



Southern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors Meeting

August 26, 2013

The second regular monthly meeting of the Board of School Directors of the School District of Southern Lehigh was held at 7:42 p.m. on the above date (August 26, 2013) at Southern Lehigh High School, Center Valley, PA.

PRESENT: Dimmig, Gunkle, McLoughlin, Hayes, Lindsay, Lycett, Mohr, Quigley, Stelts

ABSENT: None

OTHERS: Christman, Lewis, Melber, Millman, Bartholomew, Kennedy, Buchman, Takacs, Bergey, Donahue, Farris, Mickley, Popichak (PATCH), Rizzo (Morning Call) and approximately 14 other members of the community.

OPENING PROCEDURES

Mr. Dimmig 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.

Attorney James A. Bartholomew, School Solicitor, was recognized for his 35 years of service and presented with a personalized wooden armchair as a token of appreciation upon his retirement. Attorney Bartholomew thanked the Board with the following remarks-

“Thank you for your kind words and for honoring me this evening at my last Board meeting as District Solicitor.

I am often asked how long I have served as Solicitor. Without checking the Board minutes, I can't be entirely sure. But, I think that I was first appointed with Attorney Richard Shaffer in 1976 when I was a young associate in the law firm of Butz Hudders and Tallman. We replaced Attorney Karl Donecker who had served as Solicitor of the District from its creation in the late 1950's when the School District was consolidated and probably even before the time of its consolidation. Karl was a wonderful man and an astute lawyer. It was hard to fill his shoes. I left Butz Hudders in the fall of 1977, and it was shortly thereafter that Dick Shaffer said to me: “You've been doing all the work for the District, so you should continue to serve as Solicitor.” So, I think that it was probably around 1978 or so when I became the named, appointed Solicitor for the District.

By my count, over the past 35 plus years, I have attended more than 700 school board meetings, served 5 different superintendents, 1 interim superintendent, more than 60 different Board members, and numerous principals, staff, and teachers. As I look back over my career as a lawyer, I would have to say that my public service as District Solicitor has been the most satisfying and rewarding of anything that I have done as a lawyer. I was very fortunate to have a very close relationship with Jim Snell, the District's Business Manager, for 30 or so of those many years. We frequently worked very closely together on virtually everything that impacted the District's operations, including public bidding issues, debt financing, building projects, changes in the law, tax collection, personnel

issues, purchasing additional land, closing and selling Coopersburg Elementary School, establishing an Education Foundation for the District, obtaining the approvals from the Township and building the Intermediate School, and more – you name it and very likely Jim Snell and I touched it in some way. My goal was always to be able to present to the administration and the Board the best possible legal advice that I could give on important matters affecting the District's operations.

I was also very fortunate to be able to serve what I consider to be one of the premier School Districts in the Lehigh Valley. It's no accident that the School District was named as one of the best places to work in the Valley. I happen to believe that students in Southern Lehigh are getting a terrific education here under the guidance of a dedicated teaching staff. These things do not just happen by chance. They happen because of leadership from the top down, including the Superintendent and other professional administrative staff, and most importantly the volunteer, elected Board Members. Our Board Members devote countless hours of public service to the School District without any pay. Sometimes they even take some heat in public. It is a difficult job, and they do it very well. Historically, this Board has not been a political Board. By and large, its only political ambition is to provide the best possible education to its students and, at the same time, to be mindful of its obligation to spend taxpayer dollars wisely. It has been a real pleasure to work in a District where quality is a priority; thoroughness, open discourse, and thoughtful decision making is important; and respect for others is valued. In closing, I just want all of you to know how much I have appreciated the opportunity to serve this District and that I wish you all the very best. Thank you."

The public, including former board members and several long time colleagues were invited to have cake and refreshments after the meeting.

VISITORS

Mrs. Karen Markham, addressed the Board to request that the book, "The Bluest Eye", be removed from the summer book list due to material she found inappropriate for her daughter. Mr. Dimmig thanked Mrs. Markham for her feedback and was encouraged to discuss the appropriateness of the book with high school administration.

Mr. John Schubert addressed the Board to discuss the slow payment process of the district's emergency services tax collected by Berkheimer Associates.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY Gunkle and **2ND BY** Lycett to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2013 meeting as distributed to all Board members.

