

MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2021
www.muhsdk12.org

Call to Order

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District was called to order on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 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. Mark J. Nelson
Member – Mr. Otto W. Voit, III
Solicitor – Mr. Brian F. Boland, Esq.
Recording Secretary – Mrs. Patricia L. Law

Members Absent

Member – Mr. Randall R. Madara (Ill)

Administration Present

Superintendent – Dr. Joseph E. Macharola
Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Alan S. Futrick
Business Manager – Mr. Shane M. Mathias, CPA
Director of Physical Plant and Transportation – Mr. Ken Patterson
Director of Special Education – Dr. Shawn Rutt
Supervisor of Special Education – Dr. Tyler Herman
Behavior Analyst – Mr. Zachary Milch
Director of Technology – Mr. Daniel Houck
Director of Federal Programs – Mrs. Cathy Shappell
Director of Food and Nutrition – Mr. Carey Kline
Community & Family Outreach Coordinator & Interpreter – Ms. Elizabeth Laviena
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 – Dr. Jeffery Ebert
Middle School Assistant Principal – Dr. Felicia Gonzalez
Intermediate School Principal – Mr. Steve Baylor
Elementary Center Principal – Mr. Kyle Crater
Elementary Center Assistant Principal – Mrs. Ginny Hornberger
Elementary Center Assistant Principal – Mrs. Shannon O'Donnell

Visitors *(Note: This is who appeared to be attending via Zoom and may not include everyone)*

Amanda Gring	Don Kline	Cathy Salesky	Brian J. Boland
Linda Figueroa	April Kreiser	Holly Allen	Stephanie Jablonski
Jen Doyle	Jennifer Rahn	Jolyn Casper	Kristen Bagenstose
Julie Roth	Kathi Wolfe	Dan Fair	Lindsay Deysher
Cary Rowe	Tim Goodhart	Hao Duong	Sharon Kile
Theresa Fidler	Jill McIntyre	Josue Tinoco	Heather Rios
Jay Seyler	Penny Vojtasek	Laurie Vlasak	Amanda Gring
Michael Althouse	Karen Althouse	Leslie Corley	Kim Velazquez
Melanie LaFaver	Sara Patton	Jamie Shipe	Leila Meisinger
Brent Hafer	Liz Hafer	LaTara Nguyen	Mrs. Moser
Toni Crater	Shannon Logan	Amy Rohrbaugh	Michelle Djevharian
Adam Miron	Lindsey Seelig	Jennifer Wenzel	Fram Wesoloskie Havens
Jodie Tolomei	Donna Marburger	Lisa Chlebowska	Samantha Gantz
Colin Gehr	Carolina Ramos	Madeline Corson	Cathy Liszcz
Becky Achey	Stacey Carmello	Andrea Stern	Kelly Burr
Tonya Spiers	Ben Shreve	Chad Thiele	Jen Wilson
Patricia Keiper	Shana Kelly	G. Smith	Sherry Hinnershitz
Breanna Hafer	Jennifer Wyland	Erika Watson	Heather Rosenberry
Kelly Bohn	Kay Adams	Angie Szczecina	

Educational Presentations

- A. Second Reading of Policy No. 146.1, Trauma-Informed Approach - Dr. Joseph E. Macharola

Dr. Macharola said he highly recommends the Board review this policy and approve it next month.

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.

Michael Althouse - Mr. Althouse said he was a concerned parent and educator and was disappointed at the lack of progress in implementing an in-person hybrid instruction model in the school district. He said Dr. Macharola said that the positivity rate among staff is very high and it prevents the District from opening. Mr. Althouse said he did not understand why Muhlenberg's numbers are so high in comparison to all of the other school districts around Muhlenberg. It is such an outlier compared to the other districts. He said if the other districts' numbers were close to Muhlenberg's numbers, they would all be shut, but they are open still open in some capacity. Mr. Althouse said the education being provided to the students is adequate, but everyone knows it does not compare to the quality of education from in-person instruction. He said he is a teacher

