



December 2020 Board Brief

STEEL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Memorial Book

The School Board acknowledged the passing of **Donald F. McCallister**, father of Shawn and Beth McCallister, Director of Athletics and Activities and Academic Math Coach and Math Department Chair, and father of Edward McCallister, former School Board Member 2001-2009; **Francis Vecchiola**, grandfather of Shannon Hartnett, varsity assistant swimming coach; **Juliette M. Rice**, aunt of Chad Kanz, middle school teacher; **Dolores J. McDermott**, retired food service worker; **Mary E. Hammon**, aunt of Debra Wright, middle school teacher; **Benjamin S. DiMaggio**, uncle of Mike Takos, Barrett paraprofessional; **Joanie M. Tezbir**, Steel Valley Graduate, Class of 2003, and daughter of Joan Tezbir, retired food service worker; **John M. "Jack" Merisko, Jr.**, father-in-law of Kevin Tomasic; Park School teacher; **Mark A. Schmidt**, retired high school Spanish teacher; **Dorothy Ann Hrabosky**, mother of Debra Wright, middle school teacher; **Alfred Cadena**, uncle of Gwen Berchok, high school math teacher; **Mark D. Bodnar**, cousin of Chad Kanz, middle school teacher; and **Donald F. Bodnar**, cousin of Chad Kanz, middle school teacher. It was moved by **Mrs. Yuhas** and seconded by **Mrs. Fitzgerald** to place appropriate books into the school libraries in their memory.

Board President's Report

Mr. Bulger reported that due to the rising number of COVID cases and the restrictions by the Governor, the School Board is meeting virtually again. Teachers are doing an amazing job, and he is impressed on what he is hearing from the community. Food service workers are doing a fantastic job providing meals for our students. We believe children learn better when they are well nourished. The food service department will be providing meals over the winter break, and Mr. Bulger encouraged families to take advantage of the free meals.

The leadership team is meeting on a regular basis and keeping the community informed. Students are reaching out to their fellow students through virtual activities. The **High School Choir** is performing a virtual concert, and the **Middle School Student Government** is holding a game night for middle school families. Mr. Bulger thanked everyone for what they are doing to serve our students and their families. Hopefully, there is light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccine.

The **Girls' Soccer Team** did an amazing job this season making the WPIAL semi-finals, but they lost a heartbreaker in overtime. He can't wait to see what next year brings. The School Board is planning to recognize the sports teams and individual athletes at a meeting as soon as they can meet in person.

Student Representative's Report

Ben Novotny, Junior Student Representative to the School Board, reported that the 4th grade students on the **Principal Advisory Council** work hard to make Park Elementary a better place. The council is currently making improvements to the School Wide Positive Behavior and Intervention Support program and is in the process of developing a buddy system for new students.

Mrs. Alyson Fisher hosted "Cooking with the Counselor" for a Title 1 Virtual Family Night with Barrett families. The students and parents cooked along with Mrs. Fisher through a Zoom session making spaghetti bake and Rice Krispy treats. Another program will be planned soon as the parents and students really enjoyed themselves.

The **Ronald McDonald Care Mobile** will be at the Steel Valley High School on December 30 from 10 AM – 2 PM. Services provided include well visits and infant care, sick visits, immunizations, physical exams and WIC form assistance.

On November 10, the students at Barrett School had the opportunity to work with **Jerry Craft**, New York Times bestselling and Newbery Medal Award winning author. He is the creator of *Mama's Boyz*, a comic strip that won the African American Literacy Award five times. The students enjoyed interacting with Mr. Craft. He strongly encouraged students to read and write on a daily basis, and he shared his story as a young author who really enjoyed the arts and writing.

On December 17, the **Barrett PTO** will be having a virtual winter holiday celebration, and December 22 a winter parade will be held with the staff and Santa.

Ben reported that the Middle School Student Government collected over 2,500 pairs of socks during its drive in October. The socks will be donated to the Light of Life Rescue Mission and the Smithfield Center, a men's and women's shelter that works with Pittsburgh's Mercy Operation Safety Net.

On December 15, the Middle School Student Government will be hosting a virtual game night for students and their families. **Ms. Czerwinski's** middle school art students shared a video of their projects. The students did a great job with their art pieces. Student birthday recognitions have continued through December.

The middle school is focusing on increasing student engagement during remote learning to foster leadership and social and emotional well being.

The high school parent/teacher conferences took place on November 12, and teachers reported that the parent sign-in process was easily managed. Report cards were mailed to families on November 10. Evening office hours are available for students to take advantage of additional help from their teachers.

The high school **SADD Club** received awards for Chapter of the Year, Activity of the Year, and **Mrs. McCallister** was named Sponsor of the Year for 2020. The high school **Concert Choir** and **Ms. Kampe** created a video as a tribute to veterans, which is currently on the Steel Valley website.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Wehrer recognized High School Senior Isabella Sabo who was accepted into the 2021 "I Look Like a Cardiologist Program" operated by UPMC's Heart and Vascular Institute. Admission was competitive with over 120 applications for 50 spots. She will attend four virtual sessions and four meetings with a physician mentor. Congratulations to Miss Sabo and we wish her good luck in possibly finding her career.

Student athletes had a really productive fall season highlighted by the Girls Soccer team winning the section championship. The girls soccer playoffs were exciting, but losing in the semi-finals was a heartbreaker. Their teamwork and leadership was outstanding. The majority of the team is underclassmen, and Mr. Wehrer is excited for next season.

Mr. Wehrer recognized Kelsey Salopek from the Girls Soccer team as the leading scorer in the WPIAL and also named to the All-State team. These are a pair of phenomenal achievements. Congratulations to Kelsey. The School Board will recognize the fall sports teams plus the All Section, All WPIAL and All State athletes at an in-person Board meeting.

