

MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING – January 8, 2024

Board Vice President Mark Atherton called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

Superintendent Costello led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Secretary Thomas F. Telesz called the roll.

6 Members Present: Atherton, Breese, Faust, Harris, Susek, Thomas, Caffrey

Vice President Atherton – The chair wishes to announce the Board held an Executive Session prior to the Regular Board Meeting of January 8, 2024. The subjects discussed in the Executive Session related solely to matters of employee relations, labor negotiations, and/or threatened or actual litigation.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from the Regular Board meetings on November 16, 2023 and dispense with the reading of those minutes.

Motion by Dr. Susek seconded by Ms. Thomas to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of November 16, 2023.

6 Members Present: Atherton, Breese, Faust, Harris, Susek, Thomas, Caffrey

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Costello reviewed the procedures the district follows regarding inclement weather. Decisions are based on the information we receive from the National Weather Service.

Advisory - chance of 2-hour delay or virtual day

We try to make that decision the day before to allow families to adjust.

Watch – Does not require action. We wait for further updates.

Warning – We will be closed or on a virtual day.

Wind Chill Advisory – 2-hour delay to offset that chill.

Wind Chill Warning – We will be closed or on a virtual day.

We will be in session if there is no Wind Chill Advisory or Warning.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT REPORT

Admin Building:

Completed leaf cleanup

Dan Flood Elementary:

Completed leaf cleanup

Completed asphalt paving @ driveway along Wyoming Street

Continued to address work requests

Continued to address plumbing repairs

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Dodson Elementary:

- Completed leaf cleanup
- Completed plumbing repairs
- Completed work requests

E.L. Meyers Building:

Completed leaf cleanup & continued litter cleanup
Continues to perform building security checks while building is unoccupied

GAR Middle School:

- Completed leaf cleanup
- Continued to address work requests
- Continued to address plumbing repairs
- Completed lighting replacement in high ceiling of Auditorium

Heights Murray Elementary:

- Completed leaf cleanup
- Continued to address work requests
- Continued to address plumbing repairs

Kistler Elementary:

- Completed leaf cleanup
- Continued to address work requests
- Continued to address plumbing repairs
- Completed replacement of exhaust fans
- Completed replacement of water fountains
- Commenced replacement of unit heaters in pool area

Mackin Elementary:

- Completed leaf cleanup
- Continued to address work requests
- Completed plumbing repairs
- Solomon Complex:
 - Completed leaf cleanup
 - Continued to address work requests
 - Continued to address plumbing repairs
 - Completed paving repairs at playground
 - Complete punch list items for Phase 1 ESCO project

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W-B High School:

Continued to address work requests
Continued to address remaining punch list/warranty items

General:

Received bids for snow removal at high school
Completed installation of plows and spreaders, in preparation for winter weather

During the two months, we have completed approximately 153 work requests. Our maintenance staff is currently addressing approximately 75 new work orders. The current number of unassigned work requests is 9. Those 9 work requests are related to issues that require further investigation.

Ms. Thomas asked when the carpeting at GAR will be replaced.

Mr. Krzywicki shared that the carpeting cannot be replaced until after because of some plumbing projects over the summer.

Dr. Costello shared that the HVAC of the Solomon, Kistler, and GAR projects will be completed this summer. In February, we will start Heights and Dan Flood. Once completed, GAR Solomon and Kistler will receive new flooring, paint, and lockers.

Mr. Krzywicki stated that GAR's HVAC would be replaced by September but does not expect it to go without trying times, including a two-week electrical shutdown.

Mr. Atherton asked if Kistler was completed. **Mr. Krzywicki** explained that the project was complete except for the pool area. He also explained that Height and Kistler cafeteria floors will need some TLC.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mr. Alex Hairston, parent, followed up about his concerns about 7th and 8th grade football coaching. Mr. Hairston reread the Nondiscrimination Policy. **Dr. Costello** shared that there were meetings with the coaches. Coaches were evaluated. During the evaluations, concerns and expectations were addressed. Each year, coaches will need to reapply for the following season. **Dr. Costello** watched every 7th and 8th grade game.

