



# Peters Township School District

## MINUTES PETERS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015  
Immediately following the 6:30 pm Reorganization Meeting  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. McMurray, President, called the regular meeting of the Peters Township Board of School Directors to order at 6:44 p.m.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Allison, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Bowman, Mr. Briegel, Mr. Dunleavy, Dr. Hardy, Mr. Merrell, Mrs. Smith, and Mr. McMurray.

Also present were Dr. Jeannine French, Superintendent, Dr. Jennifer Murphy, Assistant Superintendent, Michael Fisher, Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Patricia Kelly, Director of Pupil Personnel, Vincent M. Belczyk, Business Manager, Shelly Belcher, Communications Coordinator and Jocelyn Kramer, Solicitor.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS:

- Celebration of Excellence
  - The District celebrated the following:
    - **Excellence in Academics**
      - **PTMS Poetry Winners**  
Students from PTMS placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Phipps Conservatory poetry contest. Seventh and eighth grade gifted students partnered with the PTMS Green Team and Writing Lab students to create a booklet of more than 20 Haiku poems describing their experiences in nature.
      - **Pleasant Valley Economics Fair**  
On December 2, Pleasant Valley 3<sup>rd</sup> graders held their annual economics fair as the culmination to the study of economic principals. Students crafted their own items to sell in their “mini-malls” and created 30 second commercials to promote their wares to their fellow students.
      - **Excellence in Athletics**
        - **National Letter of Intent Signing**  
On Wednesday, December 2, twelve students from Peters Township High School signed letters of intent to continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level. This talented groups of seniors represented golf, lacrosse, basketball, swimming and track and field. The students and their schools are listed above.

- **Excellence in the Arts**  
McMurray Elementary's 6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus visited the annual tree lighting ceremony at the public library this weekend. Organized by teacher Ray Cygrymus, the students shared some holiday favorites with the crowd before Santa arrived on the fire truck. The event was also a celebration honoring the many contributions of retiring library director Mrs. Pier Lee.

**Excellence in Character**

- **McMurray Turkey Fund**  
Students from McMurray Elementary's Leadership team and the student ambassadors joined forces to collect funds for the KDKA Turkey Fund on November 23. The students waited outside of the school from 3 – 5 p.m. and collected donations from classmates, teachers and community members who stopped by to help. In all, more than \$620 was raised by the effort. A special thanks to 6<sup>th</sup> grader Greta DeRienzo and her family who organized the effort.
- **Pleasant Valley UNICEF Donation**  
Students in Mrs. Courie's second grade class collection \$125 for UNICEF this month. Thanks to Giving Tuesday, the class's donation will be doubled to \$250. The students will receive a certificate from UNICEF for their efforts as a reminder of the difference they are making this holiday season.

**Excellence in Leadership**

- The Peters Township School Board would like to acknowledge the many contributions of former member Diane Ritter who passed away in October at age 62.

It all began as she worked on committees within the PTA, but soon everyone knew that they needed her strength, leadership, and attention to detail at a higher level. Her leadership roles included serving as a PTA Officer and then PTA President, eventually becoming Area Council President. These positions ultimately led to her serving on the Peters Township School Board for eight years and serving as school board president for two years. She was always professional, prepared, and innovative, following every rule and policy to the letter. Her memory of detail gave her an extraordinary ability to lead. As a tireless champion for ALL children, her legacy of great care and concern will live on in her many accomplishments in education.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

(Peters Township School District Policy 903)

Peters Township School District values parent and community engagement.

Mr. Peter Glasser (Teacher Contract/Wages)  
143 Longvue Drive  
McMurray, PA 15317

Mr. Glaser stated he supports the Willing to Wait Group and is here tonight to request fair compensation for the teachers. Compensation which is also fair for two-thirds of the tax payers of the District that do not have children in the educational system. Many have suffered a reduction in the standard of living and experienced an increase in medical co-pays and deductibles, as well as an increase in the costs of goods and services necessary to purchase. Many of the residents live on a fixed income and will have no increase next year. We can no longer afford the exorbitant salaries and benefits of the teachers that are way out of the market value of the teachers. There are many teachers in the market that have advanced degrees and have been unable to find a job and are working as clerks in store for low hourly rates. Some of these graduates would be willing to work for an hourly rate plus a contribution to a health care plan. Peters Township has a perfect opportunity to get rid of the teachers, since the contract has expired. It is time to look for a private company that is willing to come in and run the district. Many service and manufacturing businesses operate in similar manner and pay a mark-up to these companies for providing these services. FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) must be provided, but Peters does not have to have teachers directly on the payroll. Mr. Glaser reviewed information on contracting out teachers and providing a market up to companies providing the service and still saving taxpayers money and reduce taxes by up to 50%. A fair market compensation package offered by a company run organization will be very attractive to new teachers looking to start a career, or those looking to make a move from inner city schools. A company run organization will also provide the opportunity to remove any teachers would be considered a threat to students and allow students to feel safer. This would also eliminate union defended questionable practices. This is a prime opportunity without a teacher's contract to move to contracting out the employment of teachers.

