

**EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING TO TAKE OFFICIAL ACTION ON THE
DISTRICT'S ATHLETICS HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN**

September 28, 2020 – 8:00 P.M.

VIA Zoom

Minutes

- I. **President** Richard Schlameuss called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
Board Secretary, Patricia Rosado called the roll.
- II. **Board Members present:** George Andrews, Rebecca Bear, Larry Dymond, Sharone Glasco, Debbie Kulick, Wayne Rohner, Richard Schlameuss and Lisa VanWhy. Dr. Damary Bonilla was absent.
- III. **School personnel present:** Brian Baddick, Brian Borosh, Charles Dailey, Chris Ludwig, Tom McIntyre, William Riker, Shirley Rodriguez, Denise Rogers, Patricia Rosado, Bill Vitulli and Valerie Wickberg. Christopher Brown, Solicitor.
- IV. **Community members present:** Gina Fish, Jen Fluck, Audry Garrett, Toni Ann Gilmore, Sabrina Herman, Maria Hopkins, Randall Litts, James Moreira, Susan Randall, Darryl Sabino, Ed Shanley, David Shook, Julia Sullivan, Ruben Torres and Linda Yeager.
- V. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

ACTION BY THE BOARD:

Motion was made by Lisa VanWhy to adopt this agenda for September 28, 2020, as submitted. Motion was seconded by Sharone Glasco and carried unanimously, 8-0.

VI. **SUSPENSION OF RULES**

ACTION BY THE BOARD:

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to suspend the rules of the day to permit discussion by the administration or members of the Board concerning review of the Athletics Health & Safety Plan, without the necessity of a motion and second being previously made. Motion was seconded by George Andrews and carried unanimously, 8-0.

VII. BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS

Mr. Schlameuss said he would like to make everyone aware that whatever decision is made tonight, it would include the directive that everyone will need to wear a mask and participate by social distancing, unless they came as a group. Administration will be enforcing this directive at the games. Mrs. Bear said she would like to add that all individuals should remain in their seat and not at the sidelines socializing.

Dr. Riker said he believes the purpose of this evening's meeting is to ultimately decide if the Board will follow the directive from the Governor, which is 250 individuals for outdoor events and 25 for indoor events. Although the conversation hinders predominately on the football games, we also have to discuss volleyball, which is held indoors. He said he would like the Board to keep in mind that anything they decide should apply for outdoor and indoor facilities. Mrs. VanWhy asked if any other sport, besides volleyball is indoors. Dr. Riker said the only fall sport that is indoors is volleyball. Mr. Andrews asked if we also need to discuss junior varsity and intermediate sports. Mr. Schlameuss said the sports he mentioned have already been taken care of. Mr. Andrews said they have not been done. Dr. Riker said, last Monday, the current Athletics Health and Safety Plan that was approved included a certain number of tickets that would be distributed to each player on the team based on the sport and the number of participants in the sport to allow for the 250 limit. Mr. Andrews said we are also discussing tonight voiding that decision and going to 50% capacity. Mr. Schlameuss said we are not discussing that tonight. Mr. Andrews said he thought this was part of tonight's decision. Mr. Schlameuss said the motion does not indicate 50%. Mr. Andrews said he does not agree that 50% capacity is not part of tonight's discussion. Mr. Schlameuss said Mr. Andrews needs to read the document that was provided to the Board members indicating how many tickets are being distributed per sport. The Board members also received the motion of what will be discussed tonight. He said, we as a Board, can change the motion to indicate 50%. Mr. Andrews said he thought 50% was part of the Athletics Health & Safety Plan. Mr. Schlameuss said at the last meeting we said if the legislators overturn the Governor's veto, then we go to 50% capacity but the veto was not overturned. Therefore, we are in a limbo state and we are not legally allowed to go over the 250 capacity, as per the Governor. There is no penalty if we go over the 250 capacity. Mr. Chris Brown, Solicitor, said technically, we are required to stay under the limitation but many districts are not staying within the limit of 250. The penalty seems limited and remote. Mr. Schlameuss said the Governor vetoed the Bill and the legislators did not overturn it. The Board does not know where to go from here but the motion is a starting point. Mr. Dymond asked if some student catches the virus at a game, can it be traced back to us and would we be compliant. Mr. Brown said it is very hard to say. His instinct is that it would not be a liability to the district but he cannot say it with certainty. Mr. Dymond said we could be litigated or the State can cut our funding. Mr. Brown said there is no regulation or statute that would indicate that they can do that. The only concern would be a liability issue. If the district creates a hazardous situation, then it would be more true but it does not sound like the Board is looking to do that. Mrs. VanWhy said they would have to prove that they caught the virus at the game. Mrs. VanWhy said in looking over the document that came from Schlameuss the occupancy at the stadium would be about 27.5%. This is keeping under 50% at North and South. She asked if she is correct. Mr. Andrews said if we set the attendees at 50%, it should be for both schools. This is not being discriminatory. It is using the numbers at each stadium to get as many people as we can to attend. Mr. Schlameuss said we are not here to discuss this issue. Mrs. Bear said she went to the North Soccer game, and the stands were empty even with the tickets that they received. She asked if the Board is considering allowing visitors to attend if they sign up for the games. Dr. Riker said the decision that was made by the Board last week is that they would provide 2 tickets at tennis and 5 tickets at cross country for visiting spectators. No visiting passes were allotted for the varsity football games. Also, visitors' passes were allotted for Freshman, JV and Intermediate level sports. Mr. Andrews asked how does a student get a ticket if they want to see a game. Mrs. Bear said if anyone

