



Southern Lehigh School District

Board of School Directors Meeting

November 21, 2011

The second regular monthly meeting of the Board of School Directors of the School District of Southern Lehigh was held at 7:30 p.m. on the above date (November 21, 2011) at Southern Lehigh High School, Center Valley, PA.

PRESENT: Eddinger, Gunkle, Hayes, McLoughlin, Miracle, Mohr, Quigley, Stelts
ABSENT: Dimmig
OTHERS: Christman, Melber, Millman, Bartholomew, Kennedy, Lewis, Covelle, Donahue, McGinty, Hafner, Knoll, Takacs, Rich (PATCH), Peterson (Morning Call), Petty (Express Times), and approximately 31 other members of the community.

OPENING PROCEDURES

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

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

Mrs. Christman thanked Mr. Miracle and Mr. Eddinger for their many years of service to the District and staunch support for academic excellence.

Mr. Miracle served on the Board for 16 years and held the position of President, Vice-President and Treasurer. He also served on the Facilities, Negotiations, Policy, Act 93 and Budget and Finance Committees.

Mr. Eddinger served on the Board for 12 years and held the position of President, Vice-President and Treasurer. He also served on the negotiations, Act 93, Budget and Finance Committees.

Mr. Miracle and Mr. Eddinger were presented with rocker chairs as recognition for their service for the District.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY Stelts and **2ND BY** Gunkle to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2011 meeting as distributed to all Board members.

VOICE VOTE: " YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried

ABSENT: Dimmig

VISITORS

Mr. John Zuk addressed the board regarding whether or not they would conduct a search for a new superintendent.

Dr. Trish Colasurdo addressed the board regarding the reason behind why the district switched student information systems.

Mrs. Karen Prezemloski addressed the board regarding who parents should submit to in the future for technology questions.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOVED BY Stelts and **2ND BY** Gunkle to approve the **CONSENT AGENDA** items as follows -

Approve the bills dated November 21, 2011 showing paid bills in the amount of \$75,378.84 and bills to be paid in the amount of \$915,222.99 for a total amount of \$990,601.83 for the General Fund; and bills to be paid in the amount \$607.66 for the Capital Reserve Sinking Fund; and bills to be paid in the amount of \$333.75 for the Construction Fund;

Approve the following Substitute Teachers for the 2011-2012 school year -

Stephen Berg, Health and Phys. Ed. K-12

Samantha Morgan, Social Studies;

Approve first period Childrearing Leaves for the following staff -

Wendy Bonsall, Learning Support Teacher, Lower Milford Elementary School for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year with an anticipated effective date of December 5, 2011.

Jennifer Edwards, Health and Physical Education Teacher, Southern Lehigh High School for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year with an effective date of December 2, 2011;

Accept the resignation of Scot Engler, Director of Special Education, effective January 19, 2012;

Approve the following substitute support staff for the 2011-2012 school year -

Brenda Shelly, Substitute Cafeteria Worker, \$7.73 per hour

Katherine Touzeau, Substitute Health Paraprofessional, \$14.14 per hour

Eileen Rupp, Substitute Cafeteria/Playground Monitor, \$9.45 per hour

Patty Lynn-Helmick, Substitute Cafeteria/Playground Monitor, \$9.45 per hour;

Approve the following staff -

Heather Jani, Long-term Substitute Instructional Assistant (7 hour) Southern Lehigh Intermediate School, for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year at the hourly rate of \$16.50, effective October 10, 2011. Ms. Jani will fill the position of *Stacey Kuntzman* while she is in a long-term substitute teacher position.

Patty Lynn-Helmick, Cafeteria/Playground Monitor (1 day per week), Southern Lehigh Intermediate School, at the hourly rate of \$9.45, effective November 22, 2011. Ms. Lynn-Helmick will work one day per week while *Denise Walkowicz* continues to work 4 days per week. This one day was previously filled by *Susan Garofalo*;

Approve unpaid leave of the following staff -

Judith Browne, Instructional Assistant, Southern Lehigh Intermediate School, from January 17 through 20, 2012;

Accept the resignation of Cathleen Ragsdale, part-time Cafeteria Worker, Southern Lehigh High School, effective November 25, 2011;

