



# Southern Lehigh School District

## Board of School Directors Meeting

January 22, 2007

The second monthly meeting of the Board of School Directors of the School District of Southern Lehigh was held at 6:11 p.m. on the above date (January 22, 2007) in the Southern Lehigh High School, Center Valley, PA.

**PRESENT:** Miracle, Auteri, Bromwell (left at 10:25 p.m.), Corso (arrived at 6:16 p.m.), Eddinger, Quigley (left at 10:20 p.m.), Rennie, Schubert, Stelts (left at 10:20 p.m.)

**ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS:** Liberati, Snell, Guerriere, Bartholomew, Kennedy, Churm, Metrick, Bergey, Zuk, Turner, Farris, Madsen (Morning Call), Popichak (Saucon News), and 5 other members of the community.

### OPENING PROCEDURES

Mr. Miracle led the Board and others attending the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOVED BY** Quigley and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Rennie to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2007 meeting as copied and distributed to all Board members.

Minutes of  
1/8/07

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Corso**

### VISITORS

### CONSENT AGENDA

**MOVED BY** Bromwell and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Quigley to approve the **CONSENT AGENDA** items as follows:

Approve the bills list dated January 22, 2007 showing paid bills in the amount of \$36,714.38 and bills to be paid in the amount of \$530,571.16 for a total of \$567,285.54 for the General Fund, and bills to be paid in the amount of \$76,355.18 for the Construction Fund, and bills to be paid in the amount of \$4,401.01 for the Capital Reserve Sinking Fund;

Approval of  
Bills

Approve the addendum to the bills list dated January 22, 2007 showing paid bills in the amount of \$564.85 and bills to be paid in the amount of \$36,818.24 for a total of \$37,383.09 for the General Fund, and bills to be paid in the amount of \$40,240.18 for the Capital Reserve Sinking Fund;

Approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of December, 2006;

Approve  
Treasurer's  
Report

Accept the resignation of the following staff -

Accept  
resignation-  
Miller

Ryan Miller, Learning Support Teacher, High School, effective January 15, 2007 (January 13, 2007 is last day worked);

Approve the following student teacher placements -

Approve  
student  
teacher  
placements-  
Brinker,  
Resnick,  
Walters

Michelle Brinker, English, Lehigh University with *Joseph Castagna*, High School from January 15, 2007 through April 20, 2007.

Rebecca Resnick, Mathematics, Lehigh University with *Brad Siesko* and *Justina Viola*, High School from January 15, 2007 through April 20, 2007.

Caitlin Walters, Elementary Education, DeSales University with *Nancy Smillie*, Hopewell Elementary School from January 16, 2007 through March 2, 2007;

Approve the following substitute teachers -

Approve  
substitute  
teachers-  
McCleery,  
Spinosa,

Juliet McCleery, Special Education  
Maria Spinosa, Elementary  
James Maletesta, Secondary Guidance (pending receipt of required paperwork);

Approve childrearing leave for Lisa McGinty, 5<sup>th</sup> grade Teacher, Lower Milford Elementary School, from January 25, 2007 through the end of the 2006-2007 school year;

Approve a salary step adjustment for the following staff, effective February 1, 2007 -

Rochelle Adam, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Teacher, Hopewell Elementary, Bachelors +30 to Masters.  
Janelle Dreas, Learning Support Teacher/Special Education Facilitator, High School, Masters to Masters +15.  
Karen Fairclough, Learning Support Teacher, High School, Masters to Masters +15.  
Dana Kleppinger, Language Arts Teacher, High School, Bachelors to Bachelors +15.  
Carol Yale, Music Teacher, Lower Milford Elementary School, Bachelors +15 to Bachelors +30;

Correct the effective childrearing leave starting date of Keri Haas, Psychologist, Lower Milford Elementary School from December 8, 2006 to December 18, 2006;

Accept the retirement of the following staff -

William Davis, Custodian, High School, effective February 7, 2007. Mr. Davis has worked at Southern Lehigh School District for 28 years;

Approve the following support staff -

Joan Decker, Custodian, High School, at an hourly rate of \$15.13, effective January 23, 2007. Ms. Decker will fill the position created with the retirement of William Davis;

Approve the transfer of the following support staff -

Karen Himmelsbach, 3 hour Part-time Cafeteria worker, High School to 4 ¼ hour Part-time Cafeteria worker, High School, at an hourly rate of \$11.74, effective January 23, 2007. Mrs. Himmelsbach will fill the vacant position created with the transfer of Susan Covey;