He announced that classes will remain remote through January 22, 2021, as is being done currently. It is disappointing because we know that students learn best in front of their peers and highly skilled teachers. Our staff is doing an excellent job of synchronous learning. If your child is struggling please take advantage of the after school tutoring.

Letters to Steel Valley families and staff members talked about the stresses that families are going through. Everyone is dealing with some level of stress. We deserve respect and understanding from others, and Mr. Wehrer encouraged everyone to have patience with one another.

In recent weeks, local and public officials have reported that cases of COVID continue to rise. The school district will continue to follow its remote learning model through January 22, 2021, which is the last day of the 2nd nine-week grading period. Extracurricular activities, including athletic practices and contests, are postponed and hopefully will be rescheduled.

The Food Service Department will be preparing seven days of breakfast and lunch for students over the holiday break. The care package includes 1/2 gallon of milk, 1/2 gallon of juice, fruits, vegetables, seven breakfasts and seven lunches. You must submit a request no later than December 17 through your child's school account. Pick up will be December 22 from 5-7 PM and December 23 from 10 AM – Noon at the High School, Park and Barrett Schools.

In addition to providing the holiday care package, the cafeteria staff is distributing Grab 'n Go meals Monday through Friday at mid-day in the High School, Barrett School and Park School, and also on Tuesday and Thursday from 5 to 7 PM at the High School. Meals can be picked up at the school closest to you. The food service department will be distributing meals for the weekend on Thursday and Friday.

On December 18 and 19, Steel Valley Graduate Joseph McCain is inviting the community to pick up a Food Basket of Love at the 8th Annual Giveaway being held at Barrett School's Amity Street Entrance. On Friday, December 18, the public can pick up food from 9 AM – 7 PM, and on Saturday, December 19, food will be distributed from 10 AM – 5 PM.

The baskets will include items needed to make a family meal with the exception of perishable meat. Everyone is welcome. Please bring an empty box to fill with the food items. Many thanks to Joe McCain who has been a blessing in the Steel Valley Community through his annual food distributions.

Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services' Report

Mrs. Borges reported that progress reports would be available on December 22. The last day of classes will be December 23 before winter break, and remote classes will resume on January 4 and continue through January 22, which is the end of the first semester.

Director of Academics, Information & Technology's Report

Mr. Colebank stated that the secondary administration is preparing the 2021-2022 Academic Handbook and will present a proposal to the School Board. Secondary students will choose their classes online this year. Transcripts will be available for elementary and secondary students.

Apple development team released information that there is an error in its IOS 14.2 version, which makes the battery sluggish in iPads. The district will release a video showing students how to perform an IOS update on their devices. The district notification system sends out 3,870 emails and texts, but we are missing 40% of parents who need to sign up on Sapphire. Mr. Colebank encouraged parents to provide their contact information to receive the district notifications.

Meeting Minutes

The Board approved the meeting minutes of:

- October 26, 2020 worksession
- October 29, 2020 regular meeting

Financial Management

The Board approved the following items:

- General Fund invoices for November 2020 in the amount of \$472,945.33
- General Fund hand checks for October 2020 in the amount of \$1,672,169.71
- General Fund hand checks for November 2020 in the amount of \$568,002.10
- General Fund Revenue Report for October 2020
- General Fund Expenditure Report for October 2020
- General Fund Balance Sheet for October 2020
- Food Service invoices for October 2020 in the amount of \$23,835.70
- Food Service Revenue Report for October 2020
- Food Service Expenditure Report for October 2020
- Food Service Balance Sheet for October 2020
- Payroll Funding Transfers for October 2020
- Adopted a resolution calling for charter school funding reform
- Re-affirmed Administration's decision to enter into an agreement with **AMCA Systems, LLC**, for the use of the ACA TaxTrack Software for the 2020 tax year
- Accelerated budget opt out Resolution certifying tax rate within inflation index
- Payments to:

BDA Engineering , Inc.	Invoice #191101-10	\$2,025.00
A-1 Electric, Inc.	Pay Application #5	\$12,746.63
Lugaila Mechanical, Inc.	Pay Application #8	\$6,522.11

The funds will be paid out of the 2019 Capital Project Fund for the HS/MS HVAC Project.

- Pay application, contingent upon the balancing of boilers, the completion of the punch list and the Superintendent's approval to pay application.

A-1 Electric, Inc.	Pay Application #6	\$13,000.00
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The funds will be paid out of the 2019 Capital Project Fund for the HS/MS HVAC Project.

- Special Sick Leave for PSERS credit purposes for the employees listed for emergency sick leave taken for the employee's own illness or quarantine under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

Operations

The Board approved the amended Health and Safety Plan as presented.

Co-Curricular Leadership

The Board approved the fundraising request as presented.

Educational Leadership

The Board approved the following items:

- Accepted a donation of \$1,650.00 from the **Allegheny Intermediate Unit** OnRamp Grant for Remote Learning to purchase 100 Magic School Bus Science Kits entitled, "Exploring Oceans" and "Mysteries of Rainbows"
- Accepted Barrett Elementary School's 1st Place Award of \$300 from **Positive Promotions** for its Black History Program: "Building Bridges and Breaking Barriers" held on February 20, 2020
- Authorized the advertising of the 2021 Board meeting dates as presented

Personnel

The School Board approved the following items:

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Steel Valley School District and the Steel Valley Act 93 Group for a retirement incentive dated December 10, 2020
- Accepted the verbal resignation of **Joseph Faiello** from the position of full-time custodian retroactive to December 4, 2020
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Steel Valley Education Support Personnel Association (PSEA/NEA) and the Board of School Directors