



# **Southern Lehigh School District**

## **Board of School Directors Meeting**

**February 24, 2014**

The second regular monthly meeting of the Board of School Directors of the School District of Southern Lehigh was held at 7:35 p.m. on the above date (February 24, 2014) at Southern Lehigh High School, Center Valley, PA.

**PRESENT:** Gunkle, Lycett, McLoughlin, Hayes, Lindsay, Merkle, Parsons, Quigley

**ABSENT:** Dimmig

**OTHERS:** Christman, Melber, Lewis, Millman, Kennedy, Buchman, Bergey, Takacs, Jordan, Lilly, Donahue, McGinty, Mickley, and approximately 60 other members of the community.

### **OPENING PROCEDURES**

Mrs. Gunkle led the Board and others attending the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Board met in Executive Session prior to this meeting to discuss personnel and legal matters.

The Board introduced middle and high school students who recently received Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. The Scholastic Awards are awarded to those students who demonstrate exceptional artistic and literary talent.

The Board also recognized the Southern Lehigh Competition Cheerleaders who participated in the UCA World Cheerleading Championships and placed first in their division. This was the first year that Southern Lehigh was eligible to compete due to their national ranking.

### **VISITORS**

Community members were acknowledged and offered the opportunity to speak when the "Elementary Building Planning" agenda item is discussed.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOVED BY** McLoughlin and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Quigley to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2014 meeting as distributed to all Board members.

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

**ABSENT: Dimmig**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOVED BY** Parsons and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** McLoughlin to approve the **CONSENT AGENDA** items as follows -

Approve the bills to be paid as of February 24, 2014 showing bills paid in the amount of \$23,676.69 and bills to be paid in the amount of \$617,558.28 for a total amount of \$641,234.97 for the General Fund and bills to be paid in the amount of \$175.60 for the Capital Reserve Sinking Fund;

Approve the Treasurer’s Report and Investment Report for the month of January, 2014;

Approve the following substitute teachers for the 2013-14 school year-

Sara Kimble, Elementary Ed K-6

Michael Metz, Social Studies 7-12; Earth and Space Science 7-12

Colin Zander, Health and Physical Education K-12;

Approve the following substitute staff for the 2013-14 school year-

Sara Kimble, Substitute Instructional Assistant, an hourly rate of \$15.31;

Approve the unpaid leave of the following staff-

Georgios Mitakos, Instructional Assistant, Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, for March 10, 2014 (partial day) and March 11 through March 14, 2014;

Approve the intermittent FMLA Leave of the following staff-

Jana Brown, Instructional Assistant, Southern Lehigh High School, beginning February 14, 2014 through February 13, 2015;

Approve the following staff (pending receipt of required documentation)-

Irene Tyson, Instructional Assistant (3 hours/day), Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective February 25, 2014. Ms. Tyson will fill the vacancy due to the resignation of *Judith Browne*;

Approve the following coaches for the 2013-2014 school year (*pending receipt of required documentation*)-

Rocco DelPriore Assistant Baseball \$1124.25\*\*

Alexander David Assistant Baseball \$1124.25\*\*

*\*\*This is a shared position and stipend with Jeremy Haas.*

Jennifer Shields Girls Head Lacrosse \$2977\*\*

Megan Lichtenwalner Girls Head Lacrosse \$2977\*\*

*\*\*This is a shared position and stipend.*

Kimberly Checkeye Assistant Girls Lacrosse \$3572.

**VOICE VOTE: “YES” – Unanimous – Motion Carried**

**ABSENT: Dimmig**

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

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

### **High School report –**

- Some of our winter sports teams are continuing in the Colonial League playoffs this week and we wish our athletes good luck.
- 2/21 - HS Parent Advisory Council met
- Just a reminder that the HS musical Shrek will be held Feb. 27-Mar. 2. Students have been putting the final touches on things and are getting very excited for the show. Some of our characters have been out and about at the elementary schools and at Chick-Fil-A to promote the show and to raise money to offset costs
- High School will be hosting a visitation by three school districts on Tuesday February 25th who are interested in seeing our new high school schedule, including Spartan Period, in action. One of those districts is Pascack Valley, from New Jersey, who was just in the news for attempting a "virtual snowday"
- 2/26 - Winter Athletic Recognition Day and Luncheon in the board room starting at 11:30AM

### **Middle School report –**

- 2/7 - Winter Dance
- 2/26 - Eighth Grade Group Photo
- 3/4 - Parent Teacher Group Meeting
- 3/5 - Regional Computer Fair (- 2 groups of SLMS competing)
- 3/7 - PMEA District 10 Regional Music Festival
- 3/12 - LINC (mentor program)
- 3/17-21 - PSSA Prep
- 3/24-27 - PSSA Math and Reading
- 3/21 - Spring Dance
- 3/28 - Career Day
- 3/25 - Board Visitation Day
- Academic Showcase: Postponed due to weather.
- PEAK Activities: Paracord bracelet, pretzel design and baking, and the Phillies game for May.

