

**MINUTES OF A  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
OF  
PERRY TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS  
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

July 13, 2020

The Board of Education of Perry Township Schools, Marion County, Indiana, held a virtual live-streamed regular board meeting on Monday, July 13, 2020.

Board of Education members present:

**Steve Johnson**, Board President  
**James H. Hernandez**, Board Vice President  
**Lee Shively**, Board Secretary  
**Hannah H. Dale**, Board Member  
**Emily Hartman**, Board Member  
**Charles R. Mercer, Jr.**, Board Secretary  
**Ken Mertz**, Board Member

Administrative staff present:

**Mr. Patrick W. Mapes**, Superintendent  
**Mr. Chris Sampson**, Associate Superintendent of Operations  
**Mr. Bob Bohannon**, Assistant Superintendent of Career Preparation, 6-12  
**Mrs. Vickie Carpenter**, Assistant Superintendent of Foundational Learning, Pre K-5  
**Mr. Kent Hatcher**, Chief Financial Officer  
**Mr. Matthew Willey**, Chief Technology Officer

**CALL TO ORDER THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

Mr. Johnson called the regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda by Mrs. Hartman. It was seconded by Mr. Shively. The motion passed 7/0. Included with these minutes are copies of the following items:

- Minutes of the June 8, 2020 Public Hearing & Regular Board Meeting
- Financial Report for May 2020
- Allowance of Vouchers
- Personnel Report
- Approval of Acceptance of Donations

**Winchester Village**

- a. Southport High School student, Matthew Borho, is pursuing his rank of Eagle Scout for Boy Scouts of America and has chosen to partner with Winchester Village. He will raise funds and donate material to build a 9 Square frame. 9 Square is a game the students will be able to utilize during P.E. and recess.

- Approval of a Renewal Contract with CDW-G for Microsoft Licensing
- Approval of a Renewal Contract with IXL to Provide Unlimited Usage for Grades 2-6 Students in Math/ELA, and Grade 1 Students in Math Only
- Approval of a Renewal Contract with Securly for a Safety Cloud Internet Filtering
- Approval of a Renewal Contract with the Waterford Institute for Unlimited Access for our Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Students at Home and at School
- Approval of a Renewal Contract with Edmentum to Provide a Site License Access to Courseware/PLATO for all High School Credit Students.
- Approval of a Renewal Contract with Monica Gallien to provide the entire spectrum of audiology services for our students

### PUBLIC COMMENT

As this board meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19, public comments were open to 4:00 p.m. on Monday, July 13, 2020.

Listed below are the names of people who emailed the Board of Education by 4:00 p.m.

Lorrie Hizer  
 Marcus Guajardo  
 Rachel Sharp  
 Treena Scism  
 Michelle Brzycki  
 Michelle Moore  
 Stacey Miller  
 Michele Turney  
 Phill Powell  
 Edward Cook  
 Aimee Rose Formo  
 Ann Bilodeau  
 Katherine Albers  
 Brianne Osburn  
 Kristen Brzycki  
 Jacquie Sheehan  
 Dennis Lawton  
 Nathan Orme  
 Marcia Casey

Thank you for your questions and comments. We received so many, some quite lengthy that we are unable to read all of them individually during the meeting, but we have summarized and are addressing each concern:

1. Masks - why are Kindergarten through 5th graders exempt from wearing masks?
2. Extra-curricular. Students who are E-learning should be able to participate in athletics, clubs, etc.
3. Not comfortable with opening school; instruct via all e-learning
4. Your plan did not include a plan if a student or teacher tests positive, or what happens to other students exposed.

5. More details regarding seating on the bus and social distancing on the bus.
6. The plan was about 'opening' school; we want more specific information on how you will close if school is shut down. It was chaotic in the spring.
7. What is the district doing to ensure a more seamless transition in the fall?
8. What will e-learning look like? Will it be improved? Would child to be able to log into the classroom live and participate with class.
9. Teachers concerned they have not been included in the reopening process.
10. Improve communication – need more communication and need more detail

#### **ITEMS OF INFORMATION REQUIRING ACTION**

Mr. Sampson recommended approval of the professional services contract with Pete Hubert to serve as the Perry Township Employee Safety Manager. Mr. Mertz moved to approve, Mr. Mercer seconded. The motion carried 7/0.

Mr. Hatcher recommended approval to advertise the DOE annual financial report. Mr. Hernandez moved to approve, Mrs. Dale seconded. The motion carried 7/0.

Mr. Hatcher recommended approval of the 2020 budget timeline/calendar. Mr. Shively moved to approve, Mrs. Hartman seconded. The motion carried 7/0.

Mrs. Baker recommended approval of the 2020-2021 Support Staff Handbook. Mrs. Dale moved to approve, Mrs. Hartman seconded. The motion carried 7/0.

