, to recognize his service, Mr. Donato, he has served on this Board this time from 2004-2009. Now it is my pleasure to recognize the Dame of McKeesport School Board, probably I would think one of the longest serving if not the longest serving Board members that has sat on this Board is Barbara Stevenson who has served on this Board and dedicated her life to the children of McKeesport for 24 ½ years. So, Barb, we appreciate all the work you have done. We are going to miss you tremendously and also we know Dravosburg is getting a great council person. Thank you.

Mrs. Stevenson – Mike, can I just say something real fast? I just want to thank everybody. I have really enjoyed my tenure on the School Board. It is sort of bittersweet. I'm going to miss it, I know. This school district has been a part of my life for 24 years. All of three (3) of my children have graduated from McKeesport. They are all very successful and sometimes our school district gets a bad wrap. Test scores aren't everything. My three (3) children are an example of this. They are all very successful and I think anybody, if you really want to, can be a success. I'd like to thank all of the teachers for teaching my children whenever they were in school. I'm going to get choked up, but I know I'm going to miss this.

Treasurer's Report – Mr. Lopretto moved to acknowledge receipt of the Treasurer's Report for the month of October 2009. Seconded by Mr. Brown.

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Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Hearing of Citizens –

Deborah Podolak, 111 Monongahela Avenue, Dravosburg, PA 15034.

Mrs. Podolak addressed the Board on the issue of bullying her son, Joseph Podolak.

Nancy Jean Boyle, 1000 Andrew Street #203, Homestead, PA 15122.

Mrs. Boyle addressed the Board on the issue of bullying of her grandson, Joseph Podolak.

Scott Smith, 1507 Kansas Avenue, White Oak, PA 15131.

Mr. Smith addressed the Board on the issue of construction.

Dr. Major Mason, 1419 Bailey Avenue, McKeesport, PA 15132.

Dr. Mason addressed the Board on the issue of the construction contract. (Dr. Mason's handout is included as backup to the minutes.) Correct the notes to include Mr. Brown voted for PPM and Mrs. Stevenson voted against PPM.

Ray Malinchak, 600 Beckman Drive, McKeesport, PA 15132.

Mr. Malinchak addressed the Board on the issue of contract.

Keith Murphy, 907 Evans Avenue, McKeesport, PA 15132.

Mr. Murphy addressed the Board on the issue of construction contract. (Mr. Murphy's handout is included as a backup to the minutes.)

Dr. Jane Coughenour, N. Huntingdon, PA 15642.

Dr. Coughenour addressed her mom (Barbara Stevenson) at her last meeting.

Minutes – Mr. Halaszynski moved to approve the minutes of the Open Agenda Meeting of October 15, 2009 and the Regular Meeting of October 21, 2009. Seconded by Mr. Lopretto.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Bills - Mr. Kondrosky moved to approve the list of bills. Seconded by Mr. Chiaverini.

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Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Refunds – Mr. Lopretto moved to approve property tax refunds. Seconded by Mr. Halaszynski.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Field Trip – Mr. Chiaverini moved to approve the following field trip:

- A. Freshman Academy students to Baltimore, Maryland on February 19, 2010.
Seconded by Mr. Halaszynski.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Transfers – Mr. Brown moved to approve the year end budgetary transfers for 2008/2009 as per the auditor's recommendation. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Survey – Mr. Kondrosky moved to approve the administration of the Pennsylvania Youth Survey to the 6th and 8th grade students. Seconded by Mr. Brown.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Plans – Mr. Kondrosky moved to approve the Getting Results Plans for South Hall, Founders Hall and Cornell. Seconded by Mr. Brown.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Green Sheets – Mr. Chiaverini moved to approve personnel recommendations. Seconded by Mr. Halaszynski.

