Southern Lehigh Parents and Guardians,

We would like to update you on a few new initiatives that we instituted over the summer. These are all in an effort to enhance communication with our Southern Lehigh families.

Student data verification

In order to allow us to be assured we have proper contact information we are completing comprehensive data verification for our student information system. We have converted our data into our new student information system but want to ensure that we are aligning the data appropriately. As we transitioned our systems the naming conventions that were used in each system did not always align in a seamless fashion. Since we need to manually align some of these fields, we thought it would be prudent to allow parents to make updates at this time so we will have the most up to date information. Please take time to complete the updates and return the form to your child's building as soon as possible.

Sapphire Community Portal (4-12)

Our Sapphire Community Portal continues to see some enhancements and we are excited about the potential that the portal holds. This year brought a new look to the portal as well as a section in which the students will be able to store electronic files throughout their Southern Lehigh careers.   We will be working with students to utilize this feature over the course of the year. One key feature of the portal is that it only contains a **copy** of the actual data. The Community Portal is stored on its own secured, server. This security feature is in place to protect the integrity of our data. The original data is stored on separate, secure servers. To further protect our data we require anyone will access to the actual data to change their password every 90 days. We use industry standards for password complexity and the passwords are encrypted. I encourage you to consider changing your passwords on a regular basis as well, and be sure not to share your login or password with anyone. You can update your password by logging into the portal and clicking on your name in the upper right hand corner. If you have a child in grades 4-12 but do not have a portal account, we encourage you sign up for one today. The application can be found on the SLSD website under the Parent tab.

Please look for future announcements regarding updates to our Portal including an electronic data verification system, as well as electronic registration for new families. Plans for updates and improvements to the Community Portal will be ongoing.

Blackboard Connect

We would like to remind you of our newest portal connected to our electronic alert system, Blackboard Connect. This is another powerful tool that will help us keep our families informed of happenings in the district. We have been utilizing the alert system for several years but now, for the first time, you can control how you receive important messages from your child's school, or the district office. Registration only takes few minutes and the link can be found on our website (www.slsd.org) under the Parent tab. Look for the Blackboard Connect link. The website also has step-by-step directions to assist you in registering. Please be sure to download the directions as they contain information for identification codes. We will continue to utilize the alert system to inform you of weather related closings or delays, attendance information, as well as building activities and updates.

EZ School Pay

Parents that used EZ School Pay to deposit funds for cafeteria purchases before school started, and during the first two days of school, may have noticed that if their student moved from one building to another, they appeared to be enrolled in both buildings. When the food services department performed the yearly rollover of students for students moving to a different building they placed them into a "Post Graduate" field at the school they were leaving as a form of backup. This was done in case there was a problem in transferring their account information to the new school. Although doing this created the illusion that they were enrolled at both schools, only a shell of their information was left at the old school. All up to date functions were applied and took place at the new school. This did not hinder the normal functions of EZSchoolPay.com. Now that the beginning of school is completed and there were no data problems detected, the "Post Graduate" field has been eliminated. Parents should no longer see a double enrollment. Questions regarding our EZ School Pay system should be directed to Mr. Greg Martin, Food Services Manager, at marting@slsd.org.

Thank you,

Ken Jordan
Director of Elementary Education and Instructional Technology
Southern Lehigh School District