Mrs. Baker recommended approval of the 2020-2021 Administrator Handbook. Mrs. Dale moved to approve, Mr. Hernandez seconded. The motion carried 7/0.

Superintendent Mapes recommended approval of Resolution 20-013, Reaffirm Support of an Anti-Racist Culture and Commitment to Acceptance and Support for Teaching and Learning of all Families. Mrs. Dale moved to approve, Mr. Shively seconded. The motion carried 7/0.

Superintendent Mapes recommended approval of Resolution 20-014, Perry Township Schools' Reopening Health and Safety Plan. Mr. Shively moved to approve, Mrs. Hartman seconded. The motion carried 6/1.

#### **COMMENTS AND CONCERNS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT**

Mrs. Hartman thanked district leaders for their leadership during this pandemic. We are blessed in Perry Township to have people who love and care for children, and are here to serve. She thanked Superintendent Mapes for his leadership and for looking out for the safety and well being of township employees and students.

Mrs. Hartman said we all have come to our decisions in different ways. She has researched and read medical journals and discussed the virus with a physician at her work. At the end of the day, we have to trust the experts who are leading Marion County. They have made difficult decisions. I feel like we have to trust the experts who are leading Marion County and if their recommendation is to start school with protective measures in place, I have to trust their expertise. Parents, I would implore to you to begin educating your children about wearing a mask. This is something simple that we can start now. If your child has not put on a mask yet, begin getting your child used to wearing one. Parents, I would ask if you plan to drive your children to school, carpool with a neighbor or family member. It helps alleviate the numbers on buses for the families who do not have the capability of driving their child to school. Mrs. Hartman said she is very proud of our township. We are making a decision and we are moving forward.

She stated she understands the teachers' concern and worry from the emails she has received. We need to trust, take precautions, be smart and put one foot in front of the other. It was very refreshing, encouraging, and good for my well-being to vote to start school. I encourage those who are worried and scared, this can be a good thing. Mrs. Hartman thanked the building principals as she knows they continue to update their building plans. I appreciate everyone's hard work.

Mr. Mercer thanked Superintendent Mapes and administrators for their hard work. This is particularly hard and there will be those who will jump ship no matter what we do. I believe most of the emails I received, we addressed in the revised plan. In regard to parents' concern about extra-curricular activities, there are some things we have the power to change, and other things we do not have the power to change. Thank you.

Mr. Mertz thanked the public for their engagement on this matter. We are trying to control the uncontrollable. It is difficult. The administrative team has been thinking through all scenarios. This decision is not an easy one. We are trying to move forward in a safe way. We feel the best for our students is to be in the classroom with their teacher. Mr. Mertz thanked the administrative team for making changes to their plans based on the emails we received. I was of the same opinion those parents who selected the online education for their children wouldn't want to be in the building or participate in extra-curricular activities/sports, so the emails we received were beneficial. I appreciate the administration changing that. We will move forward and see what changes tomorrow. Mr. Mertz thanked Superintendent Mapes for always making time to answer my questions.

Mrs. Dale expressed gratitude for the anti-racism resolution and for bringing that forward. I think that is a very powerful, good first-step for our district. I'm looking forward to supporting it as we continue to engage our students, teachers, and our community in those conversations and movement.

Mrs. Dale appreciated the way everyone communicated with us about going back to school, with gratitude and respect. I voted in opposition tonight. It's not my faith in the plan, it's more so opening in person. I believe in starting school on July 29. My emotions come from I don't want my vote to be construed as disrespecting the effort, time and energy that administrators and so many others have put into this plan. The pandemic is a jigsaw puzzle with never-ending pieces because it is constantly changing. I want to express respect and gratitude to everyone who worked on that. I feel we are also between a rock and a hard place right now. I keep hearing everyone say we are going to be most likely doing e-learning at some point during this school year. Of course, the hope is that we are not. The reality is, that there is a very high chance. With that, I feel like our planning efforts should be put into e-learning and making it more effective and being prepared for that transition. There is so much we don't know about COVID and there is so much we don't know how to manage things here and I think that just for myself, it weighs heavily putting our educators and children at risk. It is not a decision I can make in confidence, but I respect and honor each of us voting as we feel is best. Again, I reiterate my gratitude to every person in Perry Township who is making this decision and every parent who has to make the decision on sending their child to school or not. Thank you again to everyone working to put these things in place.

Mr. Shively echoed the sentiment on the anti-racism resolution and glad we have it in place. He encouraged teachers, especially middle and high school teachers and administrators to be patient, understanding, and be an ear to listen because of what children have seen and experienced and gone through with COVID and racism. Students will have a lot they need to unpack. I especially encourage administrators to have this discussion with their staff. A lot of kids may not have had someone to talk to about what is going on.

