

PENN

# BOARD REPORT

Volume 45 No. 4

CAMBRIA

November 2023

This report summarizes the actions taken by the Penn Cambria Board of Education at its regular meeting, November 21, 2023. Routine business, such as approval of minutes, treasurer's report, payment of bills, and financial reports was accomplished. The Board also took the following actions:

- I. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION** - Mr. George Pyo presented James Ronan, Head Varsity Basketball Coach, with a 2022-2023 P.I.A.A. District VI Boys Basketball Coach of the year plaque. Mr. William Marshall praised Mr. Ronan for his achievements and tremendous dedication to student athletes. James Ronan expressed that it is an honor to receive this award after a great year and thanked the parents and community members that have supported the team since day one with so much love and energy. This unbelievable honor is not a reflection of the coach, but reflects the players, parents, and community.

- II. **SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS**

Congratulations to the following students who have successfully auditioned into the group and will be representing Penn Cambria at the Cambria County Honor Band Festival:

Junior High: Alto Saxophone - Leah Conway and Madelyn Kittell  
Clarinet - Kaylee Biel, Jaeda Hurst, and Adyson Lloyd  
Euphonium - Vincenzo Ricupero  
Flute - Elizabeth Zumstein  
French Horn - Sophia Miller  
Percussion - Dominic Weisinger  
Trombone - Grace Gregg  
Trumpet - Isabella Askins, Kendyl Lawrence, and Kendal Wessel

Senior High: Alto Saxophone - Cassidy Adams and Jacob Bossler  
Tenor Saxophone - Destiny Gray  
Baritone Saxophone - Colin Berkheimer  
Clarinet - Avah Harber and Peyton Farabaugh  
Euphonium - Camryn Ashworth and Avree Majors  
Trombone - Charles Golden  
Flute - Hailey Farabaugh and Allison New  
Piccolo - Ariane Eckenrode  
French Horn - Emma Hazlett

Congratulations to the following Varsity Boys Soccer Team who placed 1<sup>st</sup> at District VI Championships: Levi Baker, Elijah Chyr, Evan Connacher, Kyle Conrad, Seth Conrad, Andrew Dillon, Kurtis Eger, Cody Farabaugh, Zachary Farabaugh, Ryan Giraud, Charles Golden, Duncan Gongloff, Cayden Helsel, Joseph Hite, Gabriel Irving, Preston Kilcoyne, Nicholas Marshall, Carter Panick, Jackson Rice, Giovanni Tiracave, Sean Tomlinson, and Frank Wallis.

Congratulations to the following Varsity Football players who placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at District VI Championships: Ethan Amsdell, Asher Ball, Isaac Britton, Malakai Brown, Aaron Brumbaugh, Cameron Coudriet, Jeremiah DeLaCruz, James Delgrande, Andrew Dillon, Isaac Dreese, Jack Eckenrode, Marcus Eckenrode, Matthew Eckenrode, Landon Ehrenfeld, Preston Farabaugh, Brayden Foreman, Brock Fredack, Mason Geist, Grant Gides, Benjamin Gorba, Ryan Hanlon, Gavin Harrold, Nikolajis Heil, Ayden Himmer, Derek Hite, Jarett Holmes, Jesse Horning, Gabriel Irving, Brady Jones, Anthony Keith, Evan Latterner, Marcus Lilly, Johnathan McAndrew, Carter McDermott, Mason Mento, Blake Nadolsky, Chase Plazek, Thomas Plunkett, Cameron Price, Logan Price,

Hunter Pyo, Anthony Rossman, Benjamin Shoemaker, Isaac Strittmatter, Dayne Summerville, Eli Summerville, Braydon Tickerhoof, Ian Urish, Corbin Vinglish, and Keegan Waddell.

- III. **HEARING OF VISITORS** - There were no questions, concerns, comments, related to school business.
- IV. Approved a one-year renewal agreement effective January 1, 2024, with *MetLife* to provide dental insurance coverage for all eligible employees. This benefit plan will continue to be administered in compliance with all employment agreements.
- V. Approved the Superintendent's recommendations as follows:
  - A. **PERSONNEL ACTIONS**
    - Accept Retirements, effective at the close of the 2023-2024 school year
      - Deborah Roberts, Cresson, Elementary Teacher, after 26 years of service
      - Darlene Podrasky, Lilly, Middle School Teacher, after 32 years of service
    - Accept Resignations
      - Kimberly Gobert, Gallitzin, High School Cafeteria Worker, retroactive to October 16, 2023
      - Angela Gibbons, Cresson, Elementary Dean of Students/Gifted Education Teacher, retroactive to November 14, 2023
      - Jessica Secriskey, Cresson, Aide, retroactive to September 20, 2023
      - Coreen Zaffuto, Altoona, Majorette/Color Guard Advisor, effective at the close of the fall sport season
    - Approve Appointments
      - Paulina Miller, Ashville, Middle School Special Education Teacher, Masters Step 9, \$54,799, effective date to be determined
      - Adam Smearman, Altoona, from High School Special Education Teacher to Elementary Dean of Students/Gifted Education Teacher, retroactive to November 13, 2023
      - Crystal Thomas, Cresson, from 185-day Middle School Secretary to the Principal to Central Office Administrative Assistant, effective date to be determined
      - Wendi Rardin, Cresson, 4.75 hours per day High School Cafeteria Worker, retroactive to October 23, 2023
      - Dawn Houser, Lilly, from 4.75 hours to 6.5 hours per day High School Cafeteria Worker, retroactive to October 25, 2023
      - Katelyn Seese, Ashville, Volunteer Varsity Cheer Coach, effective immediately
      - Richard Brooks, Ebensburg, Assistant Varsity Wrestling Coach, at a stipend of \$3,958, effective pending documentation
    - Approve McIlwain School Bus Lines, Inc. Drivers, effective pending documentation
      - Cheyenne Sands, Gallitzin
      - Daniel Ehrenfeld, Lilly
- VI. 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 2024-2025 fiscal year by more than its index (7.5%).
- VII. Ratified the successor agreement with PCEA, which covers the period from August 21, 2024 through August 20, 2029.
- VIII. Appointed Matthew Kearney as representative to the Admiral Peary Area Vocational Technical School Joint Operating Committee, for a three-year term expiring December 1, 2026.
- IX. Approved Pursuit Sports Apparel as the official sponsor of the Penn Cambria Wrestling Boosters' Tournament to be held December 15 and 16 at Mount Aloysius College, per Policy #915. The official name of the tournament will be known as the Panther Holiday Classic Tournament, presented by Pursuit Sports Apparel.

