



Board Notes

A Monthly Summary of the Hatboro-Horsham School Board Meeting

August 2021

Board Members

Jennifer Wilson, President
David P. Brown, Vice President
Marian McCouch, Treasurer
Theresa E. Brown
Tara Conner-Hallston

Eric E. Coombs
James Greenhalgh
Susan E. Hunsinger-Hoff
Denise J. Schultz
Scott Eveslage, Superintendent

OVERVIEW

Since the District is now requiring universal K-12 indoor masking, Superintendent Dr. Scott T. Eveslage provided an update on the [Health and Safety Plan for 2021-22](#) that the Board approved on July 19. More than 40 community members participated in public comment to discuss the plan.

Also, the Board approved hiring two new certified staff members, in addition to an item relating to the Keith Valley Middle School (KVMS) replacement project.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Eveslage said the Health and Safety Plan for 2021-22 aligns with [guidance](#) from the Montgomery County Office of Public Health (MCOPH), while allowing for a flexible response to changing conditions. The rapid rise in community transmission, spurred by the Delta variant, has prompted several public health entities, including the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to support universal indoor masking for K-12 students, staff, and visitors.

Further, Dr. Eveslage explained the County's policy regarding isolation and quarantine guidelines. He emphasized that in the instance of a close contact (being within 3-6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for 15 minutes or more), if both students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks, then those individual students would not need to quarantine. Under these guidelines, Dr. Eveslage said that it will result in more students remaining in school for instruction. When case count and community transmission begin to decline, the District expects new guidance on when the appropriate time would be to offer masking relief and modification to other mitigation efforts.



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Public Comment

Following the agenda items, 42 community members made public comments regarding the Health and Safety Plan for 2021-22. Community members who support the plan acknowledged the rise in cases and hospitalizations among children due to the spread of the Delta variant. Most thanked the Board for approving a plan that will allow students and staff to safely return to in-person instruction. Meanwhile, those who support optional masking questioned the effectiveness of masks.

Business Office Highlights

As the District continues the early planning stages of redesigning and replacing the aging Keith Valley Middle School, the Board approved David Blackmore & Associates, Inc. Their engineers will perform geotechnical investigation services for the KVMS project at a cost of \$31,118. These services include a complete field investigation, laboratory analysis of soils and a geotechnical analysis with a report.

Additionally, the Board approved the purchase of 34 and 54 SmartBoard carts for Blair Mill and Simmons Elementary Schools from Visual Sound on a COSTARS Contract in the amount of \$472,804.

Personnel

Ahead of the 2021-22 school year, the District welcomed two new certified staff members: Peta-Gaye Woodline and Branden Coleman.

Ms. Woodline will serve as a High School ESL teacher, replacing Lori Fox who retired. Meanwhile, Mr. Coleman will serve as the High School's behavioral support counselor — a brand new position within the District.



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Reports

Finance

Mr. Bill Stone announced that reports of fraudulent checks from the Horsham Post Office may have affected community members who mailed their school real estate taxes there. He advised those individuals to review their online banking activity and to contact the tax office to confirm payment was received. More details are available on the District's [website](#).

Policy Committee

Ms. Denise J. Schultz reported that the District is moving forward with work on its equity policy. A community forum on the equity policy, with stakeholder feedback, will be held in the coming weeks. Additionally, the next policy committee meeting is on September 1. Committee members will review a policy to add language that requires them to review policies in a timely matter. The committee will also review a new policy relating to civility.

Eastern Center Arts & Technology

Ms. Tara Conner-Hallston announced that Mr. Michael Refsnider, an ECAT teacher, recently received Teacher of the Year by the Pennsylvania Association for Career and Education. Additionally, ECAT is pleased with its current enrollment of 636 students, with 39 more on a waitlist. ECAT is working to reevaluate programs to ensure they are relevant for once students graduate and either pursue further education or enter the workforce.

Pennsylvania School Boards Association

Ms. Theresa E. Brown announced that the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) and PSBA 2021 School Leadership Conference will be held September 27-29 at Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in the Poconos. **However, following the meeting, the conference was converted to a series of virtual offerings in late October.**

Next Board Meeting

The next Legislative/Action Meeting is Monday, September 20 at 7 p.m.

REMINDER

The first day of school is Thursday, September 9, 2021

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This communication from Hatboro-Horsham School District and its Board of School Directors is meant to be a summary of actions taken at the most recent Board meeting, and is not intended to serve as minutes of the meeting. Materials presented at all meetings are available on BoardDocs and video recordings are also available. For more information on School Board meetings, please visit www.hatboro-horsham.org/domain/175.