wants to attend, they can reach out to the athlete's family to see if they have any extra tickets they can use. Mr. Andrews said this would be a hard way to handle this situation. He said Board members and teachers should be able to attend. Mr. Schlameuss said that the Governor's first statement was that there would be no athletics in the fall. The Governor then set a limit of 250 outdoors and 25 indoors. He said he is very uncomfortable with allowing a number that goes way over the 250 limit. It will be very challenging to get parents in the game for Volleyball games. We cannot worry about allowing teachers, staff and the Board because the focus should be on allowing parents into the games. Mr. Andrews said he does not think they should stay at 250 and 25 but follow their own numbers like other districts are doing. He said according to Chris Brown, it's not a liability issue. Mrs. Kulick said some schools in the other districts followed this though and they have had to terminate or close due down due to issues they encountered. Mr. Schlameuss said he would like to hear from everyone's opinion and then hear from the community. Mr. Rohner said he is looking at the document that states in varsity football, we do not allow for spectators, Stroudsburg allows 2 per athlete, Pleasant Valley allows 2 and Pocono Mountain also allows 2. Why are we not doing the same? Mr. Schlameuss said that is the suggestion that we have on the agenda tonight. Mrs. Bear said she agrees with 2 tickets per player but she is not okay with people not wearing masks on the sidelines, nor the cheerleaders not wearing masks and with people who get out of their seats. Everyone, staff, students and anyone else, need to stay in their seat with their mask on. Mr. Dymond said that he received a text from someone indicating that the contract speaks about all staff being able to attend with a guest for free. Mr. Schlameuss said, we as Board members would like to attend but no one can attend this year. Anyone who wants to see a game can purchase the program. Mr. Rohner said he heard there is an issue with that program. Mr. Rohner asked how are the intermediate sports being handled. Mr. Schlameuss said the Board voted on that last Monday and tickets were assigned. Mr. Rohner asked if parents are able to attend. Mr. Schlameuss said they absolutely are. Mr. Andrews asked why do they need to give 7 tickets. Why don't they hold some for other people that would like to attend? Mr. Schlameuss said the reason for this meeting tonight is to talk about sports that did not receive spectator tickets. Other sports that were assigned tickets, were discussed last week. Dr. Riker said he would like to read from the Department of Health FAQ regarding face coverings. It reads: Coaches, Athletes and Spectators must wear facing coverings unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet. Athletes are not required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in workouts and competition that prevents the wear of face coverings but must wear it in the dugout, sidelines, etc. or at any time where 6 feet of social distancing is not possible. The guidelines from the Department of Health is not indicating that spectators are wearing face masks at all times at the event. You can choose to enforce your rule but I read you the guidance from the Department of Health. Mrs. VanWhy said she was thinking the same thing because the football players should not have to wear it while playing in the games and the cheerleaders while cheering. Mrs. Bear said she was speaking about when they are not actively engaged.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Limited to comments on this agenda by residents and taxpayers of the school district (3 min. ea.)

