

**Somers Point Board of Education Meeting (Thursday, February 17, 2022)**

Generated by Tina Loder on Wednesday, February 23, 2022

President Staci Endicott called the meeting to order at 6:06pm.

Open Public Meetings Statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to two newspapers, posted on the bulletin board of City Hall and on the doors of the three schools as required in the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, and as amended by P.L. 2020, c.11.

Flag Salute was led by Mrs. Jenna DeCicco

Roll Call

Members Present: Mrs. Stacie Brookbank, Mr. John Conover, Mrs. Jenna DeCicco, Dr. Kathleen Dolton, Dr. Alice Myers, Mr. Michael Sweeder, Mrs. Heather Samuelson, Mrs. Staci Endicott

Members Absent: All were Present

Other Members: Dr. Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Julie Gallagher, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Mrs. Amy Houck Elco, Attorney

**Board Vacancy**

Interviewed Karen Tomasello for Board Vacancy Position

**Executive Session**

Motion was made to enter Executive session by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Mrs. DeCicco, All In Favor

Recess to Executive Session at 6:15pm, we will be in executive session for approximately 25 minutes. Action may be taken.

Reconvene to Public Meeting at 6:37pm.

**Appoint Board Vacancy**

Motion was made by Dr. Meyers, seconded by Mrs. Samuelson to appoint new board member, Karen Tomasello. Motion was carried unanimously 8-0.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Dr. Myers to approve Item 5A. Motion was carried unanimously 8-0.

Resolved that the following meeting minutes be approved as presented and available for release to the public upon request and according to policy:

Regular Meeting- 1/20/2022

Executive Meeting- 1/20/2022

Special Meeting- 2/4/2022

Executive Meeting- 2/4/2022

**Presentations**

COMMENT FOR THE RECORD BY DR. CRY

To the Somers Point School District Community,

As we enter the 103rd day of this school year in the third year of a pandemic, I wanted to take a moment and **Thank the School Community, Our Staff, Our Parents, Our Students, and Our Board of Education-** it has been a challenging few years as we have ridden this wave of Covid-19 ups and downs, changes and executive orders all while focusing on how to educate our students during these unprecedented times.

We asked our children to be resilient through it all while many of us have struggled to keep the day-to-day events of our work and home lives "as normal as possible." In one of the many messages I have received in the last 23+ months, a statement was made that "you can't be that positive all the time," and the person was correct. ***I am not.*** However, ***I choose*** to make every day positive when I am charged with taking care of 770+ Students and 150+ staff. Do I smile through it and be present for them, or do I crumble? Crumbling wasn't an option. I made a commitment to this District in July of 2018, when I started. That means I choose to be positive, work hard, and fight for the students and Staffuly of this District.

In reviewing the past 23+ months, I will be the first to admit that while I am committed to the District, I chose to be positive each day, work hard and fight for the students and Staffuly of this District, I am not perfect, none of us are. I spent the last 23+ months reacting to executive orders,

changing guidance from the department of health, and the department of education. This resulted in reactionary decision making, not perfect by any means, but all with the best interest of the students of Somers Point in mind.

I'm happy to say as we continue to move to what some might consider a new normal, where numbers are moving down and masks will soon be optional. We see a light at the end of the tunnel, where we had been living in this reactive world. Therefore, I wanted to take this opportunity tonight to discuss the bright future ahead of us.

As of February 17, 2022, we are hitting the reset button. We are making a conscious effort to slow down and focus on the positive future ahead. We need to put aside the adversarial conversations, accusations, finger-pointing, toxic social media posts, and assumptions over the past 23+ months. We need to take a breath, exhale and as Mrs. DeCicco so eloquently stated in October of 2020, we all need to be "Pushing on the same side of the rock." Our students need this from us. They need us to collaborate and work together for their best interest academically and in regards to their mental health coming out of this pandemic.

To our families and community members, we are all in this together. We want to move forward as one school family and see your children come out of the pandemic more successful than ever. As a parent myself, I know how hard it has been to be a parent and often educator in assisting your child during the pandemic, engaging and interacting in your child's education in a way you never had before. I appreciate your time and hard work. I appreciate your involvement in our schools. As you know we need your support as much as your children need ours.

