

Regular Meeting
Steel Valley School District Board of Directors
Senior High School Library
February 28, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bulger, President, at 7:06 p.m.

Roll call as follows:

Mr. Blick, Mr. Colasante, Mrs. Ligeros, Mr. Olson, Mr. Rojtas,
Mrs. Steele, Ms. Youngblood, Mrs. Yuhas and Mr. Bulger

Also attending: Mr. Wehrer, Mr. Fetzko, Mr. Colebank, Mrs. Borges, Mr. Zenone

Flag Salute

Acknowledgements

Moment of Silence

The Board acknowledged the following deaths in the Steel Valley School District families: *William S. Barron*, father-in-law of Denise Barron, instructional resource teacher and Christie Barron, school nurse; *Kevin J. Todd*, fiancé of Sherri Titmus, middle school secretary; *Mary Ann Ostrowski*, sister of Patricia Keener, retired secretary in the activities/athletic office; *Mildred “Mitzie” Boytim*, cousin of Misty McMahan, high school custodian; *Aurelia A. Abaray*, aunt of Danielle Mays, high school cafeteria worker and cousin of Susan Salapa, retired English/Language Arts teacher; *Joanne Kostella*, aunt of Sherri Titmus, middle school secretary, and great aunt of Dylan Titmus, Park School custodian; *Charles A. Chickie Caito*, cafeteria monitor at Park School; *Tre’Quan T. Embry*, 2016 Steel Valley Graduate; *Aaron C. Wade*, 2018 Steel Valley Graduate; *Mario Funari*, brother-in-law of John Zenone, Director of Operational Services and Board Secretary; *Catherine E. Weary*, aunt of Diana Borges, director of pupil personnel and special services; *E. Jean Scott*, grandmother of Mariann Reilly, high school English Language Arts teacher; *Trudi L. Pinkerton-Zeiler*, wife of Sean Zeiler,

former assistant football coach; *James O. “Mack” McCallister*, cousin of Shawn and Beth McCallister, activities/athletic director and academic math coach.

Mr. Olson moved and Mrs. Yuhas and seconded the motion to approve the purchase of memorial books to be placed into the district libraries in memory of the above departed. Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: None. Motion carried.

Board President Report

Mr. Bulger:

- Stated that he is glad that this is the second month that we have standing room only at the Board meeting. He announced that the school district has provided more communication to our community through Facebook and social media. Our SPP scores show growth and improvement and academic rigor. The Middle School and High School Student Governments collected over 1,200 items to donate to Beverly’s Birthdays. A Caring Closet was started for students to stop in for needed toiletries. He is excited about all the service projects our students are undertaking.
- Black History Month was celebrated at Barrett with an interactive wax museum and high school students performing songs by famous Black artists. Students are learning in nontraditional ways through the STREAM activities, and the Dr. Seuss activity held at Barrett brought all the first graders together for learning.
- The Arts are alive and well in the district. He was very proud of the students who performed in the musical *The Sound of Music*. A chorus student and band members auditioned and were selected to participate in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association’s Chorus Festival and Band Festivals. Mr. Bulger recognized the artwork of third grader Jeremiah Owens, which was on display that evening in the library.
- Special things are happening in the Steel Valley School District and we are all a part of the Steel Valley community. He challenged everyone to share the positive things happening in our community.
- Mr. Bulger discussed the hiring process in the school district. The district posts all open positions, interviews candidates, presents candidates to the School Board in executive session, and then the Board votes at the regular meeting. It is a

transparent process, and it is the same for all employees.

Student Representatives' Reports

Isabella Furrick

Channing Griffith

- Announced several students interested in the health care field were given an opportunity to view an open heart surgery through The Future Is Mine (TFIM) program. On February 7, 56 juniors attended the National College Fair to explore postsecondary education options. The Biology, Algebra, and English CDT testing took place in the high school.
- Select high school seniors attended two more sessions of the PNC job collaborative program, which helps prepare students for the work force after high school, by providing advice on interviewing, resume building, and much more. Mr. Josh Taylor, a speaker from the 93.7 Fan Club, spoke to 20 students about careers after high school.
- On Valentine's Day, staff members collected \$150 for St. Jude's Children's Hospital.
- A pep rally took place to celebrate the achievements of student athletes and winter sports teams, especially the boys basketball team who made it into the playoffs. Both the boys and girls bowling teams, as well as two individual players, Danielle Long and Trevon Scott, made it past the first round of playoffs and into regionals.
- On February 21, members of the French Club and Choir traveled to the Benedum Center for a performance of *Phantom of the Opera*. The students really enjoyed this wonderful show come to life.
- The Harmony Club gave its annual Black History Month presentation to junior and senior students on February 26. The speaker was very informative and empowering and the students really enjoyed the presentation.
- The Student Councils from the Middle School and High School along with Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) joined forces in support of an organization called Beverly's Birthdays. This group provides birthday cheer to children experiencing homelessness and other difficult family situations. Our students, staff, and community donated over 1,200 items such as boxes of cake mix, frosting, candles, and paper products to donate.