- A. Ms. Valerie Wickberg said her daughter plays volleyball. She hopes that they would raise the limits to at least allow one parent to attend the games. The school has two sets of bleachers to help them sit apart. She cannot see the away games so she would like to see the home games.
- B. Ms. Audry Garrett thanked the Board for listening and taking into consideration what everyone is saying. She realizes that the Board's job is not easy. She is speaking tonight about the Volleyball varsity games. She understands, she cannot be at the games but the entire team should be allowed, which includes the Junior Varsity team. They will be able to social distance

if they attend. It will benefit the team because they learn from each other. She said she does not envy the Board for having to make these decisions.

- C. Ms. Maria Hopkins said she would like clarification on the wording of the motion where it says: “every student participant of any Fall Semester athletic competition”. She would like to make sure that this motion includes football players, cheerleaders and band students.
- D. Ms. Toni Ann Gilmore said she is currently watching the soccer game on video. Her son plays soccer and football and is close to breaking a record. She would love to be there in person to see it. The video does not follow the ball so you cannot see everything. Thank you for making these tough decisions and please allow two tickets per family.
- E. Miss Sabrina Herman said she is a sibling of a senior soccer player. It is not fair to not let visiting parents to the games. Between them, they have 14 passes and they only need 3 max. At the last soccer game, the maximum amount of people that attended was 30. She has never seen more than 50 attendees. Looking at the game by video is awful and why do they have to pay \$10 for it. We never had to pay to see a soccer game. The cameras are awful. You cannot see the away games. Pleasant Valley is allowing 2 spectators. Why can’t ESASD do the same. It is very sad that the North and South players’ families cannot attend each other’s games. She asked the Board to reconsider their position on these issues.
- F. Mrs. Darryl Sabino said people are forgetting that we are in a pandemic and they want to fill our stands. She said they need to understand that having 2 tickets per band, football players, and cheerleaders should be the maximum amount. We cannot let everyone because we are still in a pandemic. She said she appreciates that the Board got together tonight for another meeting to try to discuss and make this tough decision. She said it is not necessary to let other team’s spectators or any other people come and watch the games. People should not forget that we are in a pandemic.
- G. Ms. Linda Yeager thanked the Board for having the special meeting for the South parents. She said her son is a senior and plays varsity football. She said her son has played with most of the current senior players for 10years. She represents these students and they are not asking to fill the stadium or place anyone at risk. The coaching staff have been doing a phenomenal job in following the procedures. They are asking for 2 tickets for each football player, cheerleader, and band members. They would like for especially the seniors to get the tickets since this is their last year and the last time that she will be able to see them play. They plan to attend in a safe manner by wearing masks and stay seated in the bleachers. She said she appreciates the Board for taking this time to consider the 2 two tickets for the parents. Hats off to Pleasant Valley for allowing visiting spectators because that is the only way she is going to see the team play. It would be embarrassing to see the visiting bleachers empty since there is room for social distancing.

IX. ATHLETICS HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

Mrs. Glasco said she has concerns regarding visitors from other school districts but is open to three tickets per player. There is ample space to spread out and people will comply. It would allow for parents and siblings to support players, band members and cheerleaders

Mrs. VanWhy said she agrees with distributing three tickets to home visitors.

