

Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting, Porter Township School Corporation Board of School Trustees  
October 12, 2023 | 5:00 pm CST

Board Members Present: Dr. Natalie Wargo, Lilann Sgouros, Mary Harlow, Eric McGinty

Board Members Absent: Laura Chavez

Staff Members Present: Dr. Stacey Schmidt, Superintendent, Ben Parrish, Assistant Superintendent, Kathleen Smith, CFO, Laura Scott, Executive Assistant, Angela Vale, Deputy Treasurer, and SRO Steven Leonard

There were no community members in attendance.

1. **CALL TO ORDER – Dr. Natalie Wargo, President, 5:04 pm**
  - A. Pledge of Allegiance
2. **AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS – Dr. Stacey Schmidt | There were no agenda adjustments**
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT | There were no public comments**
4. **CONSENT AGENDA – Dr. Schmidt**
  - A. Personnel Report
  - B. Board Minutes
    1. 9/14/2023 – Regular Board Meeting
    2. 9/29/2023 – Special Board Meeting
  - C. Payroll and Claim Dockets



Dr. Schmidt recommended approval of the items on the consent agenda as presented in the board packet. A motion to approve the consent agenda as presented was made by Lilann Sgouros, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

5. **FINANCIAL REPORT – Mrs. Kathleen Smith**
  - A. Financial Report
  - B. Fund Report
  - C. Investment Report
6. **BUSINESS**
  - A. **Approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement – Dr. Schmidt**
    1. Public Comment

The terms of the agreement have not changed since the last discussion. Dr. Schmidt offered to answer any questions; there were none. A motion to approve the CBA was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**B. Approve Administrative Compensation Increases and Contract Extensions – Dr. Schmidt**

Dr. Schmidt is recommending 2-year contracts for the administrators listed in the board packet. The pay increases mirror what was done for the CBA. A motion to approve the administrative compensation increases and contract extensions was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Lilann Sgouros. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**C. Approve Classified Compensation Increases – Dr. Schmidt**

There is a list of classified staff and proposed compensation increases in the board packet. To summarize: 3% increase for most of the classified staff. Food Service is getting a larger increase to close the gap created a few years ago when they received a lesser increase. The base rate for Special Ed Paraprofessionals is increasing to \$13.50/hour due to the difference in work performed. A motion to approve the classified compensation increases was made by Mary Harlow, seconded by Lilann Sgouros. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**D. Approve Additional 2023-2024 Transfer Students – Dr. Schmidt**

Dr. Schmidt recommended approval of two additional in-good-standing transfer students for this year. A motion to approve the transfer students was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Lilann Sgouros. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**E. Approve Fundraisers – Dr. Schmidt**

There are several fundraisers in the board packet: Class of 2026, Drama Club, Basketball. Dr. Schmidt recommends those for approval. A motion to approve the fundraisers was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**F. Accept Donations – Dr. Schmidt**

We had a very generous donation to our Feed It Forward program, for which we are very grateful. Additionally, we received donations from Indiana Farm Bureau and Gibraltar. A motion to accept the donations was made by Mary Harlow, seconded by Eric McGinty. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**G. Recognition of the Following Clubs and Organizations for the 2023-2024 School Year – Dr. Schmidt**

**1. BGHS Wolfpack Football Club**

BGHS Wolfpack Football Club is outlined in the board packet for recognition. A motion to recognize this club was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**H. Gibraltar Design – District-Wide Facility Assessment & Feasibility Study**

**1. Present Summary Data for the Existing School Buildings and Sites**

**2. Present Preliminary Findings for Summary of Existing Conditions**

Jim Thompson and Kris Kingery from Gibraltar design shared summary data of their initial inspection of our buildings and properties. The purpose of the study is for us to determine priority of projects and to anticipate future needs. Gibraltar will attend every other board meeting through March 2024 to present new findings and hear opinions from the board.