To our Staff, we want to move forward as one school family. I see that you are working hard, every day, to help our students be as successful as possible. I know that it has not been easy for you these past 23+ months, working in unprecedented times. You have remained invested in what is best for our students, and I appreciate your hard work very much. I know that it has not been easy along the way and that I often provided you with last-minute changes as guidance was often thrown at me with little or no turnaround time. I appreciate your dedication to our schools and your flexibility. I know some of you may feel frustrated with all of the changes over the past 23+ months, I hope that we can work on moving forward, reflecting on the past, and embracing the future.

Andrew Whitworth, 2022 NFL man of the year, said it ideally - every interaction is an investment, and when it comes to our work, we need to try, fail, regroup and grow. From this day forward, I am asking the adults in our school community to be BRAVE. Hold brave conversations. Increase positive interactions with each other. I'm asking you to ask questions first to the District before you simply post on Social Media. I'm asking you to embrace a positive mindset for our students.

So what does our future look like? March 7, 2022, arrives...shields will come down in our classrooms, masks will be optional depending on comfort level, and the sun will rise on a stronger and more cohesive Somers Point School Community.

I challenge our school community to make more personal connections with each other. Do not hesitate to reach out to your teachers with any questions about your child's progress or classroom needs. Do not hesitate to reach out to the administration, parents, and Staff alike, if you have any questions or need anything for your children.

I am also making myself available to every parent in this community, if you are not getting the assistance you need in your child's building- contact me. I am making myself available to every staff member in this school community, if you are not getting the assistance you need in your building- contact me. In addition, in collaborating with the Union, I am meeting regularly with Union Leadership, Administrators are meeting with Union Members and the Board is also meeting with Union Leadership.

Tonight, I can't help but feel like I am Denzel Washington in the movie Remember the Titans after a long run with his team to try to get them to bond. He stopped at the cemetery at Gettysburg to drive a point home about teamwork. He said, "If we don't come together, right now, on this hallowed ground, we too will be destroyed -- just like they were. I don't care if you like each other or not. But you will respect each other. And maybe -- I don't know -- maybe we'll learn to play this game like men." While we are talking about an educational organization and not a football team during the Civil Rights movement of the early '70s, the concept is similar. We are in this together to support our students.

I look forward to a positive future together!

Superintendent's Presentation

[LINK TO FEBRUARY SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT](#)

COVID Safe Return to School Plan Update

[SPSD Safe Return To School Plan September 2021 - Updated 2 11 2022 - Google Docs.pdf \(1,231 KB\)](#)

Public Forum-Agenda Items Only

Open Meeting to Public/Guidelines for Public Forum

President Staci Endicott opened the meeting to the public at 6:52pm and read the following notice: Public participation will be in accordance with District Policy #0167. Public participation will include, but not be limited to the following rules: a participant of the public will present his/her name, place of residence, and group affiliation if appropriate. Each participant will be limited to three (3) minutes per statement and the overall duration of the public comments shall not exceed 30 minutes.

-Dana Janson:

Good evening school board members,

I am writing to you regarding masks and masks mandates. Masks served a purpose during the height of Covid 19, when the disease was unknown. Since March of 2020 we have gained knowledge; science has uncovered a few mysteries of this viral infection and we have learned to live with it. We have cooperated and agreed to mask mandates for the safety of our neighbors and friends. The time has come for this to end. As of 3/7/2022 the state no longer requires masks to be worn in school. I will be giving my children that option and I will expect the school board to also make an educated decision not one based on thoughts and politics.

I have included instructions from the world health organization for mask wearing to be used effectively. This information was updated 1/5/22. Ask yourselves if your teachers and students are able to follow this.

How should I wear and clean a fabric mask?

