

Wellsboro Area School District  
Board of Education  
**WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
October 6, 2020

Called to Order by President Susan Judlin at 6:30 PM in the Auditorium, Administration Office, 227 Nichols Street, Wellsboro, PA, via Zoom Meeting.

Roll Call of Members: Mrs. Linda West, Mr. Lee Stocks (via zoom), Mr. John Hoover, Mr. Wayne Hackett, Mrs. Tracy Doughtie (via zoom), Mr. Chris Gastrock, Mr. Matthew Feil (via zoom and joined at 6:44 PM), Mrs. Susan Judlin, and Mr. David Messineo.

Present were the following: Dr. Brenda Freeman, Superintendent; Mrs. Laura Perry, Business Manager/Board Secretary; Administrators: Mr. Steven Adams, Mr. Robert Kreger, Mr. Ben Miller, Mr. Daren Bryant, Mr. Bryant Murphy, Dr. Ben Largey, and Mr. Tim Hanner.

The Directors were provided a presentation from the district's financial advisors and bond counsel in conjunction with the possible refinancing of its General Obligation Series of 2016A and General Obligation Series of 2016AA debt service. The presentation included recommendation to utilize the two-step approach to the refinancing that allows the district to seek bank loans prior to issuing general obligation bonds. Mrs. Jamie Doyle, PFM Financial Advisors, Managing Director, reiterated to the directors that no extension on the existing amortization schedule would occur with the refinancing. The motion to consider the refinancing will be placed on the October 13, 2020, agenda for board consideration.

Dr. Freeman, Superintendent, provided an update on the COVID-19 transmission rate for Tioga County, PA, and stated the indicator has been adjusted from low to moderate and stressed that other area districts are also in the moderate indicator as well. She stated that each possible COVID-19 case is handled on a case by case basis for determining the district's response. She updated the directors that the administrative team has been working on the potential for a hybrid model of some in-person instruction and some remote instruction scenarios and are vigilantly preparing a plan to accommodate this plan. She mentioned that other districts have had to close on 14-day cycles due to substitute shortages or testing increases for COVID tests. The district's current guidelines provide for not having staff and students return to school until test results are provided and would require 10-day remote learning for a negative test result and 14-day remote learning for a positive test. The district continues to work with the Department of Health and the rapid response team in determining protocols and identifying close contacts. She completed her COVID-19 update by thanking the students, families, faculty and staff for their communication and for practicing social distancing and mask wearing as this will ensure the school is able to remain in session.

Dr. Freeman announced that Policies #300 through #317.1 have been distributed to the directors and will be reviewed at the next Program and Policy committee meeting. Mr. Messineo requested that future draft policies be provided to the directors in electronic format only and that only paper copies be provided if specifically requested by a board member.

Dr. Freeman extended her congratulations to Will Poirier for his accomplishment of scoring 50 soccer goals and 50 assisted goals, which is a new school record.

Recent gathering limitations have been issued through the Governor's Office and the PA Department of Health, effective October 9, 2020. The district is reviewing the new guidelines and will work to have these implemented for all district locations.

Mr. Matt Rendos, Mrs. Tanya Harmon, and Mr. Shane Mascho presented information on the district's Chapter 339, K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program, initiative. An overview of the handout was provided and the directors agreed to review the material at the next scheduled Programs and Policy Committee meeting, as well as, to place this on the November agenda for board consideration.

Dr. Freeman completed her update with a review of the draft agenda for the October 10, 2020 agenda.

Mr. Chris Gastrock, Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, provided an update to the recent meeting's discussion involving renovations to the Rock L. Butler Middle School. He stated that the committee provided direction to Mrs. Perry to investigate financing opportunities, including \$ 2 million, \$ 4 million, and \$ 5.5 million thresholds. He stated that preliminary figures indicate \$ 4 million would provide for flooring, LED lighting upgrades, HVAC, painting, ceiling repairs, blinds, and bathroom upgrades, as well as air conditioning. Discussion continued on the type and concentration of the air conditioning being considered. Mr. Gastrock believes we are a long way from saying "move ahead" and wants to ensure that enough discussion and planning occurs to meet all the current needs during the project scope of work. Mrs. Judlin asked the board to be methodical in its decision-making to modify to meet the needs of the district.

A discussion regarding the schedule of the WOLA Head Teacher and the fact that this position will be 100% dedicated to online students was had. This teacher will also remain as the district's Head Librarian. Dr. Freeman reiterated that it is her belief that this is a critical component with the online program's success.

The topic of "Flexible Fridays" occurred and Mr. Byrd was able to explain that the district is strategically trying to find what to offer based on needs of the students and to complete four week rotation cycle with a 62 minute period, with one period per day to allow for tutoring, clubs, and school to work opportunities.

Mr. Messineo stated that the Programs and Policy committee meeting agenda will include an update on summer curriculum work with the department chairs present, a review of the Chapter 339 materials, and a review of policies #300 - #317.1.

Mrs. Perry covered the topics of the 2021/22 budget development, including the director's wishes in regards to the Act 1 Index being 3.8% for the district. The directors provided guidance to proceed with the Act 1 Timeline Resolution to not raise taxes above the Act 1 Index.

Mrs. West, in conjunction with Mr. Kreger, introduced the topic of having a Therapy Dog program at the Middle School. Mr. Kreger has agreed to secure a \$ 1 million liability insurance policy as the dog's owner and stated the program would operate under the agreement modeled by the Southern Tioga School District. Mrs. West states she feels it improves self-esteem,

attendance, social skills and counters stress and depression. Mr. Kreger agreed that interaction would be limited to non-instructional time and would mainly be for special education students.

Public Comment - None at this time.

The work session adjourned at 8:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura Perry". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Laura Perry, Secretary to the Board  
Board Secretary  
Wellsboro Area School District