Correct the effective starting date of Joan Decker, Full-time Temporary Custodian, High School from December 18, 2006 to December 19, 2006.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" - Unanimous - Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Corso**

### **CURRICULUM/STUDENT AND STAFF ACTIVITIES**

**MOVED BY** Quigley and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Bromwell to approve the *Southern Lehigh Speech and Debate Team* to attend the Harvard University Invitational at Harvard University, Boston, MA from Friday, February 16, 2007 through Monday, February 19, 2007.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" - Unanimous - Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Corso**

**MOVED BY** Quigley and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Bromwell to approve the *Southern Lehigh High School Band and Bandfront* to participate in the 2007 Dixie Classic Festival, held in Richmond, VA from Thursday, April 19, 2007 through Sunday, April 22, 2007.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" - Unanimous - Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Corso**

[Mrs. Corso arrived at meeting]

**MOVED BY** Stelts and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Rennie to approve the request from Brad Siesko, Computer Science, Math Teacher, High School to teach a dual enrollment course through Lehigh Carbon Community College at Southern Lehigh High School, beginning spring semester 2007.

Approve  
 B. Siesko to  
 teach a dual  
 enrollment  
 course through  
 LCCC at SLHS  
 beginning  
 spring  
 semester 2007

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" - Unanimous - Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: None**

The School Board acknowledged receipt of Keystone Achievement Awards in recognition of achievement from Pennsylvania Department of Education for Adequate Yearly Progress for all five Southern Lehigh School District schools for two consecutive years, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. Mr. Liberati presented the awards to the principals that were in attendance.

**BUSINESS AND FINANCE**

Act 1 Referendum Question

Attorney Bartholomew provided the Board with background information regarding provisions contained in Act 1 of 2006 regarding front-end referendum. He explained that Act 1 requires the Board to authorize and submit a question for referendum at the May 15, 2007 primary election seeking voter approval to allow an increase in earned income tax (EIT) or adoption of a personal income tax (PIT) for the purpose of funding a homestead exclusion. If approved by the electorate, the effect of an affirmative vote on the referendum question would only shift taxes, by increasing the current earned income tax or by replacing it with personal income tax, and by granting a corresponding tax reduction in the form of homestead and farmstead exclusions on property tax. Act 1 requires that any increase in earned income tax or adoption of personal income tax must be used to fund homestead and farmstead exclusions.

The Board is required to take action and adopt a resolution on a question for referendum on EIT/PIT and homestead exclusion, and set the amount of farmstead exclusion on or before March 13, 2007. Act 1 provides that prior to adoption of resolution, the Board must comply with legal advertising requirements via a public notice advertisement once a week for three weeks. The time-line presented to the Board at its meeting on January 8, 2007, contemplates legal advertisements on February 5, 12, and 19, with public hearing and adoption of a resolution by the Board on February 26, 2007. In order to meet the advertisement deadlines, the Board must be in a position to give direction to the Administration not later than January 22, 2007 Board meeting with respect to the likely contents of the resolution and referendum question to be adopted by the Board at the February 26, 2007 meeting.

There was considerable Board discussion.

The Board consensus was to set \$10,000 as the farmstead exclusion.

The Board consensus was to set the homestead exclusion at the minimum allowed by Act 1, which was 25% of the median assessed value of all eligible homestead properties in the school district that would result in a property tax reduction of \$496 on qualified homestead property during the first year and \$827 during subsequent years, based on 41.1 mills. To fund homestead and farmstead exclusions, the Board consensus was to convert the school district's current earned income tax (EIT) to a personal income tax (PIT) at a rate of 1.15%. The current earned income tax rate is 0.50%. The consensus of the Board believed that earned income tax was easier to collect, but thought that personal income tax is a fairer tax than earned income tax.

School Board Appreciation

Mr. Liberati thanked the School Board members for their time and dedication for serving the Southern Lehigh School District community, and presented each Board member with an engraved pewter plate.