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PROFESSIONAL:

LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

1. Nicole Given Art Itinerant (Cornell/McClure), maternity leave of absence effective 01-04-10 to an undetermined date . Unpaid leave will commence after the expiration of (20) sick days. FMLA
2. Stephanie Glover Music Teacher, High School, maternity leave of absence effective 01-04-10 to an undetermined date. Unpaid leave will commence after the expiration of sick and personal days.
3. Melissa Piontka Elementary Teacher, McClure Intermediate School, maternity leave of absence effective approximately 12-02-09 to an undetermined date. Unpaid leave will commence after the expiration of sick days. FMLA
4. Elizabeth Pochiba English Teacher, High School, maternity leave of absence effective 12-23-09 to an undetermined date. Unpaid leave will commence after the expiration of sick days. FMLA

TO BE HIRED: Long Term Substitutes: Rate of pay will be \$80.00/day + benefits and increase to \$125.00/day on the 61st day:

1. Jamie Lovely (Glover) Music Teacher, High School, effective 01-04-10.
2. Deneen Folkmire (Piontka) Elementary Teacher, McClure Intermediate School effective approximately 12-02-09.

TO BE HIRED: Long Term Substitute: Rate of pay will be \$125.00/day + benefits:

1. Sarah Mooney (Given) Art Teacher, Itinerant (Cornell/McClure) effective 12-22-09.

TO BE HIRED: Long Term Substitute: Rate of pay will be \$100.00/day + benefits and increase to \$125.00 on the 61st day:

1. Sandra McPherson (Pochiba) English Teacher, High School, effective 12-23-09

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TO BE HIRED: Title I Facilitator for the 2009-2010 school year. Rate of pay will be either \$95.00/day + individual benefits or \$105.00/day without benefits:

1. Cherie King Cornell Intermediate School, effective immediately.

RESIGNATION: Extra Curricular Athletics: Effective immediately:

1. Chris Olinsky Assistant Wrestling Coach

CONFERENCE REQUESTS:

1. Joan Carney
(16) students Genetic Update Conference. Sponsored by the Genetic Education Center at Upper St. Clair High School.
December 4, 2009
(Paid for by the Biotech Grant)
\$494.00
2. Michael Dischner
(25) students W. PA VEX Robotics Competition. Sponsored by the National Center for Robotics at The California University of Pennsylvania
November 20, 2009
(Paid for by the TTC Grant)
\$250.00

CHANGES TO THE SUBSTITUTE TEACHER LIST:

ADDITIONS:

- 1.* Megan Bomba Elementary
- 2.* Stephanie Budd Elementary
- 3.* Lauren Menzietti Elementary
- 4.* James Cordis General Science

BOARD ACTION TO INCREASE THE SUBSTITUTE RATE FOR **ALL** RETIRED TEACHERS TO \$100.00/DAY.

SUPPORT STAFF:

RESIGNATIONS:

1. Jean Mercea Special Education Assistant, Centennial Elementary School, effective 10-30-09.
2. Patricia Jackowski General Worker, Food Service Department at the High School, effective 08-28-09.
3. Maria Ward General Worker, Food Service Department at the High School, effective 08-28-09.

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TO BE HIRED: Effective immediately:

1. Catherine Shaffer General Worker, Food Service Department at Founders' Hall. Hourly rate of pay will be \$7.25.
2. Margaret Rowe General Worker, Food Service Department, placement to be determined after bidding process. Hourly rate of pay will be \$7.25.

CHANGE OF STATUS: Effective 10-30-09:

1. Tammy Filotei From: Lunch Aide at White Oak Elementary
To: General Worker at White Oak Elementary
Rate of pay: \$7.25/hour

SUPPORT STAFF:

CHANGES TO THE SUBSTITUTE LISTS:

ADDITIONS:

- 1.* Cindy Budai Instructional Assistant and Food Service Department
- 2.* Kathy Mesiarik Food Service
- 3.* Erica Posipanka Food Service
- 4.* Kaye Whirl Food Service

DELETIONS:

1. Cathy Kelly Food Service
2. Keith Yates Food Service
3. Jennifer Harkelroad Food Service
4. Beverly Kitchens Food Service
5. Janine McBride Food Service

BOARD ACTION TO CREATE THE FOLLOWING CONTRACTED POSITION EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY (Paid for by the ELECT/EFI Grant):

1. Young Parents Project Case Manager Liaison. Position not to exceed 160/days -- 7.5 hours/day. Contracted rate of pay will be \$21.50/hour.

