

**MIDDLETOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Academic Affairs Committee Meeting**  
**April 12, 2016 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**MINUTES**

**Members in attendance:** Mike Corradi, Newton Davis, David John and Linda Mehaffie

**Members not in attendance:** None

**Non-Voting Members in attendance:** Terry Gilman and Christopher Lupp

**Staff/Public in attendance:** John Brougher, Kevin Cook, Marie Drazenovich, David Franklin, Christine Mostoller, Chris Sattelle, Lori Suski, Jody Zorbaugh and Heidi Zula, District Administrators and Staff; Michelle Geppert, Jodi Neuschwander and Terri O’Neil, District Professional Staff; Jeff Litts, District Solicitor; Dr. William Vollmar, District School Physician; Dan Miller, Press and Journal; Tom Mehaffie, Todd Truntz and Jon Wilt, Lower Swatara Township Commissioners; Anne Shambaugh, Lower Swatara Township Manager; Dick Brandt, Lower Swatara Township Police Department; Robert Givler, Royaltown Police Department; Cheryl Dondero, Dauphin County Drug & Alcohol; Philip Moore, Pinnacle Health; Dan Miller, Press & Journal; Bruce Hamer and Julie Wilt, Interested Citizens

Executive Session            The committee met in Executive Session prior to the committee meeting at 6:20 p.m. to discuss a student expulsion matter.

Opportunity for  
Public Comment            No one addressed the committee at this time.

Student Matters            **Possible Action Item – Waiver of Expulsion Hearing Agreement:** Dr. Suski reviewed the administration’s recommendation to approve a Waiver of Expulsion Hearing Agreement for student 15-16-004. The committee recommended that the waiver agreement be moved to the Board agenda for approval.

Policies                      **Discussion Item / Possible Action Item – Naloxone Policy:** Mr. Litts explained that the General Assembly passed legislation in 2014, which authorized the administration of Naloxone to address specific drug overdose situations. Mr. Litts explained that several of their school district clients contacted his firm regarding the development of a policy for Naloxone after communication was disseminated by PDE. Mr. Litts explained that his firm developed a sample policy and the cost was split over several clients. Mr. Litts summarized the information contained within the policy. Mr. Litts responded to a question from the School Board about whether there would be any legal liability if the District chose not to adopt a policy despite the fact that discussion has been occurring in committee meetings. Mr. Litts said that there would be no liability exposure since school districts are not required to administer Naloxone. Mr. Litts responded to another question about what type of liability the District might face if the policy were adopted and Naloxone was administered and there were less than positive results. Mr. Litts said that he did not believe that there would be any significant opportunity for the District to be exposed to liability. Mr. Litts said that the District has immunity protection from the Political Subdivision Tort Claims Act. Mr. Litts said that the literature that he

has read indicates that there is very low risk associated with the administration of Naloxone. Mr. Litts responded to a question regarding the possible impact to licensure of any District employees that might administer Naloxone. Mr. Litts said that Certified School Nurses have two levels of licensure – one from PDE to hold the position of Certified School Nurse and the other being their nursing license. Mr. Litts said that a claim against the PDE certificate must show bad intent. Mr. Litts explained that in his role as a school solicitor he is more familiar with claims being made against a professional certificate (i.e. Certified School Nurse) than he is with claims against a professional license (i.e. nursing license). Mrs. Neuschwander asked if the police and the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) in the community carry Naloxone. Chief Brandt said that the Lower Swatara Township police do not carry Naloxone, but the EMTs do. Ms. Dondero said that only four of the 32 police forces in Dauphin County do not carry Naloxone. Mr. Moore said that there is a significant number of Naloxone doses administered each year at Pinnacle Health. Mr. Moore said that Naloxone is a very safe drug to administer. Mr. Moore said that it can be administered like an epi-pen or through the nose. Mr. Moore said that there is an advanced injector that will walk someone through the steps that need to occur to administer Naloxone. Mr. Moore said that the most significant impact that can result from administration is that when someone awakes they may be agitated. Mr. Moore said that use of Naloxone should be seen as similar to the use of an epi-pen. Mr. Mehaffie asked if there is an impact if Naloxone is administered when an overdose has not occurred. Mr. Moore said that there is no impact. Mr. Moore said that he would not give Naloxone to someone who is unresponsive or extremely sedate. Mr. Moore said that the District should consider that an overdose could occur on school grounds. Mrs. Neuschwander asked if there is any harm in waiting for EMTs to arrive when that usually happens within five minutes. Mr. Moore said that is difficult to answer because you may not know how long someone has been in that state. Mr. Moore said that anyone can pick up Naloxone at a pharmacy. Mr. Corradi asked if the proposed policy has a requirement on who can administer the drug. Mr. Corradi said that some schools do not have a certified school nurse and an overdose could occur after school hours. Mr. Litts said the policy would presume that someone has been trained in the administration of the drug before they would do so. Ms. Dondero said that there is a push for the use of Naloxone as a way to get people into treatment for drug abuse. Ms. Dondero said that you cannot get someone who has died from an overdose to treatment. Ms. Dondero said that it is true that there may never be an overdose situation in the schools, but the discussion about the drug is helpful to engage the entire community in the potential to save someone's life. Ms. Dondero said that statistics show that 1 in 4 families deal silently with someone having a drug problem. Ms. Dondero said that whether the District adopts a policy for Naloxone or not, Dauphin County Drug & Alcohol would like to work with the District and the community to promote awareness. Ms. Dondero noted that Governor Wolf announced that the state will be offering the nasal spray to schools. Dr. Suski asked Dr. Vollmar if he would help to write administrative procedures for the policy if the School Board decides to adopt it. Dr. Vollmar said that he would assist. Dr.

