

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
OF THE
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
MT. LEBANON SCHOOL DISTRICT

February 24, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors was held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2020, in Room D205, Mt. Lebanon High School.

Ms. Olbrich called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jefferson Elementary students Aaisha Ansari, Shaylin Short, Bodie Antonelli, Ellsie Short, and Everett MacPhail. The students gave a presentation on the Jefferson Jimmies buddy program designed to encourage other students and build self-esteem.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mr. Hugh Beal, Mrs. Elaine Cappucci, Dr. Aviva Diamond, Ms. Valerie Fleisher (by phone), Dr. Justin Hackett, Ms. Sarah Olbrich, Mr. Michael Riemer, Dr. Stephen Strotmeyer, Mr. Jacob Wyland
Absent: None

ATTENDING:

Dr. Marybeth Irvin, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Thomas Peterson, Solicitor
Administrative Staff: Ms. Cissy Bowman, Dr. Ronald Davis, Dr. Heather Doyle, Mr. Robert Geletko, Mr. Richard Marciniak, Mr. Christopher Stengel, Mr. Brett Bielewicz, Mr. Joel Thompson

MINUTES

It was moved by Strotmeyer and seconded by Diamond that the Board approves the minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting held on January 13, 2020; the Discussion Meeting held on January 13, 2020; and the Regular Meeting held on January 20, 2020.

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE

STUDENT COUNCIL REPORTS

Jefferson Middle School Student Council members Keerthi Girish and Logan Kuhlman reported on the events at Jefferson Middle School. Council held their annual Candygram event in December and raised \$416.40 for the Team Kyle fundraiser. Student hosted Jeans Days on Wednesdays in December and January to support Penn State's THON and collected \$600 to help in the effort to end childhood cancer.

On February 14, 43 Student Council members attended the PASC Spring Region Conference hosted by Montour High School. Students attending became more familiar with the PASC organization and had the privilege to hear Stu Sanders, a well-known expert on student leadership. Six of the student led leadership workshops were presented by JMS students. The conference was an extremely worthwhile experience for all who attended.

The annual Pop Tab Wars began this week with homerooms battling with each other for one week to see who the winner is. The true winner will be the Adelaide Koala Rescue, an organization focusing on saving animals indigenous to Australia in the wake of the tragic fires. Student Council is hoping to have a healthy donation to help koalas, kangaroos, and wombats of Australia.

During the fourth week of March, JMS will hold Wish Week. The Wish Week Committee has been working hard on granting as many wishes as possible, everything from gifting a wire shopping cart that will fit in the palm of your hand to scheduling several kid principals during the week. Council looks forward to bestowing a little contained, happy, craziness in the building.

Mt. Lebanon High School Student Body co vice presidents presented an update on the events and activities at the high school. Six hundred and ninety four students attended the 2020 Snowball Dance on a snowy night this month. The theme of the dance was “Aurora: Under the Northern Lights.” The decorating committee did a great job of creating the theme in Center Court.

The Link Crew program continues to be a very successful mentorship program at the high school. The annual “Cocoa and Cram” event took place just before final exams last month. Over 300 freshmen and an additional 50 sophomores were able to study in a relaxed environment and ask for assistance from their mentors and high school teachers. Mrs. Smith, Mr. Locke, Ms. Deet, and Mrs. Saba do a great job of training Link Crew members to be effective mentors to the freshmen.

The Vitalant blood drive took place last week and resulted in 26 blood products being donated by students, parents of students, and faculty. The final drive of the year will be held on April 20 and employees of the District and parents of students are welcome to contribute.

Jack took a moment to congratulate Eva for being selected as the February Mt. Lebanon/Dormont/Castle Shannon Rotary Student of the Month. Some of Eva’s accomplishments include being a Pittsburgh Penguins Elite Tier 1 AAA Girl’s Ice Hockey Teammate of the Month, a 2019 KDKA Extra Effort award winner, a member of the National Honor Society, a varsity letter award winner in field hockey and lacrosse, an active volunteer for the Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation, and she maintains a 5.0 weighted GPA.

Under the supervision of Mr. Peter DiNardo, students in several Social Studies classes and the Student Council have developed a Week of Kindness which began on February 24. These students received a challenge that asked them to find a way to promote kindness, empathy, and unity at our school. Several ideas were discussed and a plan of action was determined. The committee also crafted a Lebo Pledge that they hope students will sign and refer to throughout the year. A video was shown that showcases what is planned during the Week of Kindness.