* Pending receipt of Act 34, 114 and 151 clearances, T.B. Tine Test and Drug Test results

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

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Bids – Mr. Kondrosky moved to reject the stage equipment bids of October 21, 2009 and authorize the architect to re-bid the project. Seconded by Mr. Chiaverini.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Investment Banking – Mr. Lopretto moved to accept the proposal from Janney Montgomery Scott to provide investment banking/bond underwriting services to the District for financing of the current construction/renovation projects. Seconded by Mr. Brown.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Lopretto, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Voting no. Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Ms. Spando

Bond Counsel - Mr. Chiaverini moved to appoint Dinsmore & Shohl as Bond Counsel for the financing of the current construction/renovation projects. Seconded by

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Committee Reports

Athletic – James Brown – no report

Buildings & Grounds – Joseph Chiaverini – no report

Cultural Diversity – Wayne Washowich – no report

Education/Technology/Grants & Outside Funding – Steven Kondrosky – Yes we did meet. The Education Committee met on November 12th. We usually have an hour to set aside for the meeting, but due to the Buildings & Grounds meeting that lasted one and a half hours, we had to cram an hour of information into a half hour. With some very fast talking we held the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was for continuous school improvement plans with the reports given by Pam Gordon for Cornell, Harry Bauman for Founders and Dr. Chapman for the high school. A study of program to improve the reading and math skills is being introduced to our district that was proven successful in another district with similar conditions. This should provide a tremendous input in assisting our educators with the necessary information to help

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increase our test scores and bring our district up to respect. We need to reach our students and show them how competitive they can be with just a little effort. This could truly be an extremely positive situation for our school district.

Financial Affairs – David Donato – no report

Legislation/Policy – Barbara Stevenson – no report

Personnel – Chris Halaszynski – We had a meeting and all of the decisions are reflected in tonight's green sheets.

Safe Schools – Joe Lopretto – We did have a meeting. Myself and Dr. Gabauer and the Principal staff. We had a few things that needed fixed at the last meeting and now are fixed. More cameras are being put in place. Kudos to Dr. Gabauer and all the principals. Things are going safe and that's the way we want to keep them.

Solicitor's Report – Nothing for the public meeting.

Correspondence – None

New Business –

Mr. Donato – Just a couple of issues, some general housekeeping issues that I would like on the record, Ms. Decker. On the issue of Bond Counsel, I should have commented at the time. The firm chosen was substantially higher. The fee was substantially higher than PNC Corp. That's the group that I was supporting and it did not pass. I wanted to give my motivation for that. The other thing is, the Board of Directors has received from the Business Office, the financial statement of the district budget year ending June 30, 2009. Once again, I am pleased to report that the School District has a fund balance of \$5.8 million. Pretty much like it has had over the course of the last decade. In between now and the actual audit report, when the audit report does reveal the actual numbers, those numbers are usually swelled a few dollars and will probably be over or around \$6 million. So I wanted to say significant because this is the last time I will have a chance to address the finances of the district. I would urge Board members to keep up the good work in keeping that kind of fund balance as we move forward. We were able to do that while reducing taxes and I think that's a compliment if I've ever heard one. So, I'm very proud of that record and very proud of the Board members that helped us achieve that. Lastly, Ms. Spando, I would like to commend you in the fashion of which you conducted

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yourself in, arguably one of the most difficult years that I can recall. Any controversial decisions over the course of the year in which you stayed above the fray. This Board of Directors, in my view, owes you a debt of gratitude.

Ms. Spando – Thank you.

Mr. Kondrosky – Madame President, at this time I would like to make a motion to terminate the services of Dillon, McCandless, King, Coulter & Graham as special counsel and appoint the firm of Dodaro, Matta & Cambest effective immediately. Seconded by Mr. Lopretto. Discussion followed.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Voting no. Mr. Donato, Ms. Spando

Dr. Brinkos – We are going to have to reschedule the Reorganization Meeting because the School Code states that the new Board will take office on the first Monday of the first week of December. This year the first week of December does not have a Monday in it. So, we are going to have to reschedule the Board meeting. I would ask the Board to make a motion to reschedule our Reorganization Meeting for December 7th. Motion made by Mr. Washowich. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky.

Voting aye. Mr. Brown, Mr. Chiaverini, Mr. Donato, Mr. Halaszynski, Mr. Kondrosky, Mr. Lopretto, Ms. Spando, Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. Washowich

Adjournment – 8:15 PM – Mr. Washowich moved for adjournment. Seconded by Mr. Kondrosky.

Voting aye. All Members present.

ATTEST: _____
David M. Seropian, Business Manager/Board Secretary

