

## School Board Presidents Report

January 15, 2018

I would like to begin tonight by wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

I would also like to extend a thank you to PTA Council for the reception they hosted earlier this evening for the Board in honor of School Board Recognition Month. I know I speak for my colleagues when I say that we greatly appreciate the volunteer work of the PTA members who work tirelessly on behalf of our students and contribute to the positive learning environment in our schools.

### **Mellon Middle School Stock Market Awards**

Congratulations to Mellon Middle School students David Poole, Noah Bhuta, Tommy Hanson, Eli Heidenreich and Nico Vannarsdall on winning first and second place in the Fall 2017 Pittsburgh/Southwestern Pennsylvania Stock Market Games in the Middle School Division. Their success was based on their knowledge of business, the global economy, and investing by creating top performing portfolios. The Stock Market Game is an online simulation of the global capital markets that engages students in grades 4-12 in the world of economics, investing and personal finance, and prepares them for financially independent lives. More than 600,000 students take part every school year across all 50 states and around the globe. Congratulations to our students and their Business Information Technology teacher, Ms. Deanna Amenta.

### **Teacher Negotiations**

Our current collective bargaining agreement with the Mt. Lebanon Education Association expires on June 30, 2018. As required by law, teacher contract negotiations are now underway. The School Board plans to work with the leadership of the MLEA in good faith to come to an agreement that balances the needs of all District stakeholders. We have faith that this process will guide us to a positive outcome for our teachers, students, and community.

Today we celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A day that represents his bravery and his lifelong quest for unity, equality and respect.

I think it is appropriate to talk about Dr. King here tonight in the School Board meeting before students of our school district, because education is at the root of everything that he and the Civil Rights Movement stand for.

This is a great time to talk about embracing differences, respecting others, anti-bullying and standing up for what is right. As a former School Resource Officer from the Mt. Lebanon Police Department, I saw first-hand how the demonstration of respect and understanding can play a critical role in a successful educational environment.

As I revisited the details of Dr. King's impressive life, I grew to become more impressed with his unrelenting quest for and value that he placed upon human dignity and equality of life. But what impressed me just as much was his passionate desire to continue to learn.

Here are some interesting facts about Martin Luther King Jr.:

- He graduated from high school at the very young age of 15
- He received a college degree, Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Morehouse College at the age of 19
- He attended Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, PA. He was an exceptional academic student and Valedictorian of his class in 1951. He was elected class President. He also earned a fellowship for graduate study.
- Dr. King earned a Doctorate in Systematic Theology from Boston University in 1955.
- At the age of 26 he led a bus boycott, which caught the attention of the nation
- His non-violent protests and bus boycott resulted in the outlawing of segregation in public accommodations and discrimination in education and employment
- He led the movement and played an important role in achieving more enhanced, equal rights for African Americans

Many of these facts focus on Dr. King's academic accomplishments and I do not think that is a coincidence. It is only with a strong academic foundation - one that focuses on science, mathematics and letters for sure - but one that is cultivated in an environment that encourages understanding and diversity of opinion, can we nurture the students in our community who will change the world in ways large and small.

So on this day we remember Dr. King, celebrate the values that he embodied and measure ourselves and our community against the ideal that he spoke of so eloquently during his all too brief life.

This concludes my Board Presidents report.  
Michael Riemer