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: None

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Approve the bills list as of August 26, 2013 showing bills paid in the amount of \$490,685.18 and bills to be paid in the amount of \$417,984.58 for a total amount of

\$908,669.76 for the General Fund and bills paid in the amount of \$16,850.00 for the Capital Reserve Sinking Fund;

Approve the Treasurer's Report and Investment Report for the month of July, 2013;

Accept the resignation of the following staff-

Melinda Watkins, .5 Kindergarten Teacher, Liberty Bell Elementary School. Ms. Watkins was appointed to this position at the August 12, 2013 board meeting and is being recommended on this agenda for the Grade 3 Teacher position;

Approve the following Substitute Teachers for the 2013-2014 school year-

Melissa Clarke Elementary Ed K-6; ESL; Middle Level Citizenship 7-9;
Middle Level English 7-9

Rachel Kletzel Elementary Ed K-6; Middle Level English 7-9; Middle Level Mathematics

Amanda Labs Elementary Ed K-6; Special Ed N-12; Middle Level Mathematics 7-9

Meaghan Lyons Elementary Ed K-6; ESL

Jill Melchior Elementary Ed K-6; Special Ed N-12

Georgios Mitakos Elementary Ed K-6;

Accept the resignations of the following staff-

Michelle Davis, Instructional Assistant, Southern Lehigh High School, effective August 16, 2013.

Melinda Watkins, Instructional Assistant, Liberty Bell Elementary School, effective August 16, 2013.

Sharon Neders, Instructional Assistant, Liberty Bell Elementary School, effective August 7, 2013.

Stacey Kuntzman, Instructional Assistant, Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, effective August 19, 2013;

Approve the following staff-

Donna Reffle, Instructional Assistant (3 hour), Hopewell Elementary School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013.

Linda Wentling, Instructional Assistant (3 hour), Hopewell Elementary School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013.

Anastasia Benner, 1:1 Instructional Assistant (5.75 hour), Liberty Bell Elementary School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013. Ms. Benner will fill the position due to the resignation of *Sharon Neders*.

Mara Lambert, Tech Facilitator (27 hours/week), Lower Milford Elementary School, an hourly rate of \$20.15, effective August 21, 2013. This is a new position.

Stephanie Weihs-Hespell, Instructional Assistant (3 hour), Lower Milford Elementary School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013.

Amanda Anderson, Tech Facilitator (29 hours/week), Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, an hourly rate of \$20.15, effective August 22, 2013. Ms. Lambert will fill the position due to the resignation of *Elizabeth Tate*.

Tracy Hammond, Instructional Assistant (29 hours/week), Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 20, 2013. Ms. Hammond will replace *Stacey Kuntzman*.

Judith Lynch, Instructional Assistant (29 hour/week), Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 20, 2013. Ms. Lynch will replace *Melinda Watkins*.

Lisa Dickinson, Instructional Assistant (3 hour), Joseph P, Liberati Intermediate School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013. Ms. Dickinson will fill the position due to the transfer of *Judith Lynch*.

Georgios Mitakos, RtII Instructional Assistant (3 hour), Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013. Mr. Mitakos will fill the position due to the transfer of *Mara Lambert*.

Angela Hagenbuch, Instructional Assistant (20 hours/week), Southern Lehigh Middle School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013

Susan Huber, Instructional Assistant (4 hour), Southern Lehigh Middle School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013.

Joanne Gottier, Instructional Assistant (4 hour), Southern Lehigh Middle School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013.

Michelle Albanese, Instructional Assistant (4 hour), Southern Lehigh High School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013.

Cathleen Hendrzak, Instructional Assistant (5.75 hour), Southern Lehigh High School, an hourly rate of \$17.46. effective August 26, 2013.

Jennifer McLaughlin, Instructional Assistant (5.75 hour), Southern Lehigh High School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 21, 2013;

Approve Stephanie Hutzayluk, Long-Term Substitute Instructional Assistant (29 hour/week), Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School, an hourly rate of \$17.46, effective August 26, 2013. Ms. Hutzayluk will fill the position during the reassignment of *Amanda Ruth*;

Approve Nicole Castetter, Substitute Licensed Health Room Nurse, Hopewell Elementary School, for the 2013-2014 school year, an hourly rate of \$20.00, effective August 20, 2013. Mrs. Castetter will fill the position during the unpaid leave of *Judith Miller*;

Approve the following Substitute Instructional Assistants, an hourly rate of \$15.31, for the 2013-2014 school year-

Georgios Mitakos

Stephanie Hutzayluk;

Approve the following mentors for the 2013-2014 school year-

Carol Horvath, mentor for *Susan Bryan*, .5 Kindergarten Teacher, at a stipend of \$700.

