

PENN  
**BOARD REPORT**  
CAMBRIA

Volume 44 No. 7 January 2023

This report summarizes the actions taken by the Penn Cambria Board of Education at its regular meeting, January 24, 2023. Routine business, such as approval of minutes, treasurer’s reports, payment of bills, and financial reports was accomplished. The Board also took the following actions:

- I. HEARING OF VISITORS** - Questions, concerns, comments, related to school business.
  - A. Attorney Repak stated the rules for public comment: “During this portion of the meeting, this is an opportunity for only residents, taxpayers, employees, and students of the district to provide information that you would like the Board to consider regarding a decision. We ask you to limit your comments to 5 minutes. If you share a common topic with others, we encourage the use of a single spokesperson for the group. Out of respect for our staff and students, we request that your public comments focus on issues or policies and not people. The intention of the audience of citizens is for the Board to listen to you. We will carefully weigh your comments, but may not engage in dialog, which is not the intended purpose of this opportunity. Should the comments be personally directed, or derogatory remarks made against District Board Members, District Officials, or District employees, or profanity used, the individuals remaining time will be forfeited. Please state your name and community in which you reside within Penn Cambria School District.”
  - B. Michael Noll, Cresson, a Penn Cambria parent, addressed the Board of Directors with issues regarding a specific coach and the reasons why his child has not participated in the extracurricular activity this year, stating that we will never know the true extent of the damage caused by the coach to the program, the sport, or the students that participated.
  - C. Patricia Farabaugh, Ebensburg, a Penn Cambria parent, came forward in support of student athletes, with concerns of an extracurricular program and the program’s head coach. Ms. Farabaugh relayed recent posts on social media. She also shared mental health issues within the program and how athletics is a passion and an escape from the stress of education, peers, and home life.

**II. EXECUTIVE SESSION** - The Board entered Executive Session to discuss personnel.

**III. ANNOUNCEMENT**

- A. Mr. Roberts made a statement, on behalf of the eight (8) board members present, regarding the process used by the Board of Directors to support the community, students, and parents. The Board considers information from all sources and investigates it. The Board admires your courage to speak, knowing that it has not been an easy road to take. We thank you for your courage and appreciate it.
- B. Mr. Marshall made the following announcement:  
“Please join us in thanking our Penn Cambria school directors for their hard work and dedication during January, which is School Director Recognition Month. They make our students’ success their priority.

PA school directors are locally elected officials who voluntarily devote an average of 20 hours per month to school board business.

The Penn Cambria School Board advocates on behalf of our school, students, and community. We salute them for their volunteer investment of time and effort for the good of our children.”

**IV. SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS** - Congratulations to the following student-athletes who have been named to the Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference all-league team for the 2022 fall sports season: Boys cross

country - Joshua Stolarski, Girls cross country - Kasey Farabaugh, Football - Offense Zachary Grove and Garrett Harrold; defense Vincent Chirdon and Mason Raymond, Golf - Zachary Martynuska and Alyssa Mostick, Boys soccer - Andrew Dillon and Vincent Gongloff, Girls soccer - Meghan Andersen and Chloe Karabinos, Volleyball - Kaylee Mento.

- V. Authorized the payment to local tax collectors of \$1.00 (one dollar) for each addition, deletion, or address change to the tax workbooks. The district will provide guidelines for this compensation to the local tax collectors at the time new tax workbooks are distributed. The district's Business Office will validate all changes prior to payment.
- VI. Authorized the Business Administrator to continue past practice of making donations to local fire companies and libraries.
- VII. **APPROVED** the Superintendent's recommendations as follows:
- A. **PERSONNEL ACTIONS**
- Accept Retirements, effective at the close of the 2022-2023 school year**  
Suzanne Creehan, Cresson, Elementary Teacher, after 28 years of service  
Douglas Fogel, Ashville, Elementary Physical Education Teacher, after 31+ years of service  
Ronald Walters, Hollidaysburg, 5th Grade Social Studies Teacher, after 24 years of service
- Accept Resignations**  
Anne Ciaverella, Osterburg, High School Art Teacher, effective December 13, 2022  
Alexis Eckenrode, Lilly, 6th Grade Social Studies Substitute and Middle School Family Consumer Science Teacher, effective January 13, 2023
- Approve Appointments**  
Sarah Barlick, Lilly, Middle School Family Consumer Science Teacher, Bachelors Step 13, \$60,022, effective date to be determined
- Brent Davison, Loretto, from Volunteer to Assistant Varsity Baseball Coach, at a stipend of \$1,931.20, effective immediately
- Kimberly Eckenrode, Gallitzin, Aide, location to be determined, effective pending documentation
- Emily Lane, Carrolltown, Elementary Art Teacher, Bachelors Step 1, \$38,822, effective February 8, 2023
- Christina Racz, Ashville, Aide, location to be determined, effective immediately
- Amanda Smorto, Cresson, from Assistant to Head Junior High Volleyball Coach, at a stipend of \$3,370, effective immediately
- Christine Trexler, Cresson, from IU08 Substitute Teacher to High School, School-Year Secretary, retroactive to January 3, 2023
- Marissa Vinglish, 6th Grade Social Studies Substitute Teacher, retroactive to January 18, 2023 through the close of the 2022-2023 school year.
- Approve Leave**  
Employee # 008516, Middle School Teacher, effective on or about March 24, 2023 through on or about May 19, 2023
- Approve Substitute Teacher**  
Marissa Vinglish, Dysart, retroactive to January 3, 2023
- Approve Substitute Aide**  
Amanda Flynn, Lilly, effective pending documentation