- The High School Student Council will be hosting the third and final blood drive of the school year on Tuesday, March 19, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Please consider donating.
- On February 4, eighth grade students attended a field trip to the Heinz History Center to experience the *Destination to the Moon* exhibit. Selected seventh graders participated in a STREAM event called “World Domination.”
- Stand Together held its Share the Love Valentine’s Day Door-Decorating Contest in the Middle School. Students and teachers decorated classroom doors with information about specific mental health illnesses and kindness. Dr. Bethany Fenyus had the winning door, and her homeroom won a breakfast party and a \$25 gift card for decorating supplies.
- On February 13, the Stand Together student organization held a “Love Yourself” lunch activity. They offered a Valentine’s Day themed photo booth, shared sweet treats for a raffle and made Valentine’s to decorate their friends’ lockers. The Stand Together group wants students in the Steel Valley Middle School to accept each other and share kindness by being the nice kid!
- On February 7, sixth, seventh and eighth grade gifted students competed in the Equations competition at Woodland Hills Junior/Senior High School.
- Girl Talk students, led by Mrs. Ryan Dunmire-Kuftic from the Middle School, in collaboration with The Best of the Batch Center took a field trip to a Duquesne Men’s Basketball Game.
- Stand Together student group put together a Breaking Barriers March Madness Basketball Competition at the Middle School. A small group of Stand Together students will come to each homeroom and ask 25 questions, and each student who participates will have a chance to shoot a basket. The goal of this activity is to raise awareness of mental illness and substance abuse disorders and to promote acceptance of all people by educating students on these illnesses. A basketball game is scheduled on March 27 in the middle school gym between the winning homerooms. Students would also recruit a few teachers to play on their teams.
- On February 21, eighth grade gifted students enjoyed the musical *Chicago*, and on February 22, the sixth grade class traveled to the Carnegie Science Center for the “Engineer of the Future” event.
- Teachers and administrators from the Ambridge School District visited the Steel Valley Middle School on February 27. There will be an ongoing partnership between the schools. Thank you to the following teachers who helped with the

visit: Heather Clark (organizer), Steve Large, Ed Tozzi, Mike Hofbauer, Ryan Dunmire-Kuftic, Dr. Bethany Fenyus and Marguerite Luvara.

- Selected fifth and sixth grade students participated in the STREAM C.S.I. activity where they learned about mean, median, mode and range along with the scientific method during the catapult event on February 26-27.
- In celebrating Black History Month, middle school staff conducted lessons about African American scientists, abolitionists, baseball players, and many other notable figures.
- February was a busy month at Park Elementary School. Students loved seeing themselves on WTAE news after the Action Weather visit by Meteorologist Mike Harvey. Valentine's Day was really nice, and the My Special Person Dance was awesome. The kids had a great time at the Scholastic Book Fair and really enjoyed all of the Seuss Week activities.
- Barrett students celebrated the 100th day of school with various school activities. The PTO met to discuss the upcoming Cash Bash that will take place on March 9 at Whitaker Fire Hall starting at 7:00 p.m. On February 13, Kindergarteners participated in Bring your Grown Up to School Day. The Queen of Hearts visited with the Kindergarten classes on February 21. A hoagie sale began to support the yearbook sale. The Black History Month Living Museum will be held on February 26.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Wehrer:

- Announced that Teacher Jonette Bost coordinated the Black History Celebration at Barrett Elementary School held on February 26. He noted that Barrett alumni who participated as contemporary singers provided students with a deeper learning experience through this interactive program. Barrett students explored the Black Migration and how the world has changed over time through the interactive wax museum activity. Students celebrated what makes them diverse and how they can live together through learning about celebrity sports players, entertainers and game changers.
- Third grade students created a cookbook, which included recipes from each of their family heritages. A copy of the cookbook was provided to the Board members. They also cooked sweet potato pie, Caribbean coconut rice and peas, and Mung bean dessert to taste. Ms. Bost noted that students were encouraged to

leave an imprint by learning and sharing their history.

