



MINUTES
SPRING GROVE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
VOTING MEETING

DATE/TIME of MEETING: September 13, 2021 @ 6:00 PM

LOCATION of MEETING: SPRING GROVE AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL
244 OLD HANOVER ROAD, SPRING GROVE, PA

ATTENDANCE: **The following School Directors were in attendance:**
Karen Baum, Maurice Gaskins, Cindy Huber, Ben Ramsay, Todd Staub,
Doug Stein, Dave Trettel (*via Zoom*), Doug White

The following School Directors were absent:
Rachel Rohrbaugh

The following Spring Grove Area School District Administrators were in attendance:

Dr. George W. Ioannidis, Superintendent
Dr. Steve Guadagnino, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Mark Czapp, Director of Business Operations/Board Secretary
Ms. Karyn Brown, Director of Pupil Services

A voting meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Spring Grove Area School District was held on Monday, September 13, 2021. Cindy Huber, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed. Roll call taken by the Board Recording Secretary reflected seven Board members present, with Dave Trettel participating virtually and Rachel Rohrbaugh absent for personal reasons.

Huber reported that the follow executive sessions were held since reported at the last sunshine meeting: August 23, 2021, for Personnel; September 3, 2021, for Legal; and September 9, 2021, for Legal reasons. There will be an executive session this evening following adjournment of the DSF meeting for negotiations.

SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE:

Dr. Ioannidis opened a time of public comment by sharing that the goal of the District since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic has been to open schools to offer programs and extracurriculars to students in a safe and engaging environment. The recent mask order is being implemented with a grace period that was extended to the close of Monday, September 20. We continue to receive exception forms, and we continue to review the best manner to implement the order for the benefit of all. Our overall success depends on the cooperation of staff, parents, and students.

1. Following a statement read by Board President Huber regarding parameters for public comment, Huber asked for a motion to limit each public comment to four minutes and extend the allotted time from a half hour to a full hour, in order to give as many audience participants an opportunity to speak as possible.

White motioned. Gaskins seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Ramsay spoke as the newest member on the School Board and stated that he has spent nearly forty hours over the past few weeks speaking with members of other school boards, in addition to state and local representatives of York County. He believes that everyone is trying to do the right thing, regardless of what side an individual stands on the mask order, and he asked that all those who are planning to speak this evening be courteous and respectful.

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PUBLIC COMMENT:

Allissa Barshinger, resident and parent, stated that many families need and use public education as a childcare option. In-person education is higher quality than virtual, and if children get sick, they cannot be in school. If we can do anything to reduce the transmission of COVID, we should enforce the best tools that result in overseeing what is best for our students, including enforcing the mask order.

Ann Strickland, staff member at SGE, thanked the Board for giving students the option to wear masks at the start of the school year, stating she is for personal choice of mask use. She also thanked the Board for keeping our schools open and shared her support for the administration and school board. She encouraged everyone to come together for the good of keeping schools open, and if masks are not an option for medical reasons, an acceptable face shield serves as a feasible alternative.

Ioannidis took a moment to thank Barshinger and Strickland for their comments. He values the opportunity to speak with all community members for the benefit of our students. There are different perspectives and multiple sides; but we remain here for a singular purpose and will do whatever it takes to remain open. In school is where the kids want to be, and this is where we want them to be.

Amber Dull, resident and parent, stated that power was taken from the community, the school district, and the parent last week with the change in the mask order. Stress has returned, and the Governor has ignored the impact to students. She is concerned that teachers' and administrators' trusting relationship with students will be lost when we push for masking instead of educating. She does not want her children to wear a mask, and she does not want to look at other avenues for her children's education.

Jacob Miller, resident and parent, thanked the Board, stating that his mother served on the Board years ago. Miller is concerned about the District's letter going to the Department of Education as it appears as though we are looking to do the bare minimum. If we do not structure our measures around fighting COVID, we are going to lose the battle. He referred to the District's Health and Safety Plan that states we will follow CDC guidelines. Vaccination and masking are cheap ways to fight the spread, and he supports the order; but we need to fight it together.

Justin Fuhrman, Heidelberg Township, thanked the School Board and the teachers. We came together on September 12th after 9-1-1, and it was about keeping our freedom. This current situation is also about freedom, and he supports having a choice with the mask order.

