MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regular Board Meeting Minutes April 8, 2020 www.muhlsdk12.org

Call to Order

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District was called to order on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at 7:06 PM by Board President, Mr. S. Wayne Hardy via remote access using Zoom.

Members Present

President – Mr. S. Wayne Hardy
Vice President – Mr. J. Tony Lupia, Jr.
Secretary – Mr. Thomas W. Gross
Assistant Secretary – Mrs. Cindy L. Mengle
Treasurer - Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster
Member – Mr. Garrett E. Hyneman
Member – Mr. Randall R. Madara
Member – Mr. Mark J. Nelson
Member – Mr. Otto W. Voit, III
Solicitor – Mr. Brian F. Boland, Esq.
Recording Secretary – Mrs. Patricia L. Law

Administration Present

Superintendent – Dr. Joseph E. Macharola Assistant Superintendent - Dr. Alan S. Futrick Business Manager - Mr. Shane Mathias Supervisor of Accounts - Mr. Mark Moyer Director of Physical Plant and Transportation - Mr. Ken Patterson Director of Special Education - Dr. Shawn Rutt Director of Technology - Mr. Daniel Houck Supervisor of Language Arts and Literacy - Mrs. Cathy Shappell Athletic Director - Dr. Tim Moyer High School Principal - Mr. Michael Mish High School Assistant Principal - Ms. Lori Morris High School Assistant Principal - Mr. C. Eric Schaeffer Middle School Principal - Mr. Jeffery Ebert Middle School Assistant Principal - Dr. Felicia Ulsh Intermediate School Principal - Mr. Steven Baylor Elementary Center Principal - Mrs. Krista Venza Elementary Center Principal – Mr. Antonio Mirabito

Visitors

Jolyn Casper Linda Figueroa Greg Purcell (WFMZ)

Hearing of Visitors - Muhlenberg School District taxpayers and residents have an opportunity, at this time, to comment on matters of concern, official action, or deliberation which are or may be before the Muhlenberg School Board. The Board retains the option to accept all public comment at this time. Presentations should be limited to two minutes per person. In the event that the Board determines that there is not sufficient time for residents or taxpayers of the School District to comment, the Board may defer the comment period to the next regular meeting.

Mr. Hardy stated anyone who would like to make a comment please use the "raise hand" function, state your name and your address.

There were none.

Educational Presentations

There were none.

Committee Reports

- A. Berks County Intermediate Unit Mr. Randall R. Madara

 There was no meeting this month.
- B. Reading-Muhlenberg CTC Mrs. Cindy L. MengleThe monthly meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 13, 2020 via Zoom.
- C. Berks County Tax Collection Committee Mr. Shane M. Mathias/Mr. Otto W. Voit, III

The meeting was postponed.

- D. PSBA Liaison Mr. Otto W. Voit, IIINo report this month.
- E. Muhlenberg Community Library Mr. Terry Heckman/Mr. Randall R. Madara
 There was no meeting held in April.

- F. Muhlenberg Township/Laureldale Borough Liaison Mr. J. Tony Lupia, Jr.
 - Mr. Lupia was not able to attend.
- G. Educational Programs Dr. Alan S. Futrick

No report at this time.

Solicitor's Comments - Mr. Brian F. Boland

No report at this time.

Superintendent's Comments - Dr. Joseph Macharola

Dr. Macharola thanked everyone for their patience and support navigating through this extraordinary situation that has had a world-wide affect. The spread of COVID-19 has required everyone to work within rapidly changing circumstances. He said the top priority is keeping students and the school community safe. Dr. Macharola said these are unprecedented times and the District is in unchartered territory. He said in his thirty-six and a half years in education he has never seen anything like this. On April 8th, Operation Chromebook was executed successfully because of the people who are boots on the ground - the volunteers and staff - secretaries, educational assistants, maintenance, principals, directors and teachers. They all volunteered to help to distribute thousands of the District's Chromebooks to students to be sure that they had these devices in their homes to begin their educational programs. Dr. Macharola said the District was in Phase I, enrichment, the first two weeks. He said recommendations had come from both the state and federal government as to what steps to logically take so that the District could be assured that appropriate measures would be taken to give the Muhlenberg School District students an opportunity to learn without any kind of repercussions. Dr. Macharola said the District is now in Phase II. He said no one has a crystal ball and he will continue to say - minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, day-by-day emerging situations change and the answers will change.

