



POTTSGROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Meeting Held January 27, 2015

Summary of Key Discussion and Actions Taken:

The Pottsgrove School District Board of Directors held its twice monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2015 at District Office.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public comment

The Board took action on the following:

The Board approved the conference attendance as presented in the agenda.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Superintendent, Ms. Shellie Feola, Superintendent, presented the Draft 2015-2016 school calendar. This calendar starts students just after Labor Day (September 8) and ends students June 15 to allow an additional week for the heavy summer construction.

The following is a brief overview of each scheduled Board Committee discussion:

POLICY COMMITTEE

Dr. Bill Shirk, Assistant Superintendent, presented the following policies for review and revision consideration:

1. Graduation Requirement Board Policy 217 (Revision recommendations in light of new school code regulations)
2. Field Trip Board Policy 121

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Middle School Chiller Project

Mr. Dave Nester, Business Administrator, reported that bids were received on January 23, 2015. The budget for these repairs was \$125,000. District administration will seek approval of the lowest available bid proposal of \$131,491 to complete the necessary repairs.

Food Service RFP

We are mandated to solicit proposals for Food Service Management services on a five-year basis. Essentially, the contract is for one year and can be renewed four times. We are currently compiling an RFP for these services.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Initial Budget Presentation

Ms. Feola and Mr. Nester made the initial budget presentation for the 2015-2016 school year. We are facing a budget shortfall of approximately \$2.5 million of which \$750,000 was planned. This shortfall was driven by a reduction in School Based ACCESS (Medicaid) funding, salary increases, PSERS increases and charter school tuition increases. We are still very early in the budget process and Mr. Nester reviewed the state required timelines and considerations under the Act 1 law. The PowerPoint presentation will be on the website later this week.

CURRICULUM & ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

New Course Proposals

Dr. Bill Ziegler, High School Principal, reported that five new courses are being proposed for implementation during the 2015-2016 school year at the High School. These courses include:

Advanced Placement Psychology

Advanced Computer Science A

Computer Programming

Spanish in the Workplace

Project Lead the Way: Digital Electronics

All courses will enhance course programming and student selection opportunities. In most cases, these courses provide an additional course within an already defined sequence of courses. No additional staffing is required.



POTTSGROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Meeting Held January 27, 2015

Summary of Key Discussion and Actions Taken:

Grading Committee Update

Mr. Daniel Vorhis, Director of Education and Assessment, reported that the grading committee has met as a full group twice in November and January. During these meetings, the group has reviewed current grading practices in Pottsgrove and examined research. It is important to note that all learning is grounded in research about best practices in grading. In addition, the full team has broken into two sub committees, an elementary and secondary team. Each team has participated in professional learning about four grading practices. These grading practices will become the foundation for the work in Pottsgrove moving forward. In addition, a Pottsgrove School District Grading Guidelines document is being developed. This will include procedures for homework, percentages, late or missed assignments, the impact of a zero, etc.

Specifically, the secondary committee is working toward developing guidelines with the goal of having teachers at this level be well prepared for the transition from a seven- to a ten-point scale. The elementary team has researched and reviewed many examples of standards-based report cards from districts across the region. Both sub committees are scheduled to meet together again in January and February.

Finally, members of the grading practices committee are currently designing professional learning plans. These plans will engage all staff in professional learning about grading practices in each building. Since principals and staff members have been a part of the full committee meetings, they will take key learning back to each building.

As per the grading practices committee, it is believed that many practices will challenge the thinking of staff. It is also believed that an external expert in the area of grading would help our staff in upholding defined grading practices. Thomas Guskey has been identified as a potential expert and we recommend bringing him to present to all staff members of the Pottsgrove School District on April 1. The cost for this is approximately \$45.00 per professional staff member (\$11,500 plus expenses). In addition, board and select community members (key communicators) would be invited to attend this professional learning. If individual staff members were sent to see Thomas Guskey at a professional learning event outside the district, the cost would far exceed the amount being spent per person within the district.