- The Fine Arts is the cornerstone of what we do, and special recognitions in art, music and drama were celebrated. Mr. Wehrer introduced Jeremiah Owens, third grade student at Barrett Elementary School, and he praised Jeremiah's creative talents, especially the painting of the owl and the waterfall. Jeremiah's art is also on display and for sale at Steel Valley Roasters on Eighth Avenue in Homestead.
- High School Junior Diana Craycroft was selected to participate in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 1 Chorus Festival. She performed with 200 other vocalists from over 50 school districts in western Pennsylvania on February 6-8.
- Ben Novotny auditioned for the Junior High District Band, grades 7-9, and was selected to perform in the PMEA District 1 Band Festival at Yough Middle School on February 15-16. Ben stated that, "it was the best experience developing as a musician with over 200 students. This experience cemented in my heart that I want to go into music."
- Two students, Nicole Csider and Channing Griffin, auditioned and were selected to perform in the High School District Band Festival at Burrell High School on January 23-25.
- Stated that the spring musical is always one of the highlights of the year. The talent at Steel Valley is amazing with the leadership of Mike Altman. Mr. Altman noted that the musical is always fun and hard work. He recognized his wife Sarah Altman for her work with the students. There was a lot of music in *The Sound of Music*, and she taught the nuns to sing in Latin. He praised the parents for taking care of the cast and crew. He noted that the high school students stepped up and adopted the children in the show. Toni Besh made all the costumes and did a marvelous job, and Christine Schott stepped up the last two years to assist the stage crew.
- Congratulated the Varsity Boys Basketball Team and Coach Chapman for an outstanding season earning a spot in the first round of the playoffs.
- Congratulations to Camden Polak for surpassing the 1,000-point mark for his basketball career on February 5 in a 54-40 win against Burrell High School. Camden also scored 48 points in a 90-80 triple overtime win against South Allegheny to set a new single-game school record scoring 11 three-pointers in a single game on January 25. Mr. Wehrer is proud of the boys basketball team and looking forward to having Camden back for another year.
- Mr. Ed Tozzi reported the Girls and Boys Bowling Teams qualified for the

Pennsylvania regional tournament on March 9, and they both had their best seasons finishing in second place with 8-2 records.

- Individual section champion was Trevon Scott, who qualified for the WPIBL singles championship tournament. Danielle Long, who is a four-year member of the girls varsity bowling team, qualified for the Pennsylvania state championship, too. Danielle signed a letter of intent with the Robert Morris Colonials next fall. Congratulations and good luck to Danielle and Trevon.
- Mr. Wehrer announced that the school district has a cooperative agreement for wrestling with West Mifflin Area School District. Three wrestlers from Steel Valley were individual section qualifiers making it to the WPIAL championships. Good luck to Tony Salopek, Frank Guzzi and Gavin Rosso at the WPIAL championships for a chance to go to states.
- Mr. Bryan Macuga, Secondary Campus Principal, made a presentation on the rationale for prerequisites. Also presenting were Associate Principal Mr. Strom, Mr. Vickers, Mrs. Geyer and Mrs. Logan.
- The first reason for the prerequisites was to challenge students. The SPP scores increased from 51.8 in 2016-2017 to 65.3 in 2017-2018. We had the highest jump in Pennsylvania (13.5 points) due to rigor and appropriate placement of students.
- The prerequisites have helped teachers differentiate instruction more effectively and meet students where they are. With the prerequisites, there are smaller class sizes and instruction is ahead of where it was last year.
- Mr. Macuga thanked the School Board for its support of the prerequisites, and he reported that the 2019-2020 Academic Handbook would be presented at the March Board meeting.

Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services' Report

Mrs. Borges

- Announced that March 12 would be an early dismissal for students as follows:

11:50 a.m. High School

12:15 p.m. Barrett and Park Schools

12:23 p.m. Middle School

- On March 18, there will be an inservice day for staff members and no school for students.
- A Preschool/Kindergarten Family Night is planned at the Carnegie Library of Homestead on March 28 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. This event is for incoming and current Kindergarten students and families. Children can visit activity stations, browse through the library, complete Kindergarten registration, sign up for a library card and meet the Kindergarten staff. There will also be snacks, crafts, games, technology and a special visit from Clifford the Big Red Dog.
- Brownie Troop 16369 asked the School Board for help in improving the Park playground. They have collaborated with Mrs. Schott for a garden, Art Club for a mural, but would like to apply for a grant for playground equipment. Steel Valley Wellness has agreed to help with writing a grant. The students would like to see a soft surface and play equipment, and they asked the School Board for money to make this happen.

