

KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MEETING MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING – January 25, 2022

Notice of Meeting

The New Jersey Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend the meetings of, public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Knowlton Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted with The Express-Times, The Star Ledger, and distributed to the Knowlton Township Elementary School, the Delaware Post Office, and the Knowlton Township Municipal Building. This meeting will commence at 7:00 P.M. The meeting will be held remotely. The public will be able to access the agenda, as well as electronically view and participate in the public portion of the meeting via a link posted on the District's website at www.knowltonschool.com or join by phone by dialing any of the following numbers: 301-715-8592, 312-626-6799, 929-205-6099, 253-215-8782, 346-248-7799, or 669-900-6833. Webinar ID: 866 1742 7010 Passcode: 960844. Any members of the public wishing to submit written comments prior to the start of the meeting by 12 noon on day of said meeting, must email such comment to the attention of the Board Secretary at brennanm@knowltonschool.com.

Call to Order

Mrs. Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Flag Salute

Mrs. Smith invited everyone to join her in the flag salute.

Roll Call

Present: Mr. Matthew Baley, Mrs. Dawn Bates, Mrs. Rhonda Moritz (7:17 pm), Mrs. Tammy Smith, Mrs. Alison Stiehl, & Mrs. Ronni Wittreich.

Absent: Mr. Don Biery.

Others: Mrs. Jeannine DeFalco, Superintendent, Mr. Michael Brennan, Business Administrator, Dana Carroll, Vice Principal, Students, Teachers, & Public.

Mission Statement

We are committed to provide an engaging, comprehensive education aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment in which all students are encouraged to be critical thinkers and self-advocates. Instilling a passion for learning will inspire and guide students to become responsible and compassionate citizens in a constantly changing world. Students have the opportunity to achieve their maximum academic potential both here and in their future education while developing confidence, competence, and character.

Correspondence

Mr. Brennan read a maternity leave request from Mrs. Katelyn Toth, PS Teacher.

Superintendent's Report and Certificates of Appreciation

Mrs. DeFalco gave the following report:

* It is School Board Recognition Month. Each board member will receive a certificate of appreciation in recognition of dedicated service to the children, staff and families of Knowlton Township Elementary School. If you are in the school for one reason or another, the front bulletin board is decorated to celebrate all of you. Thank you for all that you do to help us to navigate our way to success.

* Ms. Maxman and her Earlyact club will be moving forward with the seventh annual "Soup-er Bowl" to benefit local food pantries. Starting today through February 14th, Early Act will collect canned soup as well as other canned goods. Donations may be placed in any of the collection bins. The bins will be located in our Main office hallway, front vestibule and East Wing door for local families and students to drop off. Leadership and Friendship is the club's current focus for the month of collection.

* Our mid-year metrics for eSpark were shared with me (grades K-2) and the data is as follows:

- # activities completed: 7,416
- # standards mastered: 414
- Average pre-to-post quiz growth: 21%
- Average engagement rating: 83%

* Our Knowlton recipient for the PTA Reflections contest this year is Victoria Quick. The theme this year was "I will change the world by..." and she submitted a drawing which depicted composting.

* As the district McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison I am currently working on my Level 2 certification course. As the designated homeless liaison for our district, this is a required to receive comprehensive ESSA mandated training to perform my duties. The course is approximately 7 hours in length.

Vice Principal's Report

Mrs. Carroll gave the following report:

* I attended a Law Seminar through WCPSA. John Comegno presented a 2-hour seminar updating attendees what the updated mandates and new guidelines mean for schools.

* As you will see tonight, the Health and Physical Education curriculum has been updated and rewritten in some areas to address the new standards. The Social Studies Curriculum will be on next month's agenda. There is one grade level left to complete.

* The Spelling Bee was held last Friday. We will congratulate our winner and runner-up shortly. I would like to thank Mrs. Reber for streaming this event live for parents of the spellers to watch and I would like to thank Mrs. Hill, for being the pronouncer, and Mrs. Thurgood, Mrs. Jones, and Ms. Lennox for judging the event.

* I attended a Warren County Coalition Meeting. The topic was on vaping and how the schools and the parents can work together to tackle this issue, as well as, coming up with discipline or a consequence that is meaning to help the student struggling.

* I also attended a LinkIt Webinar. LinkIt presented changes to their platform and introduced new ways to help analyze data and progress monitor students effectively.

Board Secretary's Report

Mr. Brennan gave the following report:

* Pension: Submitted 2021 Q4 (Oct-Dec) IROC Payments/Reports for TPAF & PERS.

* MYBR meeting with the Superintendent & SBA of Warren County.

* FY 2021 W2 Statements have been distributed to all employees and I have provided all the 1099 information to R&L to process tax form for our vendors.

* Following the approval at our BOE meeting, our annual notice of meetings schedule for 2022 has been advertised in both the Express Times & Star Ledger.