and he knows the quality that can be had only through in-person instruction. He said 70% of the respondents to the survey said they would like a return to in-person instruction; surely the District can figure out a way to bring 70% of the students back and provide the families the option they are looking for. Mr. Althouse said he urged the Board to debate a solution to this problem sooner rather than later and to hopefully set a date to return to a hybrid option as soon as possible. He said it was obvious the families of this community want this option and it is obvious that the families of this community deserve the ability to choose between these options just as families in nearby districts have been for months. Mr. Althouse asked the Board to listen to their constituents and the people in this District to begin the hybrid model as soon as possible.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Mr. Althouse for his comments. He said he was saddened that Mr. Althouse was disappointed in the District. The District is poised and ready to implement the hybrid model. Dr. Macharola said Mr. Althouse raised the question that other school districts have in-person instruction, but this school district is a very transient school district; it is not a rural school district and the COVID numbers are high. He said Mr. Althouse asked why the numbers are high and there are a lot of questions with that, but one answer is of all the districts that might reflect the urban area that the District borders, no one probably reflects that as much as the Muhlenberg School District. Perhaps that is why the COVID numbers are as high as they are. Dr. Macharola said that was not a negative statement but the numbers are what they are. The outlying areas do not reflect the Muhlenberg School District or the neighboring urban district in the city as much as Muhlenberg does. He said the numbers in terms of COVID are high here and he hoped that they begin to diminish. The District is at 252 employees who have had COVID-19 or had to quarantine with symptoms or from exposure. Right now with that total number of employees, the District would have 500 days of quarantine. Dr. Macharola said he wanted the kids back in school right now, but that cannot happen if the District cannot adequately staff the buildings. He said the District has four buildings, there are over 4,000 students and he supported 100% of the students, not 30%, not 70% - 100%. With 70% of the students coming into the buildings, and a low rate of teachers and staff on-site capacity because of COVID, the District cannot safe distance. This is not a light switch district (on and off) like some of the other districts (Muhlenberg has been consistent) and the schools will not be putting one hundred students in the auditorium with one teacher because staffing is so low. Substitutes are at an all-time low across the Commonwealth and the country. Dr. Macharola said he hoped the teacher preparation programs begin to emerge and get stronger, but this will not help right now. He said he was convinced that the District could get the students back in school with the models that are listed on the website. Principals will be reaching out to parents to secure who will be coming back and who will not be coming back. The District will be streaming classes to those students who will be staying home. Dr. Macharola said the faculty will do a great job and the District will follow safety protocols with masking and safe distancing; however, the District cannot double up classes because of a lack of staff and faculty nor can it provide an environment that is unsafe for children. Dr. Macharola said numbers are high because Muhlenberg is a reflection of the urban area that it borders. It is a transient community. The district's enrollment increased by 600 students in the last five years and the buildings are

crammed. The District has used offices and storage rooms for learning. A classroom was moved to a different building to offset those numbers. The District has done a good job with that. He said the District makes mistakes and has its blemishes. When the District comes out with its rollout, there will be challenges with that - issues with transportation. Dr. Macharola said the District will do everything it can to help everyone out and he asked that everyone cooperate with the District. He said he is behind everyone in the Muhlenberg community, but, right now, it is not possible to bring the children back safely.

Carolina Ramos – Ms. Ramos stated she had two children at C. E. Cole and it is very difficult for her to see her children cry every day because they do not understand or are having difficulty with Zoom. She asked how many of the Board members have children that attend the school district, and how many of them see what the kids go through every day. Ms. Ramos said she was a teacher at Reading High School and she understood all of the mental problems and meltdowns students have. She said the isolation is too much for little kids and teenagers. Ms. Ramos said she wants her children to have an environment where they can develop their social skills.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Ms. Ramos for her service. He said her comments meant a lot to him and he was overwhelmed with his concern for the mental health of students. The schools work with their guidance counselors and the behavior specialist now and they will when the students return, as returning to school may be a shock to some students. Dr. Macharola said the District will do everything it can to guide them. He said he is a father – one who graduated from Muhlenberg, two on active duty, and one who is currently in high school experiencing very similar things, but not here in the District. He said he understood this first hand. Dr. Macharola said he was answering for everyone, and they heard Ms. Ramos, they respect her and they will get the kids back to school. He said he is concerned about this generation and the effect it will have on them for the rest of their lives; the effect it will have on the country, but most importantly he was concerned about each one of the kids in Muhlenberg. Dr. Macharola thanked Ms. Ramos for sharing.

