

**PALMERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Palmerton, PA

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

An executive session was held on Thursday, October 10, 2024, concerning personnel matters and again after the regular board meeting today, Tuesday, October 15, 2024 concerning personnel matters.

The regular board meeting of the Palmerton Area School District Board of School Directors was held in the Boardroom of the Administration Building, 680 Fourth Street, Palmerton, PA, on Tuesday, October 15, 2024, and called to order at 5:30 p.m. Vice-President Mazepa presided. The meeting was viewable via livestream on the district’s Facebook page.

Pledge of Allegiance

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Directors Connell, Haas (via telephone), King, Krawchuk, Mazepa, Danielle Paules, Earl Paules, Schaible and Snyder

**OTHER ATTENDANCE**

Ryan Kish – Interim Superintendent and Business Manager, Jacqueline McCandless – Board Secretary, and Shawn Lochinger– Solicitor

**STUDENT REPORT:**

High School – Ella Baumgardt, grade 12

- Spanish Class – celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with posters showing facts about Hispanic countries
- German Class – learned about history and significance of Oktoberfest
- Scholastic Scrimmage – ten students interested; practice has started
- PYEA – ten students interested in learning about the teacher profession; co-op teacher assignments being set up; preparing for mock lessons
- CAD – class completed designing and manufacturing LED acrylic signs
- PAAC – holding their annual pet photo contest this month
- Freshman Class – voted in their class officers: Ben Jahelka, President, Garrett Kunkle, Vice President, Jules Snyder, Secretary, and Maddie Thomas, Treasurer
- Student Council – homecoming events held last week; Ava Platts crowned queen, and Chris Zengen was chosen as king; first mini-THON fundraiser held at last football game
- Athletics – league playoffs began with field hockey and boys’ soccer qualifying; district play will start next week for field hockey, soccer, and cross country; Joey Solt competed in district golf tournament, tied for 9<sup>th</sup> place; cheer team hosted a successful first annual alumni night; senior athletes visiting on various mornings at Towamensing to greet students to help foster school spirit, thank you to Mrs. Husar, Mrs. George, and Mrs. Beblavy for coordinating and supporting this event
- Upcoming events – fire department will hold a fire safety event; World Unity Day tomorrow, wear orange; SADD club organizing spirit week for Red Ribbon Week

Junior High School – Ruthie Hook, grade 8

- Student Council – elections coming up soon; first fundraiser is the annual walk-a-thon
- Bomber Pride Day – held Sept. 27 with spirit day themes and activities each day
- Courtyard beautification done by staff and students; thank you to Foothill Farms for donating pumpkins and Yenser’s Farm for donating cornstalks, pumpkins, and mums
- Mrs. Owens’ Life Skills class – therapy dog visiting once a month to interact with students who will have opportunity to learn about dog training; future activities are being planned
- Escape Room afterschool program – has resumed with increased attendance each week; Mrs. Kim Seiler and Mrs. Melissa Hoffman facilitate the group
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA – students have submitted entries into the Young Writers competition in hopes of being chosen for publication

**SUPERINTENDENT/BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT:**

- Weight room renovation nearly complete with equipment needing to be moved back in place; thank you to Manny Mendes and Trahn Thompson for their work on laying the rubber flooring
- National Custodians Day was on October 2; Food Service Workers Day was on Sept. 25; thank you to these two groups who often do a thankless job
- Baseball fence construction started this morning; should take about a week and a half to finish
- Congratulations to Mrs. Danzeisen, who was visited last week by Rep. Susan Wild, and received a commemorative copy of the congressional record of her being a 2024 Teacher Appreciation Week honoree
- Title 1 Bingo Night at S. S. Palmer was very successful with over 130 attendees; thank you to the staff who held the event
- Ben Hartranft of Benergy, a motivational speaker who spoke to our staff at the beginning of the school year, will visit the district again next week to speak with all students

**BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:**

- Director Danielle Paules – PSBA: four trust scholarships open to students until March 14; one-time \$5,000 award for seniors. Director Schaible reported on the leadership conference she attended last week; inspired to work on board culture, professional development, and governance

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Director Schaible stated the 300 policies are mostly up to date per PSBA
- Director Earl Paules spoke about his intention to continue to support the town by making a difference as a board member; feels Mr. Kish is the right choice for Superintendent