### **Intermediate School report –**

- 2/21 - DARE graduation was held for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students
- 2/27 - 6<sup>th</sup> grade will have a cyber-safety assembly with officer Paul Iannace
- Mr. Tucker held his academy on the Hebei International School Partnership after school today.

### **Some curricular notes-**

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade is learning about cell division in science.
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade is making metric and customary unit conversions in math.
- 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade language arts classes are creating their persuasive writing essays. Topics include cats or dogs, which makes a better pet, and why our students need more time for recess.
- Both 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are also reading their novels War Horse, and Flush.

Elementary schools –

- 3/7 - Liberty Bell will present “We’ll Build a School.” This production has been written, produced, and directed by Mr. Markley and involves over sixty third grade students and faculty members. The play is about the history of Coopersburg and how Liberty Bell came to be built. Show times are 2PM and 7PM.
- 2/21 - Lower Milford had a very special treat when the cast of the high school production of “Shrek: The Musical” came to visit for the whole day! They shared excerpts from the show. They also did workshops in each of the classrooms, including question-and-answer sessions and improvised skits about their characters.
- Lower Milford is participating in the American Heart Association’s “Jump for Heart Week” this week. Mrs. Gretchen Hoff organizes this fundraiser each year.
- 3/3 - Lower Milford will celebrate “Read Across America Day” with a variety of reading-centered activities.

**BUSINESS AND FINANCE**

**MOVED BY** Quigley and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Hayes to approve the proposed General Fund and Academic Center Budgets for Lehigh Career and Technical Institute for 2014-2015.

**VOICE VOTE: “YES” – Unanimous – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Dimmig**

**MOVED BY** Lycett and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Dimmig to approve the audit report for fiscal year 2012-2013 as prepared by the firm of France, Anderson, Basile and Company, P.C.

**VOICE VOTE: “YES” – Unanimous – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Dimmig**

**SUPPORT SERVICES****PERSONNEL****REPORTS**Education Committee

Mr. Hayes reported the following was discussed at today’s meeting-

- 7<sup>th</sup> grade language arts honors course created
- GPA/Grade Weighting-Survey to be sent to parents, students, and faculty

Facilities Committee

Mr. Lindsay reported the February meeting was cancelled and provided an update on following–

- Act 129-The Middle School boiler is installed and running
- The Lower Milford roof bid postponed due to the weather
- The Liberty Bell paving project on hold due to the weather
- The grounds and building staff have been doing an exceptional job keeping sidewalks, parking lots clear of snow

### Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Christman reported the following-

- Public encouraged to support Southern Lehigh 8<sup>th</sup> grade team and vote in the Video contest, "What's So Cool About Manufacturing"
- Mrs. Christman attended the Global Education Symposium in Washington, DC and shared what we are doing in Southern Lehigh with global education with 43 administrators from throughout the nation.
- The entire Superintendent's Report is available on the district's website.

### Strategic Plan and Middle States Report

Mrs. Lewis reported the following-

- Lower Milford has established a sister school in Russia
- The entire Strategic Plan and Middle States Report is available on the district's website.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

The following community members addressed the Board regarding Elementary Buildings Planning-

Mrs. Donna Wright, Lower Milford Township Board of Supervisors, read the following and asked that her comments be included in the minutes:

"Lower Milford Township Officials are dismayed at the erroneous information presented and printed in newspaper articles concerning the plans for our three elementary schools.

In recent, 2/16 Morning Call article by Melinda Rizzo, a statement is made concerning operating and transportation costs, citing \$500,000 per year to operate Lower Milford Elementary School. That is only part of the story. The reality is, if Lower Milford is run at or near student capacity, it is, per pupil, the most economical to operate of the three schools.

As far as the statement that it is in the most rural portion of the district and about half of those attending Lower Milford live closer to other schools in the district and should be a factor in the final decision. Well that means that the other half are Lower Milford students. Bring half to Lower Milford or take half to Hopewell. Simple math dictates that is the same.

