

**Northwest Area School District
School Board Meeting
October 11, 2023**

The Northwest Area Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on October 11, 2023 in the auditorium of the Middle/High School. Mr. LeValley, School Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

The following members were present during the meeting: Mr. LeValley, Mr. Benson, Mrs. Biller, Dr. Brunn, Mr. Pierontoni, Dr. Yarnell (virtual) and Mr. Lanza. Attorney Angela Evans, Mr. Long, Mr. Miner, Mr. Mills, Mrs. Kratz, Mr. Amos, Mrs. Straub, Mr. Sorber, Mr. Shoemaker, and Ms. Hurst were also present.

Mr. LeValley reported that there was an Executive Session held from 6:00-7:00 PM to discuss personnel, safety, and litigation.

1. Approve of Minutes

Mr. Lanza made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benson to accept the minutes of the following previous meeting:

a. Regular School Board Meeting/Executive Session -September, 2023

Upon voice vote, all present voted yes, motion passes.

2. Comments: No comments.

3. Reports - No Reports

4. Payment of Bills

Mr. Lanza made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Biller to approve the payment of the following bills:

- a. General Account list of bills for October 2023 - \$272,686.87
- b. Prepays - September 2023 - \$694,322.65

Upon roll call, all present voted yes, motion passes.

5. Superintendent's Comments – Mr. Long noted that after the evacuation drill we contacted by the Hunlock Fire Department and Town Hill Church about being reunification sites for our students. Local Emergency Responders from Huntington Township will be speaking with our administrative team to evaluate the details of the evacuation. We are hopeful to add the Huntington Township Fire Department as an evacuation site.

6. Administrative Reports – Assistant Principal/Athletic Director, Mr. Mills noted that we are at the end of the football season, with only a couple of games left. We are sixth in the conference, so we will have a playoff game. Field Hockey is currently fourth, and depending on if the team wins at tonight's game against Muncy, we possibly could have a home playoff game, which hasn't happened for several years. The cross country team may have a few runners qualify for states. Also, we are working on arranging scrimmage games for the basketball teams. Mr. Mills thanked the board of education for giving him a start fourteen years ago in the classroom as a teacher, and then allowing him to work as an administrator. Mr. Mills thanked Mr. Miner for being an awesome mentor and a true friend. Mr. Mills wished his replacement the best of luck. Mrs. Kratz, Acting Special Education Director, commented about the progress of the coffee shop, and that the students who are working in the shop are progressing in their skills. Additionally, Mrs. Kratz noted how kind and courteous the students are while at the Coffee Shop. Mr. Miner noted that it is a busy week at the high school, and made mention of two events taking place. Financial Aid Night is tonight, October 11. Secondly, the Victims' Resource Center gave presentations all day long to the students regarding social media safety and the dangers of what the students are getting into. In the evening, an informative presentation was held for families to learn about what our children are exposed to on social media. Mr. Miner shared a specific example of a dating APP in which a student is randomly placed in a chatroom with a stranger. The students don't have to provide verification of their age, and end up being victims in situations in which teenage children are chatting with grown adults. Mr. Miner noted that it's scary, and wishes that every parent can hear this valuable information. Mr. Long asked which age groups would benefit most from this information. Mr. Miner responded that when a student is old enough to have a smartphone, they should.

7. Policy/Procedures - No Report.

8. Personnel

Mr. Benson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Biller for the following:

- a. Approved the child rearing leave request of Employee # 9441, effective December 1, 2023 through February 1, 2024.
- b. Appointed Matthew Lukachinsky as Secondary Assistant Principal.
- c. Approved the resignation of Connie Johnson, Secretary/Receptionist.
- d. Appointed Gina Gordon as Secretary/Receptionist, as per the Support Personnel Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective with the receipt of required paperwork.
- e. Appointed Kaysie Dluzeski as Secretary to the Elementary Principal, as per the Support