The District has extended thousands of meals to the children of the Muhlenberg School District. Dr. Macharola thanked Mr. Carey Kline and the District's tremendous cafeteria workers who have volunteered to work and help staff to be sure students got the necessary meals. He said he believed they set a record today with over 600 meals being served, which is about 1,000 plus with both breakfast and lunch being provided. Dr. Macharola said he is very proud of the district, school board, staff and administrators.

He said there were some issues with the distribution of the Chromebooks but they were immediately addressed. The distribution was very well organized by the District's Data Administrator, Kevin Vanino. Mr. Vanino had the assistance of the principals and Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Futrick. Dr. Macharola said the District's mission is pretty clear as this will go on for sometime. He said starting April 9th, students will begin virtual learning. The District's Continuity of Education Plan is on the website as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Dr. Macharola said PDE has been

extremely gracious working with school districts but especially with those in Berks County. The superintendents meet daily. Sometimes a twice a day. He said there is a plethora of issues that they are addressing and the cooperation from everyone is greatly appreciated.

Dr. Macharola said there is no doubt the budget will change. The District will have to make adjustments; the Governor with the House and Senate will be making revisions. He said he would recommend proceeding cautiously and work together with common sense. There is no way to know what the outcomes will be at this time. Hopefully, the House and Senate will come-up with meaningful help for all of the school districts in the state.

Dr. Macharola said the District's Continuity of Education Plan was very important and the Director of Federal Programs, Mrs. Cathy Shappell, along with the confidential secretaries worked hard to get this information out to people. Access to technology was delivered today, and on April 9th, instruction for all students including special education students would begin. Dr. Macharola said the District cannot waive IDEA but it will do the best it can as asked by the Secretary of Education and Federal Government. He said he is being very cautious with that, but the District will do the best it can given the circumstances. Dr. Macharola said the students who are English Language Learners and Gifted students all had to be taken into consideration when preparing the Continuity of Education Plan. There had to be appropriate and reasonable instruction and operating in good faith. No one size fits all. Dr. Macharola said administrators had to decide what made sense and what was possible. He said the District has winners champions not chumps. There are champions working in the Muhlenberg School District - clearly engaged executing the Chromebook distribution. There were hiccups and the District will continue to have them. This is new territory. The spirit for the Muhlenberg School District students and community is unquestionably unfounded. Dr. Macharola said the social-emotional problems at home are increasing from being at home and going to school. The District can only do the best it can virtually. He said the District's staff and principals will go above and beyond to help their students. Dr. Macharola said it is about getting students engaged. If they are not getting engaged, guidance counselors will be reaching out to them. He said steady as we go - this will be beat. The District will come out of this better and probably much different than what could ever be imagined from traditional learners.

Dr. Macharola said SB751 is lengthy. Some of the things listed in this bill are: the District will not be held to the 180-day requirement this year and the last day of school will be June 4th. The District will be not be changing its schedule, but will be adjusting the third and fourth marking periods. No one will be penalized because of COVID-19. That is not just the position of this District, but of Harrisburg, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education as well. Under SB751, authority was given to the Secretary to make decisions, payment to school employees, PSERS credit, cleaning supplies, protective gear, safe communication to parents (which the District has done), Continuity of Education Plan (completed), subsidies and other payments are under consideration and conversation (potentially under negotiation as well), federal testing waived, and the waiver program for LEAs.

Also included is language with reference to school bus contracts, continuing education time period, streamline for federal waiver process, non-public school waivers, non-public school placements, and legislation regarding charter schools. Dr. Macharola said this is just the beginning of this, but the District will get through it. Staff is committed and stepped up to the plate.