Mr. Hoffmaster said he has a grandson with Down Syndrome and he knows how much his daughter works with him to get him prepared to go back to school. It will be hard for him too to return, but the District must do the right thing for the kids.

Amanda Gring - Mrs. Gring said she has two daughters that will be attending C. E. Cole. She said she is extremely disappointed with the school district, which has pushed her family to leave the District. Mrs. Gring said that no one is on the same page and this is not what is best for the children. She said parents should have the choice of how their children should be educated. This is not what she wanted for her children. Mrs. Gring said she would have to make a decision about whether it would be better for her children to be held back. She said teachers are not on the same page. Rather than talking about paving and buildings, money should be spent to get the kids back in school. Mrs. Gring said she is a taxpayer and she was grateful her taxes were not raised, but her children are struggling and she will not allow her younger children to go to Muhlenberg. She said the District handled this year ridiculously since every other school district is doing it; and, she did not want to hear that Muhlenberg is close to Reading. Mrs. Gring said

her kids deserved better than this. All of the kids deserved better than this. She said teachers are doing their best and she understood that many of the teachers do not want to go back.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Mrs. Gring.

Leslie Corley – Ms. Corley said her family was new to the school district and her children (a freshman and a 7th grader) have not attended in-person yet. She asked how the District will handle students who have struggled learning virtually and who have missed interacting with their teachers; what will the school district recommend when it comes to the final grade and the child has failed. Would that student be held back, would the student move on to the next grade and receive extra help in the failing subject?

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Futrick replied students who are struggling should receive intervention now from their teacher. He said he was sure that Dr. Ebert, Dr. Gonzalez and the teachers at the middle school have made several attempts already to contact parents about their child's grades if the student is struggling. Dr. Futrick said the student(s) should be in an intervention program so that they could be caught up this school year; moving forward if the District is back next year, the school would provide intervention during the school day.

Madeline Corson – Ms. Corson said she has two children in MEC. She said she had a conversation with Dr. Macharola last week. Ms. Corson said she knows how everyone feels because she has a child in kindergarten who she must constantly tell to pay attention and does not listen very well. She said her daughter, in second grade, was having issues because she had to focus so much on her son. Ms. Corson said she wanted to tell everyone that when she did reach out to Dr. Macharola, they had a very positive communication. She said she told him that the District was not communicating enough with parents, and she said she thought that he listened because two days later an email and video was sent out. Ms. Corson said it is an impossible job for parents to try to teach their children or try to help them, but everyone should remember that they are all in this together. No one is alone - there are many parents in the school district that feel the same. She said children need to socialize, children need in-person direction; however, the school district is trying to do its best. Sending the kids back is not always the right solution, and she said she was part of the 70% that wanted her children back in school. Ms. Corson said she has watched other family members struggle because their kids go back for one week and they think everything is fine, but then someone has COVID and the whole school shuts down which is very inconsistent for the children and they are suffering just as much, if not more. She said although she hated having her children at home, she knew it was in their best interest to be home.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Ms. Corson.

Mr. Hyneman said one of the things in the news this week was that the CDC recommended that students return to school, which he heard all of the parents say; but what he did not hear was the second part of what CDC said, which was you get them back in school when it is safe to put them back in school. They used the Chicago School District as an example. The Chicago School District put in all new filter systems so the air would be cleaned daily; they had testing of students and staff as they came into the building every day; and, they had rooms where they could separate the kids so there would be smaller classes. He said he was not sure Muhlenberg was ready to do that or when the District could do that. When it is safe to bring kids back for everyone, then Dr. Macharola and everyone on the Board will want to see kids back in school. He said he has been in education for fifty-two years – this is highly unusual. It is the first pandemic that he has experienced in his life. Mr. Hyneman said he did not want to be in a situation where some of the kids get sick and possibly die because the District brought them back too soon, before it was safe. He said the first thing the District must do is make sure there is 1) a safe environment; 2) bring the kids back. Not the reverse. The District does not bring the kids back and then make sure it is a safe environment. Mr. Hyneman said he knew that was very frustrating for some parents and he sympathized with them 100%, but he knew the District wanted to make sure that every person in those buildings is in a safe environment.