How to put on and wear a fabric mask:

- Before touching the mask, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Inspect the mask for tears or holes, do not use a mask that is damaged.
- Adjust the mask to cover your mouth, nose, and chin, leaving no gaps on the sides.
- Place the straps behind your head or ears. Do not cross the straps because this can cause gaps on the side of your face.
- Avoid touching the mask while wearing it. If you touch it, clean your hands.
- Change your mask if it gets dirty or wet.

How to take off and store a fabric mask:

- Clean your hands before taking off the mask.
- Take off the mask by removing it from the ear loops, without touching the front of the mask.
- If your fabric mask is not dirty or wet and you plan to reuse it, put it in a clean resealable bag. If you need to use it again, hold the mask at the elastic loops when removing it from the bag. Clean your mask once a day.
- Clean your hands after removing the mask.

How to clean a fabric mask:

- Wash fabric masks in soap or detergent and preferably hot water (at least 60 degrees Centigrade/140 degrees Fahrenheit) at least once a day.
- If it is not possible to wash the mask in hot water, then wash it in soap/detergent and room temperature water, followed by boiling the mask for 1 minute.

-Erin McCartney:

Dear Somers Point School Board Members,

I am a parent of an 8th grade student at Jordan Road School. With Governor Murphy lifting the universal school mask mandate scheduled effective March 7, 2022 I would like the board to consider making masks in school optional for students and staff. While masks played a beneficial role in protecting the population during the highest peaks of the pandemic, they also have inhibited social interactions for children, negatively affecting their emotional wellbeing. Covid-19 numbers are steadily declining, therefore I am asking the board to please take into account balancing children's mental needs along with pandemic safety. I appreciate the time and effort the school board continues to put into protecting our children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erin McCartney

Public comment was closed at 6:58pm

## School and Community

### Student and Community Affairs Committee Report

- Before/After School Program (YMCA)
- Athletics
- Safety and Security
- Transportation
- Public Relations
- Redistricting
- Personnel

### Foundation for Education Liaison Report

- On going need for fundraising opportunities
- Bringing back events that have been stopped due to Covid-19 and adding new events.

### City Council Liaison Report

- Traffic at Dawes Avenue
- School has done everything that can be done about the traffic at Dawes and the City did acknowledge the situation but nothing went anywhere.

## Finance/Operations

### Finance Committee Report

- Contracts
- Architect Contract
- Budget
- Audit
- Personnel
- New York Avenue School Options

Motion was made by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Mrs. DeCicco to approve Items B-I, Motion was carried unanimously 8-0.

### B. Transfer of Funds

Approve the Adjustments for the Budget as presented and made a part of these minutes, as recommended by Michelle Carney-Ray-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools:

[Monthly Transfers 0122.pdf \(214 KB\)](#)

[Jan.2022 Appropriations.pdf \(308 KB\)](#)

### C. Secretary Report/Cash Report

Approve the Report of the Secretary for the month ending January 2022, as presented, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)3 and that they certify that as of January 31 2022, after review of the Secretary's Monthly Financial Report (Appropriations Section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of their knowledge no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)4 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder

of the fiscal year. The board further approves the Cash Report for the month of January 2022, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

Monthly Board Certification 0122.pdf (76 KB)

Secretary Report 0122.pdf (2,128 KB)

Cash Report 0122.pdf (92 KB)

**D. Treasurer's Report**

Approve the Report of the Treasurer for the month ending January 2022 as presented, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c) and that they certify that as of January 2022, after review of the Treasurer's Monthly Financial Report (Appropriations Section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of their knowledge no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)4 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

Treasurer Report 0122.pdf (100 KB)

**E. Bills for Payment**

Approve the Bills List as presented and made a part of these minutes, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools:

GENERAL - \$692,636.50  
 CAPITAL - \$0  
 PAYROLL - \$906,598.39  
 TOTAL - \$1,599,234.89

FEB. 17 2022 BILLS LIST.pdf (538 KB)

**F. Contracts**

Approve the following out of district contracts for the 2021-2022 school year, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools:

Name of Contract	Amount	Student ID
Extraordinary aid- Durand	\$15480	15647849
Transportation Addendum-Durand	\$8730	15647849
Transportation-SP-A Route	\$27027	15466463
Tuition Contract-McKenney Vento-Atlantic City	\$7884.81	15667940
Bayada Nursing-Nurse 2/10/2022 through 6/30/2022	\$60/hour RN \$48/hour LPN	998505

**G. Contract - Architectural Firm**

Authorize the Architectural Firm of RYEBREAD to provide the Architectural and Engineering to prepare specifications and submit same to NJDOE, Office of School Facilities, to approve the installation of new bathrooms at Dawes Avenue School, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools. Contingent upon contract review by school attorney.