Approve the combination of one 3-hour Instructional Assistant position and one 4-hour Instructional Assistant Position at Hopewell Elementary School into one 7-hour Instructional Assistant position, effective August 23, 2011. Tammy Terlingo is the incumbent in both positions, and the hourly rate remains at \$16.50;

Approve William Neal as Dance Chaperone for the 2011-2012 school year at \$46.62 per event;

Approve Karen Himmelsbach as Swim Bus Monitor for the 2011-2012 school year at \$10.80 per hour;

VOICE VOTE: " YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

CURRICULUM/STUDENT AND STAFF ACTIVITIES

Mr. Covelle, Dr. Donahue, Mr. McGinty and Mr. Hafner reported on student and staff activities at the High School, Middle School, Intermediate School and the elementary schools.

High School report –

- Over 95 students wrote letters to Senator Toomey in support of continued funding for cancer research and treatment. Students delivered letter to the Senators office on 11/18/11.
- SADD sponsored a Healthy Living Expo in partnership with other high school SADD chapters and community organizations on 11/17/11.
- Spartan Spirit Club produced a video to honor our recent graduates who are serving in our Armed Forces. The video aired on Veterans Day on WSOL.
- Parent/Teacher conferences were held on 11/17/11.

Middle School report –

- Tuesday, 11/8: Peter Pan preview
- Report cards mailed: Nov. 10
- Friday, 11/11: Recognition of Veterans' Day
- Friday, 11/11: College Day
- Tuesday & Wednesday, 11/15 and 11/16: Hoops for Hearts
- Mon.-Fri, 11/15-18: Parent-Teacher Conferences.

PEAK Activities:

- Outdoor Flag Football 11/1,7 & 9
- Cardio Room Exercise sessions: 12X's during Nov/Dec
- Indoor Soccer: 10/31, 11/2, 11/8
- Chinese Cultural Experience: 12/1 (2:35-3:45)
- Gingerbread Houses: 12/7(2:35-3:45)
- Ice-Skating: Dec. 8 (2:35-5:45)

Intermediate School report –

- Parent conference week concluded on Friday, November 18 with 630 conferences held.
- The PTG/ Scholastic book fair was also held during conference week. The PTG raised over \$8,000 during the book fair.
- IS staff attended training at K-12 systems on November 15 for K-12's report writer component of Sapphire.

Elementary schools –

- Parent conferences went well at all three buildings as attendance was very high.
- A mixture of principals and secretaries from the elementary buildings attended a Sapphire training last week on Report Writer.
- Today Lower Milford's KDG went on a field trip to Poole Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Tomorrow Lower Milford will be having Author Day as Kathy Miller, an author and nature photographer will be visiting.
- On December 1, Lower Milford's 1st Grade will be traveling to the Pennsylvania Youth Theater to see the production, "Annie."
- On December 2, Lower Milford's 3rd Grade will travel to Dillingersville School.
- On Veteran's Day, Hopewell Elementary started their day with a flag raising ceremony around the flagpole and then the 2nd Grade performed patriotic music during the school-wide assembly and afternoon parent program.
- Today is Hopewell celebrated their 41st birthday for the school was dedicated on 11/20/70. Memorabilia is showcased and the staff wore their Hopewell shirts today.
- Hopewell first graders will sail their Mayflower into the gym tomorrow and the little pilgrims and Native Americans will perform for both our student body and families to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday.
- Hopewell's Holiday Shoppe breakfast with Santa Claus and tree trimming ceremony will be on Saturday 12/3 from 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
- Liberty Bell celebrated Veteran's Day with an assembly where they invited students and staff to invite any family members who were veterans to attend our assembly and be recognized. They had over 35 veterans in attendance including Mr. Dimmig, whose niece and nephew attend our school.
- Last Friday, the first quarter Pride of Liberty Bell Celebration was held and students who earned a Pride of Liberty Bell ticket during the first quarter were recognized as part of their School-wide Positive Behavior System.
- Tomorrow afternoon, Liberty Bell will be having a Cultural Walk/Passport to the World in our gymnasium as they welcome Liberty Bell families and staff to showcase a corner of the world. At this point they have over 12 different countries representing and students will be circulating through each country as they participate in activities and get their passports stamped.

- Liberty Bell's Holiday Shoppe has been moved to the evening this year as they will be having pizza with Santa rather than donuts! The Shoppe is scheduled for the evening of Friday, 12/2, from 6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Gunkle to approve agreement with Pediatric Therapeutic Services for school-based therapy services. .