Karin Althouse – Mrs. Althouse said her husband spoke as a fellow educator and she was speaking as a mom. She said many of her family members are teachers and she is not oblivious to the challenges and she is sympathetic to teachers; but for her personally, she was into analytics and numbers and to her the numbers don't make sense. Mrs. Althouse said the District had a 46% response rate on the questionnaire, of the 46% that responded there was a 70% favorable rate. If there were 25-30 kids in a class in a hybrid setting, by her numbers, there would be 8-9 kids per class in a hybrid setting. She said she did not understand why the District could not make that work. Dr. Macharola is concerned about 100% of the kids, and she agreed; but if 70% of the parents want to get their kids into in-person education, she did not understand why that cannot work. Where there is a will, there has got to be a way.

Jodie Tolomei – Mrs. Tolomei said she and her husband are graduates of Muhlenberg and have lived in Muhlenberg for over forty years. She said their oldest is a senior this year and has missed out on many of the events; their youngest is at C. E. Cole and was not doing well so they put her in private school where she is doing well and is catching up. Mrs. Tolomei said she has many friends who are teachers in other districts and she talks to them on a daily basis. They said they have problems but they work it out. They are all working it out – the teachers, the students, the parents – because they are all on the same page. She said she understood that Muhlenberg has 4,000 students and she understood that all of the other schools have many students and may have some issues with overcrowding and how to put it together logistically. Mrs. Tolomei said she is very frustrated at how much she pays in taxes and she is now paying over \$800 a month for private school, but her kids were falling horribly behind. She said her oldest daughter hates school now and she was a straight A student. Mrs. Tolomei said she did not hear a plan of action only that over 200 teachers are sick.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mrs. Tolomei's time expired and Dr. Macharola asked that she contact him in his office.

Brenna Hafer – Ms. Hafer said she had three children in the District. She said her child in 10th grade was a straight A student, an honor student, but is now failing and depressed. Ms. Hafer said she sat with him while he contacted his teachers letting them know he didn't understand the work; and she also sat with him and heard teachers tell students that they should just do the work as they were not logging on that day. She said she did not feel students were receiving a sufficient education and she did believe the teachers had their best interests at heart. Ms. Hafer said she heard a lot of "we will, we'll get it, we're ready, when the time comes" but there is no plan. She said the if District is waiting for numbers to go down, if it's waiting for variations to go down – what is the District waiting for? It seems like there is no definite plan and the kids are suffering. She said she must work and try to help her children; she has a depressed sixteen year old who was failing and was once an honor student. She said she felt there was no support for the working parents.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Ms. Hafer and said he heard every word she said. He said the District's plan is very clear and is on the website. Dr. Macharola said the District is ready to get the kids back and he is aware there may be some glitches. He said the numbers have to drop so that the District can staff the buildings – safely, adequately. Dr. Macharola said he was concerned because she said her son is depressed and this was not something he wanted to speak about publicly, and asked that she contact his office in the morning.

Kimberly Velazquez – Ms. Velazquez said she has two children who attend Muhlenberg. She said she felt badly for the parents who said their children are struggling, but her children are doing very well. She said she sits with her first grader to be sure he stays focused to do his assignments. Ms. Velazquez said she was very thankful for their teachers. Her fifth grade child does not have a lot of live online instruction time; however, he is a good student, meets all of his expectations and gets his homework done. Ms. Velazquez said she was frustrated because they allow a lot of catch-up days so that her fifth grader is done school at noon. They do give them online library and other things for him to do; but she felt like if it is not graded and he is doing well, why make him do extra work. She said everyone is comparing Muhlenberg to all of these other districts; and the size of Muhlenberg may be comparable to Exeter School District; however, Muhlenberg has one elementary school. Exeter has several. Ms. Velazquez said social distancing the students is not an option and even though the survey results showed that 70% of the students would come back it is not known if that would mean 100% would return to one classroom. She said everyone said that the District doesn't have a plan – it does, its right on the website in detail. Ms. Velazquez said she was tired of everyone bashing the school district. She said she was a Muhlenberg graduate and took pride in that. It may not be the same as it was when she graduated in 1997; however, she still felt like her kids were getting an education and she appreciated that.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Ms. Velazquez.

