



## **BOARD OF EDUCATION - SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2020 PEOTONE HIGH SCHOOL - MEDIA CENTER**

*This Special Board Meeting was conducted via a teleconference call and also an open meeting for 50 people or less. Present in the Media Center of Peotone High School were President, Mrs. Tara Robinson, Vice President, Mr. Richard Uthe, Secretary Jennifer Moe, Trustee Roger Bettenhausen, Trustee Paul Douglas, Trustee Jodi Becker, Trustee Jody Thatcher was present via teleconference. Mr. Steve Stein, Dr. Charles Vitton, Mr. Trevor Moore, Mrs. Cathy Cuculich, Mr. Don Swanson and the Administrators.*

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

At 7:00 p.m. President Robinson called the special board meeting to order and requested all who are present to please stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. A roll call was taken and the following members answered aye (7): Mrs. Tara Robinson, Mr. Richard Uthe, Mr. Roger Bettenhausen, Mrs. Jodi Becker, Mr. Paul Douglas, Mrs. Jennifer Moe, Mrs. Jody Thatcher (present via teleconference) and no nays.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR VISITORS TO SPEAK:**

**Mrs. Dana Sippel, of Peotone, IL, Mrs. Jamie Bennett, of Peotone, IL, Mr. Wesley Cobb, of Peotone, IL, Mrs. Jennifer Hendricker of Monee, IL and Mr. Bob Janeliunas, of Peotone, IL** addressed the Board with their concerns, complaints and struggles of e-learning, and also concerns of IEP students that receive special services of speech, OT/PT, and social work. The parents were all in favor of the approved Return to School Plan (in-person learning) and urged the Board to vote no tonight for going to full remote e-learning. President Robinson thanked the parents for attending the special board meeting and voicing their concerns to the Board.

President Robinson stated that I will now open it up to the Board for their comments or questions of going to full remote e-learning for the 2020-2021 school year.

Trustee, Roger Bettenhausen stated that one of the parents speaking tonight, "Asked why another board meeting tonight"? And I would like to respond to that speaker by saying yes, we did vote and approved a Return to School Plan, but at our regular board meeting of August 17th, Mr. Stein discussed with the Board, the new guidelines that the IDPH released on August 12<sup>th</sup>. We as a Board wanted to give the community time to weigh-in on the concept of going to full remote e-learning for our students. I do agree with the speakers tonight, let's give the return to school plan a try and see where it goes and as a board and district, we will work within the boundaries of the plan, but I think we should also have a plan in place for full remote e-learning - just in case, the District has to shut down quickly.

Vice President, Mr. Uthe, asked Mrs. Caza, union president, "How do the teachers feel? Mrs. Caza responded that we just need an answer either way from the Board, so we can move forward and teach our kids.

Trustee, Paul Douglas, responded I struggle with the in-person plan, with COVID-19's rises and peaks and what if a student brings it home to their parents or if they have grandparents living with them, brings it home to them, and they get COVID-19 and dies. I am a very cautious person and I would not be able to live with myself, if I was part of the decision to go with in-person learning. So, I will have to vote yes in favor of going to full remote e-learning.

Board Secretary, Jennifer Moe, apologized for my emotions at Monday night's regular board meeting, my dad just had surgery and my emotions got the best of me. I am so sorry. I believe students need to be in school and they need that connection with their teachers and friends. And I know that the teachers are ready for school to start and ready to teach our kids. I vote yes to move forward with the Return to School Plan (in-person learning).

Trustee, Jodi Becker, reported that we as a Board voted for a Plan that I believe is a very solid plan for the District. The special task force spent many days, nights and countless hours creating the Plan for the district. Therefore, I vote yes for the Return to School Plan.

Trustee, Jody Thatcher reported that I am totally for the full remote e-learning plan, and believe me, my son struggled tremendously with remote e-learning last year. But I work in a private school setting and not all of the guidelines of IDPH are being met. But knowing what I am going through at my work and worrying about whether or not I will get COVID, my anxiety levels are so high and also I have not been attending the board meetings in person because I do not want to be responsible for bringing COVID to the meetings. So, I am voting yes for full remote e-learning and I believe this is the best option for our students and the District.

President Robinson asked if Superintendent Stein if he wanted to add anything to the discussion. Mr. Stein stated that if the Board decides to keep with the Return to School Plan in place, I plead with all parents that you have a Plan B in place and ready to go to Plan B within 24 to 48 hours, because we may have to shut down the in-person learning quick! So please have a Plan B ready to go if we have to go full remote e-learning. Also, I would like to add that if we have two or three teachers out at a building because COVID-19 quarantine, this will have a huge impact on the building and the district, because finding replacements for the teachers will be a difficult task during this difficult time.

But I do agree students need to be in school, but can the District truly handle the IDPH guidelines and sustained these guidelines when we are in-person learning? ISBE and IDPH are very wishy washy in their guidelines. My fear is that this pandemic will send the whole system to a halt, and full remote e-learning will be our only option! And if the Board votes tonight to go ahead with the approved

Return to School Plan, as administrators, teachers and staff we will knock the beginning of the school year for all of our students out of the park!