Mr. Gary McGuiness, a former softball coach, shared his concern about safety due to insufficient paid softball coaches and inequities between baseball and softball. **Dr. Costello** shared that although they were purchased by the baseball team, softball should be able to use the indoor batting cages at GAR, and there will soon be new outdoor batting cages at the high school. Additionally, when numbers merit, Athletic Directors will ask for more coaches, each situation will be evaluated. Furthermore, he shared that it is often difficult to fill coaching positions and gave softball as a specific example. **Mr. Atherton** confirmed with other examples of difficulties filling coaching positions. **Dr. Costello** also shared that there will be a portable fence for the softball field.

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LUZERNE INTERMEDIATE UNIT #18

Ms. Thomas – The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 17th.

WILKES-BARRE AREA CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER

Mr. Faust – Northeast Pennsylvania Building & Construction Trade Counsel will have their 2nd Annual Career Day on Tuesday, March 26th. Along with other letters from elected officials, the last letter of support has come in from Senator Casey for the Weld to Work Grant. If approved, the grant will double our welding capability at the CTC.

CURRICULUM/ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

No report

BUDGET FINANCE/MATERIALS & SUPPLIES/CONTRACTED SERVICES COMMITTEE

TO: The President and Members of the Wilkes-Barre Area School Board

The Budget Finance/Materials & Supplies/Contracted Services Committee respectfully submits the following reports and recommendations:

1. That approval be given to the Treasurer’s Reports for October and November 2023. **“Exhibit A”**
2. Capital Projects – That approval be given to the payments listed below.

	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Invoice No.</u>	<u>Amount</u>
A2.1	Breslin Ridyard Fadero Architects	GAR Re-Roof	Capital Reserve	725-12-2023	\$ 307.50
A2.2	Breslin Ridyard Fadero Architects	Fieldhouse	Capital Reserve	716-12-2023	\$ 3,841.00
A2.3	Green Valley	High School	Capital Projects	APP 26	\$ 16,036.53
A2.4	Apollo Group, Inc.	Stadium Project	Capital Projects	APP 21	\$ 1,581.39
A2.5	Keystone Sports Construction	Athletic Fields	Capital Projects	2715	\$ 156,176.18
A2.6	McClure Company	Solomon Plains ESCO	Capital Reserve	APP 5	\$ 186,899.58

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A2.7	McClure Company	Solomon Plains ESCO	Capital Reserve	APP 6	\$ 38,566.08
A2.8	Detwiler Roofing, LLC	GAR Re-Roof	Capital Reserve	APP 5	\$ 69,295.62
A2.9	Plains Twp	Baseball/Tennis Project	Capital Reserve		\$ 200.00
A2.10	Luzerne County Planning Commission	Baseball/Tennis Project	Capital Reserve		\$ 530.00
A2.11	Luzerne County Engineering Office	Baseball/Tennis Project	Capital Reserve		\$ 2,330.00

3. That approval be given to ratify the execution of the Government Entity Release of All Claims for the Juul Labs Inc., Marketing, Sales Practices and Products Liability Litigation and related documents in order to resolve the District's claims in the Litigation. **"Exhibit B"**
4. That approval be given to renew Dr. Kistler Elementary School's flood insurance with Selective Insurance at a premium of \$12,156.00 effective February 14, 2024.
5. That approval be given to the Third Addendum to the Agreement of Sale of the 37.34 acres of vacant land along South Empire Street between the Wilkes-Barre Area School District and the Post Family Limited Partnership date January 19, 2022. **"Exhibit C"**

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A. FEDERAL

That in accordance with the authority of the Board, the following Federal Fund AP Checks #3086 to #3138; Federal Fund Wire Transfers #202300374 to #202300401 which were drawn for payment since the last regular Board meeting of the Board of Education held on November 16, 2023.

