

School Board Report

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President, Mt. Lebanon School Board

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Niche.com 2018 Middle Schools with the Best Teachers

Congratulations to Jefferson and Mellon Middle Schools on their Best Middle School Teacher rankings from Niche.com. Jefferson teachers were ranked #1 in PA and #4 in the nation while Mellon teachers were ranked #2 in PA and # 9 in the nation. This ranking is based on an analysis of academic and teacher data from the U.S. Department of Education along with reviews from students and parents.

I want to commend the faculties of both Jefferson and Mellon Middle Schools and would like to recognize the leadership of Jefferson Principal Mrs. Kelly Szeszterniak and Mellon Principal Mr. Chris Wolfson on this outstanding recognition of our excellent teachers.

MTLSD Community Speakers Bureau

The Mt. Lebanon School District Community Speakers' Bureau is looking for community members and Mt. Lebanon High School Alumni who are passionate about their profession or area of interest and would like to share their expertise with our students. The Speakers' Bureau connects our teachers with individuals who have a desire to "pay it forward" by offering a presentation or sharing a skill or passion with the next generation. All teachers in the district have access to the information collected so every student in the district can potentially take advantage of this collaboration. This initiative is led by the High School STEM Academy and the Global Studies Program departments. Visit www.mtlsd.org/speakersbureau for more information.

The sounds of a new school year are ringing from our fields and hallways! The band has been busy practicing, our sports teams are gearing up for another great year, and the facilities team has been putting the final touches on our school buildings, and they look amazing! Another sign that school is starting soon? New teacher orientation!

New Teacher Orientation

This morning, as Dr. Steinhauer began the orientation session for our newest teachers and staff members by having everyone form a circle and introduce themselves; his message was to focus on the words, Hope, Optimism and Kindness. As usual, he is a tough act to follow, and it was my privilege to welcome them to the toughest job they would ever love! I assured them that they have amazing mentors and team leaders that are here for them as they begin their journeys and that the Board supports their work

with our students as part of the formula for success! This formula includes our professional teachers, our involved parents and students coming to the classroom, ready to learn. Everyone seemed very excited to begin their work with the district.

Superintendent Evaluation

Another large part of the success of our district is directly linked to the leadership team. As Superintendent, Dr. Steinhauer leads a wonderful team, and sets high standards for himself and those who work with him; they in turn challenge him as well. We will vote this evening on the positive evaluation Dr. Steinhauer has received for the 2016-17 school year. In accordance with the School Code, Superintendents are awarded either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory designation; as Dr. Steinhauer has met the agreed to performance objectives, he will be awarded a Satisfactory for his work in 2016-17. In accordance with his contract, the board will be approving his much-deserved pay increase.

We continue to receive accolades on student achievement and overall district success; while the entire team of administrators and teachers contributes to this ongoing success, the leadership of Dr. Steinhauer has certainly had a direct impact on these successes. It is my privilege to personally thank him for his exceptional work, serving both the students and our community, knowing that he is committed to our district's philosophy of continuous improvement both personally and professionally. He would be the first to tell us that there is still more to be achieved; to that end, his goals for the 2017-2018 school year will be posted on the District's website as soon as they are finalized.

Events of Charlottesville

And now, on a personal note, I'd like to address the tragic events in Charlottesville last weekend. We observed a moment of silence at the beginning of tonight's meeting to honor those victims of this act of domestic terrorism, as well as those killed or injured in Spain's terrorist attack.

But the events of Charlottesville were particularly difficult for me to take in; perhaps because as a family, we were in the midst of celebrating one of the most joyous occasions in our lives and the juxtaposition of the hatred we saw over the love we were feeling was indeed jarring. But as I looked around the reception, I realized that we were the antithesis for such acts of cowardice and hatred. Because within that room were Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, Spanish Basques, and Caucasians. Multiple religions were also represented and the one thing that everyone had in common was the love for the young couple beginning their life together.

As leaders within this district, we must take a stand against bigotry, racism and hatred in all its forms. Our students should feel safe in our schools, and we must continue to support policies of inclusion. Nelson Mandela said it best in his book, "Long Walk to Freedom": "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."