Mr. Shively stated in response to the complaint about lack of communication and the restarting plan; as information came in, it changed just as fast as it came in. We avoided sending out too much information because it changed so frequently to avoid confusing/conflicting/out-of-date information. Mr. Shively encourage as much as it is feasible/possible, engaging the teachers. He encourages communication. He stated he has struggled with this decision himself and the people who expressed concern. Mr. Shively assured everyone the vote he cast was one of a parent sending three kids to school in a couple of weeks and as a teacher who will be in front of 130 students in a couple of weeks. He understands, he is nervous, too. Mr. Shively stated one thing he knows about teachers is, we're going to make the best of it for the kids. That is what we need to do.

Mr. Hernandez stated it is reassuring to have the reaffirmation of the anti-racism culture. I wanted to not only acknowledge it but to encourage further steps to continue to open voices and ears which leads me to I have respect for your vote.

Mr. Hernandez echoed the sentiment previously stated about the emails received from parents and teachers regarding the reopening plan; the tone and thoughtfulness was remarkable. It helps the situation in working together on this. Mr. Hernandez thanked Superintendent Mapes and administration for their time and work. Their work has been conscientious, diligent, and flexible in listening. There are many views and many factors that are involved here that are constantly changing and a challenging environment that we're in. There isn't a one size fits all. I have confidence in our administration and staff. They are going to do all they can to provide the safest environment for our students and staff.

Mr. Johnson stated with everything going on, COVID-19, and this vote tonight ... every moment of mine has been spent thinking about this. As teachers and administrators, we want structure. Some of the emails we received said our plan was too vague. But to be honest, it was structure. We read your emails and concerns. I spoke with people from the community and we as a board changed some things. Input from the community does play a role in decisions made by the board. We need to continue to do that. Mr. Johnson stated he was still borderline, and the deciding factor was receiving the data from the Marion County Public Health Department. As Mrs. Hartman said, "As you look at the different states in the country their numbers are rising, while Indiana is going down. It might be slight, but we haven't peaked. As we continue, if we make small steps and get in the habit of wearing masks, be diligent about using hand sanitizer and washing our hands properly, then all these things will help. We need to take precautions seriously and move forward. My vote was also to start school July 29.

Mr. Johnson stated about anti-racism, we approved the resolution. Now we have to follow-through. There will be people who say they shouldn't have to do this or they don't believe in it, but we still need to forge forward until it becomes a part of the culture in Perry Township. We are a diverse school district. When I came to Perry Township in 1984, the township was over 90% white. We went through the process of bussing kids, and the kids getting to know one another. We need to continue to move forward and follow through with it.

Superintendent Mapes stated for most of you sitting on the board this is probably one of the toughest decisions you have had to make. Even those with experience. This isn't easy. I don't have control over this. So, to give guidance is difficult as the guidance comes from the Marion County Public Health Department (MCPHD), the Mayor and the Governor. MCPHD will be that resource all year. We have a lot of great people working with kids and caring about kids. I can't iterate enough this is just the start to move us forward. This is all going to change at some time as we go through this. Our goal is to see our kids, get them started on their academic program, make certain we can support them no matter their location, whether their parents choose to send them to school or do remote learning. We want to meet them with an academic program that will allow them to continue to grow. I will never be able to say thank you enough to all of our administrators all year long and all of our employees all year long, from what we've done from March 12 until this is finally put to rest, which no one knows. Everybody is working hard. This is an easy thing to panic about and not look at the kids at all and make decisions. We have not done that. That keeps us on the path That is who we are and what we do. We are going to continue. We are going to advertise the annual financial report to meet that deadline, we are going to work on next year's budgeting process ... we are going to continue to do what we would normally do as much as we can, whenever we can. That may be by Zoom or in-person, but we must make sure we serve our students and that's our focus. We keep working each and every day and we thank the board for the support we get and the feedback you give us as well as our community. That helps to drive our decision making process. We will have a great start to the year like always and we will make certain we do our best and make certain we don't block ourselves into situations that cause problems because someone is two minutes late here or three minutes late there. That's not who we are going to be. We are going to do our best to serve our kids.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Johnson sounded the gavel to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

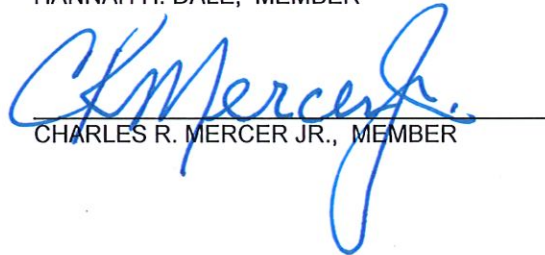
  
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STEVE JOHNSON, PRESIDENT

  
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JAMES H. HERNANDEZ, VICE PRESIDENT

  
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LEE T. SHIVELY, SECRETARY

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
HANNAH H. DALE, MEMBER

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
EMILY HARTMAN, MEMBER

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHARLES R. MERCER JR., MEMBER

Absent 8.10.2020  
KENNETH J. MERTZ, MEMBER