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B. GENERAL FUND/FOOD SERVICE

That in accordance with the authority of the Board, the following General Fund Checks #61790 to #61962 and General Fund Wire Transfers #202312223 to #202312255 and General Fund Wire Transfer #202300394 to # 202300396 and Food Service Checks #3898 to #3913 which were drawn for payment since the last regular Board meeting of the Board of Education held on November 16, 2023 be approved.

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C. GENERAL FUND

That checks #61963 to #62114 listed on the following pages, which have been inspected, be approved and that order be drawn for the respective amounts set down opposite the names of persons or firms.

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D. CONTRACTED SERVICES

1. After review of the Requests for Proposals for snow removal at the Wilkes-Barre Area High School approval be given to award Stell Enterprises Inc. the contract effective January 2024 through April 2025 at the following rates.

\$110.00	Pick-up truck with plow, per hour
\$125.00	2 ton single axle dump truck with plow & spreader, per hour
\$150.00	10 ton twin axle dump truck with spreader, per hour
\$175.00	Tri-axle dump truck with plow, per hour
\$150.00	Backhoe with snow pusher, per hour
\$165.00	4 CY front end loader, per hour
\$200.00	6 CY front end loader, per hour
\$125.00	Skid loader, per hour
\$175.00	Bulk salt, per ton (spreading included in other line items)

Motion by Ms. Thomas, seconded by Dr. Susek

6 Members Present: Atherton, Breese, Faust, Harris, Susek, Thomas, Caffrey

ATHLETIC COMMITTEE

No report

SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE

No report

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

No report

Building Maintenance

Mr. Faust – There will be a meeting on the 3rd week of January.

FACILITIES TRANSITION

Attorney Wendolowski – The Wilkes-Barre Zoning approved the Meyers buyer application was approved. Closing will be some time after the 30-day appeal time expires.

STUDENT WELLNESS COMMITTEE

No report

POLICY COMMITTEE

No Report

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PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

TO: The President and Members of the Wilkes-Barre Area School Board

The Personnel Committee respectfully submits the following report and recommendations.

All appointments are made pending District Review of the Approved State Budget, the receipt of PDE required clearances, certifications, and any applicable pre-employment drug test.

A. Agreement

1. That approval be given to the Retirement Agreement between the Wilkes-Barre Area School District and Wilkes-Barre Area Education Support Professionals Association and Employee # 553188. **“EXHIBIT D”**
2. That approval be given to the Settlement Agreement Case #2023-006922 between the Wilkes-Barre Area School District and the Wilkes-Barre Area Education Association. **“EXHIBIT E”**
3. That approval be given to the Affiliated Site Agreement between the Wilkes-Barre Area School District and Eastern University. **“EXHIBIT F”**

B. Act 93

1. That the retirement of **Michael Namey** be accepted effective January 26, 2024 and will be entitled to Article XII Sections 3 & 4 A through F of the WBAEA Agreement.
2. The updated retirement of **Michael Corcoran** be accepted effective June 30, 2024 and will be entitled to Article XII Sections 3 and 4 A through F of the WBAEA Agreement.
3. That the retirement of **Anthony Khalife** be accepted effective June 30, 2025 and will be entitled to Article XII Sections 3 & 4 A through F of the WBAEA Agreement.
4. The Board agrees to waive **Tashara Sheperis’** return to service requirement in Article XIX, Section 3, of the WBAEA Agreement for the sabbatical leave for the

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2022-2023 school year. The Board further agrees to accept Tashara's retirement effective January 30, 2024.

5. That the retirement of **Carol Davenport** be accepted effective December 22, 2023.
6. That **David Sobocinski** be appointed a School Resource Officer at Group E minimum salary.
7. That **Mark Phillips** be appointed a PCCD Funded Year to Year School Resource Officer at Group E minimum salary effective January 2, 2024.

