

**NORTH HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
LEGISLATIVE MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.
HYBRID BOARD MEETING IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LGI ROOM
AND VIA ZOOM
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Call to Order

The meeting, which was held in the Middle School LGI Room and via Zoom Webinar, and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Mathis opened the meeting with a moment of silence and salute to the flag. Mrs. Mathis took attendance via roll call.

Board Members Present

Sandra Kozera, Phil Little, Allison Mathis, Katie Poniatowski, and Helen Spade.

Board Members Present via Zoom

Deanna Philpott, Kathy Reid, and Rachael Rennebeck

Board Members Not Present

Annette Giovengo Nolish

Also Present

Dr. Patrick J. Mannarino, Michael J. Witherel, Esq., Heather Pelat, and Kris Kaufmann.

Also Present via Zoom

Dr. Beth Williams, Amy Mathieu, Jerry Muth, and student representatives, Ellie Fleischer and Hannah Sciulli.

Board Member Comments

Mrs. Mathis announced that Dr. Nolish was home recovering from surgery and that the Board sends their best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Student Representatives' Report

Hannah Sciulli noted that Ellie Fleischer was participating in a volleyball game and could not be present. Ms. Sciulli read Ms. Fleischer's report, stating that although nothing can compare to the face-to-face teaching and learning at North Hills, the teachers are working very creatively and diligently to provide the best education possible in the virtual model, and the students very much appreciate their dedication. Ms. Sciulli added that both she and Ellie are grateful to participate in athletic activities because they provide much needed physical exercise as well as being helpful to their mental health.

Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Mannarino provided his report on the district moving from the virtual model to the hybrid model. Following are his opening remarks:

“I think we know that this is going to be a very difficult year for all of us.

But I am encouraged by the hard work and dedication of our teachers, our students, and their parents.

When schools closed in March, we were forced online and onto a learning platform we were not prepared to use long term.

Sure, we had prepared for 5 flexible instruction days, but not 58.

But we met that challenge and did an outstanding job providing quality education to our students as we closed out the school year.

In August, we launched fully virtual with live synchronous lessons.

Again, something that we had never done before and our teachers are doing a phenomenal job.

But I am not surprised.

I have been saying for years that we have amazing teachers who are truly dedicated to our students and that is what makes North Hills someplace special.

I’ll admit, the incredible job we’re doing is making the decision to change the operational model to hybrid a difficult one.

But we all agree that the best place for children to receive their education is in-person and face-to-face.

And I am optimistic that we, as a community, can move to the hybrid model on Oct 5... and eventually to our blended and possibly full traditional model before the end of the school year.

By moving to Hybrid, we are again asking our teachers to do something that they have never done before. But I trust them.

I trust that they have the best educational interests of our students in mind. It will not be easy and there will be some hiccups. This model is new to us all but we will work through any and all issues that arise and we will make this model great.

Should my recommendation to move to hybrid this evening fail, we will remain in the virtual model as we have over the past few weeks through October 30, the end of quarter one.

I would like to focus tonight’s presentation on our hybrid model of our phased reopening plan.”

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Mike Santucci, 1010 Grandview Avenue, Ross Township

Mr. Santucci thanked the administration and teachers for working extremely hard to provide the best possible virtual educational experience. However, he feels strongly that his daughters will benefit from an in-person experience and asks that the Board approve the proposed move to Hybrid learning.

Christina Smith, 120 Hetherton Drive, Ross Township

Ms. Smith asked if the virtual lessons will be recorded; when the district will move to the Blended model; and what can be done so the students don’t have to carry all of their books back and forth from home to school during the Hybrid model.

Toni Reed, 208 Oakwood Avenue, West View Borough

Ms. Reed expressed concerns about teachers engaging in both in-person, and virtual platforms at the same time.

Karen Steinberger and Frances Steinberger, 120 Bronx Avenue, West View Borough

Ms. Steinberger and her daughter, Frances stated that the virtual learning is so much better than in the spring, but really hope to move to the Hybrid model. They also thanked Mr. King who has worked as the transition coordinator and is doing a wonderful job.

Catherine Regan, 108 Konzier Drive, Ross Township

Ms. Regan stated that her daughter is in 4th grade, and it will be a great challenge for her to carry every book back and forth from school to home. What can we do to alleviate that? She also asked about the elementary 6-day cycle.

Michal Ksiazkiewicz, 527 E. Warrington Avenue

Mr. Ksiazkiewicz inquired if it would be possible for his kindergartner to attend school on in the B section instead of the A section under the Hybrid model.

Barbara Dreves, 106 Hidden Valley Drive, West View Borough

Ms. Dreves had questions on entering attendance in PowerSchool.