Mr. Andrews said giving extra tickets will put us over the 250 limit. Mr. Schlameuss said he is aware and it is the reason why the Board is meeting tonight. Mr. Andrews suggest giving 7 tickets instead of 3 to fill half of the stadium.

Mrs. Glasco said she was thinking to go over a little and not be too much over the amount that would keep them in compliance. Three would be fair. Mr. Andrews said they can allow more visitors at South than at North since the stadium is bigger.

Mr. Rohner asked if the tickets would also be for the 7th/8th grade teams. Mrs. Glasco said we already assigned those tickets last week. Tonight, according to her understanding, is to speak about allowing visiting spectators at stadium games. Mr. Schlameuss said the tickets we are talking about are for volleyball and varsity football teams. Mrs. VanWhy said if we say 2 or 3 tickets, it should be for all football players, cheerleaders and band members. Mr. Schlameuss said this was also his intention.

Mrs. VanWhy asked how is volleyball impacted. Mr. Schlameuss said by allowing visitors to volleyball games, it would keep the numbers under 125. This number would be his recommendation. Mr. Rohner asked what is the motion for. Mr. Schlameuss said Ms. Glasco said she is interested in changing the motion from two to three tickets. Mrs. VanWhy said she would be happy to amend her motion from two to three. Mr. Rohner asked if these tickets are for football players and volleyball players. Mr. Schlameuss said he is correct, assuming volleyball players, substitutes and staff are in the gym at the same time.

Mr. Andrews asked if the Board is complying with the directive from Governor Wolf. Mr. Schlameuss by approving the motion, the Board would be out of compliance. Mr. Rohner said other school districts are not compliant. Ms. Kulick said she would like to remind everyone that the indoor number is 25; therefore, the Board is setting an indoor number that is four times more than the number that is allowed. She asked them to keep this fact in mind. Mr. Schlameuss said this information is important to understand. Mr. Schlameuss asked if the Board members that made the original motion agree with amending the motion to include three tickets instead of two. The maker Lisa VanWhy and the seconder, Rebecca Bear agreed. Mr. Schlameuss said this motion would include volleyball, football, band and cheerleaders.

Mrs. Bear asked if the district is allowing spectators from the visiting teams for all sporting events. Mrs. VanWhy asked if the other school districts are allowing visiting spectators. Mr. Schlameuss said only Pleasant Valley is allowing visiting spectators. Mr. Rohner said the document they received says Stroudsburg, Pleasant Valley and Pocono Mountain are allowing two visitors. Mrs. Bear said she believes the other districts are allowing two home visitors but not spectators. Dr. Riker said Pleasant Valley is the only district that is allowing one spectator. Ms. Glasco said she does not believe the district should allow spectators. Mr. Schlameuss suggested 1 spectator ticket for visiting senior family members. Mrs. VanWhy asked if the district allowed one visiting spectator ticket, how many more people would this add to the total amount. Mr. Schlameuss said if this is for just football players and not the band or cheerleaders then the number would be about 405. Mr. Andrews asked if Pleasant Valley is allowing visiting cheerleaders. Mrs. Bear said they are not.

Mrs. VanWhy asked if the Board will be considering allowing the JV teams attend to watch the Varsity teams. Mr. Andrews said the public comment was about allowing the JV team for the volleyball players. Mrs. VanWhy asked if this would be considered. She said she agrees with giving visiting seniors players 1 ticket. Mrs. Bear said visiting players' tickets should be issued for