Vollmar noted that more deaths occur from drug overdoses at a higher age. Dr. Vollmar said that Naloxone should not be viewed as a “cure-all” drug as it does not treat cocaine, valium or PCP. Dr. Vollmar said that it is still more important for someone to know how to administer CPR than to administer Naloxone. Dr. Vollmar said that an assessment should be made when someone is unconscious before assuming that Naloxone is going to be the solution. Mr. John asked whether other employees (other than nurses) can administer Naloxone. Dr. Vollmar said that someone treating an unconscious person needs to know all of the potential reasons why that could occur. Dr. Vollmar said that without that knowledge Naloxone could be administered when not warranted and the real treatment not provided, which results in the person dying. Mr. Moore agreed with Dr. Vollmar. Dr. Vollmar said that certain things occur commonly and those items need to be checked first. Dr. Vollmar questioned whether all of the District’s staff was CPR certified. Dr. Suski said that not all staff is CPR certified, but that a large portion of the staff has been trained and certified. Mr. Lupp asked if there is a difference in effectiveness based upon how Naloxone is administered. Dr. Vollmar said that the injection method is stronger. Mr. Gilman asked if someone is knowledgeable of why someone is unconscious would that allow a jump in the protocol to the administration of the drug. Dr. Vollmar said that someone could be mistaken in stating that, so it would still be advisable to follow the protocol in order. Mr. Corradi said that he agrees that the first step taken should be calling 9-1-1 and administering CPR, but suggested that Naloxone should also be a “tool” in the “toolbox.” Dr. Vollmar agreed, but felt that it is still best for someone with medical training to be involved and said that Naloxone shouldn’t be the “tool” that you pull out for every situation whether that is the right “tool” or not. Dr. Vollmar said that the protocol should be an official school document that would allow anyone facing the situation to know what to do. Mr. Litts agreed with Dr. Vollmar and said that Naloxone is not the panacea. Mr. Litts applauded the District for their participation in random drug testing to help identify students that may need help. Mr. Litts said that the policy includes many of the suggestions made by Dr. Vollmar, but that it could be helpful to have the input of a medical professional instead of just a lawyer. Ms. Dondero said that Naloxone administration is going to become part of first aid training. Mrs. Geppert asked whether other staff will be required to be trained or if that will be voluntary. Dr. Suski likened the situation to dealing with a student with peanut allergies and said that staff is often asked to be trained if they would have proximity to the student. Dr. Suski said that she would not want to force anyone to be trained, but would welcome anyone that is interested. Mr. Moore asked what type of education is done for parents to help them screen for substance abuse. Dr. Suski said that the District has had trainings in the past that are open to parents and attendance has been poor. Dr. Suski said that the District is looking to add some training at the Middle School level using research-based programs. Dr. Vollmar said that it would be beneficial to train about saying “no” to gateway drugs (cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, etc.) that lead to further drug involvement. Mr. John thanked everyone for attending the meeting and participating in the dialogue. Mr. Mehaffie thanked the District for the invitation to attend and said that the Township wants to

work with the District in this area, especially where the School Resource Officer is involved. Mrs. Neuschwander suggested that if the policy is adopted it should be expanded because the current language only addresses secondary schools. Mr. Corradi said that he would like to see the policy move forward and have staff trained. Mr. John said that he appreciates the assistance from Dr. Vollmar for development of procedures. Dr. Suski asked whether the committee was interested in moving the policy forward for first reading or waiving first reading and adopting the policy. Mr. Franklin noted that there is a limited amount of time between the April School Board meeting and the May School Board meeting and if the District wanted a longer first reading period the policy could be adopted in June. Mr. Lupp said that adoption in June would work well, so that the implementation occurs for the next school year. The committee recommended that the policy be placed on the Board agenda for first reading.