Tracy Smith-Ickes, resident, shared that though she is considered a high risk, she is pro-choice for masks. She questioned if the Governor's order is constitutional. She stated that we do not yet know the consequences of what masks are doing to our children physically, mentally, and emotionally. If the school can leave the masking option open, we need to do that. Ickes also mentioned that students are being exposed to the CNN news channel in the classroom environment and questioned if the opposing viewpoint through other news stations was also being shown.

Ben Mikesell, resident and parent, opposes the mask mandate. Parents should be able to make the decision themselves. Why are we asking students to fight a battle for the adults? He encouraged opposing any idea of making kids get vaccinations.

Bryce Weidman, high school senior, gave his perspective on the mask order, noting that his life as a student in 11th grade last year was impacted very negatively. He asked the Board to do everything in its power to not follow the order and let students make their own choice. Most kids don't criticize others for wearing or not wearing; they simply respect the right to make a choice. If it's up to the Board, make a choice for the students; if it's not up to the Board, he asked that they do everything in their power to push for choice.

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Janice Bish, resident, thanked the Board for all they are doing. The District began the school year with masks optional, and having attended the Middle School Open House during the first week, she observed a full house of attendees, with only as many as ten wearing a mask. She stated there is no point in trying to mandate masks.

Deborah Ferree, resident and former employee, has grandchildren in the district, one of whom cannot wear a mask for physical reasons. She stated that she is pro-choice with masks and asked the Board to not make the kids wear masks.

Scott Glace, resident, agrees with choice for masks and does not want it to be mandatory. He also stated that his son, who attends the high school, has told him that the teacher has the news station, CNN on in the classroom. If the kids are being forced to watch one-sided news organizations, this is a type of indoctrination, and he opposes that.

Victoria Pinca, resident and parent, stated that due to COVID last year, she was unable to meet her child's teacher and did not get to tour the building. She believes masks are unhealthy and there should be something we can do to take back control. She thanked and shared her support of the Board, and stated she and others are ready to help in any way possible.

Ragina Raygor, resident and former student, shared comments from a personal, dyslexic background. She noted how much was gained by seeing facial expressions and formation of words without masks during her education that helped to diagnose an otherwise difficult issue like dyslexia. If we continue with masks, impairments are going to get missed. Fix the problem now by not requiring masks.

Natasha Berrier, high school student, stated that students should not be placed on lockdown as they were last year when they could not come to school. She needs and supports in-person, face-to-face learning. A lot of kids are being left behind with the mask mandate, and she does not support being forced to wear a mask.

Heather Zimmerman, resident and parent, asked how community members can help the Board. She stated that at some point, we need to come together as a community and decide how we are going to take our district back.

Sean Carbaugh, resident, supports masks being optional. He asked the Board to listen to the people, and not a Governor who is forcing a mandate after not getting his way.

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE:

Huber thanked everyone for their comments.

Ramsay thanked all who spoke, especially the students. He thanked the administration for teaching our students to stand up.

Gaskins stated that the District is here to provide our students with a safe and educational environment. He related the current situation to a recent tornado warning at the end of a school day. We acted and exercised sheltering in place. We followed protocols and standard operating procedures. Students remained safe.

CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence.

ACTION ITEMS:

POLICY

Stein referred to the drafted letter to Acting Health Secretary Beam with the PA Department of Health, the next item on the agenda for consideration under Policy. He read a statement and asked that it be included in the minutes in its entirety. (See Appendix A.)

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Ioannidis followed up on the letter to DoH that the Board is going to consider. He addressed speakers who referred to the letter and stated that we are governed by the laws that are in place. Where we have the latitude to consider options, we have done that. The letter is an effort to convey to department heads at PDE and DoH the challenges we are facing. We make the best of all mandates and laws that are pushed down to districts. Citizens have the expectation that we will follow them. The letter is simply one way that we can stress to the next level the issues we face in implementing the mandate and still carry out our mission. He quoted Ramsay's earlier reference to SGASD as the tip of the spear. This is the process we go through of challenging an order. Thank you to all those who spoke.

Stein again stated he cannot sign the letter and does not believe the Board should sign the letter, either. He will be removing his name.

Gaskins asked that we copy our local legislators on the correspondence.

Ramsay stated he believes the letter is absolutely necessary; it isn't about wearing masks but taking back local control as a school district.