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

- Constance Banko – spoke in support of hiring Mr. Kish as Superintendent; wants financial accountability from the district; asked for numerical data used to choose the Superintendent; Director Earl Paules answered that Mr. Kish led in points on each rating aspect
- Richard Banko – taxpayers need to be considered more and should have a say in choosing the Superintendent; asked for the survey results from the Superintendent presentations
- Kyle Schugaradt – spoke in support of hiring Mr. Kish as Superintendent
- William Acierno – spoke of the qualities of Mr. Kish; has not seen an administrator in the past as being as on-site as Mr. Kish was for the recent S. S. Palmer renovation project; perhaps someone with business sense is the person needed for the job; stated we have enough other staff in place to handle the education side
- Brandon Beahn – expressed his disappointment of how the hiring of the Superintendent has been handled; stated transparency is crucial and that we should prioritize a candidate, such as Mr. Kish, that demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity and equity in education; Mr. Kish is a leader, and his work ethic makes him the right fit for Superintendent; rating of candidates should not be disregarded
- Michelle Gordon – attended the Superintendent candidates' public presentations which the Board encouraged our participation in, and urged the Board to remember those results; feels our voices are not being heard; reconsider the vote tonight for Superintendent by choosing a someone familiar with our district, which is key in moving forward, especially with the upcoming feasibility study discussions
- Danielle Paules – spoke about the Board's process in hiring the Superintendent and stated the district staff and community's input was not listened to; Mr. Kish deserves a chance as Superintendent; do the right thing and choose Mr. Kish
- Lori Nemeth – asked for details on the formation of the new high school clubs, STEM and Fishing; stated in any election, the majority picks a winner, and that is how it should be done here for Superintendent
- Michael George – thanked the Board for the job they do; stated if the Board feels confident in their choice for Superintendent after going through the process, then they should make that

right choice; just because the Board didn't choose who the public says, it doesn't mean the Board didn't listen to them

- Mary Farquhar – recognized that Mr. Kish never made her feel stupid for asking questions and always gave her information she needed; feels he is the right person for the job and asked the Board to consider this as they make their choice
- MaryJo King – thanked the public for their comments; stated the public's opinions were not unheard; the Board followed the process in choosing a Superintendent, making tweaks along the way; Mr. Kish has done a great job as Interim Superintendent; the rubrics filled out were only to be used as talking points in picking a Superintendent

**MEETING MINUTES**

Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Connell, to approve the board meeting minutes from September 17, 2024.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.  
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Director King moved, seconded by Director Krawchuk, to approve the consent agenda.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.  
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**FISCAL REPORTS**

- Approved accounts payable reports
- Approved treasurer's reports
- Approved budget transfers

**INSURANCE RENEWALS**

Approved the following insurance renewals effective November 12, 2024:

Coverage	Carrier	Expiring Term Premium	Proposed Term Premium
Property	CM Regent Ins. Co.	\$78,015.00	\$84,041.00
General Liability & Law Enforcement	CM Regent Ins. Co.	\$29,029.00	\$29,920.00
Crime	CM Regent Ins. Co.	\$ 1,026.00	\$ 1,069.00
Automobile	CM Regent Ins. Co.	\$ 6,516.00	\$ 7,135.00
Equipment Breakdown	CM Regent Ins. Co.	\$ 5,457.00	\$ 5,466.00
Umbrella	CM Regent Ins. Co.	\$11,527.00	\$11,865.00
Cyber Liability	Houston Casualty Co.	\$16,083.00	\$16,083.00
School Leaders' Liability	CM Regent Ins. Co.	\$24,476.00	\$28,070.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$172,129.00</b>	<b>\$183,649.00</b>

**BP ENERGY/ ELECTRICITY RATES**

Approved retroactively the agreement with BP Energy/Provident Energy for a 24-month term from July 2025 through June 2027 for electricity at \$0.05608/kWh. The district is part of a cooperative purchasing group, and this price results in a \$0.00429/kWh increase from the current pricing

**DJ**

Approved retroactively the contract with Nick Romano DJ Service for the high school dance on October 12, 2024 in the amount of \$350.00

**HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

Approved Katherine Baumgardt to teach five (5) hours a week of homebound instruction at the Professional Services rate per the PAEA Collective Bargaining Agreement effective October 16, 2024 through the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year