Colleen Smith, mentor for *Melinda Watkins*, Grade 3 Teacher, at a stipend of \$700;

Approve the following staff for additional summer duties, at the homebound rate of \$40.09 per hour-

Joseph Helinski

Carol Horvath

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: None

CURRICULUM/STUDENT AND STAFF ACTIVITIES

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

High School report –

Dr. Donahue read the following report in Mr. Covelle's absence –

- First day of school today and the first day went well with new schedule.
- Preparing for Laptop distribution next week.
- 9/16 – Back to school night

Middle School report –

- Opening Day: Smooth delivery of services to students, first day of instruction recorded.
- 8/28 - 8th grade Assembly on Decorum
- 8/29 - 7th grade Assembly on Decorum
- Activity Sign-ups: August 29, 2013
- 9/3 - PTG Meeting
- 9/4 - MS Student Photos
- 9/13 – MS Dance

Intermediate School report

- The IS school is up and running and the day went very well. Our transportation department deserves many thanks. 9/10 - Open House for Parents, 7:00-8:30PM
- 9/10 - PTG Meeting, 9:30AM
- 9/17 - Market Day Pick Up
- 9/18 - School Photos

Elementary schools –

- 8/22 - Orientations for kindergarteners and other new students were held. Almost all new students and their parents or other adults were present.
- Hopewell, Liberty Bell and Lower Milford had successful starts to the new school year. Principals and staff appreciative of all the work from the Transportation Department staff in assuring that the students' arrival and departure went smoothly.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

MOVED BY Gunkle and **2ND BY** Stelts to approve the following the Settlement of the pending Tax Assessment Appeals relating to County-wide re-assessment as follows:

Olympus America, Inc. – Lehigh County File No. 2012-C-4350

The assessed value of the property which is the subject of this Appeal, namely, PIN #6415531945191, consisting of 54 acres of land together with an industrial building situated thereon and located at 3500 Corporate Parkway, Center Valley, PA 18034, shall

be assessed at \$43,250,000, which is 100% of its fair market value, for purposes of assessment of real estate taxes for the years on and after January 1, 2013.

There was Board discussion and the motion was amended to include the stipulation that Olympus will not seek any refund in lieu of payments already paid to the school district.

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: None

SUPPORT SERVICES

PERSONNEL

MOVED BY Gunkle and **2ND BY** Stelts to approve the following certificated staff, effective August 16, 2013 (*pending receipt of required documentation*)-

Melinda Watkins, Grade 3 Teacher, Liberty Bell Elementary School, at Masters, Step 9, an annual salary of \$57,753. This is a new position.**

Susan Bryan, .5 Kindergarten Teacher, Liberty Bell Elementary School, at Masters, Step 10, an annual salary of \$28,573.50. This is a new position previously filled by *Melinda Watkins*.**

***The salary listed is for the 2012-2013 school year and the 2013-2014 salary will be determined after the school year begins.*

VOICE VOTE: "YES" – Unanimous – Motion Carried
ABSENT: None

REPORTS

Policy Committee

Mr. Lindsay reported the committee met today and discussed the following-

- Homebound instruction and Advertising

Facilities Committee

Mrs. Gunkle reminded those in attendance that a Special Board meeting to discuss the findings of a Demographic and Life/Cost Analysis will be held on Wednesday, August 28, 2013 at 7:30PM in the High School Auditorium. The presentation is available on the district's website.

Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Christman reported the following-

- The staff welcome back assembly was held on August 20, 2013 and was very positive.
- The NCLB waiver was approved and Annual Yearly Progress will now only apply to Title I schools (JPLIS and MS in this district).
- The entire Superintendent's Report is available on the district's website.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

MOVED BY Gunkle and **2ND BY** Stelts to approve the following memoranda of understanding with local law enforcement authorities for the two-year period beginning September 1, 2013-

Borough of Coopersburg

Township of Lower Milford

Township of Upper Saucon

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

VISITORS

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

ATTEST: _____ Board Secretary