

Lackawanna Trail School District
School Board Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2024

The Lackawanna Trail School District met in person and via Zoom for a scheduled meeting on Monday, September 9, 2024 at 7:30 pm, public notice thereof having been given in accordance with applicable law.

An Executive Session was held prior to the meeting from 6:35 pm to 7:30 pm. The following items were discussed: Personnel. All board members were present for the executive session with the exception of Dr. Michael Mould.

President Joe Ross called the meeting to order and directed the secretary to call the roll. Board Members present: Adrian Bianchi, Heather Clark, Brendan Dwyer, Eric Johnson, Jaclyn Litwin, Joseph Ross, Tony Vanko and Tracy Wescott. Dr. Michael Mould was absent.

Administrators present: Mr. Glynn, Mr. Kearney, Mr. Opalka, Mr. Rakauskas, Mr. Schofield and Ms. Talarico. Mrs. Kuchak and Dr. Murphy were absent.

There was an opportunity for public participation provided. The following persons shared public comment:

Joseph Strauch: Commented on Motion #5, E.LocalLink Video and school board policy draft 320.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Wescott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson, that the minutes from the August 12, 2024 School Board Meeting and September 3, 2024 Work Session be approved as submitted. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Bill Listing

Mrs. Wescott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dwyer, that all bills found to be true and accurate be approved. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Dwyer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson, that the board approve the August Treasurer's Report as submitted. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Board Resolution 2024-01 for Tax Claims

Mrs. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Litwin, that the board approve the resolution with Municipal Revenue Services, Inc. for the Agreement of Sale and Purchase of tax claims for 2025, 2026 and 2027 with Public Asset Management. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

E-Rate Consultant

Mr. Dwyer made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Wescott, that the board approve the Van Strien Consulting Proposal of Services for the E-Rate program in the 2025-2026 funding year at a rate of \$3,000 for Category One requests and \$2,000 plus 2% of the committed amount per funding request for Category Two requests. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

E.LocalLink Video Contract

Mr. Dwyer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bianchi, that the board approve the contract with E.LocalLink for video production at a cost of \$6000.00 from unassigned fund balance. The motion was rejected by a vote of 2-6, Mr. Bianchi, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Litwin, Mr. Vanko and Mrs. Wescott voting no.

Shared Transportation Contract

Mr. Bianchi made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Litwin, that the board approve the contract with Lakeland School District to share transportation services to Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf for the 2024-2025 school year. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Interim Healthcare Nursing Services

Mr. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vanko, that the board approve the Interim Healthcare Service Agreement to provide contracted substitute nursing services for the 2024-2025 school year. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Policies for First Reading

Mr. Dwyer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson, that the board approve the first reading of the following policies. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

- 301 Creating a Position
- 302 Employment of Superintendent
- 304 Employment of District Staff
- 307 Student Teachers/Interns
- 308 Employment Contract/Board Resolution
- 309 Assignment and Transfer
- 311 Reduction of Staff
- 312 Performance Assessment of Superintendent
- 313 Evaluation of Employees
- 314.1 HIV Infection
- 317 Conduct/Disciplinary Procedures
- 317.1 Educator Misconduct
- 319 Outside Activities
- 320 Freedom of Speech in Nonschool Settings
- 321 Political Activities
- 322 Gifts
- 324 Personnel Files
- 325 Dress and Grooming
- 326 Complaint Process

- 328 Compensation Plans/Salary Schedules
- 330 Overtime
- 333 Professional Development
- 336 Personal Necessity Leave
- 337 Vacation
- 338 Sabbatical Leave
- 338.1 Compensated Professional Leaves
- 339 Uncompensated Leave
- 341 Benefits for Part-time Employees
- 342 Jury Duty
- 343 Paid Holidays
- 347 Workers' Compensation Traditional Return-To-Work Program

Policies for Second Reading

Mr. Dwyer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson, that the board approve the second reading of the following policies. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

- 222 Tobacco and Vaping Products
- 227 Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia
- 323 Tobacco and Vaping Products
- 351 Controlled Substance Abuse
- 904 Public Attendance at School Events

Policies for Adoption

Mr. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dwyer, that the board approve the adoption of the following policies. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

- 146.1 Trauma-Informed Approach
- 707 Use of School Facilities
- 801 Public Records
- 803 School Calendar
- 806 Child Abuse
- 815.1 Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education

Resignation

Mrs. Wescott made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Clark, that the board acknowledge the resignation of Nicole Hayos-Tyler from her part-time paraprofessional position effective September 4, 2024. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Paraprofessional

Mr. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Clark, that the board approve Gabrielle Wiebel as a part-time paraprofessional, 4¾ hours per day, as scheduled, at the rate of \$14.00 per hour per the LTESPA collective bargaining agreement, effective September 12, 2024. All clearances are on file. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Mentor

Mrs. Litwin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vanko, that the board approve the appointment of Jessica Bentley as a mentor to the Special Education teacher, Sarah Kinback, at a stipend of \$450 for the 2024-2025 school year, as per the LTEA agreement. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Extracurricular Set Painter

Mr. Bianchi made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Wescott, that the board approve Mitchell McElwee as the Set Painter for the 2024-2025 Spring Musical at a stipend of \$300. All clearances are on file. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 8-0.