<b>UNCOMPENSATED LEAVE</b>	Approved the following uncompensated leave request:																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 163 581 205">Employee #531</td> <td data-bbox="581 163 1182 205">February 12, 2025 and February 13, 2025</td> </tr> </table>	Employee #531	February 12, 2025 and February 13, 2025																
Employee #531	February 12, 2025 and February 13, 2025																		
<b>FMLA</b>	Approved the following for Family & Medical Leave:																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 306 581 348">Employee #3493</td> <td data-bbox="581 306 1518 348">Effective from November 14, 2024 through approximately January 28, 2025</td> </tr> </table>	Employee #3493	Effective from November 14, 2024 through approximately January 28, 2025																
Employee #3493	Effective from November 14, 2024 through approximately January 28, 2025																		
<b>HORIZONTAL MOVEMENT</b>	Acknowledged the following horizontal movement effective the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year:																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 474 605 516">Tyler Svetik</td> <td data-bbox="605 474 1179 516">From Bachelor's +24 to Master's</td> </tr> </table>	Tyler Svetik	From Bachelor's +24 to Master's																
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<b>WINTER EVENT WORKERS</b>	Approved the following Winter Event Workers at a rate of \$30.00 per event effective October 16, 2024:																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 617 732 651">Pamela Andrews</td> <td data-bbox="732 617 1131 651">Kelly Heinrich</td> <td data-bbox="1131 617 1526 651">Kimberly Seiler</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 651 732 684">Suzanne Black</td> <td data-bbox="732 651 1131 684">John Hrebik</td> <td data-bbox="1131 651 1526 684">Thomas Smelas</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 684 732 718">Jessica Cohen</td> <td data-bbox="732 684 1131 718">Alexander Knoll</td> <td data-bbox="1131 684 1526 718">David Smith</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 718 732 751">Robert Falkenstein</td> <td data-bbox="732 718 1131 751">Vicki McHugh</td> <td data-bbox="1131 718 1526 751">Scott Stahler</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 751 732 785">Edward Hedes</td> <td data-bbox="732 751 1131 785">Joshua Nenscel</td> <td data-bbox="1131 751 1526 785">Rodney Strohl</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 785 732 819">Jodi Hedes</td> <td data-bbox="732 785 1131 819">Christine Owens</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Pamela Andrews	Kelly Heinrich	Kimberly Seiler	Suzanne Black	John Hrebik	Thomas Smelas	Jessica Cohen	Alexander Knoll	David Smith	Robert Falkenstein	Vicki McHugh	Scott Stahler	Edward Hedes	Joshua Nenscel	Rodney Strohl	Jodi Hedes	Christine Owens	
Pamela Andrews	Kelly Heinrich	Kimberly Seiler																	
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Robert Falkenstein	Vicki McHugh	Scott Stahler																	
Edward Hedes	Joshua Nenscel	Rodney Strohl																	
Jodi Hedes	Christine Owens																		
<b>CROSSING GUARD</b>	Approved the Contracted Crossing Guard Employment Agreement with the following for the 2024-2025 school year effective October 16, 2024:																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 953 646 995">MaryEllen Rhoads</td> </tr> </table>	MaryEllen Rhoads																	
MaryEllen Rhoads																			
<b>SUBS</b>	Approved the following Substitutes effective October 16, 2024:																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 1096 594 1129">Faith Szena</td> <td data-bbox="594 1096 1167 1129">Substitute Teacher</td> <td data-bbox="1167 1096 1453 1129">\$110.00 daily rate</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 1129 594 1213">Katherine Kamm</td> <td data-bbox="594 1129 1167 1213">Substitute Instructional Assistant; Substitute Secretary; Substitute Food Service Worker</td> <td data-bbox="1167 1129 1453 1213">\$10.00 per hour</td> </tr> </table>	Faith Szena	Substitute Teacher	\$110.00 daily rate	Katherine Kamm	Substitute Instructional Assistant; Substitute Secretary; Substitute Food Service Worker	\$10.00 per hour												
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<b>RESIGNATIONS</b>	Accepted the following resignations:																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 1314 634 1348">Rhianna Rivera</td> <td data-bbox="634 1314 1089 1348">Instructional Assistant</td> <td data-bbox="1089 1314 1502 1348">Effective October 8, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 1348 634 1381">Rhianna Rivera</td> <td data-bbox="634 1348 1089 1381">Student Council-HS Co-Advisor</td> <td data-bbox="1089 1348 1502 1381">Effective October 8, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 1381 634 1415">Lindsay Moninghoff</td> <td data-bbox="634 1381 1089 1415">Instructional Assistant</td> <td data-bbox="1089 1381 1502 1415">Effective October 11, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 1415 634 1449">Bronwyn Cseh</td> <td data-bbox="634 1415 1089 1449">Safety Patrol-Elementary</td> <td data-bbox="1089 1415 1502 1449">Effective September 19, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="332 1449 634 1482">Cindy Zmarzley</td> <td data-bbox="634 1449 1089 1482">Food Service Worker</td> <td data-bbox="1089 1449 1502 1482">Effective September 24, 2024</td> </tr> </table>	Rhianna Rivera	Instructional Assistant	Effective October 8, 2024	Rhianna Rivera	Student Council-HS Co-Advisor	Effective October 8, 2024	Lindsay Moninghoff	Instructional Assistant	Effective October 11, 2024	Bronwyn Cseh	Safety Patrol-Elementary	Effective September 19, 2024	Cindy Zmarzley	Food Service Worker	Effective September 24, 2024			
Rhianna Rivera	Instructional Assistant	Effective October 8, 2024																	
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Bronwyn Cseh	Safety Patrol-Elementary	Effective September 19, 2024																	
Cindy Zmarzley	Food Service Worker	Effective September 24, 2024																	
<b>TUITION REIMBURSEMENT</b>	Approved tuition reimbursement																		
<b>STEPPING STONES-PSYCHOLOGIST</b>	Approved the Agreement and Appendix A with The Stepping Stones Group beginning October 15, 2024 through October 15, 2025																		
<b>PSYCHOLOGISTS-INDEPENDENTS</b>	Approved the Independent Contractor Agreement with Casey Craddock, certified school psychologist, beginning October 16, 2024 through June 30, 2025																		
	Approved the Independent Contractor Agreement with Kelsey Schultz, certified school psychologist, beginning October 16, 2024 through June 30, 2025																		

