

Regular Meeting
Steel Valley School District Board of Directors
Steel Valley High School Library
August 19, 2021

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

Roll call as follows:

In attendance: Ms. Adams, Mr. Blick, Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Yuhas and
Mr. Bulger

Zoom Teleconference: Mrs. Ligeros, Mr. Rojtas

Absent: Mr. Colasante, Ms. Youngblood

Also attending: Mr. Wehrer, Dr. Mumau, Mr. Macuga, Mr. Weber, Mrs. Emery and
Mr. Fetzko

Flag Salute

Acknowledgements

Moment of Silence

The School Board acknowledged the passing of Melo C. Myers, Great Grandma of Braya Walker, daughter of Maya Adams, School Board Member; Norman T. Dodge, Grandfather of Jeffrey Deabner, Earth and Space Science Teacher; Anthony DeMartino, Sr., Father of Anthony DeMartino Jr., Worker at football games; William B. Ferson, Grandfather of Barb Ferson, Special Education Teacher at Franklin Center; Dennis Zuger, father of Lexie Zuger, Senior at Steel Valley High School.

Mrs. Yuhas moved and Mrs. Fitzgerald seconded to place appropriate books into the district school libraries in memory of the above departed.

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Adams, Blick, Fitzgerald, Ligeros, Rojtas, Yuhas and Bulger.

Negative: None. Motion carried.

President's Report

Mr. Bulger was excited to report that in a week the hallways will be full with students and staff. He is pleased with having students back in school (5) days per week with in-person instruction.

He appreciates all the hard work that everyone put in over the summer. He saw a lot of teachers posting things they were doing to have themselves ready to be back in the classrooms. He also thanked all the student summer workers that assisted with having the buildings ready.

He wished everyone a safe last week of summer and looks forward to seeing the school year start.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Wehrer reported that teaching staff and paraprofessionals will be starting back to school on Monday, August 23rd. They will have (2) days of Professional Development and (1) clerical day. Thursday, August 26th will be the Student Transition Day. This is for students in Kindergarten, 5th and 9th grades. This day allows the students to become familiar with the new buildings they will be attending. This day will also be an early dismissal. Park and Barrett Elementary will be dismissed at 12:15 PM; Middle School will be dismissed at 12:34 PM; High School will be dismissed at 11:50 AM.

First full day of classes for everyone (K-12) will be on Friday, August 27th.

Mr. Wehrer also wanted to reiterate that in July, Administration put together a Health and Safety Plan that was approved by the Board. Part of that plan addressed masks and it was decided that masks would be optional but strongly encouraged. Mr. Macuga and Mr. Wehrer will be very diligent, making sure they are aware of positive cases with the staff and students. He also said that Administration would continue to inform families of any positive cases. Mr. Wehrer concluded his report by stating that he is empowered to change any aspect of the Health and Safety Plan as needed, and that includes masking.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Mr. Macuga reported on the Professional Developments (PD) that teachers participated in last week. He explained that Steel Valley School District has built a strong partnership with Apple Learning throughout the years. August 11th – August 13th thirty teaching staff members participated in the Apple Professional Learning training. The training consisted of a beginner/refresher course and progressed to a training focused on Augmented Reality, which allows students and teachers to overlay information, visuals, and other content into the real world. Mr. Macuaga wanted to thank Apple for

continuing to support our partnership. He also thanked the teaching staff for taking time out of their summer breaks to attend these trainings.

Mr. Macuga shared information about the In-Service training schedules for the teachers and paraprofessionals. A few highlights of the trainings include a review of the district's Health and Safety Plan giving all staff members the opportunity to ask any questions they have about the plan. The Pupil Services department will have updates on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA). There will also be trainings that will focus on Trends and Resources. These trainings will allow everyone to come into the school year on the same page. There will be a Standards Aligned System (SAS) review for all teachers including new textbook training. Finally, there will be a review of the Sapphire Student Information System.

Mr. Macuga stated that the schedules are in the process of being sent home for students in grades 5-12. The schedules are also active and can be viewed within Sapphire.

Lastly, Mr. Macuga reported that the, *Meet the Principal Nights*, were well attended for all our school buildings. If you were unable to attend and have questions, please reach out to your child's building principal.