X. Approved Stefanie Adams, Charlie Golden, Tina Golden, Amy Hazlett, Lacey Kittell, Katie Lloyd, Rebecca Strunk, and Meghan Weisinger as volunteer chaperones to accompany Penn Cambria band students to a Broadway Workshop and Performance in New York City, NY in Spring of 2024.

XI. Approved the second reading and adoption of the following policies:

- 251 - Students Experiencing Homeless, Foster Care, and Other Educational Instability
- 810 - Transportation

**XII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**REORGANIZATION MEETING** of the Board of School Directors is scheduled for Tuesday, December 5, 2023, at 7:00 PM in the Library of the Penn Cambria High School for the following purposes:

- Elect a President
- Elect a Vice-President
- Select a Solicitor
- Designate time and place for committee and regular monthly meetings for 2024
- Conduct any business to come before the Board as this is the only meeting in December

**FIRST READING OF THE FOLLOWING NEW, REVISED, OR BOARD POLICIES FOR REVIEW:**

- 006 - Meetings
- 216.1 - Supplemental Discipline Records
- 217 - Graduation Requirements
- 236.1 - Threat Assessment

*(Policies were reviewed at the Committee of the Whole Meeting and copies are available upon request)*

**XIII. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

*Mrs. Jeanette Black*, Assistant to the Superintendent, provided an update to the Board of Directors on recent academic data and test scores.

“We are working to prepare productive citizens in a safe and positive environment that promotes excellence in academics, the arts, and athletics.

We've been concentrating on continuing to improve that safe and positive environment over the last three years as a result of COVID and the challenges in society. Tonight, however, I wanted to take an opportunity to talk a bit about our focus on striving for excellence in academics as well.

Please know that academics can be a broad area, especially if we're talking about preparing productive citizens. However, how do we know how prepared our students are? Grades are subjective, an “A” is not equal everywhere. Standardized assessments can tell us this. Our students are going to be measured against others when competing for college and career opportunities, and it is our job to be sure they are as well prepared as others. We must look at lots of different data, not just one snapshot, one grade, or one test. However, if a student can score proficient or advanced on a state assessment, that tells us they have a solid foundational knowledge in that subject area and sometimes much more than foundational knowledge. It also tells us they can think, and problem solve to some extent, since questions are often difficult and complex.

Penn Cambria Reading and Math PSSA scores in grades 3-8 are inconsistent. In some grade levels we are exceeding state averages, but in others we are below state averages. We have areas where we can see room for improvement such as fractions in grade 4 or geometry concepts in grade 5, but we also see areas of strength.

For example, our 8th grade averages in every reporting category in every subject (ranging from physical science to functions in math, to conventions in English) exceed the state averages.

At the high school, our percentage of first time Keystone testers in 22-23 scoring proficient or advanced was significantly higher than the state average for first-time testers in 22-23.

Achievement data is important, but to me as a public educator, growth data is even more important. Are students learning and growing at an appropriate rate, whether they are a high achiever or a low achiever? PVAAS growth data helps answer that question.

At PC Intermediate, we exceeded growth standards in both Language Arts and Science, met the growth standard in Math, and met or exceeded the growth standard for Students with IEPs and students who are economically disadvantaged in all three subject areas as well.

At PC Middle School, we exceeded the growth standard in Language Arts, Math, and Science and exceeded the growth standard for students with IEPs and students who are economically disadvantaged in both Language Arts and Math.

At PC High School, we exceeded the growth standard in English, Algebra, and Biology and exceeded the growth standard for students with IEPs and students who are economically disadvantaged in all three subject areas as well.

While we always have room to improve, this growth data shows that students are learning important foundational skills to help them be productive citizens, no matter what their future might hold.”

Mr. Monica inquired about state rankings.

Mrs. Black responded that the Future Ready Index shows how each school is doing in multiple categories, and not overall.

#### XIV. ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Marshall stated that he has worked with Mr. Roberts and Mr. Pyo for the past seventeen years and that it has truly been an honor. Both have allowed the administrators to take lead and have impacted thousands of students and community members over the years. Their service to Penn Cambria School District is greatly appreciated!

Mr. Sheehan mirrored Mr. Marshall’s statement and thanked Mr. Pyo and Mr. Roberts for always supporting him.

Mr. Pyo concluded that it has been an honor to serve Penn Cambria School District.