The second Wipe Out Cancer Wednesday is scheduled for February 26. This school wide initiative was developed by Student Council to encourage students, faculty, staff members, and administrators to wear pink, green, teal, purple, or orange clothing that shows support of the students, teachers, and our Principal who are battling cancer. Two more Wipe Out Wednesdays are planned for March and April.

Sophomores Melanie Rayl and Michel Mylen’s wonderful acting skills catapulted them into the final round of the Shakespeare Monologue and Scene Competition that took place at the O’Reilly Theater. They performed an impressive and humorous interpretation of Helena and Demetrius from “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

Four high school orchestra members qualified for positions in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Regional Orchestra. The students are juniors Alexandra Stephenson and Caroline Kenney, senior Aaron Fry, and sophomore Rose Lischner.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Olbrich reported that she had the honor of visiting Foster Elementary school and Principal Jason Ramsey with Dr. Irvin. Mrs. Olbrich is always impressed with the teachers in our district and their commitment to our children; it was heartening to see in person. From teachers working in small groups, to sitting on the floor with children, to creating library displays highlighting the myriad texts and authors we have, Foster is a vibrant flourishing school. But what has stuck with me the most, is one of the ways Foster stands out. Around every corner there is artwork. From archways painted with birds, to murals made out of bottle tops representing famous artists - where there used to be radiators. There is always something beautiful and inspiring to look at, most evident in the library mural depicting the Dewey decimal system.

The board president announced that Public Schools Week starts today and celebrates our nation's public schools, our students, and the many school professionals who work to help students achieve their greatest potential. Nine out of 10 students in America attend public schools. Public Schools Week is a national celebration to highlight the great things happening in our nation's public schools and in our Mt. Lebanon schools as well. The Mt. Lebanon School District has provided a quality education for all children in this community since 1912 and we have seen the results in our accomplished alumni. This initiative shows the strength and potential of public schools in a democratic society.

A public school education is the great equalizer for children. Regardless of ability, race, wealth, language, religion or country of origin, a public school prepares children for future endeavors. Mt. Lebanon embodies this in myriad ways through our mission statement "To Provide the Best Education Possible for Each and Every Student".

Ms. Olbrich announced that the Board will hold a Budget Forum for the public to discuss the factors we will be considering in our upcoming budget deliberations on March 11 at 7:30 pm in the High School Room D205.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Irvin report on behalf of Dr. Steinhauer who was unable to attend the meeting due to a family matter, and reported that the District is the recipient of two outstanding grants.

Mt. Lebanon School District was awarded a \$2,500 Helping Kids Mini Grant from the American Association for School Administrators and Sourcewell to be used for Peak Performance Academy.

Peak Performance Academy will focus on the four pillars of positive well-being: How we think; How we move; How we rest; and What we eat. All four areas are critical to positive performance in school and life. We will use research and evidence based approaches to help middle school students build competence and understanding in these four areas with the goal of establishing positive practices prior to entering high school. Dr. Steinhauer was the recipient of this grant, which supports Superintendent Goal 2, Social and Emotional Learning. In fact, he mentioned this in his presentation on this goal last month.

The District is also the recipient of a \$35,000 PA Smart Grant to expand computer science and coding learning opportunities with teacher training. Elementary school librarian Bridget Belardi and HS computer science teacher Duane Lewis, who lead their respective departments, were the writers for this grant, in support of the Superintendent Goal 1- Learning for the Future.

These funds will be used to provide an elementary and middle school team of educators with professional development to support the advanced coding skills needed to grow our program as well as to purchase supplies that students will use in the demonstration of their coding skills.

The PAsmart program is a statewide initiative designed to ensure that students have the skills and abilities needed for the 21st century, particularly in science, technology, engineering and math, by providing high-quality educational opportunities for students as well as related professional development for teachers.

BOARD REPORTS

Policy Committee – Dr. Diamond reported the Policy Committee met on February 10 and reviewed policies IHBF, Homebound Instruction and JJE, Student Fundraising. Revisions were made and the policies were moved forward for Board approval.