C. Professionals

1. That the retirement of **Alan Sowa** be accepted effective the last day of the 2023-2024 School Year.
2. That the resignation of **Jill Casarella** be accepted effective January 19, 2024.
3. That the resignation of **Cheryl Jaworski** be accepted effective December 21, 2023.
4. That **Thomas Belles'** request for a sabbatical for the 2nd Semester of the 2023-2024 school year be approved.
5. That **Misael Hernandez** be appointed a Special Education Long-Term Substitute Teacher effective November 30, 2023 for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.
6. That **Ed Rosengrant** be appointed a Business, Computer, and Information Technology Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the 2nd semester of the 2023-2024 school year.
7. That **Meghan Morris** be appointed an Art Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 2, 2024.
8. That **Vanessa Dankovitch** be appointed an Elementary Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 8, 2024.

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9. That **Gabrielle Drevitch** be appointed an Elementary Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 8, 2024.
10. That **Matthew Fazio** be appointed a Math Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 22, 2024.
11. That **Nicol Brito Polanco** be appointed a Spanish Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective December 21, 2023.
12. That **Dominick Bayo** be appointed an Elementary Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective December 18, 2023.
13. That **Jeffrey Weems** be appointed a Math Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year effective January 29, 2024.
14. That **Dakota Zyskowski** be appointed a Social Studies Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.
15. That **Brian Minich** be appointed a Math Long-Term Substitute Teacher for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.
16. That **Samantha White** be appointed a temporary professional employee as a Special Education Teacher effective January 29, 2024.
17. the following professional employees be appointed to the following positions at a rate of \$35.00 per hour. RAISE, A-TSI, and ARP ESSER assignments will be based on student participation and grant program funding available. RAISE, A-TSI, and ARP ESSER tutoring hours not to exceed grant program funding.

ARP ESSER After School Program Session 2

Jamee Hopkins
Maureen Sovan Carey

Amy Pascale
Leah Zelinka

D. Secretaries & Teachers' Associates

1. That **Naomi Arzola-Morales'** request for an unpaid leave from January 1, 2024 through the end of the 2023-2024 school year be approved.
2. That **Patricia Kondracki's** request for an unpaid leave from December 11, 2023 through December 27, 2023 be accepted.

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3. That **Kevin Kaskey's** request for an unpaid leave on December 22, 2023 be accepted.
4. That **Daniel Sawicki's** request for an unpaid leave from February 5, 2024 through April 29, 2024 be accepted.
5. That the resignation of **Susan Conti** be accepted.
6. That the resignation of **Lauren Tomek** be accepted.
7. That **Derrick West** be appointed Full-Time Long-Term Substitute ESL Paraprofessional/PCA(s) 32.5 hours per week for the remainder of the 2023-2024 School Year.
8. That **Ijahnae Griddings** be appointed ESSER Part Time Teacher's Associate (Paraprofessional/PCA) 20 hours per week with a position termination date at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.
9. That **Nyasha Walters** be appointed ESSER Part Time Teacher's Associate (Paraprofessional/PCA) 20 hours per week with a position termination date at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.
10. That the following employees be appointed to the following positions at their current hourly rate. RAISE, A-TSI, and ARP ESSER assignments will be based on student participation and grant program funding available. RAISE, A-TSI, and ARP ESSER tutoring hours not to exceed grant program funding.

RAISE After School Program Session 2 AIDE

Marianne Egan

E. Custodians, Maintenance and Housekeepers

1. That the retirement of **Susan Parada** be accepted effective March 31, 2024.
2. That the resignation of **Mollie Hardin** be accepted effective January 17, 2024.
3. That **Brenda Kowalczyk's** request for an unpaid leave on November 21, 2023, November 29, 2023 and December 20, 2023 be accepted.

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4. Due to excessive work requests, Brad Marconi be granted a maximum of 2 hours per day of overtime at time ½ from October 2022 through December 2023.
5. That **Fidelina Santos Gonzalez** be appointed a Grade I Custodian.

F. Crossing Guard

1. That **Patricia Harris** be appointed a Full Time Crossing Guard.
2. That **Rosa Sanchez Villarini** be appointed a Full Time Crossing Guard.