Mr. Marc Simon (Privatization of the School District)  
170 Druid Drive  
McMurray, PA 15317

When a new contract is agreed to it will no doubt be funded by increased local taxpayer effort. With a budget that is 75% funded by the local tax effort any future contracts will also be supported by increased burden on the local taxpayer. We need to act responsibly and take control for a fair and equitable teacher contract. We can work within the 75% funding and save funds by eliminating the top tiered salary takers, eliminate the \$40,000 bump; creating a new salary structure comparable to state wide averages; basing any annual increases on merit instead of tenure; bringing health care premium co-pay and deductibles in line with what industry is paying; and eliminating the contributions to the state run pension system and replacing it with a standard 401 k retirement plan. The right reason to attract and maintain quality teachers is provide them with good students who have the ability and motivation to learn. Residents will endorse such a plan. The District should always strive to be in control of our own destiny and direction. That is why we should consider the avenue of outsourcing the teachers. Mr. Simon provided some statistical information on contracts the bump step of Peters is 66% as compared to McGuffey at 29% using the 2013-2014 fiscal year data. Comparing to Canon MacMillan in 2011-2012 the step is 60% in Peters and 20% in Canon MacMillan. The bump step in Peters has gotten way out of line. There are 284 teachers with 37% at on step 17, which accounts for almost

\$10,000,000 of the salaries. Mr. Simon is advocating the school go private, eliminate the jump step, and we may be able to include some of the eliminated jump step into the annual increments for all teachers. Solicitor Jocelyn Kramer responded to some of the comments heard tonight. The School Board is working with the union to move forward with the best interest of the residents and the community and students. Unfortunately these ideas that are concerns of yours, this school district is constituted as a public school district. The School Code and the Constitution would prohibit us from privatizing. We are also constrained by labor relation laws that don't allow us to subcontract-it's an unfair labor practice. So we understand your concern and the information discussed tonight, it is being reviewed by our negotiating team. It is not as simple as walking away they have to uphold the constitution and laws they were just sworn in to uphold.

Rodney Gaetano representing PT Willing to Wait (PTFT Strike)  
200 Bridle Trail  
Venetia PA, 15367

Mr. Gaetano commented on the issues the PTFT ignored to fit their strike in. Fight a battle that will never be won only compromises made. Averages and generalities never tell the whole story, you have to educate yourself to find the truth. You have to read contracts, budgets, and understand district finances. Emotion is unpredictable and unreliable, numbers have no emotion so stick to the facts. Fair and equitable applies to all and should not be a privilege at the expense of another. If our teachers are doing such a good job then why is it not reflected in the SAT scores compared to other districts that have comparable salaries. Why are tutorial agencies thriving to fill the gaps and why is the library packed with teachers tutoring students for profits. A household with two top step earners would have a combined income of \$210,000, well above the average income of \$145,000 of the Township. Most employees contribute about 25 to 30% of the cost for health care with the employer paying the balance. The Federation now contributes only 10% of their health care cost. Mr. Gaetano stated he is very happy with the responsiveness and commitment from most of the teachers his children have had. Based on what is on the table we are facing an 11.5% increase over the next five years after a 9% tax increase over the last two years with the Board proposal and a 25% increase based on the last PTFT offer. This is just part of the uncertainty facing the district going forward. Reassessments will also be a shock to taxpayers. Any contract must be as conservative as possible for fiscal responsibility. PTFT bring negotiations into the new century come back to reality.

Katherine Karolick  
224 Walnut Drive  
Venetia, PA 15367

Mrs. Carolick stated the teachers were responsive and cooperative when the students got back to the classroom. We believe more than 50% are great teachers and do not want this . She supports the Board in their efforts to work through the process.

Jim Goldsmith  
118 Tanglewood Drive

Mr. Goldsmith wanted to review two issues brought to his attention, the advanced placed courses if there is another strike will the students be capable of finishing the requirements?

Residents have a fear of bringing their thoughts out in public on the strike, can we set up a page so they could share their thoughts without the fear.

Mr. McMurray responded that emails are getting to the Board about the labor issue.

Dr. French and Dr. Murphy stated the district is working with the College Board to push back the testing date, and the NMSI grant will also allow the district to work with the Math, Science, and English teachers to compact our instruction to insure our students receive the instruction necessary.

Mrs. Smith requested clarification on the additional instructional time through the NMSI grant, does that mean each student will receive an additional 18 hours of instruction for each Math, Science, and English.