Director of Academics, Information & Technology's Report

Mr. Colebank

- Announced that Mylan Laboratories will give each school two EpiPens free. He also ordered 10 first aid backpacks to be used on school field trips.

Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

Cynthia Hill – Academic growth

Donna Dreshman – Questioned 1.4 refunds

Jim Deutsch – Inquired why Policy 4.2 is updated.

Board Meeting Minutes

Ms. Youngblood moved and Mr. Olson seconded the motion to approve the following minutes:

January 22, 2019 worksession

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Rojtas, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Abstain: Ligeros, Olson, Steele. Negative: None.

January 24, 2019 regular meeting

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Abstain: Steele. Negative: None.

Motion carried.

1.0 Financial Management

Mr. Blick moved and Mr. Colasante seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 1.1 Board to approve list of bills:
 - 1.1.01 General Fund invoices for February 2019 in the amount of \$430,784.52
 - 1.1.02 General Fund hand checks for January 2019 in the amount of \$541,731.44
 - 1.1.03 General Fund Revenue Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.04 General Fund Expenditure Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.05 General Fund Balance Sheet for January 2019
 - 1.1.06 Food Service invoices for January 2019
 - 1.1.07 Food Service Revenue Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.08 Food Service Expenditure Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.09 Food Service Balance Sheet for January 2019
 - 1.1.10 Payroll Funding Transfers for January 2019
 - 1.1.11 External Groups Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.12 High School Student Activities Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.13 Middle School Activities Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.14 Athletics Fund Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for January 2019
 - 1.1.15 Capital Projects Balance Sheet for January 2019
 - 1.1.16 Capital Projects Revenue for January 2019
- 1.2 Accept the bids by Anthony Barna of Integra Realty Resources to perform an appraisal on Courtyard by Marriott, Block & Lot 89-R-226 for the tax year 2018 and 2019 in the amount of \$1,800.000 and to perform an appraisal for Dollar Tree, Block & Lot 130-G-156 for the tax year 2017 in the amount of \$2,800.00 at a witness fee of \$275.00 per hour to appear at trial as an expert realty estate appraiser for the school district on the two cited realties
- 1.3 A refund to Alison Kass for Lot & Block 182-P-80 in the amount of \$841.60
- 1.4 Refunds as follows:

Marlex Properties LLC	Lot & Block 130-R-301	\$ 552.47
Marlex Properties LLC	Lot & Block 131-G-145	\$ 764.23
Triple A Investments LLC	Lot & Block 130-R-71	\$ 397.90
Jamie R. Christian	Lot & Block 131-C-72	\$ 771.14
Commercial Net Lease Realty	Lot & Block 130-G-100	\$16,840.77

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: None. Motion carried.

2.0 Operations

Ms. Youngblood moved and Mrs. Ligeros seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 2.1 Facility rental requests as presented
- 2.2 Classify the band trailer as surplus equipment and to be traded in on a new trailer or placed up for bid for the 2019-2010 school year. The district will also place the value of a new trailer in the 2019-2020 budget to be purchased next year

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: None. Motion carried.

3.0 Co-Curricular Leadership

Mrs. Yuhas moved and Mr. Rojtas seconded the motion to the approve the following:

- 3.1 Fundraising requests as presented
- 3.2 Payment of \$700.00 for the disc jockey services at the prom to be held at Soldiers & Sailor Memorial Hall on May 17, 2019

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: None. Motion carried.

4.0 Special Assignments

Mr. Olson moved and Mrs. Yuhas seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 4.1 Hold second reading and adopt revisions to Policy 819 Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response
- 4.2 Hold first readings of the revisions to Policies 004, 006, 007, 011, 103, 103.1, 104, 105, 108, 113.3, 115, 116, 127, 137 and 138

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: None. Motion carried.