- Personnel Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective November 1, 2023.
- f. Appointed Marie Adams as a part time Paraprofessional as per the Support Personnel Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective October 12, 2023.
 - g. Appointed Randi Jennings as a full time Paraprofessional, as per the Support Personnel Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective October 16, 2023.
 - h. Appointed Lauren Malacari as the Mentor to Hannah Stepanski for the 2023-24 school year.
 - i. Approved the request of Gareth Henderson to attend the “Trending Upward” Annual Conference, November 16-17, 2023, in Grantville, PA, at an estimated cost of \$406.
 - j. Accepted, with regret, the resignation of Melissa Troy, part time cafeteria employee, effective, October 9, 2023.
 - k. Approved the request of Employee # 9372 for the following unpaid days: October 30 , 2023, October 31, 2023, and November 1, 2023.
 - l. Approved the sabbatical request for the purpose of education for Employee # 1728 for the second semester of the 2023-24 school year.
 - m. Approved to post and advertise for a long term high school math substitute teacher for the second half of 2023-2024 school year.
 - n. Approved the FMLA request of Employee # 2198 effective on an intermittent basis from August 21, 2023 through approximately November 24, 2023.
 - o. Approved to post and advertise for a part time Building Aide.

Upon roll call vote, all present voted yes, motion passes.

9. Finance –

Dr. Brunn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benson for the following:

- a. Approved the settlement agreement and release between the Northwest Area School and student # 920032.
- b. Approved the ESL agreement with the Luzerne Intermediate Unit for the 2023-24 school year.

Upon roll call, all present voted yes, motion passes.

10. Buildings & Grounds/Safety - No Report

11. Education/Curriculum – No Report

12. Co-Curricular –

Mr. Benson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Pierontoni for the following:

- a. Appointed Derek Dietz as a Volunteer Track and Field Coach for the 2023-24 school year/season, at no cost to the district, pending required clearances

Upon roll call, all present voted yes, motion passes.

13. Transportation: No Report.

14. Additions to the Substitute List -

Mr. Benson made a motion, seconded by Dr. Brunn for the following:

- a. Approved the interim action to appoint Marie Adams as a Paraprofessional Substitute for the 2023-24 school year, effective September 18, 2023.

Upon roll call, all present voted yes, motion passes.

15. Tabled Items - No Tabled Items

16. Legislative – No Report.

17. West Side CTC - Mr. Benson reported that a presentation was given by Nutrition Inc.

about the different foods that are served for breakfast and lunch.

18. LIU Update - Minutes available upon request.

19. New Business – No New Business.

20. Solicitor's Report – No Report.

21. Comments - Mr. Mills reported that Millville School District will challenge Northwest Area School District to a battle across the mountain in basketball. Mr. Mills noted that the details will be worked out, however, the losing principal has to wear the winning principal's jersey to school the next day.

Mr. Lanza shared some of Northwest Area's history regarding a student's accomplishments from the class of 1958. After high school in 1958, Northwest graduate, Robert Harcharik, received a degree in Communications from Penn State University, and then went to Washington, D.C. and formed a company called TimeShare Incorporated. Harcharik then broke down a mainframe into sections in which small businesses could get a piece of. The president of MCI on the west coast heard about the work of Harcharik, contacted him, and asked him to become the Vice President of Communications at MCI. Over time, Harcharik worked with Vint Cerf and developed a cutting-edge option in data communications which resulted in the launch of MCI Mail.

Mr. Wandell, Northwest Area Bus Driver, commented that it was chaos to get to the church near the Primary School during the bomb threat. There were cars and parents everywhere. Mr. Long thanked Mr. Wandell for his comment and noted that we are looking for a different reunification spot, possibly the firehall.

Mr. Miner noted that Mr. Lukachinsky, Assistant Secondary Principal, was present at the meeting. Mr. Lukachinsky stated that he can't wait to get started and make a home here.

22. Adjourn – Mr. Benson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sutliff, and unanimously by the Board to adjourn the meeting at 7:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Pete Lanza, Board Secretary