

Mt. Lebanon School District
School Board President Report – October 17, 2015
Lawrence M. Lebowitz

Good evening. At the beginning of each school year, we set aside time to recognize the many contributions made to our schools through the volunteer efforts of our Mt. Lebanon PTA. The Mt. Lebanon School District is very fortunate to have 10 active PTA Units (that is, one at each of our schools) along with a well-organized PTA Council. This parent advocacy organization has been a vital part of our schools for over 85 years.

We are pleased to give special recognition tonight to the PTA Presidents and Council President, each of whom volunteer so much of their time to advocate for all of the students in the District. We look forward to working with you this year and for many years to come.

As I call your name, please come forward to receive well-deserved recognition for your efforts:

Jodi Kubit – PTA Council

Mary Ellen Donato – Foster

Christina Battaglia – Hoover

Joyce Devine – Howe

Amy Shannon-Spector – Lincoln

Christine Neavin – Jefferson

Moira Aulbach – Markham

Allison Carey – Washington

Colleen Frank – Jefferson Middle School

Bonnie Dougherty – Mellon Middle School

Lisa Silverman – Mt. Lebanon High School

In accordance with state law, each year the School Board is required to work with the Superintendent to establish goals for the upcoming year. At the same time, we look back to see if the goals set in the previous year have been met. I am pleased to report that both tasks have been accomplished, and Dr. Steinhauer both met last year's goals and is eager to do the same for the 2016/2017 school year. Dr. Steinhauer's goals for the coming year will be posted on the District website. We could not be more pleased with Dr. Steinhauer's work and very much appreciate his efforts on behalf of the District.

Talking about good management, this evening we will be voting on the Single Audit Report prepared for the District by our CPA firm, Maher Duessel. As I know my fellow Board members agree, the report is extremely comprehensive and paints a very complimentary picture of the District's financial position. Additionally, and very importantly, it makes it clear that our District's finances are extremely well managed by Ms. Klein and her staff. We appreciate all of their collective efforts, along with that of Dr. Steinhauer, to help ensure the financial stability of the District

so as to enable us to achieve our goal of providing the best education possible for each and every student.

In previous months I have reported on my visits to each of the schools throughout Mt. Lebanon. Last week, I had a wonderful visit to the High School where I spent part of the morning with Principal McFeeley and Dr. Davis touring through the halls and observing classes in Mathematics, English, Social Studies, World Languages, Special Education and English as Second Language. I once again had an opportunity to see teachers meeting as part of the Student Assistance Program (on which we will be voting this evening) and, of course, spoke with several teachers throughout the building. I also took the opportunity to sit in on Mr. DiNardo's AP Government class and heard some very interesting connections being made between the goals of our founding fathers and what is occurring in election politics today. As has been the case after every other visit, I left that morning feeling so good about our teachers, students and the overall learning environment at the High School.

In that same regard, and in response to an invitation from our Global Studies Program (which, as the Board will recall, we helped to establish along with our STEM Program a few years ago), I spoke to two classes at the High School on Friday morning. Despite the early hour, the kids were attentive and hopefully learned a few things about the intersection between immigration law and politics. I strongly encourage any and all community members to take

advantage of this same opportunity to meet with our High School students and share their own expertise. I assure you that it will be time very well spent.

I would also like to thank Mrs. Birks for representing the School Board at the Foster 75th Anniversary Celebration held on October 8. I understand that it was a wonderful event and is a real testament to the Foster community both past and present that so many people attended to celebrate this special milestone in the school's history.

Let me also take a moment to give a special "shout out" to our Girls Tennis Team. I do so not only because of their Section Championship and WPIAL runner-up finish but, even more so, because these accomplishments were achieved without the benefit of playing any home matches. Instead, and as the Board will recall, the Tennis Team has in fact had to play all of their "home" matches at a neighboring school during the entire construction process. We really had hoped to enable the girls to at least play one match on Horsman Drive but, unfortunately, it did not work out. Despite this fact, the girls have had a great season and will hopefully continue this success into the PIAAL Playoffs. Congratulations to all of the members of the team and Coach Skrok.

Last but certainly not least, tonight we bring back the “Extra Mile Award” which (as its name reflects) recognizes a District employee who does indeed “go the extra mile” for our students. This month’s winner is seated right here with us and is Ms. Jeanine Szalinski. Having served four different Superintendents, Jeanine is a consummate professional who supports not only our Superintendent but, also, our Director of Communications, our Director of Advancement as well as several different constituent groups. She is also our “Right to Know” Officer which, as we all know, takes a lot of time and even more patience. Ms. Szalinski also does all of the administrative work on behalf of the Board. Jeanine is always willing to help and, no matter how busy she is or how many other requests she is handling, she somehow finds the time to help us. She is someone who simply “gets it done” (and done very well) on a consistent basis and always with a positive attitude. For this and many other reasons, Jeanine, congratulations and thank you as for being this month’s recipient of the Extra Mile Award.