Dr. Macharola thanked the Board for their support; and stated his commitment to get everyone through this – he is with everyone in mind, heart and soul.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Madara asked Dr. Macharola if the Continuity of Education Plan was a document, were there guidelines for creating it and who reviewed it. Dr. Macharola replied yes, it is a document. All five hundred school districts were required to create a Continuity of Education Plan. The District's plan was developed by the administration in line with the guidelines by PDE and the District's Continuity of Education Plan was submitted to PDE and was identified as received. Dr. Macharola said that PDE was not going to overly question each plan, as they know that one size does not fit all. He said they know District's will have to make adjustments. They did accept the District's plan as it fits very well with the Muhlenberg School District and its incredibly diverse student enrollment. Mr. Madara asked if it included anything with regards to the District's special education students. Dr. Macharola replied yes, and he is very concerned about IDEA. He said he knows what IDEA is and certain things cannot be waived. Dr. Macharola said he felt this may need legislature intervention. The District will be identifying students with FAPE with the NOREP process. The NOREP process is clearly identified in the Continuity Plan. He said the District will do the best it can. These are unprecedented times.

Mr. Lupia said if there is any way Board members could help with the distribution of food or computers, to please let them know. Dr. Macharola thanked Mr. Lupia.

Mr. Hoffmaster said he heard from people in the community who said they were happy and surprised at how quickly people in the District got back to them when they had questions or concerns. He said he also witnessed the technology distribution and felt that it went well with everyone doing a wonderful job. Dr. Macharola said yes they all did a wonderful job with Mr. Vanino taking the lead.

Mr. Hyneman said one item that could be a problem is following a student's IEP especially those who have a one-on-one educational assistant included in the IEP. He said he is not sure where the District stands legally with that. Dr. Macharola said this is one of his major concerns and agrees with him. The District is in unprecedented times with COVID-19 and he is hoping that the state and federal government (supreme courts) are on board with this. He said the District has made a plan for the assistants to be working virtually somehow with students; hopefully, augmenting the instruction from the teacher addressing some of those concerns. Dr. Macharola said the District would be using the NOREPs in line with the Continuity of Education Plan and FAPE. He said that was recommended and the District will follow those recommendations. Dr. Macharola said many of the special needs children are also English Language Learners. He said it is

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about moving forward, but he does have many concerns for everyone, but it won't be because the District isn't doing what it needs to do.

Mr. Hoffmaster asked if administration has given any thought on what will be done for graduation. Dr. Macharola said right now they are gathering information and ideas as well as getting information from PDE.

Personnel

Resolution Nos. 182A - 182D

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Lupia, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Personnel Resolution Nos. 182A through 182D** in their entirety.

Yeas: Mr. Gross, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hoffmaster, Mr. Hyneman, Mr. Lupia, Mr. Madara, Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit. The motion carried unanimously.

182A Acceptance of Resignations

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District accept the following resignations:

- a. Ms. Eileen Musselman, STEM/Engineering Teacher, Muhlenberg Middle School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective April 15, 2020.
- b. Ms. Lisa A. Ermler, Cafeteria Clerical Assistant, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective May 15, 2020.

182B Classified Appointment

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following classified appointment:

a. Ms. Monica H. Brock, 4.5 Hour Cafeteria Worker (S. Kelly), Muhlenberg Middle School, effective upon opening of schools by Governor Wolf, at a pay rate of \$14.83 per hour.

182C Termination of Varsity Track Assistant Coach

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the termination of Mr. Jared White, Varsity Track Assistant Coach, effective April 1, 2020.

182D Authorization of Payment of Employees

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorizes the payment of all Muhlenberg School District employees at their regular rate of pay for the time period of March 16, 2020 through April 8, 2020 in compliance with any applicable laws; and to further continue payment to all Muhlenberg School employees at their regular rate of pay as per Senate Bill 751.

Management

No items at this time.

Physical Plant and Transportation

Resolution No. 183

Moved by Mrs. Mengle and Mr. Hyneman, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Physical Plant and Transportation Resolution No. 183** in its entirety.