**FIELD TRIPS**

Approved the following field trip requests:

PA FBLA State Leadership Workshop	Kalahari Resorts & Conventions, Pocono Manor	November 3, 2024 through November 4, 2024
Wrestling team tournament	Carlisle High School, Carlisle	December 13, 2024 through December 14, 2024
Wrestling team state level competition	Hershey Giant Center, Hershey	March 5, 2025 through March 8, 2025

**HS CLUB ADDITIONS**

Approved the formation of the following extracurricular clubs at the high school effective October 16, 2024:

Fishing
STEM

**CONFERENCE**

Approved the following conference:

Demi Rohlfig	TED Conference, Pittsburgh, PA	November 6, 2024 through November 8, 2024	Estimated cost of \$1,556.62
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**1<sup>st</sup> READING POLICY 816**

Approved the first reading of the following policy:

- 1) Policy #816 District Social Media

**2<sup>nd</sup> READING POLICIES 103-103.1-104-234-247-249**

Approved the second reading and adoption of the following policies:

- 2) Policy #103 Discrimination/Harassment Affecting Students
- 3) Policy #103.1 Nondiscrimination-Qualified Students with Disabilities
- 4) Policy #104 Discrimination/Harassment Affecting Staff
- 5) Policy #234 Pregnant/Parenting/Married Students
- 6) Policy #247 Hazing
- 7) Policy #249 Bullying/Cyberbullying

**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**KCE-PALMER PARKING LOT**

Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Connell, to authorize Keystone Consulting Engineers, Inc. to proceed with the engineering design and bid package at an estimated amount of \$20,000 for the S. S. Palmer Elementary School parking lot overlay project.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.  
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

**JUNIOR HIGH PRINCIPAL**

Director King moved, seconded by Director Schaible, to approve David Sodl as Junior High School Principal, as a Group One employee per the Act 93 Memorandum of Understanding, at an annual salary of \$100,000 prorated effective January 3, 2025.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.  
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

**SECONDARY ASST. PRINCIPAL RESIGNATION**

Director Schaible moved, seconded by Director Snyder, to accept the resignation of David Sodl as Secondary Assistant Principal effective January 2, 2025.

Aye Votes: All Directors Present.  
Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.

<b>SUPERINTENDENT 2024-2027</b>	<p>Director Krawchuk moved, seconded by Director Schaible, to approve Angela Friebolin as District Superintendent pursuant to the terms and conditions set forth in a contract negotiated between Ms. Friebolin and the Palmerton Area Board of School Directors.</p> <p>Aye Votes: Directors Connell, Haas, King, Krawchuk, Mazepa, Schaible, and Snyder. Nay Votes: Directors Earl and Danielle Paules. Motion Carried.</p> <p><b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pinar Angun – asked for more communication about the feasibility study be given to parents ahead of time prior to the town hall presentation</li> <li>• Heather Pisulak – asked what the timeframe is to implement the feasibility study results and when the Board will vote on it</li> <li>• Kim Long – asked about school policy on students with ADHD; asking for communication from the principal</li> <li>• Michael Snyder – concerned about the Superintendent hiring process; feels one of the other candidates had more qualifications for the Superintendent position</li> </ul> <p><b>FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Snyder congratulated and wished good luck to our two new hires tonight. Director Mazepa announced Ms. Friebolin’s start date will be December 2, 2024</li> <li>• Director Mazepa stated an executive session will be held today immediately following this meeting for personnel and legal matters</li> </ul>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	<p>Director Snyder moved, seconded by Director Schaible, to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m.</p> <p>Aye Votes: All Directors Present. Nay Votes: None. Motion Carried.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Jacqueline McCandless Board Secretary</p>