5.0 Educational Leadership

Mrs. Steele moved and Ms. Youngblood seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 5.1 Revise the 2018-2019 school calendar and designate February 18 as the make-up day for closing school on January 30; designate January 31 as an inservice day; designate February 15 as an early dismissal for students; change April 17 from an inservice day to a full student day as the make-up day for closing school on February 1; change April 18 from a holiday to an inservice day; and designate April 22 as the make-up day for closing school on February 20
- 5.3 Accept a PA smart grant in the amount of \$35,000.00 to create a Coding Club in the Middle School
- 5.4 Adopt a resolution authorizing Edward Wehrer, Superintendent, to affix an electronic signature to execute any contract with the Department of Education's e-grants system
- 5.5 Accept a \$25,000.00 grant from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency for a project titled, "Suring up the Seams of Safety"
- 5.6 An educational plan and agreement as presented

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: None. Motion carried.

5.2 Accept the following donations for a sensory space for the middle school:
Light projector-Nick Wilson; Target gift cards used to purchase handheld sensory fidget toys-Lesley and Anita Brown; Yoga ball-Mary Yuhas; Bean bag-Melissa Cheslock; Bean bags, pillows, yoga balls-Tara Perhacs; Lite Brite-Pam Skerbetz
Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood and Bulger. Abstain: Yuhas. Negative: None.
Motion carried.

Mr. Bulger thanked the individuals for the donation to our Century Space Program. Also, thanked the individuals who wrote the grants.

6.0 Communications and Technology

No update

7.0 Personnel Management

Mr. Rojtas moved and Mr. Colasante seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 7.1 An intermittent Family Medical Leave of Absence for Shari Koroly-Fetzko retroactive to February 4, 2019, not to exceed 60 days in duration
- 7.2 Accept, with regret, the resignation of Seth Mayle from the position of technology specialist retroactive to February 14, 2019
- 7.3 Change status of Kerry Kleinhans from a day-to-day substitute to a full-time long-term substitute retroactive to February 18, 2019, for the remainder of a leave of absence with an assignment of elementary music teacher at Park and Barrett Elementary Schools at Bachelor's Step 2 salary according to Policy No. 328.1 plus benefits as outlined in the SVEA collective bargaining agreement
- 7.4 Hire Suzanne Hughes as a day-to-day substitute teacher for the 2018-2019 school year at the approved daily rate, contingent upon passing all pre-employment screenings and compliance with Act 168, which must be completed within 30 days
- 7.5 Hire Angela McNutt and Holly Stiles as day-to-day substitute nurses for the 2018- 2019 school year at the approved daily rate, contingent upon receipt of

current clearances, passing all pre-employment screenings and compliance with Act 168, which must be completed within 30 days

- 7.6 Family Medical Leave of absence for Terri Vargo effective on March 4, 2019, not to exceed 60 days
- 7.7 Deleted
- 7.8 Hire Sharon Hodges as a districtwide paraeducator at a rate of \$10.10 per hour plus \$1.50 per hour for highly qualified status on a mutually agreed upon date, contingent upon receipt of current clearances, passing all pre-employment screenings and compliance with Act 168, which must be completed within 30 days
- 7.9 Hire Jodie Eiler as a substitute custodian and Joyce Fletcher as a substitute secretary, paraprofessional and food service worker at the approved rates per hour and no benefits, contingent upon passing all pre-employment screenings and compliance with Act 168, which must be completed with 30 days
- 7.10 Accept, with regret, the resignation of Heather Clark from the supplemental position of secondary associate webmaster effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
- 7.11 Approve the spring athletic supplemental appointments as presented for the 2018-2019 school year

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Youngblood, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: None. Motion carried.

- 7.12 Hire Raymond Braszo to the supplemental position of high school head football coach effective immediately

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively: Blick, Colasante, Ligeros, Olson, Rojtas, Steele, Yuhas and Bulger. Negative: Youngblood. Motion carried.

Mrs. Ligeros commented on the applicants and the interviewing process for the position of football coach.

Citizen Comments

Donna Dreshman

- Campbell Foundation PR (Communication) Grant
- Budget meeting timeline

- Pool condition
- Website is not user friendly
- The number of students graduating. Mr. Wehrer stated he estimates 108 students.

Jennifer (Last name not given)

- Thanked the Board for the honor of placing a book for the deceased loved ones.
- Inquired about making morning student drop-off more efficient.

Mr. Deutsch

- Discussed his conflict with the Superintendent. Mr. Wehrer responded to this claim stating Mr. Deutsch's intrusion into his family life is disconcerting. Mr. Wehrer stated he will be respectful, but he will continue to be protective of his family.

Mr. McCallister thanked the Board for employing Mr. Braszo.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 9:04 p.m.