## **FOR ACTION:**

### **REPORT NO. 15:**

#### **FOR ACTION: APPROVAL OF THE 2020-2021 RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN**

President Robinson asked for motion for going full remote, e-learning for the 2020-2021 school year. Mrs. Thatcher made a motion for full remote e-learning for the District. Mr. Douglas seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was taken and the following members answered aye (2) Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Douglas, and the following members answered nay (5), Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Uthe, Mrs. Becker, Mrs. Moe and Mr. Bettenhausen.

President Robinson stated, let the record show that the District will move forward with the 2020-2021 Return to School Plan, approved by the Board on August 5, 2020 for in-person learning and hybrid. The official first day of school for students will be September 2, 2020.

### **REPORT NO. 16:**

**FOR ACTION: ADDENDUM TO THE APPROVAL OF PERSONNEL  
(ADDITIONS ARE IN BOLD AND UNDERLINE)  
(\*Contingent upon receipt and evaluation  
employment documentation required by the District  
and the Illinois State Board of Education\*)**

The Board will need a motion to approve the following **Addendum** to the Approval of the **Certified and Classified Staff Personnel**.

#### **CERTIFIED STAFF EMPLOYMENT:**

- **Caley Michalak - PHS-Guidance Counselor - (effective date of 08/24/2020).**
- **Ariana Meewes - PHS - Long Term Substitute for English Teacher, Christina Juma's maternity leave (effective date of 08/24/2020).**

#### **CHANGE IN STATUS:**

##### **2020-2021 School Year**

- Emma Ahrens-PES-Permanent Substitute to Second Grade Remote Learning Teacher (effective date of 08/10/2020).
- Michele Clayton-PIC- Reading Specialist to 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> ELA/Science. (effective date of 08/17/2020).
- Larry Dewese -PES-Music Teacher /Permanent Substitute (effective date of 08/10/2020).

**CHANGE IN STATUS (continued):**

**2020-2021 School Year**

- Eric Peppmuller- PES-Third Grade Teacher to PIC
- 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Teacher, Math/SS (effective date 08/10/2020).
- Jim Wedic -PIC - PE/Permanent Substitute (08/10/2020).
- Krysta Harmon -PIC - Music/Art/Permanent Substitute (08/10/2020).
- Tara Popovich-PES Permanent Substitute to Third Grade Teacher (effective date of 08/10/2020)
- Tracy Redman-PES-Reading Specialist to Third Grade Teacher (effective date of 08/10/2020).
- Gregg Schreiber-PES-Physical Education Teacher/Permanent Substitute (effective date of 08/10/2020).
- Laura Zivat-PES- Art Teacher/Kindergarten Teacher (effective date of 08/10/2020).
- April Workman-PES-SI Maternity Substitute (effective date of 09/01/2020).

**RESIGNATION:**

- **Laura Franklin- PHS-Long-Term Substitute for English Teacher, Christina Juma's maternity leave (effective date of 08/17/2020).**

**CLASSIFIED STAFF**

**CHANGE OF LOCATION:**

- Dawn Mahalik - PJHS 1:1 Paraprofessional to PHS 1:1 Paraprofessional (effective date of 08/17/2020).

**CHANGE IN STATUS:**

- **Kim Gura - Transportation- Bus Driver - from a five hour to a four hour bus route (effective date 08/19/2020).**
- **Maria Novoa- PJHS-Cafeteria-from part-time to substitute (effective date of 08/17/2020).**

**RESIGNATION:**

- Marissa Backlin - PES - 1:1 Paraprofessional (effective date of 08/18/2020).
- **Shawn Fox - Transportation - Bus Aide (effective date of 8/19/2020).**

President Robinson asked for a motion to approve the **Addendum to the Approval of the Certified and Classified Staff Personnel**. Mr. Uthe made a motion and Mr. Bettenhausen seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was taken and the following members answered aye (7): Mr. Uthe, Mrs. Becker, Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Bettenhausen, Mr. Douglas, Mrs. Moe, Mrs. Thatcher and no nays.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

For the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees or legal counsel; collective negotiating matters; student disciplinary cases and other matters relating to individual students; pending, probable, or imminent litigation; security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonable potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public or public property.

**There May Be or May Not Be Action Following the Executive Session.**

### **OTHER:**

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

At 7:57 p.m. President Robinson asked the Board if anyone had anything for closed executive session tonight and the Board responded no. With that, President Robinson asked for a motion to adjourn the special board meeting. Mr. Uthe made a motion and Mrs. Robinson seconded the motion, and a voice call vote was taken and the following members answered aye (7): Mr. Uthe, Mrs. Becker, Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Bettenhausen, Mr. Douglas, Mrs. Moe, Mrs. Thatcher and no nays. The special board meeting of August 20, 2020 is adjourned.



---

Tara Robinson, President



---

Cathy Cuculich, Reporter