Sherry Hinnershitz – Ms. Hinnershitz said that her son was in 10th grade and very upset that he is not back in school and he was having a hard time understanding why they cannot go back when all of the other school districts are back. She said as parents they must go to work and they work with older people. They are in and out of their companies all day long and have just as much of a risk as a teacher does being around the kids; in fact, they have more of a risk than the teachers do, but they are expected to go to work every single day. Ms. Hinnershitz said she did not understand why they aren't expected to be at work also. She said she knew that they were teaching online; however, her son is in his room with his Xbox right next to him. Ms. Hinnershitz said she was sure that the 70% of people who said they wanted their kids to go back to school, also have the TV on, have Xbox on because they were bored and their parents were at work. She said her son is in tenth grade and has a 4.3 grade point average, but this quarter it went down a little bit because they are at work and they are expecting him to be an adult and do what he needs to be doing. Luckily, he is a child that can be trusted. Ms. Hinnershitz said she knew the District said they had a plan, but it has been a whole year, wouldn't the plan already be in place and the kids back after a whole year. She said she appreciated what they were doing and she knows that they are trying to make smart decisions and it is not just based on her and her son, but after a year, there should be a plan and it should be very soon.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Ms. Hinnershitz. He said the District does have a plan and it is spelled out. He wants the numbers to be safe and adequate staffing to get the kids back. Minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, day-by-day as the issues change, so do the answers. Dr. Macharola said it came down to that and the number of COVID cases. The plans are there. He said they will get the students back to school but they must do it safely and with adequate staff.

Mr. Nelson asked if Dr. Macharola knew the percentage of staff that have received at least the first vaccination. Dr. Macharola said yes, 80% of the staff said they are going to get it; eighty-one staff members have received one dose and there are a few that have had both doses. Mr. Nelson said that is less than 25%. Dr. Macharola said yes, but it is definitely improving. Mr. Nelson said it is much better but part of the problem is getting the vaccine rolled out and Pennsylvania is down on the list to receive the vaccine. Dr. Macharola said it is forty-ninth.

Holly Allen – Mrs. Allen said her son is a sixth grader at C. E. Cole and her concern is that her son was normally a good student but he hates school now due to online learning. She said he is a swimmer on a swim team but can't do that because the school is closed and he is depressed. Mrs. Allen said he was eleven and he should not be home by himself. She said she worked in the medical field and her husband is a customer service representative and neither of them can be home with their son. Mrs. Allen said she has received numerous messages through Dojo that their son needs to turn on his

Zoom camera at which point she must leave her patients to call her son to tell him to log back on. She said she understood, as worked in the medical field for a cardiologist had both of the COVID shots, and sees all of these old people. She said she was concerned because her son is eleven and home all by himself.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Mrs. Allen for her comment and for her work in the medical field. He asked that she contact the building principal in the morning.

Katie Iannacchino – Ms. Iannacchino said she wanted the kids back to school and was also extremely disappointed. She said she was mentally exhausted from the whole thing and felt like she should give up trying to plead to Board members to open the schools. Ms. Iannacchino said she liked when one of the parents asked how many of the Board members had kids that attend Muhlenberg. She said it was a very good question because it is hard to put a vote in the hands of Board members who are not going through what parents are going through and they are not in the trenches with the kids and seeing what's going on. Ms. Iannacchino said she was not going to waste her two minutes saying how much she wanted the kids back in school, but what she is most disappointed about is that the District has tried nothing. She said there are kids with special needs and younger kids (kindergarten and first grade); can't the District try something right away to help the kids with special needs to see if that would work, learn from what works and what doesn't work. Ms. Iannacchino said it was disappointing to be in a District that's not trying anything at all.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Ms. Iannacchino for her comments. He said he appreciated what she had to say and was sad that she was disappointed.