EDUCATION

A motion was made by Mrs. Mathis, seconded by Mrs. Spade, and **was passed by a vote of 6 yea and 2 nay to approve the Change of Operational Model for Teaching and Learning**, as per document 1, as recommended by the Superintendent. Voting yea was Ms. Kozera, Mr. Little, Mrs. Poniatowski, Mrs. Rennebeck, Mrs. Spade, and Mrs. Mathis. Voting nay was Ms. Philpott and Mrs. Reid. The district will move from the Virtual Model to the Hybrid Model as defined in the approved Health and Safety Plan, beginning on October 5, 2020. This motion also authorizes the Superintendent, in consultation and recommendation from the Allegheny County Health Department, to change the operational model from hybrid to virtual for any or all school buildings based upon positive identification of COVID cases in students or staff members.

ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

None

A.W. BEATTIE CAREER CENTER

None

PERSONNEL

Resignations

A motion was made by Mrs. Spade, seconded by Ms. Kozera, and **unanimously passed to approve Resignations**, as per document 1, as recommended by the Superintendent:

Elizabeth Burns – Assistant Cheerleading Sponsor, effective September 10, 2020.

Linetta Brown – Paraprofessional at Ross Elementary, effective August 24, 2020.

Jennifer Friedman – Teaching Assistant at Ross Elementary, effective September 28, 2020.

Appointments

A motion was made by Mrs. Spade, seconded by Ms. Kozera, and **unanimously passed to approve Appointments**, as per document 2, as recommended by the Superintendent:

William McKellar – Middle School Boys' Soccer Coach at the rate of \$2,379, effective September 10, 2020.

Jean Mientus – Long-term substitute school nurse at the middle school at the rate of \$185 per day, effective October 6, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

Changes of Status

A motion was made by Mrs. Spade, seconded by Ms. Kozera, and **passed by a vote of 7 yea and 1 nay to approve Change of Status**, as per document 3, as recommended by the Superintendent. Ms. Philpott voted nay.

Rebecca Dunham – from Paraprofessional at McIntyre to Long-term substitute kindergarten teacher at the rate of \$35,000 (pro-rated), effective October 1, 2020 through January 3, 2021.

Leave of Absence

A motion was made by Mrs. Spade, seconded by Ms. Kozera, and **unanimously passed to approve Leave of Absence**, as per document 4, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Shannon Browell – Paraprofessional at McIntyre, unpaid leave of absence effective September 17, 2020 through May 27, 2021.

Legal

A motion was made by Mrs. Spade, seconded by Ms. Kozera, and **unanimously passed to authorize the District to enter into an Attorney-Client Fee contract with the Frantz Law Group, ALPC**, for the commencement of a legal action against Juul Labs, Inc., as per document 5, as recommended by the Superintendent.

COMMUNITY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

None

POLICIES

1. First Reading – Policy 819 – Employee Service Awards – Revisions

A motion was made by Ms. Kozera, seconded by Mrs. Spade, and **unanimously passed to add Policy Item 1 to the October 8, 2020 Committee Meeting with Action for second reading.**

LEGISLATIVE

None

FINANCE

A motion was made by Mrs. Mathis, seconded by Mrs. Spade **and unanimously passed to ratify General Fund Bills**, as per document 1, as recommended by the Superintendent. These include checks numbered: 61368 through 61415; 61417 through 61418; and 61420 through 61498.

A motion was made by Mrs. Mathis, seconded by Mrs. Spade **and unanimously passed to ratify Capital Project Fund Bills**, as per document 2, as recommended by the Superintendent. These include checks numbered: 61416 and 61419.

A motion was made by Mrs. Mathis, seconded by Mrs. Spade **and unanimously passed to ratify Food Service Fund Bills**, as per document 3, as recommended by the Superintendent. These include checks numbered: 61367.

SUPPORT SERVICES

A motion was made by Ms. Philpott, seconded by Mrs. Spade, and **unanimously passed to Authorize the Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations to investigate the installation of solar panels on the hilltop campus**, as per document 1, as recommended by the Superintendent. This agreement is being made with Kinect Energy Group. There is no financial obligation associated with this initial exploratory action.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jennifer Forchay, 142 Jacks Run Road, Ross Township
Ms. Forchay expressed concerns about moving to the Hybrid model.

Catherine Regan, 108 Konzier Drive, Ross Township
Ms. Regan had questions about substitute teachers. How well will they be trained to teach under the Hybrid model?

Barbara Dreves, 106 Hidden Valley Drive, West View Borough

Ms. Dreves ask about the possibility of having students tested for COVID prior to attending school in person.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Mathis adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Loretta J. Rieger
School Board Secretary