The article attempted to liken Lower Milford Elementary to the Haycock Elementary School which was part of the Quakertown School District. Not only is it absurd to compare the schools, but the Townships as well. According to the Morning Call of April 20, 2011 also by Melina Rizzo, Haycock was a small school that served 105 students unlike Lower Milford that has a capacity for 242 students or 142% greater capacity than the Haycock School. Half of the land mass comprising Haycock Township is permanently preserved by state Park, State Game Lands, County Park and Ag and Open Space Easements. The Haycock school was built in the same era as Lower Milford but did not see the expansion and upgrades that were made to Lower Milford Elementary in 1991 which doubled its size and according to the Engineers and Architects, allowed for future expansion. Lower Milford has many vacant lots which will eventually be built upon which will most definitely increase transportation costs to bus them to Hopewell or Liberty Bell because the District was shortsighted and closed Lower Milford Elementary.

Lower Milford Officials have examined the proposals made by the School District. It is perfectly clear that mistakes have been made in the preparation of the options the school district presented. Numbers do not lie and it is very clear that the numbers do not justify any proposal which includes closing Lower Milford Elementary School. Lower Milford Elementary, upon inspection, is in excellent condition and is a viable asset to the School District. It makes good financial sense to keep this school building in operation.

Lower Milford Township Officials are going on the record stating our objection to the Southern Lehigh School District options involving closing Lower Milford Elementary School and any option which would cost a minimum of \$14 million dollars more taxpayer money than necessary.

To vote to close Lower Milford Elementary is not financially justifiable and no other reason should be entertained by a board of elected officials.”

Mr. Paul, Shellaw asked the Board to keep Lower Milford Elementary school open.

Mr. David Wheeler presented an on-line petition which was posted on change.org to keep all three Southern Lehigh Elementary Schools in operation.

Mrs. Michelle Burns asked for clarification of the Capital Reserve Fund.

Mrs. Kristen Jellison commented that the lack of attendance at recent board meetings shouldn't indicate that the community has waned in support of keeping all three elementary schools open.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**MOVED BY** Quigley and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** McLoughlin to approve a first reading of the following revised policies:

- #220 Pupils: Students Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials
- #248 Pupils: Unlawful Harassment
- #913.1 Community: Flyer/Information Distribution

**VOICE VOTE: “YES” – Unanimous – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Dimmig**

There was Board discussion.

**MOVED BY** Parsons and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Quigley to approve first reading of the following new policy-

- #236 Pupils: Student Assistance Program

**VOICE VOTE: “YES” – Unanimous – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Dimmig**

**MOVED BY** Gunkle and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** McLoughlin to restore two paid holidays of the four lost to inclement weather to the Secretarial and Technology Employee Policies as floating holidays. These floating holidays must be used by June 30, 2014.

**VOICE VOTE: “YES” – Unanimous – Motion Carried**  
**ABSENT: Dimmig**

**MOVED BY** Merkle and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Quigley to create District email addresses for board members upon request.

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

There was Board discussion.

**MOVED BY** Lycett and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** Lindsay to form a committee to work with board representation and community members to investigate a partnership with private donors to build a turf field.

**VOICE VOTE: "YES" –Hayes, Lindsay, Lycett, McLoughlin, Merkle, Parsons, Quigley – Motion Carried**  
**"NO" - Gunkle**  
**ABSENT: Dimmig**

There was Board discussion including the ability to advertise, district management of facility use scheduling and maintenance and clarification that no public money would be utilized to fund this project. The Superintendent, Coordinator of Athletics and the Director of Support Services will be available to the committee to provide district and facilities information.

**MOVED BY** Lycett and **2<sup>ND</sup> BY** McLoughlin to allow the administration to review and change the hours of the Fitness Center for community use in order to accommodate students and student athlete practice schedules.

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

Mrs. Gunkle announced that an at-large seat is open on the Board of Trustees of Lehigh Carbon Community College for the term July 1, 2014, to June 30, 2020. Potential candidates should submit a "Candidate for Trustee-at-Large" form by March 12, 2014.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **VISITORS**

Mr. Paul, Shellaw continued to offer his support to keep Lower Milford Elementary open.

Mr. David Wheeler asked if once an RFP was out if, pending the results the Board could choose to alter its decision.

There was additional Board discussion.

**MOVED BY** Gunkle and **2<sup>nd</sup> BY** McLoughlin to adjourn the meeting.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

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