all sports. Mrs. Schlameuss said right now they are discussing for football only. Mrs. Bear said all the extra ticket should be discussed for all sports. Mr. Schlameuss said the Board already set the cap for other sports at 250. Mrs. Bear said if we are going over the limit, we should go over for all. Mrs. VanWhy said we are already over the cap for other sports. Mrs. Bear said we are not. Mr. Schlameuss said the Board already set the number of tickets to equal the cap but many tickets are not being used. Mr. Andrews said if someone wants to attend and does not have tickets, they have to ask students if they have extra tickets. Ms. Kulick reminded the Board that Pleasant Valley is closed due to COVID. She said she personally feels that we are pushing the limit and now we want to expand it to other teams coming in, too. It is difficult to control visiting spectators. She agrees with allowing visitors from our home team only. Mrs. VanWhy asked if Pleasant Valley is closed due to COVID or was this MCTI. Dr. Riker said MCTI and Pleasant Valley High School are closed due to COVID. Mr. Schlameuss said he agrees that they, as a Board, are pressing their luck. We should look at allowing one visiting spectator for senior players only. We need to maintain some type of responsibility. Mrs. Bear said if we do this for football we need to do it for all sports. Mr. Schlameuss said if this is the case then he would prefer no visiting spectators. Mr. Rohner said everyone can vote as they wish but he disagrees with no visiting spectators. Dr. Riker asked if Mr. Schlameuss is speaking about visiting spectators and not home visitors. Mr. Schlameuss said no for visiting spectators but yes for home spectators. He said he does not feel comfortable with opening visiting spectators for all sports. He said this may not be everyone's position but it is his position. Ms. Glasco said she is not comfortable with visiting spectators from other teams. Mr. Andrews said he is comfortable with visiting spectators for all teams. He said the chance of getting COVID whether we have visitors or not is the same. Mr. Schlameuss said it is a logistical issue in letting some come in and not others. Mrs. Bear said if we would allow visitors from other teams, we would need a roster with names of who they are here to see in order to control the numbers appropriately. Mr. Schlameuss said right now we have three tickets for the home team visitors. If anyone wants to amend this motion, we can. Mr. Andrews asked if these tickets are for volleyball and football. Mr. Schlameuss said they are. Mrs. Bear said we should vote on the motion and do another motion for visiting spectators.

ACTION BY THE BOARD:

Motion was made by Lisa VanWhy to amend the Athletics Health and Safety Plan to indicate that every student participant of any Fall Semester athletic competition, not already assigned spectator tickets for their sport in the Athletics Health & Safety Plan, will be issued three spectator tickets. Motion was seconded by Rebecca Bear. A roll call vote was taken and passed 6-2. Rebecca Bear, Sharone Glasco, Debbie Kulick, Wayne Rohner, Richard Schlameuss and Lisa VanWhy voted yes. George Andrews and Larry Dymond voted no.

Mrs. VanWhy asked how would allowing visiting spectators impact what was voted upon last Monday. Tickets were already issued, so how would this decision affect the past vote. Mr. Schlameuss said it would raise the amount of participants but the reality is that those attending do not pack the gym. He believes it would not put the district into jeopardy if they go over the limit. Dr. Riker said with respect to football, Mr. Schlameuss' statement is correct. If you are looking to add tickets for all players, you would be adding another approximately 80 potential spectators to the event. If it is limited to senior players, then you would probably be adding an additional 20-30 spectators. He said this is his guess since he does not know how many seniors the opposing team has. Mr. Schlameuss said he would not want to exceed 250 people at the inside sports but for football only. Mrs. VanWhy asked if we issue one ticket for the visiting spectators, would this create a big chaos. Mrs. Bear asked how would we know who the visitors are if we do not create a roster. Mr. Schlameuss asked who would do the roster. Mrs. Bear said another option is to leave

