

**SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
Regular Board Meeting
December 10, 2020**

Members Present:

*Bruce Lord, President
Jennifer Lofland, Vice President
Joseph Sillo, Secretary
Frank Agovino, Treasurer
Domenic Bentivegna, Director
Jennifer Flynn, Director
Jacqueline Guy, Director
Kevin Keenan, Director
Margaret Rovinski, Director*

Lisanne Mikula, Solicitor

*Anthony Barber, Superintendent of Schools via phone
Don Mooney, Executive Director of Operations via phone*

MEETING MINUTES

Prior to the public comments, President Lord discussed the absence of Dr. Barber and Mr. Mooney as well as anyone else other than the 9 board members and Ms. Mikula. He noted that the administrative team members were remote and dialed in via conference call due to the current 10 person COVID restrictions.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments submitted via email were read at the School Board meeting by Ms. Mikula and are included as an attachment to the minutes.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

Although Board action is required, it is generally unnecessary to hold discussion on these items. With the consent of all members, they are therefore grouped and approval is given in one motion. In the event a Board member wants to discuss any item, the Board President will move it to an appropriate place on the agenda.

Motion: Ms. Guy

Second: Ms. Flynn

Vote: 9-0-0

1. Approval of Minutes

Regular Board Meetings – November 19, 2020

C. ITEMS FOR BOARD ACTION

1. Personnel Report – Ms. Bellace

RECOMMENDATION: *that the Board approves the Personnel actions as listed in the Personnel Report.*

Motion: Ms. Guy

Second: Dr. Lofland

Vote: 9-0-0

Comments: Dr. Barber reviewed the Personnel report which included (1) retirement-certificated, (1) retirement-non-certificated, (3) hires, non-certificated, (2) changes of assignment, non-certificated and (1) Family Medical Leave.

2. General Obligation Bond Financing – Mr. Mooney

(Roll Call Vote)

RECOMMENDATION: *that the Board adopts the proposed bond resolution (i) authorizing the issuance of general obligations bonds to refund the Series of 2015 bonds if the district can realize a minimum net present value debt service savings at least 2% on the outstanding principal, and (ii) authorizes the district to pursue the issuance of General Obligation Bonds, to be issued in 2021, in an aggregate amount not to exceed of \$12,000,000.*

Motion: Ms. Guy

Second: Dr. Lofland

Vote: 9-0-0

<u>Director</u>	<u>Vote</u>
<i>Frank Agovino</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Domenic Bentivegna</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Jennifer Flynn</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Jacqueline Guy</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Kevin Keenan</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Jennifer Lofland</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Bruce Lord</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Margaret Rovinski</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Joseph Sillo</i>	<i>Yes</i>

Comments: Mr. Mooney explained the reason for the resolution which was to refinance the General Obligation Bonds. This was the first piece of debt on the master plan and the refinancing is to take advantage of the current low interest rates.

D. LIAISON REPORTS

1. Solicitor’s Report – Ms. Mikula

Ms. Mikula noted that Governor Wolf’s additional mitigation orders, including suspension of sports and extra-curricular activities. Also, tax assessment appeals are still going forward and all information is being reviewed.

2. Legislative Board Report – Mr. Agovino

No report.

3. DCIU Board Report – Ms. Rovinski

Met December 2nd via Zoom. Last night was the Executive Session and the auditors presented their report.

4. DCCC Board Report – Mr. Sillo

Did not meet; a report will be made in January.

**5. Future Board Meetings – January 21, 2021
February 25, 2021**

6. Superintendent's Salutations – Mr. Lord

E. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Ms. Guy

Second: Ms. Rovinski

Before and after each meeting, the Board meets in Nonpublic Executive Study Session to discuss personnel, legal and labor relations matters.

Respectfully submitted,



*Joseph Sillo
Director and Board Secretary*

PUBLIC COMMENTS

DECEMBER 10, 2020 SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Jennifer Natow, 109 North Highland Rd., Springfield

Good evening. My name is Jenny Natow and I am a very proud Springfield parent of a 4th and 5th grader who attend Scenic Hills Elementary School. I am also an elementary school teacher in a neighboring school district to ours.

I would like to share my concerns tonight regarding Springfield's current A/B hybrid model for our youngest learners. I am respectfully asking that you please consider a new model; one that I believe is more effective and more consistent. It is also one that I have been partaking in myself as a first grade teacher since September. This new proposed hybrid model is that of an AM/PM schedule for our elementary students. I assure you there are so many positives to this plan. An AM/PM schedule guarantees students and teachers will see each other in person every single day. The core subjects of reading, writing, and math are covered in two and a half hours of direct uninterrupted instruction all while maintaining best practices and providing the proper and immediate support to students. Children are given a school routine that is closer to what their old normal was. Parents are given more consistency to their work schedules. Contact and potential exposure is minimized due to lunches and recess being eliminated and students being in school for a shorter period of time. Social Studies and Science lessons are provided online asynchronously and specials (which I wholeheartedly value) are taught live online. This plan will also allow for our school spaces to be maximized when utilizing our wonderful YMCA child-care program. I am living this hybrid schedule each day and I promise you it works! I am seeing regular ed. students, special ed. students, and emotional support students thrive each day.

