

Union Area School District
New Castle, Pennsylvania
Public Board Meeting Minutes
Union Area Board of School Directors
November 2, 2020

The Union Area Board of School Directors met in public session on November 2, 2020 in the Middle/High School Auditorium for a Special Board Meeting at 7:00 PM. The following persons were in attendance:

Board Members:

Dr. Michael Hink
Mr. Donald Friend
Ms. Debra Allebach
Mr. John Bertolino
Mr. Arin Biondi
Ms. Roxanne Exposito
Mr. Robert Mrozek
Mr. John Pacella
Ms. Elizabeth A. Sylvester

Administrators:

Dr. Michael Ross, Superintendent
Dr. Scott, O'Donnell, Curriculum Director
Ms. Linda O'Neill, Elementary Principal
Mr. Rob Nogay, MS/HS Principal

Ms. Samantha Lavery, Business Mgr. /Board Sec.

Media: N/A

Solicitor: Lou Perrotta, Esq.

Public: See Attached Sign-In Sheet.

Board Members Not Present: 0

Call to Order

Dr. Hink called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Hink requested those in attendance to join in the salute to the flag at 7:05 P.M.

Roll Call (7:06 PM)

Dr. Hink called for roll call at 7:06 PM. All Board Members were present.

Executive Session Announcement

Dr. Hink announced that the Union Area School Board met in executive session at 6:00 PM to discuss security and student safety and legal contract language. Executive Session ended at 7:00 PM.

Informational Items (7:07 PM)

A. COVID -19 & Health & Safety Plan

Dr. Ross updated the Board on the newest guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Dr. Ross explained the Department of Health has recommended that all Lawrence County School District's move to virtual learning due to the positivity rates in the County being at an increased risk. Dr. Ross further explained this is the decision of the Board and his recommendation is to shut down the school and comply with the Department of Health even though his personal opinion may not agree since Union's numbers are not high.

Public Comment on Agenda Items (7:17 PM)

Mr. Mike Gunn – Questions the plan, the possibility of extending the school year into the summer, grading, and homework assignments.

Dr. Ross explained those concerns to Mr. Gunn and how it will mimic the start of school in the fall.

Ms. Dana Cucitrone asks the Board to keep kids in class and compliments how teachers are doing a great job. Ms. Cucitrone questioned if the school were to shut down how long it would be and what would happen to athletics?

Dr. Ross explained the recommendation on closing and when to reopen the building as well as the health and safety plan in athletics.

Chaz Macri – Blames the State for pushing a decision like this on the community.

New Business (7:30 PM)

Dr. Hink calls for new business at 7:30 PM.

Pacella moved to add to the agenda to follow the Department of Health's recommendation and to stop in-person learning. Allebach seconded.

Dr. Hink called for discussion. There was none.

Dr. Hink called for a vote to place the motion onto the agenda (3 yes, 6 No – Hink, Friend, Bertolino, Biondi, Exposito, Mrozek). The motion did not carry.

Biondi moved to add to the agenda to adjust the Health & Safety Plan by 1 student/staff case while the County remains in substantial spread and increased risk. Pacella seconded.

Dr. Hink called for discussion. There was none.

Dr. Hink called for a vote to place the motion onto the agenda (9 yes). The motion to add to agenda carried.

Public Comment (7:48 PM) - None.

Biondi moved to adjust the Health & Safety Plan by 1 student/staff case while the County remains in substantial spread and increased risk. Sylvester seconded (9 yes). The motion carried.

Adjourn (7:51 PM)

Allebach moved to adjourn the regular scheduled meeting at 7:51PM. Pacella seconded (9 yes). The motion carried.

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