Jennifer Rahn – Ms. Rahn said she wanted to applaud all of the Board members (and Dr. Macharola) for what they are doing for the District as it is not an easy job. She said she worked for one of the Career and Tech Centers in Berks County and they are struggling with sixteen different sending schools' schedules on a daily basis. Ms. Rahn said their teachers are exhausted, but they are plowing through every day. Schedules change every minute of the day. Schools shut-down and they must close programs, but they are doing it. She said she understood the parent's pleas to get the kids back to school and she wanted her students back as well. Ms. Rahn said she has an eighth grader who is in honors and it is wearing thin on him. She said he told her that it is very hard for him. If it would not be for her kids in Scouts, they would have no socialization whatsoever. Ms. Rahn said as far as parents complaining about TVs and the Xbox being on during the day, if they are on Xfinity, pause the gaming systems. She said she did this every day and the only thing she struggles with are the cell phones because she can't have them at home with no way to communicate. Ms. Rahn said she goes into work every day and does schedule changes every day. She said it is frustrating, but the District is doing the best it can with the situation and the number of students. Ms. Rahn said when she attended Muhlenberg, there were several elementary schools, which later closed because the enrollment was down; but now it is not.

She said maybe it is time to renovate and use some of the \$9.8 million to get another elementary center to get the students back in with the population growing. Other schools are doing it and maybe the District needs to look at that route.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola said that was certainly a good point and the District definitely has a campus that could accommodate an addition to a building. He said he was sure the Board would be in agreement. He said that was a very good suggestion and thanked Ms. Rahn.

Heather Rosenberry – Mrs. Rosenberry said she has two boys attending Muhlenberg and academically they are doing fine. She asked why the District does surveys and gives parents false hope if 70% of them want the kids to go back, but it doesn't matter what the parents say. Mrs. Rosenberry said that Dr. Macharola said the District is trying, but there are three and half months left of school and she did not see any efforts. She said the District has the middle school, C. E. Cole, a high school and the elementary center – get one of them up and running. She said the District should try certain grade levels, separate them throughout the schools. Mrs. Rosenberry said that Dr. Macharola said the District is poised and ready multiple times, but there has been no actions. She said her kids ask every day when they will be going to school – we're going to the gym, baseball academies, hanging out with friends. Mrs. Rosenberry said that Dr. Macharola said the staff was affected and asked if that was 228 positive cases or 228 people who were around someone that was positive. She said we have all been in contact with someone who had it. We all go to the grocery store, we all go somewhere. She said that she makes her children wear masks and she wore a mask, but there has been no effort. When Dr. Macharola said the District is going to try, when can parents anticipate a response to the direction of 70% of parents who want the children to go back to school, that there is going to be an effort or make an attempt to bring them back; because there has been no attempt. Mrs. Rosenberry said she knew that multiple school districts in the area and all across the east coast have kids in school. They make it work.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola thanked Mrs. Rosenberry for her comments although he said he did not agree with them. He said when he said the District is poised and ready. It is the numbers of COVID cases - cases that have been positively identified and cases where quarantine is necessary for ten days. Anybody at any time could get it at any place, but when an employee working in the District is identified, doctors are involved and they must quarantine for ten days. Dr. Macharola said the District is ready to bring the kids back and he was not just saying that. The plan is on the website. The District has been very upfront and very transparent. He said he understood how Mrs. Rosenberry felt and hoped that things changed here very quickly.

Committee Report

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

No report at this time.

B. Reading-Muhlenberg CTC – Mrs. Cindy L. Mengle

Mrs. Mengle said a meeting was held on Monday, February 8, 2021. Herbein was there to present the audit report and everything came back clean regarding their audit.

C. Berks County Tax Collection Committee – Mr. Shane M. Mathias, CPA

No report at this time.

D. PSBA Liaison – Mr. Otto W. Voit, III

No report at this time.

E. Muhlenberg Community Library – Submitted by Mr. Terry Heckman (Read by Dr. Futrick)

The library is scheduled to reopen their doors to patrons on Wednesday, February 10th at 9:00AM initially taking walk-ins on a reduced and limited trial basis.

At her annual state of the library address, Library Director, Melissa Adams, presented a list of library accomplishments for the year 2020, which was sent to Pat to give to each board member as part of their monthly board packet. The final insurance damage settlement check sent to the library came to \$87,269.28 which was roughly 80% of the total cost of the damages that was incurred.