tickets at the door. She asked how is Pleasant Valley handling it. Dr. Riker said he would suggest that our Athletic Director issue tickets with a different color than ours and give to the visiting team's Athletic Director so we know who the visiting spectators are. Mrs. VanWhy asked if the motion on the table is for seniors only. Mr. Schlameuss said the motion is for all players. Dr. Riker said this is how he understands it. Ms. Kulick said we should set a number so that we don't have one number from one team and another number from another. Mr. Schlameuss said we are not talking about seniors but for all team members. Ms. Kulick asked how do we make sure that we do not overload the stadium. We are pushing the envelope. Mr. Brown asked if they are speaking about only outdoor sports. Mrs. Bear said this is for outdoors sports only. She said we are pushing the limit already indoors by allowing parents, JV players and others. Mr. Andrews said, if we are already over the limit indoor, why not allow one parent from the visiting team to attend. Mr. Rohner said he would like to clarify what they are voting on. Are the JV football players allowed to attend the varsity football games as spectators in the stands since we are allowing visitors. Dr. Riker said High School South is not including the JV football players in their number with respect to being on the sidelines. Right now, the motion that was approved was for three home spectators, which would not include the JV football players. Mr. Andrews said this would mean that the JV players would not be able to go to the games. Mr. Rohner said there is no reason why we cannot allow them to attend. Dr. Riker said since we went from 250 individuals to 800 individuals, there is no reason why we cannot allow it. Mr. Schlameuss said we are not talking about this topic right now. Mr. Rohner said the Board is choosing to ignore this issue. Mr. Schlameuss said they are not ignoring. Mr. Rohner can make a motion tonight after the following motion is voted upon. Dr. Riker said he would like to clarify that the motion that is being considered is for tennis and cross country too, because right now they receive one ticket for spectators. Mr. Schlameuss said tennis and cross country should still follow the same number that was previously voted upon. Ms. Glasco said she concurs with staying with the same amount of tickets that was already discussed and approved because it is ample. She said she does not want to go back and add. The motion on the floor is for one additional ticket for football only. Ms. Bear said the tickets are for football, soccer and field hockey

ACTION BY THE BOARD:

Motion was made by Rebecca Bear to allow no fewer than 1 ticket to visiting spectators for each player for all outdoor sports (football, soccer & field hockey). Motion was seconded by Lisa VanWhy. A roll call vote was taken and failed 4-4. George Andrews, Rebecca Bear, Wayne Rohner, and Lisa VanWhy voted yes. Larry Dymond, Sharone Glasco, Debbie Kulick and Richard Schlameuss voted no.

Mr. Brown asked if the following motion is for just football or for all sports. Mr. Rohner said it is for all sports. Mr. Schlameuss said he does not think it applies to all teams. Mr. Rohner said it would apply to all fall sports. Mr. Rohner modified his motion to include all sports. Mr. Andrews agreed. Ms. Kulick asked how many numbers of students will this action add. Mr. Schlameuss said he believes about 27. Ms. Kulick said we are pushing the limit even more. Mr. Rohner said that there are two sides of the football stadium and he is confident that they can maintain social distancing. Mrs. Bear asked if he is including the cheerleaders. Mr. Rohner said, "yes" all sports. Mr. Andrews said there are about 10 cheerleaders. Mr. Rohner said these are tough times and it should include all sports.

ACTION BY THE BOARD:

Motion was made by Wayne Rohner to allow JV players to attend all fall sports games as spectators. Motion was seconded by George Andrews. A roll call vote was taken and passed 6-2. George Andrews, Rebecca Bear, Larry Dymond, Wayne Rohner, Richard Schlameuss and Lisa VanWhy voted yes. Sharone Glasco and Debbie Kulick voted no.

Mr. Andrews asked if tonight's decisions exceed the 250/25 directive from the Governor. Mr. Schlameuss said "yes". This is the reason that they had tonight's meeting. Mr. Andrews asked if the Board had to amend any votes that were previously done. Mr. Schlameuss said "no". All action has been taken.

ACTION BY THE BOARD:

Motion was made by Lisa VanWhy to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Rebecca Bear and carried unanimously, 8-0.

X. **ADJOURNMENT: 9:20 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia L. Rosado
Board Secretary