**MOVED BY** Rennie and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Bromwell to acknowledge the approval of PlanCon Part E by the Department of Education in connection with the proposed intermediate school and enter same into the minutes of the meeting.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" - Unanimous - Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: None**

Preliminary 2007-2008 Budget

Set millage rate for property taxes at 43.25 mills for the preliminary 2007-2008 General Fund Budget

Administration approved payment #12 (retainage) of Chevron Energy Solutions

Mr. Eddinger, of the Budget and Finance Committee, provided an update on the budget process and shared a draft of a preliminary 2007-2008 General Fund Budget that needed to go on display the following day (January 23, 2007). Preliminary budget adoption by the Board is scheduled for February 12, 2007. In order to meet the requirement that the preliminary budget must be available for public inspection twenty days prior to adoption, and in order to meet the requirement that a public notice must be advertised ten days prior to preliminary budget adoption, the Board must be in position to give direction to the Administration not later than January 22, 2007 Board meeting with respect to the likely contents of the preliminary budget to be adopted by the Board at the February 12, 2007 meeting.

There was Board discussion that included new staffing requests, technology plan expenditures, and millage increases based on the school district's 5-year budget plan.

The Board consensus was to increase the Technology Plan by \$180,000 in the draft preliminary 2007-2008 budget that was presented by Mr. Eddinger, and to recommend a 2.15 mill increase in the property tax rate for the 2007-2008 preliminary budget.

**MOVED BY** Eddinger and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Stelts to set the millage rate for property taxes at 43.25 mills, an increase of 2.15 mills, for the preliminary 2007-2008 General Fund Budget that would be adopted on February 12, 2007.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" – All but Quigley**  
**"NO" – Quigley – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: None**

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Administration has approved payment #12 (retainage) of Chevron Energy Solutions Company and release of \$179,313 from Citi Capital North America, Inc.

### **PERSONNEL**

### **REPORTS**

#### Lehigh Career & Technical Institute

Mr. Miracle reported that seven Southern Lehigh School District students were *Students of the Month* for December, 2006.

#### Superintendent's Report

Mr. Liberati wanted to know if the Board preferred February 1 or February 2, 2007 for the annual visit to the Middle School and High School. Mr. Miracle responded that he had sent out an email to the Board, and that he would let Mr. Liberati know which day when he receives the responses.

#### Facilities Report

Mr. Liberati reported that the building committee had met last week with Mr. Breslin, architect for the Grade 4-6 School. At that meeting, Mr. Breslin provided construction documents to the District and Turner Construction Company. Mr. Liberati said the documents should be out for bid by the end of January.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Curriculum Committee

In the January 15, 2007 Superintendent's Update, Mr. Liberati included a survey of School Board Committees at various districts in Carbon and Lehigh Counties and asked for discussion at the Board level as to changes and additions to the committee processes that provide communication and direction for the school district.

There was considerable Board discussion about forming a Board curriculum committee. There was no clear Board consensus on this matter. Mrs. Auteri, Ms. Bromwell and Mr. Schubert volunteered to decide how to develop a process of forming a curriculum committee. Administrators would be included in this process.

Graphing Calculators

Also included in the January 15, 2007 Superintendent's Update, was a memorandum from Mrs. Metrick about Graphing Calculators. The memorandum included several options with associated costs. The School District would provide calculators for each student for the year under Option 2 for levels below pre-calculus (algebra I, applied algebra I, algebra II, applied algebra II/physics, pre-college algebra, trigonometry), and would require students in pre-calculus and higher math courses to have their own graphing calculators not provided by the School District. The total cost of Option 2 would be \$72,448 after considering the calculators in current inventory.

**MOVED BY** Eddinger and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Rennie to implement Option 2 for graphing calculators funded by money in the budget under mini-grants, estimated to be \$72,448, for classes listed.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" – All but Schubert**  
**"NO" – Schubert – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: None**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**MOVED BY** Eddinger and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Stelts to renegotiate a new contract with Superintendent Liberati for a term of three years, effective July 1, 2007. Negotiations to commence at the convenience of Mr. Liberati and the School Board.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" - Unanimous - Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: None**

Mr. Quigley and Mrs. Corso stated that they voted yes on the motion, but prefer continuity and support a five-year contract renewal.

**COMMUNICATIONS****VISITORS' COMMENTS**

Arland Schantz spoke about the Mobile Ag Lab program for students. He also announced that Lehigh Valley Agricultural Summit II would be held on March 14, 2007.

The Board took a brief recess at 10:20 p.m.

[Mr. Quigley left the meeting]

[Dr. Stelts left the meeting]

The Board met in Executive Session at 10:22 p.m.

[Ms. Bromwell left the meeting]

The meeting was reconvened at 10:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED BY** Auteri and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Rennie to adjourn the meeting.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" - Unanimous - Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Bromwell, Quigley, Stelts**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_ Board Secretary