**H. Use of Facilities**

Approve the use of the gym for Mission Point Church for basketball and volleyball on Friday nights from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM from February 18, 2022 to May 27, 2022, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

**I. Fund Raising Activity**

Approve the fundraising activities, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools:

Activity/Club	School	Fundraising	Explanation below
Future Act Club	Jordan Rd	Sell Hershey Kiss Valentine mice	1
Band	Jordan Rd	Sell World's Finest Chocolate to reduce cost of Hershey trip.	

## Curriculum

### Instruction Committee Report

- ELL Three Year Plan
- GT Moving Forward
- Summer School
- Instructional Coach Placement
- Mentor
- Upcoming Professional Development

Motion was made by Dr. Dolton, seconded by Dr. Myers to approve Items B-D. Motion carried unanimously 8-0.

#### B. Out of District Professional Development

Approve the following Out of District Professional Development for the 2021-2022 school year, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools:

Name	Program	Date(s)	Location	Fee	
1	Kim O'Brien Kristie Unsworth	NJ TESOL Conference	06/01/2022 06/02/2022	New Brunswick NJ	\$971.88
2	Katelyn Tobiasen	NASW-NJ Conference	05/02/2022	Online Sessions	

#### C. ELL Three Year Plan

Approve submission of the ELL Three Year plan to NJDOE, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

#### D. Volleyball Schedule

Approve the 2022 Jordan Road School Volleyball Schedule, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

ATLANTIC CAPE VOLLEYBALL.pdf (89 KB)

## Personnel

### Negotiations Committee Report

- No Report

Motion was made to by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Mrs. DeCicco to approve Items B-D. Motion carried unanimously 8-0

#### B. Resignations

Approve the resignations of the following staff recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools:

Name	Position	School	Effective Date
Suzanne Ancharski	Paraprofessional	JRS	02/26/2022
Kelly Unger	Kindergarten	DWS	03/28/2022
**Kathleen Renda	Pre/K	NYA	03/18/2022

#### C. Retirements

Approve the following retirement revision as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

Name	Position	School	Last day in District	Date of Retirement
**Susanne Staiano (CHANGE IN DATE)	Nurse	Dawes	October 03, 2022	November 01, 2022

#### D. Administrative Internship

Approve Mr. Phil Pallitto's participation in NJPSAFE/ NJEXCEL Supervisor Internship with Dr. Kaas and Dr. Venello as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

Motion was made by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Dr. Myers to approve Item E. Motion carried unanimously 8-0.

**E. Change in Hours**

Approve a change of hours for Nancy Garrett from 24.25 hours to 27.92 hours on current step as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.,D. Superintendent of Schools.

Motion was made by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Dr. Dolton to approve Items F-J. Motion carried unanimously 8-0.

**F. Home Instruction**

Approve homebound instruction for student # 998785 for 5 hours a week, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

**G. Stipend - Nurses**

Approve due to the continuing Covid-19 Pandemic we are providing our nurses with a stipend in the amount to not exceed \$3000 out of ESSER funds due to the increased work during COVID-19 during non-contractual hours. This stipend is only for the 2021-2022 school year and is not an entitlement under contract or law, nor is there any agreement or expectation that this stipend will be paid again, as it is a one-time stipend based upon the unique circumstances of COVID-19, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

**H. Sports-Coaches**

Approve the following coaches for the remaining Winter and Spring Sports for the 2021-2022 school year, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of School.