These plans will be funded entirely through Federal Title II funds. The purpose of Title II, Part A is, "to increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and districts improve teacher and principal quality and ensure that all teachers are highly qualified." Through the program, state and local educational agencies receive funds on a formula basis.

Math and ELA PD Plans

Mr. Vorhis share a professional learning plan designed to provide teachers of high school math with in classroom coaching. This coaching will support all teachers of Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. In addition, all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade teachers will participate in coaching.

The external coach will be a consultant with Carnegie Math. In addition, Pottsgrove School District's instructional coaches will participate in the process. In this way, internal capacity is developed so that instructional coaches can continue to support teachers in the future.

English/Language coaching will support all K-5 teachers in refining instructional practices in balanced literacy. Teachers will have the opportunity to choose a specific component of balanced literacy on which to focus. As a result, the coach will support the teacher's developing knowledge of that component. The external coach for this plan will be from Heinemann. Again, internal instructional coaches will participate in this process. In addition, reading specialists will participate so they are better equipped to support teachers and students.

These plans will be funded entirely through Federal Title II funds designated for professional development.



POTTSGROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Meeting Held January 27, 2014

Summary of Key Discussion and Actions Taken:

Dial 1:1 Update

Mr. Michael Wagman, Director of Technology, reported that we completed a round of student surveys based on research into educational aspirations and levels of student engagement conducted at Indiana State University. We implemented an abbreviated version of the survey and added a question about home access to broadband Internet services. We also conducted a technology professional development survey of our secondary division faculty last summer. The student responses regarding educational aspirations and engagement along with the teacher responses from professional development survey will help us develop a baseline from which we will measure change over time, as new teaching and learning practices evolve in response to a digital learning environment and professional development. We will conduct both of these surveys again at the end of this school year, as well as subsequent years.

The response to the question regarding Internet access tracks closely with a survey we conducted in 2012-2013. In fact, the percentage of students without Internet access is up slightly. At this point, we have just over 9.5 percent of our students, grades 6-12, reporting that they do not currently have broadband Internet access at home. We are focusing on this fact when we work with our teachers, leveraging the built-in tools provided on the mobile devices that can mitigate this access gap. Mr. Wagman requested that we revisit an earlier discussion regarding what else we might be able to do to mitigate the gap even further.

Our dedicated 1:1 coach and our instructional coaches have been working directly with secondary division faculty individually, grade level and department teams, and in large groups.

A team of students from the High School had a day of training at the Apple Store Genius Bar and will be applying their new learning to support their peers. This program will be extended to the Middle School.

BOARD ACTION

The Board approved a resolution to be presented by Pottsgrove High School's homecoming queen to the Pottstown Borough government recognizing Pottstown's 200th birthday.

UPCOMING DATES

- 1/28/15 Act 80, 2 hour early release
- 1/28/15 Beginning Orchestra at 7:30 P.M. @ LPE Gym
- 1/28/15 HS Wrestling at 6:30 PM @ PGHS (Sr. Recognition)
- 1/28/15 Academic Quiz Bowl Home
- 1/29/15 Beginning Band at 7:30 P.M. @ LPE Gym
- 1/29/15 HS Boys' Basketball at 6:00 PM @ PGHS (Sr. Recognition)
- 1/30/15 Someone Special Dance BOYS at 7:00 PM @ LPES
- 1/31/15 Someone Special Dance GIRLS at 7:00 PM @ LPES
- 1/31/15 HS Wrestling at 6:30 PM @ PGHS
- 2/4/15 MS Spring Concert Preview, 6th grade Band and Orchestra at 6:30 PM
- 2/7/15 Elementary PTA Bowling Event at 1:00 PM @ Limerick Bowling
- 2/10/15 School Board Meeting 7:30 PM @ PGMS

View the Comprehensive Calendar of District events at <http://www.pgdsd.org/Page/2>

Visit the Board website at <http://www.pgdsd.org/board>

For Renovation information, visit <http://www.pgdsd.org/facilities>

Board meetings are now recorded for viewing on PCTV twice weekly, Wed., at 6:30 PM, Sun., at 6:00 PM and on demand from the District website.