In spite of a very turbulent year, they were able to end 2020 with a net surplus of just over \$24,000 - thanks to the generous support of the community patrons and business sponsors.

They are re-applying for a second PPP loan to help pay for employee salaries. If successful, they could see an additional Federal government check of \$28,244.

The library's final 2020 total circulation came to a total of 23,903 items which included 5,209 loaned DVD's, 325 loaned CD's, 578 loaned audiobooks and 6,393 loaned e-books.

F. Muhlenberg Township/Laureldale Borough Liaison – Mr. J. Tony Lupia, Jr.

Mr. Lupia said the Muhlenberg Township meeting was scheduled for Monday, February 15, 2021. He encouraged everyone to purchase raffle tickets for the Library to help them make up the deductible for the insurance company.

G. Educational Programs – Dr. Alan S. Futrick

No report at this time.

Solicitor's Comments – Mr. Brian F. Boland, Esq.

No report at this time.

Superintendent's Comments - Dr. Joseph Macharola

Dr. Macharola thanked the community and said the District is there for them. He said no one wanted the kids back to school more than he did. Dr. Macharola said it is going to happen. The kids would get back to school and safely. It will happen. He said he knew that some of the parents were upset and thanked them for their comments.

Board Business

Personnel

Resolution Nos. 124A – 124I

Moved by Mrs. Mengle and Mr. Hoffmaster that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Resolution Nos. 124A through 124I** in their entirety.

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

124A Mentor Assignments

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following mentor assignments at the professional rate of \$30.00 per hour for the 2020-2021 school year:

- a. Mrs. Linda Grace, mentor for Mrs. Suleil Ramirez, Third Grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for thirty (30) hours.
- b. Mr. Chris Geddio, mentor for Mrs. Taylor Brennan, Long-Term Substitute, Third Grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for thirty (30) hours.
- c. Mrs. Marcey Harman, mentor for Ms. Beverly Witte-Mech, Long-Term Substitute, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for fourteen (14) hours.

- d. Ms. Laurie Vlasak, mentor for Ms. Michelle Lawlor, Long-Term Substitute, Kindergarten, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for sixty (60) hours.

124B Request to Extend Leave of Absence/FMLA Leave

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the request to extend the Leave of Absence/FMLA leave for the following employee:

- a. Mrs. Erin Antosy, Third Grade Teacher, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, extend Leave of Absence/FMLA to on or about May 3, 2021.

124C Professional Appointment

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

- a. Ms. Jade Fagley, Long-Term Substitute, Third Grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center (E. Antosy), extend current LTS assignment to on or about April 30, 2021, at a prorated salary of \$42,932 (B, 18 Steps from the Top).

124D Completion of Probation

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the completion of probation for the following classified employee:

- a. Ms. Pryscilla Figueroa, Instructional Assistant, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of January 25, 2021 and recommended for permanent employment as of January 26, 2021.

124E Spring 2021 Coaching Assignments

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Spring Coaching Assignments for the 2020-2021 school year as submitted (Exhibit #96).

124F Sports Event Monitors for the 2020-2021 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Sports Event Monitors for the 2020-2021 School Year at the pay rate of \$10.50 per hour as presented (Exhibit #97).

124G Co-Curricular Appointment

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following co-curricular appointment:

- a. Ms. Catherine Rauenzahn, Varsity Field Hockey Head Coach (L. Yoder), at a salary of 4,350 (Year 1).

124H Acceptance of Resignations

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

- a. Mrs. Denise Rapp, Class A Secretary, Physical Plant and Transportation, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective April 6, 2021.
- b. Ms. Karen A. Snyder, Fifth Grade Teacher, C. E. Cole Intermediate School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

124I Classified Appointment

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

- a. Ms. Jacqueline Torres, 4.5 Hour Cafeteria Worker (C. Salesky), Muhlenberg Elementary Center, effective upon return of students to in-person learning or as needed to prepare for the return of students, at a pay rate of \$15.03 per hour.

Management

Resolution Nos. 125 - 127

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Hyneman, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Management Resolution Nos. 125 through 127** in their entirety.

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

125 School Calendar for the 2021-2021 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the School Calendar for the 2021-2022 school year as presented (Exhibit #98).