Director of Pupil Services' Report

Dr. Mamua reported that the Special Education Department is in the preliminary process of looking at the curriculum for Life Skills Support (LSS) and Autistic Support (AS). By creating LSS/AS teams, and using SAS, it will for allow an even flow of education between the elementary schools, middle school, and high school. This will provide programs to students that have challenging needs.

Dr. Mumau thanked Mr. Shoemaker and Mrs. Lavelle for their creativity in updating classroom designs and delivery systems.

Dr. Mumau gave many thanks to Mrs. Levick, for her assistance with submitting the paperwork for the Title III: English as a Second Language (ESL) Grant. We received \$750, and with that grant money we will be purchasing BrainPOP for the students.

Dr. Mumau also expressed her appreciation for all the hard work that the K-12 school counselors have been doing with student scheduling, service agreements, parent phone calls, and emails. She said it means a lot to the Pupil Services department.

Dr. Mumau gave a brief itinerary about the Professional Development meetings that will take place on August 23rd and 24th. There will be updates on FERPA/HIPPA. There will also be a Mental Health First Aid training through the Student Assistance and Prevention Programs (SAP); this will be informative and helpful for staff and how to interact with students. There will be an introduction to a research and evidence based program called ACCOMODS training. This will help support special and regular education teachers on how to look at defining interventions in the classroom for all student learners. This training will start with the learning support teachers and staff and then move onto the regular education teachers.

Dr. Mumau also reported that Steel Valley received a grant from the AIU to implement Unique Learning Systems (ULS) in some of the learning support classrooms to support Pennsylvania's Core Standards and academic interventions.

Dr. Mumau added that Mr. Strom is working diligently to put together the High School's Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Team.

Dr. Mumau also wanted to give a special thanks to Mr. Strom, custodial, and tech staffs in helping her prepare to infuse a new special education classroom in the High School.

Dr. Mumau congratulated the Middle School, Ms. Bragan, and all the members of their PBIS Team. The PBIS Team's motto is *Keeping it R.E.A.L. (Respect, Effort, Attitude, and Leadership)*. The goal is to carry out this motto to the High School students.

Dr. Mumau was excited to announce for the Middle School, that she will be working with Ms. Bragan and Mr. Macuaga in running Pathways to Graduation (P2G). This is a \$20,000 grant through the AIU. This program is going to look at the social and emotional learning needs of the students to direct their path to graduation.

Dr. Mumau said the Elementary PBIS Teams have met; they will kickoff their plan in the middle of September. She gave special thanks to Dr. Shaughnessy and Mr. Walsh, for their daily supports with growing our youngest learners academically, socially, and emotionally.

Dr. Mumau also wanted to thank the members of the community for taking the time to sit down and talk with our committee that went around to Homestead, Munhall, and West Homestead. The feedback is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Wehrer thanked Dr. Mumau and also introduced Ms. Rebecca Bragan as the newly appointed Middle School Principal and asked if she would like to step in and introduce herself.

Ms. Bragan said that she was coming from her *Meet the Principal Night*, and she is excited to start the new school year. She said that her PBIS Team had students in the school yesterday participating in a role reversal exercise. The point of this exercise is to reinforce what kids are doing correctly. She explained that the goal is to reward the appropriate behaviors, not focusing on the students going above and beyond, but the students that are coming in and doing what's right and creating a positive environment; reinforcing that through positive behavior rewards.

Ms. Bragan also touched on the Path to Graduation; she explained that working with internal support students and looking at data, Steel Valley will adopt the Check and Connect Program. Ms. Bragan said she was fortunate to work with this grant at her previous school district. This will lay the foundation for tier intervention and also make sure every student has a reason to be here.

Ms. Bragan closed by giving thanks to the community and to the Board.

Director of Academics, Information & Technology's Report

No Report

Solicitor's Motion

No report.

Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

Ms. Noblet shared her excitement of the hiring of Mr. Austin Riley as well as the bringing back of the Success Coaches. She said she is grateful for the student support. She added it was nice to see the hiring of staff members at Park Elementary for the supplemental positions that recently became open due to retirements. She was also pleased to see that a new district van driver was hired to transfer students back and forth between schools.

Ms. Noblet wanted to clarify if the masks are optional rather than recommended. She thought masks were recommended if you are not vaccinated.

Mr. Wehrer responded saying that masks are recommended whether or not you are vaccinated.