**Possible Action Item – Adoption of Policy Revisions:** Dr. Suski stated that the policies attached to the agenda were made available for first reading during the month of March. The committee recommended that the policy revisions be moved to the Board agenda for approval.

**Information Item – Recommended Policy Revisions:** Dr. Suski reviewed proposed revisions to several policies that are related to special education. The committee agreed to move the policy revisions to the Board agenda for first reading with adoption to be scheduled for June.

## Programs

**Discussion Item – Middle School Transfer Ceremony:** Mr. Cook explained the history of the operetta and the eighth grade transfer ceremony. Mr. Cook explained that the program has been in effect for decades. Mr. Cook said that prior to 2012 participation was mandatory. Dr. Suski said that an early dismissal occurred for Middle School students only on the date of transfer until 2013. Dr. Suski noted that the decision to suspend the practice of an early dismissal to prepare for the transfer program was because it would not be a legitimate reason under PDE guidelines. Dr. Suski said that mandatory participation was stopped because High School graduation is not even mandatory. Mr. Cook said that participation has declined since 2012 for various reasons. Mr. Cook offered some comments regarding why the program has become problematic – spring sports conflicts, band conflicts, parent cost associated with the type of clothing worn, staff preparation time that could be focused elsewhere or result in less overtime. Mr. Cook proposed that the transfer program be phased out with no changes for 2016, and that in 2017 and 2018 the transfer program would occur with no operetta because a spring musical would be held instead. Mr. Cook said that a spring musical would result in greater participation since all students could be involved. Mr. Cook said that after 2018 there would be no more transfer program. Mr. Cook said that with this proposal incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders would not have a transfer program and the administration would like to share this with current 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents at the May orientation. Dr. Suski noted that this would typically be an administrative decision that would not usually require Board involvement, but

because of the long-standing history the administration wanted to allow the School Board to offer perspective. Mr. John said that it would seem that participation decline is a signal that perhaps the community is also offering input that change is warranted. Mrs. Mehaffie asked if there would be any recognition that would occur. Mr. Cook confirmed that the awards that are usually presented at transfer would be given at an end-of-year all school assembly. Dr. Suski said that the administration researched and determined that there are no other public schools that have a transfer program. The committee expressed no objections to the plan proposed by Mr. Cook.

#### Curriculum

**Information Item / Possible Action Item – Health and Physical Education**

**Curriculum:** Mrs. O’Neill reviewed the health and physical education curriculum revisions. Mrs. O’Neill explained the components of the physical education curriculum at the various grade levels. Mrs. O’Neill noted that adaptive physical education is implemented at the Middle School and High School. Mrs. O’Neill reviewed the components of the health curriculum at the Middle School. Mrs. O’Neill explained the addition of suicide prevention added to the curriculum at the eighth grade level. Mrs. O’Neill expounded upon the various elective physical education courses that are available at the High School. Mrs. O’Neill discussed the science and health electives that are available at the High School. Mrs. O’Neill said that the goal for graduating students is that they would feel comfortable going into a gym and participating in various exercise and recreation programs. Mrs. Mostoller said that the District is seeking to have the curriculum revisions moved forward to the Board agenda for approval. Mrs. O’Neill discussed the various curriculum materials that are being sought to go along with the revised curriculum. The total cost of the curriculum is slightly more than \$27,000. The committee recommended that the curriculum revisions be moved to the Board agenda for approval.

**Information Item – Proposed New Music Elective for 2017-2018:**

Mrs. Mostoller said that Mr. Fisher presented a proposal to add a new music elective for the High School titled “History of Rock and Roll.” Mrs. Mostoller said that the new elective could be added as part of the music curriculum revision that is already scheduled to occur next year. Mrs. Mostoller said that there is a desire to expand music electives especially in areas that are theoretical. The committee was supportive of the proposed new elective.

#### Communications

**Information Item – 2016 Winter Keystone Exam Results:**

Mrs. Mostoller explained the history of the Keystone Exams and the recent legislation that has delayed the use of the Keystone Exams as a graduation requirement. Mrs. Mostoller noted that despite the recent legislation the District still wants to see students proficient in Keystone Exam areas so the District is continuing with remediation efforts. Mrs. Mostoller presented results from the 2016 Winter Keystone Exams for retakes only. Mrs. Mostoller said that the District’s scores in Algebra, Biology and Language Arts show that the District’s students are performing above state average.

**Information Item / Discussion Item – Responsive Classroom:**

Dr. Suski said that Mr. Corradi had asked about the responsive classroom program and Mrs.