Dr. Murphy responded yes one six hour session has already been held.

Eric Tabor  
314 Bunker Hill Drive

Thanked the Board for their time and commitment to the community during the labor negotiation process.

Kathleen Chaudhari  
307 Fox Run Drive

Requested someone address standardized tests.

Mr. Fisher responded we are working with the state to push back the standardized tests.

#### PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Mr. McMurray stated updates will continue to be posted on our website.  
An Executive Session was held on December 3, 2015.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

#### I. BUSINESS OFFICE

**RECOMMENDATION:** Consider a motion to approve Business Office recommendations as follows: (attachments 1 through 4)

1. Approval of the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting dated November 16, 2015.
2. Approval of General Fund bills for November 12, 2015 through November 30, 2015.

3. Approval of Capital Facilities Fund bills for November 12, 2015 through November 30, 2015.
4. Approval of Food Service Fund bills for November 12, 2015 through November 30, 2015.

Note: Treasurers Report, Capital Facilities Fund, McMurray Elementary, Middle School, High School Activity Funds and the High School Athletic Fund for November are not included.

**MOTION:**

Mrs. Bowman moved for approval of the Business Office recommendations 1 through 4, seconded by Mrs. Smith.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(9-0)**

II. BOARD COMMITTEES

**Personnel**

Ron Dunleavy: No Report  
Public Comment: None

**Buildings and Grounds**

Bill Merrell

1. **RECOMMENDATION:** Move to approve the purchase of 1,362 chairs from P.E.M.Co. Educational & Contract Furniture at a cost of \$81,226.91 through the Pennsylvania Costars program for use in the McMurray Elementary School. This purchase is funded through the Capital Projects Fund.

**MOTION:**

Mr. Merrell moved for approval of Recommendations 1, seconded by Mrs. Smith.  
A discussion was held on the above recommendation.  
Public Comment: None

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(9-0)**

**Education**

Sue Smith: No Report

**Finance**

Jamison Hardy: Gave an update on the status of the State Budget.

**Policy**

Lisa Anderson: no Report

The next Policy Committee meeting will be held on Monday, December 14, 2015.

**PSBA**

Lisa Anderson

**Western Area Career and Technology Center**

Rebecca Bowman

The next Joint Operating Committee Meeting will be held on December 16, 2015.

**SHASDA**

Ron Dunleavy

The next SHASDA meeting will be held on January 28, 2016 at Upper St. Clair School District's LGI Room. All Board Members and Administrators are invited.

**Intermediate Unit**

Thomas McMurray

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2015.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA**

**III. CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Consider a motion to approve Certificated Personnel recommendations subject to all required pre-employment history reviews and clearance requirements as follows:

1. Approve the following **leaves of absence:**

December 2015-2016-01

December 2015-2016-02

December 2015-2016-03

2. Approve the following **student teachers/observers/interns** for the **2015-16** school year. All compliance documents for the following individual are on file.

Name: Angela Crump  
Dates of Assignment: 01/19/16 - 04/29/16  
College or University: California University of Pennsylvania  
Curriculum Major: Speech and Language Pathology  
PTSD Teacher & Bldg.: Nicole Scott/Pleasant Valley and High School  
Assignment: Externship

**MOTION:**

Mrs. Smith moved for approval of Certificated Personnel items 1 and 2, seconded by Mr. Merrell.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**(9-0)**

IV. NON-CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL

**RECOMMENDATION:** Consider a motion to approve Non-Certificated Personnel recommendations subject to all required pre-employment history reviews and clearance requirements as follows:

1. Approve the following **leave of absence:**

December 2015-2016-04

2. Approve the following **resignations:**

Name: Kristi Firestone  
Position: Paraprofessional, McMurray Elementary  
Effective: November 17, 2015

Name: Patricia Ennis  
Position: Driver, Bus Garage  
Effective: November 27, 2015

3. Approve the following **new hires:**

Name: Susan Manko  
Position: Cafeteria/Food Service  
Assignment: High School  
Salary: \$12.96/hr  
Effective: December 14, 2015  
Replaces: Joy Ferraco

Name: Diana Gerba  
Position: Cafeteria/Food Service  
Assignment: High School  
Salary: \$12.96/hr

Effective: December 14, 2015  
Replaces: Elizabeth Snyder

Name: Lorraine Bansavage  
Position: Cafeteria/Food Service  
Assignment: High School  
Salary: \$12.96/hr  
Effective: December 14, 2015  
Replaces: Marge Urbas

4. Approve the following **day-to-day non-teaching substitutes** for the **2015-16** school year:

1. Ennis, Patricia - Driver
2. Feitt, Amanda - Paraprofessional, Cafeteria/Playground Monitor,  
Clerical and Cafeteria/Food Service
3. Manhollan, Rebecca – Clerical