Ms. Noblet thanked all the parents that participated in fulfilling the Amazon Wish Lists.

Ms. Noblet asked if nurse or paraprofessional substitutes have been added to the agenda for approval.
Mr. Wehrer responded no.
Dr. Mumau added that they are actively accepting applications for paraprofessional positions.

Mr. Deutsch referenced motion (7.2) asking what was deleted.
Mr. Wehrer responded that it was for the elimination of a position at Park Elementary that had a retirement; instead we decided to post the position. The position was posted on August 18, 2021.

Mr. Deutsch directed a question to Dr. Mumau asking how many paraprofessional positions are open?
Dr. Mumau stated she had to rescind the hiring of Mr. Kevin Clarke within the past (2) weeks so she is actively looking for a paraprofessional position.

Mr. Deustch gave special thanks to Mrs. Beth McCallister for all the work she did while leading various clubs throughout the years.
Mr. Wehrer added that Mrs. Beth McCallister has done a very fine job with the supplemental positions that she held; he particularly added everything she has done with the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD). He noted at one point Steel Valley was the Statewide Chapter of the Year; then Mrs. McCallister was the Statewide Sponsor of the Year; recently Ben Novotny was appointed the SADD Student of the Year. Mr. Wehrer said she has set a high bar, but also a great foundation that people can build upon.

Mr. Deutsch concluded by asking if anybody being hired tonight is related to anyone on the School Board.
The Board responded no.

Ms. Schott commented on motion (7.3) she said she understands that it may be a personnel matter and the Board may not be able to comment.
Mr. Wehrer agreed that it would be best to hold off talking about this until it happens.

Ms. Cara Karstetter talked about how some of the athletic teams and clubs are struggling with participants. She said she reached out to various School Board Members and Administrators about her concerns and asked for assistance with posting information on the district's website, social media, and phone calls. She said everyone she spoke to was supportive and she appreciates the assistance.
Mrs. Yuhas added that we need to focus on the level of excitement in school and that needs to start at the elementary levels. She added that Ms. Bragan and Dr. Mumau are bringing a lot of positive energy especially with the PBIS Teams.

Mrs. Ruston commented on the retirement of Mrs. McCallister, she hopes these open positions are being filled so Steel Valley can offer the extra curricular groups.

Mrs. Vinay asked a question regarding the lack of athletes on our High School sports teams. She asked if there is a way that 8th graders can play at the High School level.

Mr. Bulger said that is not an option because it is against Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) regulations.

Ms. Schott added she does believe 8th graders can participate with the High School Marching Band.

Mr. Bulger said that is true, because the band does not fall under the PIAA.

Ms. Adams asked about the different reasons people are not participating for the some of the teams, soccer specifically.

Mrs. Karstetter said that a lot of people respond saying they are not familiar with the sport. She said the coaching staff is willing to work with anyone who never played the sport before.

Ms. Adams added that athletes could use off-season sports as conditioning for the sport that they usually play.

Mrs. Karstetter agreed and referenced a couple of baseball players that played soccer in their off-season to stay in shape and help assist with footwork.

Board Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Yuhas moved and Mrs. Fitzgerald seconded the motion to approve the following meeting minutes:

July 26, 2021 Worksession Meeting

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Blick, Fitzgerald, Ligeros, Rojtas, Yuhas and Bulger.

Abstain: Adams. Negative: None. Motion carried.

June 24, 2021 Regular Meeting

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Blick, Ligeros, Rojtas, Yuhas and Bulger.

Abstain: Adams, Fitzgerald. Negative: None. Motion carried.

1.0 Financial Management

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

1.1 Motion to approve the list of bills:

1.1.01 General Fund invoices for the 2020-2021 school year paid in 2021-2022 in the amount of \$104,672.86

- 1.1.02 General Fund invoices for August 2021 in the amount of \$101,857.76
- 1.1.03 General Fund hand checks for the 2020-2021 school year paid in 2021-2022 in the amount of \$1,187.99
- 1.1.04 General Fund hand checks for July 2021 in the amount of \$1,554,891.86
- 1.1.05 General Fund Revenue Report for July 2021
- 1.1.06 General Fund Expenditure Report for July 2021
- 1.1.07 General Fund Balance Sheet for July 2021
- 1.1.08 Food Service invoice for July 2021 in the amount of \$83.75
- 1.1.09 Food Service Revenue Report for July 2021
- 1.1.10 Food Service Expenditure Report for July 2021
- 1.1.11 Food Service Balance Sheet for July 2021
- 1.1.12 Athletics Fund Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for July 2021
- 1.1.13 High School Student Activities Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for July 2021
- 1.1.14 Middle School Activities Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for July 2021
- 1.1.15 External Groups Balance Sheet and Disbursement Report for July 2021

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Adams, Blick, Fitzgerald, Ligeros, Rojtas, Yuhás and Bulger.