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Stelts to approve the Treasurer's Report and Investment Report for the month of October 2011.

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Gunkle to approve a purchase agreement with Toshiba Business Solutions for the purchase of 11 new copier machines at a price of \$43,572.00, to be purchased from Capital Reserve, with a monthly service agreement of \$679.35.

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Gunkle to reappoint the firm of Sweet, Stevens, Katz & Williams, LLP as special counsel for labor relations and special education matters for the 2012-2013 school year. The July 1, 2010 hourly rates will remain in effect. (VI, D)

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

SUPPORT SERVICES

PERSONNEL

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Gunkle to approve Stacey Kuntzman, Extended-term (Category E) Substitute Teacher, Lower Milford Elementary School, at a salary of \$44,788 (pro-rated), effective October 10, 2011. Ms. Kuntzman will fill the position created by the childrearing leave of *Wendy Bonsall*

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Stelts to approve Morag Christie-Churm as Special Education Consultant, effective November 29, 2011 at a rate of \$65.00 per hour as needed for a maximum of 20 hours per week.

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

REPORTS

Lehigh Career & Technical Institute

Mr. Miracle reports that LCTI will interview 3 candidates for Dr. Hornberger's position.

Education Committee

The HS Program of Studies was reviewed.

A committee of HS and MS teachers and administrators is working on developing a modification in the schedules.

The district has begun exploring ACCESS funding to recover any eligible expenses. If anyone is interested in housing the guest teachers for Arabic or Chinese please contact the school district.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Liberati and Mrs. Christman attended a retreat in Hershey where representatives from PDE discussed future state budgets and the new teacher evaluation system through the state.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Stelts to designate Leah Christman, Assistant Superintendent as Substitute Superintendent of the School District beginning December 10, 2011 with full authority to perform the duties of Superintendent during such periods of time when Joseph Liberati, Superintendent, may be absent from the District pending his anticipated retirement in March, 2012;

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Stelts to approve as part of the restructuring plan the following changes to Act 93 Staff -

Kristen Lewis, Director of Elementary Education to Assistant to the Superintendent, at a salary of \$116,950.70 (prorated) effective November 22, 2011.

Susan Knoll, Logistics Support Technician to Coordinator of Support Services, at a salary of \$51,930.96 (prorated) effective November 22, 2011. The position of Logistics Support Technician will be eliminated.

Kenneth Jordan, Technology Coordinator to Director of Elementary Education and Instructional Technology, at a salary of \$101,000 (prorated) effective November 22, 2011. The position of Technology Coordinator will be eliminated;

VOICE VOTE: " YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Stelts a first reading of the following revised policy -

#210 Pupils: *Use of Medication*

VOICE VOTE: " YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

MOVED BY Mohr and **2ND BY** Miracle to approve the Collective Bargaining agreement between the Southern Lehigh School District and the Southern Lehigh Education Association.

VOICE VOTE: " YES" – Eddinger, Gunkle, Hayes, McLoughlin, Miracle, Mohr, Stelts
" NAY" – Quigley
Motion Carried
ABSENT: Dimmig

The following statement regarding the Collective Bargaining Agreement was read by Dr. McLoughlin:

In summer 2011, with the mutual consent of the SLEA and the SLSD school board directors, a series of conversations began between members representing these two groups. Both groups saw appeal in possibly advancing an understanding of each others concerns, knowing that the current collective bargaining agreement was due for re-negotiation in the coming months. Thus, meetings began with a largely informal atmosphere, with no agenda other than the general hope that such conversations could accelerate and make more satisfying the negotiations to come. Michael Eddinger (President, SLSD) and Thomas McLoughlin were asked to join these meetings on behalf of SLSD, joining Dale Beltzner, Matt Greenawald, and Ed Sinkler representing SLEA.