PERSONNEL

2. Following a report of the Personnel Committee's recommendations read by Doug Stein, Stein moved and Baum seconded the following:

A. Approval of the following retirement resignations, with regret:

- 1) Spring Grove Elementary School Principal – Mr. Jon Weaver, effective April 1, 2022, for the purposes of retirement, following 30 years of service to the School District.
- 2) Paradise Elementary School Head Custodian – Mr. Scott Leppo, effective February 2, 2022, for the purpose of retirement, following 5 years of service to the School District.

B. Approval of the following resignations:

- 1) Spring Grove Area School District Elementary Instructor – Mrs. Tisa Cernovsky, effective November 11, 2021, for relocation due to spouse's employment.
- 2) Spring Grove Area School District Instructional Assistant – Emotional Support – Ms. Tammie Harlacker, effective September 3, 2021, for personal reasons.
- 3) Spring Grove Area Middle School Cafeteria Assistant – Ms. Rachel Myers, effective September 3, 2021, for personal reasons.
- 4) Varsity Head Cheerleading Coach (Competition, Football, and Wrestling) – Ms. Jordan Myers, effective at the end of the fall season, to return to school.

C. Approval of the following appointments, provisionally hired pending receipt of updated clearances and completed Act 168 disclosure forms from previous employers:

- 1) Spring Grove Area Middle School Cafeteria Assistant – Mrs. Deborah Wise, effective August 18, 2021. Compensation established at \$10.44 per hour for 2.5 hours per day / 180 days per year.
- 2) Spring Grove Area Middle School Instructional Assistant Special Education – Ms. Brittany McKee, effective September 1, 2021. Compensation established at \$12.25 per hour for 7 hours per day, 180 days per year.

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- 3) Spring Grove Elementary School Instructional Assistant – Kindergarten – Ms. Elizabeth Fishel, effective September 14, 2021. Compensation established at \$10.93 per hour for 5 hours per day, 180 days per year.
 - 4) Spring Grove Elementary School Instructional Assistant – Special Education (Learning Support) – Ms. Justine Bollinger, effective September 14, 2021. Compensation established at \$13.25 per hour for 4.5 hours per day, 180 days per year.
 - 5) Paradise Elementary School Instructional Assistant – Special Education (Life Skills Support) – Ms. Susan Good, effective September 28, 2021. Compensation established at \$14.50 per hour for 7 hours per day, 180 days per year.
- D. Approval of the following individuals pending receipt of clearances and completed Act 168 disclosure forms from previous employers, with compensation established at \$10.00 per hour:
- 1) Mark Anders, Custodial Support
 - 2) Kaylee Moore, Custodial Support
 - 3) Terry Murray, Nutrition Support
- E. Approval of the following individual, pending receipt of updated clearances, for the 2021-2022 school year to work school events needing AV support, at the established rate of \$12.00 per hour:
- 1) Gracie Priest
- F. Approval of the following individuals, pending receipt of updated clearances, for the 2021 – 2022 school year to work athletic events at the established event rate in the matrix:
- 1) Murphy Altland
 - 2) Gracie Priest
- G. Approval of the following individual, pending receipt of updated clearances, to work aquatics events at the established hourly aquatics rate in the matrix and provide aquatic assistance during community swim activities:
- 1) Elizabeth Bell
- H. Approval of the following professional substitute for the 2021-2022 school year at a rate of \$110.00 per day and \$125.00 per day beginning on the 21st day cumulative, provisionally hired pending receipt of updated clearances and completed Act 168 disclosure forms from previous employers:
- 1) Peggy Harling
- I. Approval of the following individuals holding a bachelor’s degree and completing the District’s Guest Teacher orientation program to substitute teach in all subject areas during the 2021-2022 school year at a rate of \$110.00 per day and \$125.00 per day beginning on the 21st day cumulative, provisionally hired pending receipt of updated clearances and completed Act 168 disclosure forms from previous employer:
- 1) Robin Klocek
 - 2) Stacey Reed

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Vote by roll call resulted in the motion carrying, with a unanimous vote by Board members.

Ioannidis congratulated and recognized Jon Weaver on his retirement after 30 years with the School District. Weaver received a standing ovation for his service.

ADJOURNMENT: Gaskins moved for adjournment at 7:26 PM. Baum seconded. The meeting adjourned by unanimous voice vote.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

Mark A. Czapp,
Director of Business Operations/Board Secretary