Board Development/PSBA – Dr. Strotmeyer reminded the Board of the PSBA Team of Ten workshop for the Board development on February 26. Board members are invited to attend PSBA Advocacy Day on March 23 in Harrisburg to meet with Pennsylvania legislators and advocate for public education. PSBA is asking school districts state-wide to support a resolution calling for charter school funding reform. The main issues are that formula for funding and the public cost of charter schools is not only unfair but imbalanced, charter school proficiency in state testing is more than 20% lower than public schools, and graduation rates are lower. Most importantly, the burden of funding falls mainly on the school districts. The Board will place on the March agenda.

Environmental Sustainability Board – Mr. Beal reported that he is gathering information for the Environmental Sustainability Board on the District's efforts relating to sustainability, recycling and composting.

Municipal Liaison – Dr. Hackett reported that the Commission is discussing road reconstruction, updates on storm water fees, and bids for installing solar panels on the public library.

Parkway West Career & Technology Center – Mr. Beal attended the 2/4 meeting as Mr. Riemer was in Puerto Rico doing disaster relief work. The enrollment this year is 912 with 41 students from Mt. Lebanon. Courses of study include Auto Body Repair, Automotive Technology, Carpentry, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Diesel Technology, Graphic Arts & Production Technology, Electrical Systems Technology, Healthcare Occupations Technology, HVAC/R, Cyber Security & Network Technology, Public Safety Technology, Veterinary Assistant Technology, Welding Technology.

Six seniors passed the NOCII or certification examination in their field. Mt. Lebanon students earned 44 portable industrial credentials in their field. Mason and Jackson Baylor finished in 1st place in the Parkway Skills USA completion. The annual open house will be held on March 3. Dr. Copeland will be presenting an update on Parkway West CTC and the March regular board meeting.

Pathfinder School – Mr. Beal reported that he attended the Pathfinder board meeting on February 19. Mr. Beal reviewed the general structure of the consortium. The 2017-2018 financial audit is clean and the auditors are working on the 2018-2019. Mr. Geletko has been helpful in the preparation of the audits. The Pathfinder board will be voting on the 2021 budget in March and the consortium schools will vote on the budget in April.

COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS

One resident spoke before the Board about the following:

- Question regarding the number of bids received on the field resurfacing
- Questioned the scheduled of work
- How does the accepted bid meet the budget

NEW BUSINESS

It was moved by Beal and seconded by Riemer that the Board approves, ratifies, and accepts the following financial reports: (Copy in official minutes)

- a. Treasurer’s Report dated January 31, 2020,
- b. List of Bills dated January 31, 2020, and February 19, 2020, and
- c. List of Contracts in Excess of \$100 dated February 10, 2020.

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Beal and seconded by Strotmeyer that the Board approves the Capital Projects Fund Budget for the 2020-2021 construction season as per the list dated February 6, 2020 in the amount of \$1,618,766. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Wyland and seconded by Diamond that the Board approves the February 6, 2020, list of personnel changes as revised February 20, 2020. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Diamond and seconded Riemer that the Board approves revisions to Policy IHBF, Homebound Instruction, in the form presented. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Diamond and seconded by Riemer that the Board approves revisions to Policy JJE, Student Fundraising, in the form presented. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: Fleisher
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Riemer and seconded by Strotmeyer that the Board approves the Parkway West Career and Technology Center General Operating Budget for 2020-2021 in the amount \$6,994,089 with an estimated cost to the District of \$277,887, and the Jointure Budget in the amount of \$723,154 with Mt. Lebanon share being \$121,929.94. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Strotmeyer and seconded by Cappucci that the Board approves the following student trips:

- a. Mt. Lebanon High School Student Council to Kingsley, PA, February 27-29, 2020
- b. High School Yearbook Production students to Nashville, TN, April 15-18, 2020

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Cappucci and seconded by Riemer that the administration is authorized to enter into a contract with Field Turf Inc. through the Pennsylvania Keystone Purchasing Network bidding program based on pricing of \$899,113.72 for the resurfacing of and repairs to the High School Stadium track and field, subject to approval by the Superintendent and Solicitor of an acceptable final agreement.

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Hackett and seconded by Strotmeyer that the Board nominates Sarah L. Olbrich as a Trustee for the Western Region to the Allegheny County School Health Consortium Board for a two-year period effective March 30, 2020.

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS

Four residents spoke before the Board about the following:

Damage done to turf by outside groups
WPIAL events hosted by Mt. Lebanon High School
Diversity and cultural inclusion in the District and community
Make children aware of people with different backgrounds

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Riemer and seconded by Beal to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Cecile D. Bowman, Secretary
Board of School Director

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