G. Extra-Curricular Salary Schedule-6

1. That the resignation of **Michael Caprari** as Head Teacher be accepted.

H. Athletics

1. That the resignation of **Frank A. Castano** as Boys Lacrosse Varsity Assistant Coach be accepted and would like to remain as a volunteer coach.
2. That the resignation of **Diane Breese** as Field Hockey Junior High Head Coach be accepted.
3. That the resignation of **Sierra Hildebrand** as Boys Varsity Volleyball Assistant Coach be accepted and would like to remain as a volunteer coach.
4. That the resignation of **Josh Wasielewski** as Tennis Varsity Boys and Girls Head Coach be accepted.
5. That the resignation of **Abigail Schaal** as Wolfpack Cheerleader Associate Advisor be accepted effective December 17, 2023.
6. The following appointments are made for the sports season and will be continued on a season to season basis unless the post is declared vacant by the Board of School Directors. All appointments are effective upon all PDE required clearances and documents being submitted.

Track/Cross Country Winter Head Coach

Paul McGrane

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Track & Field Varsity Assistant Coach (1/2 pay) Brewster	Stephanie
Track & Field Varsity Assistant Coach (1/2 pay)	Shawn Austin
Boys Lacrosse Varsity Assistant Coach	TABLED
Girls Tennis Varsity Head Coach	TABLED
Boys Tennis Varsity Head Coach	TABLED
Boys Volleyball Varsity Assistant Coach	Maria Santana
Field Hockey Junior High Head Coach	Alyssa Monaghan
Track & Field Junior High Head Coach	Damon Saxon
Track & Field Junior High Assistant Coach	Galen Shell
Track & Field Junior High Assistant Coach	TABLED
Boys Wrestling Volunteer Assistant Coach	Theodore Evanko
Boys Volleyball Volunteer Assistant Coach	Evanston Myers
Boys Volleyball Volunteer Assistant Coach	Denny Mizhquiri
Track & Field Volunteer Assistant Coach	Joshua Schiowitz

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RESOLUTION #1

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors of the Wilkes-Barre Area School District has determined that there will be no increase in the rate of any tax for the support of its public school for the 2024-2025 fiscal year by more than the index established by the Department of Education (Department) for the District;

WHEREAS, the Index for the District is 7.8%;

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Wilkes-Barre Area School District does hereby certify that the District will comply with the procedures as set forth in Section 687 of the Public School Code as it relates to the annual budget for the adoption of its proposed final budget;

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors certifies that increasing any tax at a rate less than or equal to the established index will be sufficient to balance its final budget;

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors certify that the District will submit information on a proposed increase in the rate of a tax levied for the support of the public schools to the Department on a uniform form prepared by the Department no later than five (5) days after the adoption of this resolution.

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors certify that a copy of this resolution adopted pursuant to Section 311 of the Taxpayer Relief Act of Special Session No. 1 of 2006 will be sent to the Department no later than five (5) days after the adoption of this Resolution;

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors recognize that the District shall not be eligible to seek referendum exceptions under Section 333(f) of the Taxpayer Relief Act; and

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors recognize that the Department shall compare the proposed percentage increase in the rate of the tax with the index; within ten (10) days of the receipt of the information as required, the Department shall inform the District whether the proposed tax rate increase is less than or equal to the index.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of School Directors of the Wilkes-Barre Area School District as follows:

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The Board of School Directors adopts this RESOLUTION on the 8th day of January 2024 indicating that it will not raise the rate of any tax for the support of its public schools for the 2024-2025 fiscal year by more than the index established by the Department of Education for the District of 7.8%.

DULY ADOPTED, by the Board of School Directors of this School District this 8th day of January 2024.

Motion to accept Mr. Beese, seconded by Mr. Faust

6 Members Present: Atherton, Breese, Faust, Harris, Susek, Thomas, Caffrey

NEW BUSINESS

No news business

Communications from Solicitor

Motion to accept Dr. Susek, seconded by Ms. Thomas

6 Members Present: Atherton, Breese, Faust, Harris, Susek, Thomas, Caffrey

Meeting adjourned 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Telesz
Board Secretary