**MOTION:**

Dr. Hardy moved for approval of Non-Certificated Personnel items 1 through 4, seconded by Mr. Merrell.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(9-0)**

V. **EXTRA-DUTY PERSONNEL/PROGRAMS**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Consider a motion to approve Extra-Duty Personnel/Program recommendations subject to all required pre-employment history reviews and clearance requirements as follows:

1. Approve the following **extra-duty Activity personnel** for the **2015-16** school year:  
(attachment)

**HIGH SCHOOL**

Drama, Tech. Director, Coffeehouse

Sean Sullivan

2. Approve the following **extra-duty Athletic personnel resignation** for the **2015-16** school year:

**HIGH SCHOOL**

Volleyball Boys Assistant Coach

Scott Smith

3. Approve the following **renewal of extra-duty Athletic personnel** for the **2016-17** school year:

**HIGH SCHOOL FALL**

Cross Country Head Coach  
Field Hockey Head Coach  
Golf, Boys Head Coach  
Golf, Girls Head Coach  
Soccer, Boys Head Coach  
Soccer, Girls Head Coach  
Tennis, Girls Head Coach  
Volleyball, Girls Head Coach

Timothy Wu  
Amy Casciola  
David Kuhn  
Timothy “Brian” Farrell  
Robert Dyer  
Patrick Vereb  
Brandt Bowman  
Ashley Green

4. Approve the following **status change** during the **2015-16** school year:

**High School**

Maura McCarthy

Daniel DiDonato

**From:**

Cheerleading

Assist. Coach (Winter only)

Wrestling 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Assistant Coach

**To:**

Cheerleading

Volunteer

Wrestling 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Head Coach  
(Split 15% w/ Holderbaum)

5. Approve the following **extra-duty Athletic personnel** for the **2015-16** school year:  
(attachments)

**HIGH SCHOOL**

Cheerleading Assistant Coach (Winter only)

Cheerleading Assistant Coach (Winter only)

Cheerleading Assistant Coach (Winter only)

Volleyball Boys Head Coach

Katelyn Phillippi (Split 33%)

Chelsea Stockhausen (Split 33%)

Melissa Giaquinto (Split 33%)

William “Pete” Swauger

6. Approve the Odyssey of the Mind as a Club for Peters Township School District, contingent upon receipt of all compliance documents.
7. Approve the Titanium Titans Robotics Team as a Club for Peters Township School District, contingent upon receipt of all compliance documents.

**MOTION:**

Mrs. Smith moved for approval of Extra-Duty Personnel/Programs items 1 through 7, seconded by Dr. Hardy.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**(9-0)**

**VI. PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES AND TRIPS**

**NO ACTION ITEMS AT THIS TIME**

VII. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

**RECOMMENDATION:** Consider a motion to approve the Educational Programs and Student Activities as follows:

1. Approve the following **student trips:** (attachments)

Organization: Wrestling – High School  
Advisor: Jason Carpetta  
Event: Sharon Wrestling Duals  
Dates: January 29 – 30, 2016  
Location: Sharon, PA  
Est. Cost to Dist.: \$0.00

Organization: PTHS Music Department – High School  
Advisor: Ryan Perrotte and Milt Barney  
Event: Sing at Carnegie Hall, NYC  
Dates: March 17 – 20, 2016  
Location: New York, NY  
Est. Cost to Dist.: \$340.00

**MOTION:**

Mrs. Smith moved for approval of Educational Programs and Student Activities item 1, seconded by Mr. Merrell.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(9-0)**

VIII. OTHER

**RECOMMENDATION:** Consider a motion to approve other recommendations as follows:

1. Approve the revised 2015-16 School Calendar. (attachment)
2. Approve to extend the contract for purchasing electricity with Premier Power through the Intermediate Unit One Consortium, on terms and conditions approved by the Solicitor, through November 30, 2019. This purchase agreement is contingent upon a lower or matched negotiated 2016-2017 price of \$ .0629 per kwh.
3. Approve an Agreement in Lieu of Expulsion regarding student 15-16-01.

**MOTION:**

Dr. Hardy moved for approval of Other items 1 through 3, seconded by Mr. Merrell.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(9-0)**

BOARD INFORMATION: None

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: No Report

QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD ON AGENDA ITEMS (15 minutes): None

CORRESPONDENCE: Mrs. Bowman

ANNOUNCEMENTS

December Board Meetings:

Monday, December 14, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting  
Immediately Following the Finance Meeting Policy Committee Meeting

January Board Meeting:

Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. Reassessment Meeting with Township  
PT Middle School

Monday, January 18, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. Regular Board Meeting

Monday, January 25, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. Buildings Grounds and Transportation  
Committee Meeting

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Mrs. Smith moved for adjournment at 7:42 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Bowman.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(9-0)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board President