126 Memorandum of Understanding Between Muhlenberg Township Police Department and Muhlenberg School District

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorize the Memorandum of Understanding Between Muhlenberg Township Police Department and Muhlenberg School District as in accordance with "Safe Schools Act", PA School Code, Article XIII-A (Exhibit #99).

127 Memorandum of Understanding Between Laureldale Police Department and Muhlenberg School District

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorize the Memorandum of Understanding Between Laureldale Police Department and Muhlenberg School District as in accordance with "Safe Schools Act", PA School Code, Article XIII-A (Exhibit #100).

Physical Plant and Transportation

Resolution No. 128

Moved by Mr. Nelson and Mr. Hyneman, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Management Resolution No. 128** in its entirety.

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

128 Repaving and Relamping of MHS Parking Lot Bid Solicitation

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the request to proceed with construction documents and bid solicitation for repaving and relamping of the Muhlenberg High School parking lot as presented (Capital Reserve Fund) (Exhibit #101).

Budget and Finance

Resolution Nos. 129 - 131

Moved by Mr. Hyneman and Mrs. Mengle, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Budget and Finance Resolution Nos. 129 through 131** in their entirety.

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

129 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 #102):

Fund	Treasurer's Report	Financial Report	Bills Paid Month	Investments	Budget Transfers
General	Dec 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021 Ck#49202-49381 V#26678-26709	Dec 2020	
Cafeteria	Dec 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021 Ck#6995-7020 V#2845-2847	Dec 2020	
Capital Reserve (Fund 32)	Jan 2021	Jan 2021			
Capital Projects Fund (Fund 39)	Jan 2021	Jan 2021			
Activity	Dec 2020	Dec 2020			

130 Berks County Intermediate Unit Proposed Mandated Services Budget for the 2021-2022 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Berks County Intermediate Unit Proposed Mandated Services Budget for the 2021-2022 School Year at the district's share of \$42,997.80. (Exhibit #103).

131 Approval of 2021 Mileage Rate

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the 2021 standard mileage reimbursement rate for the use of a personal vehicle for business purposes of .560¢ per mile in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service guidelines as of January 1, 2021.

Education

Resolution No. 132

Moved by Mr. Lupia and Mr. Hyneman, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Education Resolution No. 132** in its entirety.

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

132 Agreement with BCIU and John's Driving School for Behind-the-Wheel Driver Education

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the agreement with the Berks County Intermediate Unit and John's Driving School to provide behind-the-wheel instruction to students from the Muhlenberg School District as presented (Exhibit #104) .

Student Activities - *There was none.*

Minutes

Resolution No. 133

133 Approval of Minutes

Moved by Mr. Voit and Mr. Hoffmaster, that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting of January 13, 2021; and, the Regular Board Meeting of January 13, 2021 be approved as submitted.

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

Old Business - *There was none.*

New Business

Resolution No. 134

Moved by Mr. Hyneman and Mrs. Mengle, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Resolution No. 134** in its entirety.

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

134 Memoriam of Mr. John T. Kissinger

Resolved, that we remember the passing of Mr. John T. Kissinger who served in the Muhlenberg School District for twenty-eight (28) years (1956-1984) as a teacher and reading specialist. 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. 135

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mrs. Mengle, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve **Resolution No. 135** in its entirety.

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

135 Memoriam of Mr. Carl W. Richie

Resolved, that we remember the passing of Mr. Carl W. Richie who served in the Muhlenberg School District for thirty-four (34) years (1959-1993) as a math teacher and a coach. 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.

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. - *There were none.*

MSD/RMCTC Board Visitor of the Month

February	Mr. Mark Nelson
March	Mr. Garrett Hyneman
April	Mrs. Cindy Mengle
May	Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster

Review of Board Meetings and Calendar of Events

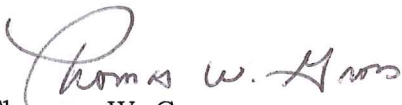
February 10	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting
March 3	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 8	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
March 10	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
April 7	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
April 12	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
April 14	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
May 5	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
May 10	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 12	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
June 2	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting
June 14	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting

136 Adjourn Meeting

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Nelson, that there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.

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

Attest:


Thomas W. Gross
Secretary