Negative: None. Motion carried.

2.0 Operations

Mrs. Yuhás moved and Mrs. Fitzgerald seconded the motion to approve the following:

- 2.1 Motion to approve the facility usage requests as presented
- 2.2 Motion to approve the purchase of three new coolers for the high school cafeteria in the amount of \$42,438, not including installation, for the 2021-2022 school year

Mr. Wehrer commented on (2.2) stating that the coolers are part of the COSTARS program at the State level, which means they do not need to be bid or quoted.

Mr. Bulger added the coolers that are in there now are as old as the building.

Mr. Wehrer confirmed and said they are from the late 1970's.

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Adams, Blick, Fitzgerald, Ligeros, Rojtas, Yuhás and Bulger.

Negative: None. Motion carried.

3.0 Co-Curricular Leadership

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

3.1 Motion to approve fundraising requests as presented

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Adams, Blick, Fitzgerald, Ligeros, Rojtas, Yuhás and Bulger.

Negative: None. Motion carried.

4.0 Special Assignments

Mrs. Ligeros reported that Steel Center approved their Health and Safety Plan at their August 3rd meeting. As of that August 3rd meeting, their enrollment is 849 students. They are requiring students, staff, and visitors to wear masks within their facility. Steel Center will be putting out a monthly publication called “The Buzz.” This will entail highlights of Steel Center and be customized to each district with their students’ achievements. Student orientation was being held on August 19th from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM. It was a self-guided tour with an open house format. Students 1st day for Steel Center will be August 25th.

Mrs. Ligeros reported on Mon Valley stating that their summer sessions were busy with their Extended School Year (ESY) classes. They concluded at the end of July. August 31st is their first day of school. Their enrollment is not as high as last year. Their Open House will be held on September 28th.

5.0 Educational Leadership

Ms. Adams reported she would be starting the Educational Leadership Committee in the Fall. She also thanked Ms. Noblet for sharing the information about the Amazon Wish Lists. She asked how people could obtain information about the lists.

Ms. Noblet said that the lists are part of the teacher’s specific account and they can share that link on social media or through email.

6.0 Communication & Technology

Mrs. Fitzgerald reported on the Parent Liaison Group that was unable to meet tonight because of the *Meet the Principal Nights*. She thanked Ms. Bragan and Mr. Strom for providing great information. She also extended her thanks to Dr. Shaughnessy and Mr. Walsh.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said she is looking forward to the Parent Liaison meeting coming up on the September 23rd. Their main topics include a tutoring program as well as putting out a student newspaper.