Yeas: Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hoffmaster, Mr. Hyneman, Mr. Lupia, Mr. Madara, Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit, Mr. Gross. The motion **carried** unanimously.

183 LED Light Fixtures

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the purchase of LED light fixtures for Muhlenberg Elementary Center, C. E. Cole Intermediate School, Muhlenberg Middle School and Muhlenberg High School at a total cost of \$55,000 as presented (funded by Capital Projects and Capital Reserve) (Exhibit #152).

Budget and Finance

Resolution Nos. 184 and 185

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Nelson, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Budget and Finance Resolution Nos. 184 and 185** in their entirety.

Yeas: Mr. Hoffmaster, Mr. Hyneman, Mr. Lupia, Mr. Madara, Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit, Mr. Gross, Mr. Hardy. The motion **carried** unanimously.

184 Approval of Financial Reports

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following financial reports and that they become part of the permanent record of the meeting (Exhibit #153):

Fund	Treasurer's Report	Financial Report	Bills Paid Month	Investments	Budget Transfers
General	Feb 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020 Ck#47560-47719 V#26282-26309	Feb 2020	
Cafeteria	Feb 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020 Ck#6740-6788 V#2810-2815	Feb 2020	
Capital Reserve (Fund 32)	Mar 2020	Mar 2020	Mar 2020 Ck#888-889		
Capital Projects Fund (Fund 39)	Mar 2020	Mar 2020			
Activity	Feb 2020	Feb 2020			

185 Extension of Deadline for Filing/Payment of Business Privilege Tax

A RESOLUTION TEMPORARILY EXTENDING THE PAYMENT DEADLINE FOR THE MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT 2019 FINAL/2020 ESTIMATED BUSINESS TAX RETURNS FROM APRIL 15, 2020 TO JULY 15, 2020 CONSISTENT WITH THE EXTENSION GRANTED BY THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE TO FEDERAL TAXPAYERS IN RESPONSE TO THE STATE OF EMERGENCY CURRENTLY IN EFFECT.

WHEREAS, there currently exists a state of emergency occasioned by the proliferation of the COVID-19 virus;

WHEREAS, many businesses are not currently in operation or are operating with limited staffing as a result of the state of emergency;

WHEREAS, in response to the state of emergency on March 17, 2020, the Internal Revenue Service issued a statement extending its payment deadline for the 2019 Federal Tax Returns for all taxpayers owing less than One Million Dollars in taxes from April 15, 2020 to July 15, 2020 including the waiver of all penalty and interest for properly filed and paid taxes and returns by July 15, 2020;

WHEREAS, as of March 18, 2020, the Internal Revenue Service has not issued formal regulations regarding the time to file returns; however, it has announced the extension of time for payment of taxes outstanding;

WHEREAS, Muhlenberg School District Resolution No. 82 of March 12, 1982 requires that all business tax returns be filed on or before April 15 consistent with the filing of federal tax returns;

WHEREAS, the Muhlenberg School District recognizes the hardship currently placed on many of its businesses by the current state of emergency;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Muhlenberg School District, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that temporary deadlines for the filing of Final 2019/Estimated 2020 Business Tax Returns be established as follows:

- 1. The payment deadline for Final 2019/Estimated 2020 Business Privilege and Mercantile License Taxes under the School District are to be consistent with the temporary payment deadlines established by the Internal Revenue Service and will be July 15, 2020;
- 2. Any payment made for the Final 2019/Estimated 2020 Business Privilege and Mercantile License Taxes consistent with the newly established Internal Revenue Service deadline of July 15, 2020 will not accrue penalty and interest. Taxpayers shall be liable for penalty and interest for incorrect returns consistent with past practices of the School District.
- 3. The extended payment deadline will not apply to delinquent taxes or delinquent returns for years prior to 2019.
- 4. The School District may adjust its filing and payment deadlines without further resolution should the Internal Revenue Service make further adjustments, consistent with past practices. Said adjustments will be posted on the Business Office's Section of the School District's website.