Jen Rowe	Volleyball
Jeanette Cellucci	Boys' Track & Field
Devon Kallen	Girls' Track & Field
Jon Bruccoleri & Ty Hegyi (split)*	Baseball
Sara Kern & Aubrey Atkinson (split)**	Softball
Jeanette Cellucci	Varsity Basketball

**I. New Hires**

Approve the following new hires, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools:

Marie Andre	Substitute Custodian	\$15.00/hr	02/18/22 - 06/30/22
Matt Marucci	JRS STEAM/Financial Literacy & GT	BA/ Step 1	02/18/22-06/30/22
Jenna Oliver	Non-Affiliated Paraprofessional	Step 1	March 14, 2022 (or sooner, depending on paperwork)
*Ryan Freund	Cafeteria Aide (Correction)	\$13.00/hr	
*Shannon Bortner	Cafeteria Aide (Correction)	\$13.00/hr	

**J. Volleyball Referee**

Approve referees for Volleyball at the following rate: \$65 per match, as recommended by Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools.

**Policy**

**A. Policy Committee Report**

Motion was made by Dr. Myers, seconded by Mrs. Samuelson to approve Item B. Motion carried unanimously 8-0.

**B. Second Reading**

Policy 3212 - Attendance

Policy 4211 - Attendance

[Policy 3212.pdf \(52 KB\)](#)

[Policy 4211.pdf \(52 KB\)](#)

**Action May Be Taken After Executive Session**

Motion was made by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Mrs. DeCicco to approve Item A-B. Motion carried unanimously 8-0.

**A. Acknowledge HIB Incidents**

Acknowledge there were 2 HIB incidents reported for the Somers Point School District from 1/21/22 to 2/17/22 in accordance with N.J.A.C.6A:16-7.1.

#227210 - Unfounded

#227853 - Unfounded

**B. Affirm HIB Incidents**

Affirm there was 1 HIB incident reported for the Somers Point School District from 12/17/2021 to 01/20/2022 in accordance with N.J.A.C.6A:16-7.1.

#225842 - Confirmed

**Public Forum**

Open Meeting to the Public/Guidelines for Public Forum

President Staci Endicott opened the meeting to the public at 7:18pm and read the following notice: Public participation will be in accordance with District Policy #0167. Public participation will include, but not be limited to the following rules: a participant of the public will present his/her name, place of residence, and group affiliation if appropriate. Each participant will be limited to three (3) minutes per statement and the overall duration of the public comments shall not exceed 30 minutes.

- Michelle Kennedy- Introduced herself as the new NJSBA Leader
- Devon Kallen- Commented on how the two Varsity basketball coaches have been coaching the JV varsity basketball team since no one ever came out for the position. After putting out multiple job hirings for the position Dr. Cry appointed Ms. Cellucci and Mr. Marucci the coaches for the JV Basketball team. At a time when its hard enough to secure coaches Ms. Cellucci and Mr. Marucci deserve the stipend. The current coaches feel discouraged, undervalued and under appreciated due to this matter.

Public comment was closed at 7:23pm

**Board Forum**

- Dr. Myers thanked everyone for coming out and advocating for themselves.
- Mr. Conover thanked Mrs. Kelly Warley for her time with the school district and is sad to see her go.

**Board General Information - For Information Only**

Board Calendar

NJSBA Upcoming Events

**Administrative Monthly Reports - For Information Only**

- A. Enrollment Report as of 2/17/2022 771.
- B. Jordan Road Principal Report
- C. Dawes Avenue and New York Avenue Principal Report
- D. Director of Curriculum Instruction

**Possible Executive Session**

Motion was made by Dr. Myers, seconded by Mrs. Samuelson to enter Executive Session, All in Favor.

Recess to Executive Session for 7:27pm, we will be in executive session for approximately 60 minutes.

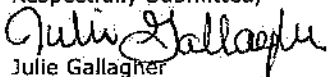
Action may be taken,

Reconvene to Public Meeting at 10:47pm

**Adjournment**

Motion to Adjourn the meeting was made by Mrs. Samuelson, seconded by Dr. Myers at 10:52pm. All In Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,



Julie Gallagher  
Business Administrator/Board Secretary