**Approve IU08 Substitute Teachers, effective pending documentation**

Nicole Lundberg, Lilly  
Alexandra Williams, Lilly

**Approve McIlwain School Bus Lines, Inc. Drivers, effective pending documentation**

Nikolas Bango, Windber  
Travis Douberly, Portage  
Lee Erickson, Revloc  
Heidi MacDonald, Lilly  
Nathan Matera, Johnstown  
William Patterson, Lilly  
Lloyd Rummell, Gallitzin  
Brady Sikora, South Fork

**B. APPROVE JOB DESCRIPTION**

School Social Worker

**C. APPROVE THE 2022-2023 REVISED SCHOOL CALENDAR**

- VIII.** Approved the Superintendent to effectuate any or all documents to enter into an agreement with Impact Counseling Services, LLC to provide Board Certified Behavioral Analyst contracted services with funding provided from the PCCD School Mental Health & Safety and Security Grant.
- IX.** Approved a resolution in lieu of adopting a preliminary budget, to not raise the rate of any tax for the support of public schools for the 2023-2024 fiscal year by more than its index (5.8%).
- X.** Approved the adoption of new or revised board policies:  
011 - Principles for Governance and Leadership  
305-AR - Compensation of Substitute Teachers
- XI.** Vote was 0-8 to retain Leah Montgomery as Head Varsity Girls Volleyball Coach.
- XII.** Approved and authorized Legal Counsel to investigate confidentiality breaches and if necessary, file a petition in the court to necessitate the same.

**XIII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

First Reading of the following revised board policies:  
103 - Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students  
104 - Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Staff  
123 - Interscholastic Activities  
309.1 - Telework  
334 - Sick Leave  
610 - Purchases Subject to Bid/Quotation  
611 - Purchases Budgeted  
626 Attachment - Procurement – Federal Programs

**XIV. ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT**

*Mrs. Kaitlyn Kalwanaski*, High School Principal, informed the Board of Directors on mental health concerns.

“As we continue to navigate through the post-pandemic world, we have seen an increase in concerns surrounding student mental health. That increase, paired with the decrease in the number of trained mental health professionals and the limited treatment availability, forces schools in uncharted territory. While we are still educators and not mental health professionals, the High School has placed a large focus this year on Trauma Skilled Schools training to create the best and safest environment possible for our students and staff.

While some of the High School staff began their Trauma Skilled Schools journey earlier, we dove in as a building starting with the August in-service. For this opening session, teachers completed the module one training. This portion of the training focused on the background: what the trauma skilled schools' model is, how stress and trauma can impact the brain, behavior, and learning, as well as purposeful practices. The purposeful practices are intentional (but not forced) activities that provide preemptive emotional regulation opportunities. These strategies can help students overcome the effects of stress and trauma to focus on what they are doing academically. When the High School staff met to debrief this training, they were encouraged to reflect on the purposeful practice list and engage their class in a practice that is appropriate to their content and classroom. Purposeful practices can be as simple as repeating a positive mantra out loud prior to beginning a task or taking a quick stretch break partway through class. Each practice, however, is dependent on the teacher, their class make-up, and the established atmosphere. Because each individual teacher operates differently within their classroom, that allows our students to be subjected to multiple purposeful practices, potentially daily, and affords the students opportunities to realize what practices work for them specifically.

The second part of the Trauma Skilled Schools training was completed as part of the October in-service day. This portion of the model focused on building a culture of resilience and the five factors that contribute to resilience. Those five factors are connection, belonging, achievement, autonomy, and fulfillment. Resilience is defined as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, or significant sources of stress. Since the resilience portion of the trauma skilled schools training was broken into five key factors, the High School staff discussed each factor in a small group to weigh what they thought the High School did well and what the High School could improve upon before sharing their group's thoughts with the entire building. These conversations became such an in-depth reflection and analysis of the building environment that we decided to continue these conversations at the November in-service.

So, what did the staff feel that Penn Cambria High School was doing well in terms of the factors of resiliency? Of the five factors discussed, most of the High School teachers felt that we were best at the connection piece of the resilience puzzle. The main reasons for connection being the strongest area at the High School were the block schedule, which allows more time with the students, as well as the number of teachers here who coach, serve as club advisors, and interact with students outside of the classroom. Strengths from other areas included for one, the number of extracurricular activities and electives that are offered at the High School for students to enjoy; secondly, allowing students to select their classes and essentially choose their route through High School; and finally, the opportunities to acknowledge students for athletics, musical talent, artistic talent, and academic achievement.

While there were aspects of the trauma skilled schools training that the staff felt Penn Cambria High School does well, there is of course room for improvement. There were many great ideas shared during our in-service discussions, so the building voted to determine what is feasible for this year and what we would like to work on for next school year. Teachers will be implementing strategies to increase the students' sense of belonging in their classrooms across the building starting with the change of the semester. As an entire building, we are also working on some bigger activities as well. Starting this month, the High School is bringing back the Student of the Month award. Teachers will vote for two students each month from each grade level based on discipline, strong character, positive attitude, as well as academic effort. We are also in the process of putting together a PAWS Reward program for quarter three. Students have been able to suggest their own ideas for the program and are helping to plan the logistics of the event. The staff at the High School set and publicized criteria for attendance at this event. Moving into the 23-24 school year, we are looking to continue implementing knowledge from the Trauma Skilled Schools Training to increase our community engagement and service through a variety of activities.

While it is nice to be getting back to a more normal routine, we must be aware that our students have had anything but a normal experience over these past few years. Working together as a building to implement strategies from our Trauma Skilled Schools Training is a great way to get students ready for the next steps after High School. And, while our focus has been on the students with these practices, it is also important to be mindful of the staff's mental health and encourage them to use this training to self-reflect and prioritize their own well-being. I am optimistic that the skills learned throughout these trainings will help us build a more positive environment at PCHS both immediately and long-term."