Approved by the Board of Directors of the Muhlenberg School District on the 8th day of April, 2020 (Exhibit #154).

Education

Resolution Nos. 186 and 187

Moved by Mrs. Mengle and Mr. Hyneman, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Education Resolution Nos. 186 and 187** in their entirety.

Yeas: Mr. Hyneman, Mr. Lupia, Mr. Madara, Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit, Mr. Gross, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hoffmaster. The motion **carried** unanimously.

186 Muhlenberg High School Summer School

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the 2020 Summer School Program at Muhlenberg High School, beginning Monday, June 15, 2020 through Thursday, July 16, 2020, at the tuition cost of \$150.00 per course (Exhibit #155).

Dual Enrollment Agreement with Reading Area Community College for the 2020-2021 Academic Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Dual Enrollment Agreement with Reading Area Community College for the 2020-2021 Academic Year at a student tuition rate of \$99.00 per credit (Exhibit #156).

Student Activities

No items at this time.

Minutes

Resolution No. 188

188 Approval of Minutes

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Voit, that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 4, 2020 and the Regular Board Meeting of March 11, 2020 be approved as submitted.

Yeas: Mr. Lupia, Mr. Madara, Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit, Mr. Gross, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hoffmaster, Mr. Hyneman. The motion **carried** unanimously.

Old Business

New Business

Resolution No. 189

Moved by Mrs. Mengle and Mr. Lupia, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Resolution No. 189** in its entirety.

Yeas: Mr. Madara, Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit, Mr. Gross, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hoffmaster, Mr. Hyneman, Mr. Lupia. The motion **carried** unanimously.

189 Memoriam of Mr. Richard Jarvis

Resolved, that we remember the passing of Mr. Richard Jarvis who served in the Muhlenberg School District for twenty-nine (29) years (1967-1996) as an elementary teacher. We honor his memory for his dedicated service to the school district and community.

Be it further resolved that we convey through this resolution our deepest sympathy to his family, and that this resolution be made part of the permanent record in the minutes of the Muhlenberg School District.

Resolution No. 190

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Hyneman, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Resolution No. 190** in its entirety.

Yeas: Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit, Mr. Gross, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hoffmaster, Mr. Hyneman, Mr. Lupia, Mr. Madara. The motion **carried** unanimously.

190 Memoriam of Mr. Donald N. Delp

Muhlenberg School District for thirty-two (32) years (1952-1984) as a physical education teacher, driver education teacher and athletic director. We honor his memory for his dedicated service to the school district and community.

Be it further resolved that we convey through this resolution our deepest sympathy to his family, and that this resolution be made part of the permanent record in the minutes of the Muhlenberg School District.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola took a moment to congratulate Jeffery Ebert, Principal at Muhlenberg Middle School, for recently earning his doctorate degree from Immaculata University.

Mr. Lupia said there is a professor at Rutgers, named Richard Ebert, and he is on the forefront of trying to determine where this Corona Virus came from. He is a 1977 graduate of Muhlenberg High School.

Hearing of Visitors

Presentation is limited to approximately two minutes per person. Should any citizen require more than the two minutes allocated, please contact the Superintendent prior to the meeting. He will coordinate such requests for the Board. Citizens addressing the Board should be aware that the meeting is being taped.

Mr. Hardy stated anyone who would like to make a comment please use the "raise hand" function, state your name and your address.

There were none.

MSD/RMCTC Board Visitor of Month

April Mrs. Cindy Mengle May Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster

Review of Board Meetings and Calendar of Events

April 8	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting
April 13	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 6	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
May 11	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 13	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
June 8	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
June 10	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting; Regular Board Meeting

191 Adjourn Meeting

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mrs. Mengle, that there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM.

Yeas: Mr. Gross, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hoffmaster, Mr. Hyneman, Mr. Lupia, Mr. Madara, Mrs. Mengle, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Voit. The motion **carried** unanimously.

Attest:

Thomas W. Gross

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Secretary