Key points of early agreement included the following:

- traditional negotiations were time-consuming and unpleasantly contentious
- the "settlement" percentages negotiated in prior contracts do not represent the actual cost to the district or what teachers realize as wage growth
- variability in cost beyond "on step" raises is a function of several factors: raises for step movement (highly variable year to year), replacement of departing teachers with new hires earning more or less, and teacher "column movement"

- these inaccuracies do not help us to budget or to reflect costs accurately, and distort the message for both teachers and the Board to the community, suggesting teacher wage growth in excess of the truth and poor stewardship of community resources and tax revenue on the part of the School Board

In addition, it was agreed that traditional negotiations resulting in fixed multi-year settlements do not provide for any impact of changing market conditions or evolving district financials over the course of the contract settlement. This creates a “winner-loser” dynamic over the term of a contract, depending on whether district costs and revenues turn out to be better or worse than foreseen at the fixed point in time of a settlement.

In considering the above, we found agreement around an “Actual Costing” methodology for wage pool growth combined with a “Shared Future” component that adjusts the wage pool raise based on key components of district financial circumstances in the future.

Actual Costing: Details of the approach appear in the contract. Briefly, however, we examined key district and regional information going back approximately 10 years, including SLSD negotiated wage raises, actual implemented wage growth when corrected for teaching FTE’s each year, Lehigh Valley wage growth, wage growth in key large regional employers, as well as several recently concluded collective bargaining agreements (Salisbury SD, Bethlehem Police, local Teamsters). Based on much of this information, we negotiated a baseline wage raise rate of 3.1% in each of the first two years of the new contract, followed by 2.8% in the final two years. These rates were strongly influenced by particularly brisk step movement anticipated in the first two contract years to come, such that a modestly higher raise rate was necessary to insure that an “actual costing” provided for “on step” teachers to maintain their current wages, at a minimum. These rates over 4 years approximate the actual wage growth experienced in our district as well as recent overall wage growth in our region. The model assumes an average teacher wage of \$65,000 and corrects for actual teacher FTE’s each year, such that the raise pool is largely unaffected by changes in FTE’s due to employee growth or attrition. Similarly, this approach eliminates incentives to replace departing or retiring teachers with either inexperienced or senior teachers, making this decision neutral with respect to impact on district wage raise implications. Finally, this approach will create additional very significant savings in adjustments made to the wages of other district employee groups, for whom the historically artificially-inflated teacher raise rate (as reflected in the CBA) has been used as a benchmark.

Shared Future: A “shared future” factor, calculated individually in each year of the contract term, adjusts the baseline raise percentage up or down by as much as 0.25%, based on real market and financial changes in the PSERS contribution rate imposed on the district, health care inflation costs, and local revenue collected by the district. Conceptually and in practice, this introduces for the first time a dynamic adjustment to the negotiated raise pool based on important metrics of cost and income to the district. While the capped impact of 0.25% in either direction is admittedly modest, the parties agree that overcoming the entrenched unwillingness to accept any raise agreements that are not “set in stone,” and to allow any market-based impact on raise pools, represents a remarkable step forward in trust and in agreeing that we should join in sharing the developments of a future which no one can be certain of. The involved Board members, and teachers themselves, hope that the experience of this contract can allow expanded “risk/reward” implications of future agreements.

In summary, the District acknowledges that the current national and local economic environment is challenged at the time of this writing in late 2011, and that a hard-nosed traditional negotiation might include the opportunity to force agreement to a short-term contract with little or no teacher wage growth beyond “step and column” movement. However, we believe the approach taken seizes a different opportunity, one which prominently includes establishment of trust and provides the chance for a durable model that simplifies future contract negotiations, rather than insuring repeated new, short-term, static, non-market responsive, traditional collective bargaining agreements. Instead, we think the current agreement provides for the following key advantages:

- 1) Actual costing methodology providing for more accurate budgeting of teacher wage pool obligations and more accurate public reporting of teacher wage inflation.
- 2) A real, and potentially expandable, component of market-responsiveness, connected to major cost and revenue metrics of future district fiscal experience.
- 3) A potentially durable model, requiring only an adjusted market-guided baseline raise pool, new experience-guided tipping points to the “shared future” metrics, and mutually agreeable “caps” to the impact of these metrics on the baseline wage rate – with possible (and in our view, desirable) greater potential risk or reward in relation to the baseline rate should district financial conditions deteriorate or improve.

COMMUNICATIONS

VISITORS

None

MOVED BY Miracle and **2ND BY** Gunkle to adjourn the meeting.

VOICE VOTE: “YES” - Unanimous - Motion Carried

ABSENT: Dimmig

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

ATTEST: _____ Board Secretary