7.0 Personnel Management

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

- 7.2 Deleted
- 7.3 Motion to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding between the District and the Steel Valley Education Association as presented
- 7.4 Motion to rescind the hiring of Mr. Kevin Clarke from the position of districtwide paraprofessional retroactive to Wednesday, August 4, 2021
- 7.5 Motion to appoint Mr. Austin Riley as a full-time districtwide special education teacher with a 2021-2022 assignment of high school special education teacher at an annual salary of \$40,019 based upon first year of non-tenured status with a Bachelor's degree according to Policy No. 328.1 plus benefits as outlined in the current SVEA collective bargaining agreement effective with the start of the 2021-2022 school term, contingent upon passing all pre-employment screenings and compliance with Act 168
- 7.6 Motion to hire Mrs. Kim Olack to the position of Middle School Secretary at a prorated annual starting salary of \$23,676 plus benefits according to the collective bargaining agreement
- 7.7 Motion to hire Ms. Sara Fite to the position of full-time Middle School/High School Secretary at a prorated annual starting salary of \$23,676 plus benefits according to the collective bargaining agreement, contingent upon receipt of current clearances, compliance with Act 168 and passing of pre-employment screenings
- 7.8 Motion to approve Mr. Keith Kaufold, Ms. Aysia Hunter, Ms. Yasmin Shaheed and Ms. Krystal Gibbs as contracted to provide district social worker services as a Success Coach at a rate of \$45.00 per hour, and approve Mr. Vada Epps to provide district social worker services as a Success Coach at a rate of \$35.00 per hour for the 2021-2022 school year
- 7.9 Motion to approve the list of applicants as presented to be placed on the support staff substitute call list, contingent upon receipt of current clearances, for the 2021-2022 school year at the approved hourly rate
- 7.10 Motion to approve the list of everyday substitute teachers as presented for the 2021-2022 school year at the approved daily rate
- 7.11 Motion to accept, with regret, the resignation of Samantha Vasy from the position of Middle School Cross Country Coach and the resignation of Beth McCallister from SADD sponsor, Student Government sponsor, Prom sponsor and Senior Class sponsor effective immediately
- 7.12 Motion to approve Mary Jo Craycraft to the Park Intramurals supplemental, Vicki Deutsch to the Park School After School Coordinator, Holli Bobick to the Park Safety Patrol sponsor, Alexis Lucas to the Middle School Girls Volleyball Coach and Emily Doyle to the Middle School Cross Country Coach

- 7.13 Motion to hire Mr. Dale Chapman as the District Van Driver to transport students from Barrett and Park Schools to the Middle School for classes
- 7.14 Motion to accept, with regret, the resignation of Mrs. Deborah Perry from the position of food service at Barrett Elementary School retroactive to August 17, 2021
- 7.15 Motion to approve Dr. Stephen Vinay III as a day-to-day substitute teacher at the approved daily rate for the 2021-2022 school year, contingent upon receipt of current clearances, passing pre-employment screenings and compliance with Act 168.

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Adams, Blick, Ligeros, Rojtas, Yuhas and Bulger.

Negative: None. Motion carried.

- 7.1 Motion to grant tenure to Barbara Ferson, Justin Burda, Marissa Petro, Tayler Rojtas, Jenna Aykul and Jennifer Lavelle and authorize the Board President and Board Secretary to execute the Professional Employee Contracts

Mr. Wehrer welcomed Mr. Austin Riley to a full-time teaching position in the High School Special Education Department.

Austin comes up to us with a Bachelor's Degree from California University of PA and he is certified in Special Education and Secondary Mathematics.

He was a Presidential Scholar and a Ruth and Clara Freeman Scholar for having the highest GPA in Education at California University. He also was a Steel Valley Graduate. While Mr. Riley was a senior at Steel Valley he wrote and directed his own play called *The Reunion*.

He served as a building substitute and a Life Skills teacher for Steel Valley, teaching virtually and in-person during the 1st semester last year.

Mr. Bulger also added his thanks to Mrs. Beth McCallister on all her hard work on the organizations she ran.

Mrs. Yuhas asked for the best point of contact for Sapphire questions and information.

Mr. Macuga answered by giving the Tech Support extension 1551. Mr. Colebank will be available when he comes back and also the building principals can assist with logging into Sapphire.

Upon roll call the following members voted affirmatively:

Adams, Blick, Ligeros, Yuhas and Bulger.

Abstain: Rojtas. Negative: None. Motion carried.

Citizen Comments

Ms. Schott commented on the Health and Safety Plan, she wanted to know what to do if her children have the common cold. She asked if there are guidelines to follow on when to keep her children home from school.

Mr. Wehrer asked that parents be conservative in their decision-making of sending their children to school. COVID-19 can manifest itself in a wide variety of symptoms. He asked parents that if your child is not feeling well, they have a runny nose or cough, please do not assume it probably is not COVID-19; instead assume it might be COVID-19. Please keep your child at home and contact your PCP to obtain further guidance from a medical professional.

Ms. Schott suggests that when referencing acronyms; please say what it stands for before using the abbreviation.

Mr. Deutsch asked about enrollment.

Mr. Wehrer said that as of right now, since students are not yet in school, we do not believe we are below enrollment from last year.

Mr. Deutsch referenced about the budget and how much money was spent on charter school students.

Ms. Adams added we want the students back to offer them better education and more programs.

Mr. Deutsch agreed and said that in the recent years our athletics, band, and clubs have really succeeded.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 8:09 PM