Reports of New Business were provided by the Superintendent, Elementary Principal, Secondary Assistant Principal, Director of Special Education, Maintenance and Transportation Supervisor and Business Manager.

Mr. Ross announced that there would be an executive session prior to the next meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

A second Executive Session was held following the meeting from 9:22 pm to 9:25 pm. The following items were discussed: Board personnel. All board members were present for the executive session with the exception of Dr. Michael Mould.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrian Bianchi, Secretary Board of Education

Superintendent's Report

Matthew Rakauskas

- Although the PS Bank Wellness Center at Lackawanna Trail Jr.-Sr. High School is still not fully outfitted with fitness equipment, it will be open beginning tomorrow before and after school for our students to use the cardio machines including treadmills, elliptical machines, and exercise cycles. It may be a few more weeks before the remainder of the pin machines and weights are delivered and set up.
- Several committee meetings which are open to the public are scheduled in the near future. On Monday September 16th Buildings & Grounds will meet at 6:00, and Curriculum & Comprehensive Planning will meet at 8:00. On Tuesday September 17th Budget & Finance will meet at 6:00, and Wellness at 8:00. The Wellness Committee, which is co-chaired by Mr. Kearney and Mr. Opalka, will meet in the classroom in our new Wellness Center. The rest of the committees will meet in the boardroom. An executive session of our Safe Schools Committee will be held during our October 11th Act 80 Day. With the exception of the Safe Schools Committee, agendas will be posted in advance, and minutes will be published within a few days of each meeting. This schedule, along with the committee meetings schedule for the entire school year is listed on our web page under the drop down menu - committees. Public attendance and participation is encouraged.
- We have added a new wrinkle to the Featured Alumni and Feature Educator section on our main web page. For September and October we are featuring mother-daughter teams of educators, something that is indeed unique. Please take some time to read these when you have an opportunity.
- The 2024-2025 school year is off to a great start. At our opening convocation I spoke to the faculty and staff about the investment that has been made in this district. We have an abundance of educational resources, numerous physical upgrades, and we are well staffed. In addition, it is important to point out that volunteerism and generosity are at an all time high. Charitable donations to purchase fitness equipment for our Wellness Center, a variety of generous sponsorships, local businesses advertising in our gym, and community volunteers who helped build the additions to our elementary playground highlight that list.

Brian Kearney - LTEC Principal Board Report

Good evening!

We have had a wonderful start to the 2024/25 school year! We began with two very intensive days of professional development, followed by the welcoming of 510 students on Thursday, September 5th. This includes 76 kindergarten students. These students joined their parents/guardians on Wednesday, September 4th at our annual open-house.

This Wednesday, September 11th we will host our second open-house, this will be for students in first-sixth grades.

September 18th will kick-off our Booster PBIS Fundraiser. Our goal is to raise \$20 per student. This culminates in a "Fun Run" to be held on Friday, September 27th at the school. All students will be included whether or not they are able to raise funds. A reminder that all money raised goes directly back to our students.

Picture Day will be held on Monday, September 30th.

Lackawanna Trail Jr. Sr. High School Board Report

Cody Opalka, Assistant Principal

Welcomed All of our Students Back into LT Jr./ Sr. High School

- On August 28, we were able to calm some nerves by welcoming our new junior high Lions to Lackawanna Trail Jr./ Sr. High School. It was great to see our new 7th grade students come through the doors with their families. Overall, It was an evening that allowed students to calm some nerves and give them a chance to navigate the building prior to the first day of school.
- We welcomed our full student body back to school this past Thursday. It was amazing to hear and see our students back in classrooms after their summer vacations. It is now time for our students to reap the benefits of all the hard work and planning that took place to get this school year off to a successful beginning. I look forward to seeing how our students will progress in their education throughout the school year.
- Wellness Center - The PS Bank Wellness Center will be open as of tomorrow for cardio workouts as our AED has arrived and has been installed. In addition, in-season athletes are asked to continue to store their items in the locker rooms prior to the start of school. The facility is open from 6:30 until 7:30 for those purposes.
- Assistant Principal Webpage - Since the Lackawanna Trail School District webpage has been updated, there is now a spot that I will be updating periodically with different information that is within my purview. At the moment, there is information on dress code, our cell phone policy, and absences. As things come up throughout the year, I will be sure to post it in this section so families and students are aware.

Director of Special Education Report

Amie Talarico

- On Wednesday we had the trainer from the Autism Initiative come to the elementary center and do some training with the new staff.
- New paras participated in orientation in August. We do still have one vacancy for para-educators.
- Two new special educators are paired with mentors. I have been working with them and our new hires from last year and will meet with them bi-weekly.
- I mentioned working on our Child Study Process in my report last month. An update: I worked with Mr. Kearney, Mrs. Lombardi, Ms. Gwidz, Ms. Young and Mrs. Ewing at the elementary center to develop materials for child study and work on a central referral form for teachers. I will also do a training with the high school team on September 17.

Maintenance and Transportation Supervisor

Tom Schofield

- Open maintenance position
- Vaping
- Welcome back bus drivers and private drivers
- AED
- Wellness Center ladder back rail painting.
- Maintenance thank you

Business Manager

Keith Glynn

The district received a \$10,000 donation from PS Bank through Commonwealth Charitable Management to benefit Technology & the Arts.