**I. Adoption of Resolution #1023-291 – 2024 Budget – Mrs. Smith**

Kathleen Smith called out the Notice to Taxpayers, which is in the board packet. This is what the board will sign so that we can move forward and approve it. After the DLGF goes through, we will be able to activate the budget. A motion to adopt the resolution was made by Mary Harlow, seconded by Eric McGinty. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**J. Adoption of Resolution #1023-292 – Reduce Budget 2024 – Mrs. Smith**

This resolution gives Dr. Schmidt the authority to allow Mrs. Smith to reduce the budgets, if needed, once the DLGF comes through with their 1782 notice and it will also allow her to reduce the 2023 budget if those dollars are needed for 2024. A motion to adopt the resolution was made by Lilann Sgouros, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**K. Adoption of Resolution #1023-293 – 2024 Bus Replacement Plan – Mrs. Smith**

Mrs. Smith recommended approval of this resolution, which has been outlined in our 5- and 12-year bus replacement plans. A motion to adopt this resolution was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**L. Adoption of Resolution #1023-294 – 2024 Capital Projects – Mrs. Smith**

Mrs. Smith recommended approval of this resolution, which has been previously reviews. A motion to adopt this resolution was made by Lilann Sgouros, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**M. Adoption of Resolution #1023-295 – Transfer from Education Fund to Operations Fund – Mrs. Smith**

Mrs. Smith recommended approval of this annual resolution, which allows us to transfer funds from education to operations, no more than 15% for the entire year. A motion to adopt this resolution was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Lilann Sgouros. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**N. Adoption of Resolution #1023-296 – Resolution to Open Procurement Card – Mrs. Smith**

Mrs. Smith recommended adoption of this resolution. We are looking at getting rid of our current credit card, due to low limits. It's causing issues for people going out for Professional Development. A procurement card will provide us with a higher balance. A motion to adopt the resolution was made by Mary Harlow, seconded by Eric McGinty. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**O. Recommendation for Employment of Candidate (Case #0002-2023) IC: 20-26-5-11.2 – ~~Mr. Parrish~~ Dr. Schmidt**

Similar to what we saw last month – this candidate has applied for a Custodial position and has an OWI on their record. They will not drive corporate vehicles. A motion to approve the employee was made by Lilann Sgouros, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4-0.

**P. Approve the Second Reading and Adoption of the Following New Board Bylaws, Board Bylaw Revisions, New Board Policies, or Board Policy Revisions – ~~Mr. Parrish~~ Dr. Schmidt**

1. Revised Policy #1521 – Personal Background Checks, References, and Mandatory Reporting of Convictions and Substantiated Child Abuse and Arrests
2. Revised Policy #2221 – Mandatory Curriculum
3. Revised Policy #2414 – Reproductive Health and Family Planning and Human Sexuality Instruction
4. Revised Policy #2416 – Student Privacy and Parental Access to Information
5. Revised Policy #2510 – Adoption of Curricular Materials
6. New Policy #2520 – Special Update, July 2023 – Selection of Curricular Materials, Library Materials, and Equipment
7. Revised Policy #3121 – Personal Background Checks, References, and Mandatory Reporting of Convictions and Substantiated Child Abuse and Arrests
8. Revised Policy #4121 - Personal Background Checks, References, and Mandatory Reporting of Convictions and Substantiated Child Abuse and Arrests
9. Revised Policy #6152 – Student Fees and Charges
10. Revised Policy #9130 – Public Complaints and Concerns
11. Revised Policy #9700 – Relations with Special Interest Groups

There haven't been any changes made to these from the First Reading. Dr. Schmidt offered to answer any questions; there were none. A motion to approve the second reading and adoption was made by Eric McGinty, seconded by Mary Harlow. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4.0.

**7. ~~ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – Mr. Parrish~~**

**8. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – Dr. Schmidt**

Dr. Schmidt gave a quick construction update on our new athletic complex. We will be doing call-backs in the spring to complete any unfinished work. The track is scheduled to be striped next week, but is weather dependent. We drew a Sectional home game, which will be Friday, 10/20. The crew has been working long hours in order to finish. The throwing fields are coming along.

Across the country, trends are showing that school attendance is low. There's a big push to crack down on this. The two benchmarks are when a student hits 10 (habitual absenteeism) and 18 (chronic absenteeism) days absent – as mandatory reporters, we have to report that information to DCS or the juvenile court system. Project Attend would like for Porter County to align on what is considered an "excused" absence. As of October 11<sup>th</sup>, we had 105 kids who've missed 5 days or more so far this year, which might indicate that they're on a path to habitual or chronic absenteeism. Some goals include

looking at ways to revise our attendance policies to make them clearer and more concise, making a bigger effort to help parents see the value of their kids attending school, and utilizing the relationships of our teachers with our families to encourage attendance.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made at 6:12 pm by Mary Harlow, seconded by Eric McGinty. The motion carried 4-0.