Facilities:

None.

Board President's Report

Mrs. Smith gave the following report:

* Good evening in my report I am providing updated news about recent developments at NJSBA and information provided by the Legislative Committee.

* First, NJSBA Executive Director Larry Feinsod has announced his plans to retire, effective July 1st. In the coming weeks, NJSBA President Irene LeFebvre will form an Executive Director Search Committee, which will conduct a search and recommend a new executive director to the NJSBA Board of Directors. NJSBA will keep the statewide membership updated on the progress of the search committee.

* On Tuesday, Jan. 18th, the day he also took the oath of office for a second term, Gov. Phil Murphy took final action on close to 150 bills that were sent to his desk in the final days of the 2020-2021 legislative session.

One's that can affect our district are:

School District Regionalization S-3488/A-5537 – The program is voluntary and provides a grant program for conducting regionalization feasibility studies as well as other financial incentives for districts to explore regionalization.

Hiring Retired Teachers S-3685/A-5576 permits a retired teacher to return to employment for up to two years without reenrollment in the pension system. The bill also applies to any retired professional staff member who provides special services, such as speech language specialists or therapists.

Wellness Grant Program A-4434/S-2716 directs the state commissioner of education, in consultation with the Department of Children and Families, to establish a student wellness grant program. The purpose of the program will be to provide grants that support school districts in implementing school-based programs and practices that promote mental wellness, social and emotional learning and student resilience.

Security Grant (2020:A-6258 /S-4309) that appropriates \$5,150,531 from the “Securing Our Children’s Future Bond Act” to provide grants for school security projects in New Jersey school districts. The funding will be allocated to the installation of silent panic alarms to alert law enforcement during an emergency as required by Alyssa’s Law, as well as other school security upgrades.

*** School Board Recognition Month – January 2022**

Gov. Phil Murphy has proclaimed January 2022 as School Board Recognition Month in New Jersey, citing the meaningful contributions that boards of education make to public education and to the quality of life in New Jersey.

To celebrate "school board superheroes," NJSBA offers resources on its School Board Recognition Month webpage at www.njsba.org/sbremonth, including graphics, sample resolutions, sample news releases and more. Also, NJSBA would love to hear how our district celebrates School Board Recognition Month. The School Board Recognition Month webpage has a link to email them our ideas.

* Lastly, since reorganizations have been completed, NJSBA requests all districts to review and update the school district's annual NJSBA Membership Census as soon as possible. This is handled by our BA. Board members please use the NJSBA website to register for programs, county meetings, as well as take your mandated training, earn Board Member Academy credits, and later in the year, complete the CSA evaluation.

Committee Reports

Mrs. DeFalco provided the following Community Outreach report:

* The Warren County PTA board has decided to postpone this year’s Founder's Day to March 2, 2022 due to the rising Covid numbers. Jeannine has responded to Samantha Quick of the PTA that she will be able to attend the rescheduled date.

* The school is working with our PTA to arrange an outdoor performance/assembly by the NW school band for Knowlton students. Samantha Quick (PTA treasurer) has been in communication with NW. The band director has indicated that their rosters for marching band will not be completed until mid-March. We will revisit once they are ready and look to schedule in early June. The hope is the performance will include the marching band as well as the color guard.

* Currently the following community groups are using our facility:
KAA basketball – Prevention Plan in place and being followed
Girl Scouts will reconvene in building – aware of school procedures

* Jeannine was provided an update on the property next door that they have been fined \$2,500 for the piles of dirt that were transferred from property across the street.

Mr. Brennan provided the following Facilities report:

*Minibus: Had our minibus serviced with oil change and fluids changed.

*Lighting: Replaced light panel in hallway by nurse's office.

* Snowplow: Placed snowplow on tractor, so we are ready for snow clearing for the winter. Many thanks to Scott Gray and our good friends at Gray Trucking for completing a welding repair on our tractor at no cost to the district. Thank you to Gary & Scott Gray for their long standing support of Knowlton & the Knowlton School!

* Gym Floor & Room#7: Buffed and restored the gym floor & the tile floor in Ms. Maxman's classroom.

* HVAC Maintenance: Inspected and replaced belts on rooftop HVAC units.

Mrs. Carroll provided the following Instructional report:

* No report provided.

Mr. Biery provided the following Finance report:

* No report provided.

Mrs. DeFalco provided the following Policy report:

* **1230** - School-Connected Organizations - only change was to a legal reference

* **1410** - Local Units - revised language

Law Enforcement section changed to Police Authorities and information in this section was streamlined due to MOA

DYFS section changed to DCP&P

Emergency Room/Squad section was extended to include other connected policies

* **5145.12** - Search and Seizure -- this was a policy we did not have on the books. This is a mandated and monitored policy and while the first paragraph is not applicable as we do not have lockers, the rest is applicable. The policy aligns with our Memorandum of Agreement with law enforcement entities and outlines specific processes for conducting a search/seizure.