Mostoller gathered material to share with the elementary principals several months ago. Mrs. Mostoller provided an overview of the responsive classroom approach. Mrs. Mostoller said that the responsive classroom is not a curriculum, but a comprehensive approach of strategies implemented consistently by all individuals with whom a child would come into contact. Mrs. Mostoller explained the four domains of the program – engaging academics, effective management, positive community, and developmental awareness. Mrs. Mostoller said that she couldn't find many criticisms of the program, but there may be conflict with current classroom management practices. Mrs. Mostoller said that the program does not seem to conflict with any of the curriculum programs that we have put into place. Mrs. Mostoller said that the program may also provide assistance with some of the mental health concerns that exist in the District. Mrs. Mostoller reviewed the training cost and said that a one-day workshop overview would cost \$2,400 and that a four-day intensive training would cost \$19,950. Mrs. Mostoller said that the trainings allow for up to 30 participants. Mrs. Mostoller said that substitute costs would need to be added if the training occurs during the school year. Mrs. Mostoller said that West Perry School District is also interested in the program and perhaps cost sharing could occur for the trainings. Mrs. Mostoller said that she contacted PaTTAN and they are offering some training related to the program, but it is not purely responsive classroom. Mrs. Mostoller also said that she spoke with someone at Southside Elementary School in Central Dauphin SD that is using portions of the program and received some positive feedback. Mrs. Mehaffie said that she thinks that the program should be implemented as soon as possible. Mrs. Mehaffie said that she doesn't necessarily think that it is necessary to spend \$30,000 for the program to be implemented. Dr. Suski said that in her professional experience programs fail when those responsible to implement them are not thoroughly trained and the program is not implemented with fidelity. Dr. Suski said that the administration has the pulse of the staff and understands the limitations of what can be added to their plates when they have already been overwhelmed with various changes mandated by the state. Dr. Suski noted that forced programs often fail when there is not appropriate buy-in from principals and teachers. Mrs. Mostoller proposed that a small group of individuals be trained next year to allow time to plan for full implementation in the 2017-2018 school year. Mrs. Mostoller said that she would like to see this program implemented in a way that will work in Middletown. Mrs. Mostoller said that an update can be provided at the regular committee meetings about the progress made throughout the process. Mr. Corradi said that he has heard that there may be grants that would help for the implementation. Dr. Suski said that the administration will investigate what grant opportunities may be available to subsidize this program.

## Resignations

**Information Item – Art Department Chair:** Mrs. Mostoller reviewed the resignation of Jared States as the Art Department Chair. Since Mr. States is resigning at the end of the school year, it is not necessary for the School Board to approve the resignation.

## Agreements

**Possible Action Item – Caring Place Agreement:** Ms. Drazenovich reviewed an agreement with The Caring Place to provide grief support training to the guidance counselors. Dr. Suski said that there is no cost. The committee recommended that the agreement be moved to the Board agenda for approval.

**Possible Action Item – FitnessGram:** Mr. Franklin reviewed an agreement with The Cooper Institute for the continued use of FitnessGram software for the health and physical education teachers at an annual budgeted cost of \$495. The committee recommended that the agreement be moved to the Board agenda for approval.

**Possible Action Item – Shop Equipment:** Mr. Franklin reviewed an agreement with Shop Specialties, Inc. to provide shop machinery maintenance at the High School and Middle School for a combined annual budgeted cost of \$3,300. The committee recommended that the agreement be moved to the Board agenda for approval.

## Grants

**Information Item / Possible Action Item – Title I Reward Grants for Fink Elementary School:** Ms. Drazenovich reviewed the criteria that designated Fink Elementary School as achieving High Progress status, enabling the school to be eligible to apply for two separate grants for up to \$50,000 each. Dr. Suski reviewed the requirement to partner with a local Focus school for collaborative efforts. The committee recommended that a motion be placed on the Board agenda to apply for the grants.

**Information Item / Possible Action Item – Title IIB Math & Science Partnership Grant:** Dr. Suski reviewed the cost of \$1,500 to retain Leann Tepsich-Cox to include MASD in the Title IIB grant application being written for Steelton-Highspire School District and Susquehanna Township School District. Dr. Suski explained how the grant provides professional development opportunities for teachers of math and science in grades 3-12. The committee recommended that a motion be placed on the Board agenda to approve the retainer payment.

## Field Trips

**Possible Action Item – High School Architectural Design:** Dr. Suski reviewed the annual Architectural Design Course field trip for twelve students and two teachers to Fallingwater in Mill Run, PA. The committee recommended that the field trip be moved to the Board agenda for approval.

## Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.