I have taught first grade for 19 years and the thought of teaching half of a class of six and seven year old kids in person all while maintaining the rest on an "at home" zoom at the exact same time is beyond overwhelming to me. Let's take a moment to imagine what a small portion of the day is like for a first grade "zoomer" and a first grade teacher in our current A/B hybrid model. During any given well- prepared and engaging lesson, the teacher is hoping the zoomer is focused and tuning in. Hoping the zoomer is receiving the support they need at home. Hoping the zoomer stays on the zoom. Hoping the zoom connection isn't lost. The teacher is hoping the zoomer isn't spinning around in their chair or playing with toys at home. The teacher is trying their hardest to help students in front of them all while running back and forth to a computer screen to check in. This list of "worrisome hopes" is endless!

Let's be honest, our amazing teachers are doing this each day because that's what great teachers do. They figure it out. My point is, they shouldn't have to. Our Springfield elementary teachers should not have the burden of managing kids in the classroom and kids at home at the same time. It's not fair to the teacher or the student.

I know that this has been hard for so many and the district's efforts to make the best possible decisions for our children have not gone unnoticed. Your time and efforts are greatly appreciated! There is no other place I would want my children to be learning each day. More often than not, I'm sharing all of the great things we do here in Springfield with my own district in Radnor because I feel you make the best choices for our kids. However, I strongly believe we need to reconsider this current instructional choice. I ask that you please take some time to think about this new potential hybrid plan for 2021. It will be so beneficial to our hard-working teachers, our parents, and most importantly our youngest Springfield students.

Thank you!

Kristen Murphy, 608 Hill Farm Lane, Springfield

I am a parent of 2 children at Scenic Hills Elementary School. My 5th grader is in special education and attends school every day. My 2nd grader attends 2 days a week following the current hybrid model.

Before I share my concerns, I would like to thank all of the teachers and staff who are working tirelessly to ensure our children are safe and educated during this nationwide crisis. I know they are doing all they can to keep everyone engaged and learning.

Even through all of their efforts, I believe there is a more successful model for the elementary level than the current 2-day version. I am asking you to consider a different model which is currently successful in neighboring districts.

I teach 2nd grade in a school district in Montgomery County. We have been following an AM/PM schedule since early October. The A group comes in the AM and the B group comes in the PM. The students are able to be in the building for 2 hours and 50 mins a day.

During that time there is a Morning Meeting, ELA, Math and a short Science/S.S. The students are only in the classroom during their time in the building. We do not have lunch and recess. This cuts down on exposure and unnecessary travel around the building. When the students are not at school for the other half of the day, specials are live zoomed and they receive asynchronous work from their teachers. Recently, we went virtual before the Thanksgiving holiday. When this took place, we stayed with the same schedule while on zoom. It kept the consistency for the families and the students. The transition back to hybrid was smooth and seamless because of the AM/PM schedule.

Kristen Murphy (cont'd)

Next, I am not sure how the Springfield teachers are able to teach to students on Zoom while also teaching to students in person at the same time. I give a huge shout out to the Springfield teachers! This poses many challenges for all involved. With the AM/PM model, my focus can be on teaching the students in front of me, not trying to manage students virtually and in-person while still trying to make sure students are understanding the concepts being taught.

Another important factor is the amount of in person contacts students are having with their teachers and classmates. The in-person time with my students has been almost double than that of my 2nd grader with his teacher and classmates at Scenic Hills. This makes a big difference when you are trying to establish routines and consistency. Our youngest learners need the most guidance and direction. Being able to see them every day in person makes this happen.

I recognize that this is an extremely challenging time for all involved. From a parent and a teacher perspective, the pros of a half day schedule greatly outweigh the cons.

Please consider this as a possible option for the start of 2021 hybrid plan at the elementary level. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my thoughts as a parent and teacher!

Mr. Michael Lee, 123 W. Sylvan Ave., Morton

Good Evening every One, I Wish You all A Happy Holiday Season Whether You are Celebrating Hanukkah, Christmas Or Kwanza Or Some Other Holiday I Am Unaware Of.

I Also Wish The Best For Those Who Do Not Celebrate The Holidays And May Every One Have A Blessed 2021. Thank You for Listening,

Good Night And May God Bless All Of You.