Presentations – Mrs. Dana Carroll, Spelling Bee Winner, Knowlton Knights, and Staff Spotlight

Spelling Bee Winner, Mrs. Carroll

Mrs. Carroll presented spelling bee awards (virtual) to Krisha Patel (Spelling Bee Winner) and Raymandeep Kaur (Runner Up). Congratulations to Krisha & Raymandeep. Great job!

Knowlton Knight Awards, Mrs. Carroll

Mrs. Carroll presented a citizenship award (virtual) to Giada Brando and Cyrus Wittreich. Congratulations to Cyrus & Giada. Great job!

Staff Spotlight, Mrs. Carroll

Mrs. Carroll presented a certificate (virtual) to our staff spotlight recipient, Mrs. Krista Tate. Congratulations to Mrs. Tate!

Public Participation

Public participation shall be governed by BOE Policy 1120.1 Public Participation in Board Meetings. Public comments are invited on all matters pertaining to the school district. All participants shall be given three (3) minutes to speak and shall state their name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate. The Board uses the public comment period as an opportunity to listen to citizen concerns, but please be aware that not all issues brought to a board meeting will be resolved this evening; rather, the Board will, in appropriate cases, delegate the authority to investigate the matter to the Superintendent or his designee. Please let the record reflect that the BOE does not endorse your comments nor will the BOE be held liable for comments you make about a staff member, or other person, which the staff member, or other person, may consider defamatory and/or libelous, as that individual retains all rights to pursue any legal remedies against you.

MOTIONS

1. Approve Maternity Leave

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve a request for maternity leave, under the conditions of the KTEA contract and FMLA from Katelyn Toth beginning April 13, 2022 through November 21, 2022, as recommended by the Superintendent.

2. Lateral Adjustment

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mr. Baley and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve a lateral adjustment for Samantha Lestrangle from step MA to MA+15 with a prorated salary increase of \$1,250.00, as recommended by the Superintendent.

3. Approve Substitutes

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the following substitutes for the 2021-2022 school year, as recommended by the Superintendent, pending the completion of required paperwork: Brenadette Acuria, Matthew Haycock, Annie Pike, and Alexa Tironi.

4. New Hire

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously by roll call vote to hire Alison Occhifinto, in the role of personal aide with an anticipated March 1 start for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year, pending the completion of required paperwork.

5. Approve Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Curriculum

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mr. Baley and carried unanimously to approve updates to the Health and Physical Education Curriculum.

6. Approve Merit Goal

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously by roll call vote to recognize the designated qualitative Merit Goal #1 for the Superintendent, as stated in the county approval letter dated September 28, 2021 has been achieved and to authorize submission to the Executive County Superintendent for approval and authorization of payment.

7. Approve Policy 1410 – Local Units

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously to approve updates to Policy 1410, Local Units.

8. Approve Policy 1230- School Connected Organization

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mr. Baley and carried unanimously to approve updates to Policy 1230, School Connected Organization.

9. Approve Policy 5145.12 – Search and Seizure

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously to approve Policy 5145.12, Search and Seizure.

10. Approve Travel Expenditures

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mr. Baley and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the travel expenditures for the 2021-2022 school year as required by the Chapter 53 revisions to C.18A:11-12.

11. Approve Minutes – December 20, 2021

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously to approve the Regular Session Minutes of December 20, 2021.

AYES: 6

NOES: 0

ABST: 0

Motion carried.

12. Approve Minutes – January 3, 2022

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mr. Baley and carried unanimously to approve the Reorganization Session Minutes of January 3, 2022.

AYES: 6

NOES: 0

ABST: 0

Motion carried.

13. Approve Bills

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mr. Baley and carried unanimously by roll call vote to approve the bills for payment as follows from December 21, 2021 through January 25, 2022 General Fund bill list of \$309,635.37 and Cafeteria Bill \$6,694.52.

Monthly Certification

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c)3, I certify that no budgetary line item account has been overexpended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a) as of December 31, 2021 (Policy 6820).

Board Secretary

Date

14. Accept Report of the Secretary and Report of the Treasurer

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mrs. Bates and carried unanimously to accept the monthly A-148 Secretary's Report for the month ended December 31, 2021 and the A-149 Treasurer's of School Monies Report for the month ended December 31, 2021 in compliance with the NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(c). The Board of Education, after review of the Secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, certifies that no major account or fund has been overexpended in violation of NJAC 6A:23A-16.10(c).

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Upcoming Meetings

February 7, 2022: Board Committee Meetings, 7pm

February 22, 2022: Board Meetings, 7pm

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mrs. Smith seconded by Mr. Baley and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Brennan, MBA
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Approved: