

SOUDERTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

760 Lower Road
Souderton, PA 18964

A regularly scheduled public meeting of the Souderton Area Board of School Directors was held Thursday, March 27, 2008 at the District Administrative Offices in the Tinner Board Room. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by President Bernard S. Currie, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll call was as follows:

PRESENT:	Dr. R. Paul Baumgartner	Mark D. Leer
	William J. Brong	Eric R. MacDougall
	Bernard S. Currie	R. Bud Miller
	Scott C. Jelinski	Victor M. Verbeke
	Thomas A. Kwiatkowski	
SOLICITOR:	Mark Fitzgerald, Esq.	

Also present at the meeting were: Dr. Charles Amuso, Karen Berk, Brenda J. Bray, Donna Brown, Steve Bukowski, R. Bradley Clemens, Deborah Doebler, Grace Eves, Henry Franz, Frank Gallagher, Warren Gericke, Van Le, Gail Ryan, Sam Varano, Wayne Walton, representatives from *The Reporter*, *The Souderton Independent*, *The Morning Call*, Radio Station WNPV, and the public.

REPORT OF THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD

Miss Van Lee, representative of the Class of 2008, reported on the success of the high school musical “State Fair,” and also spoke about future events such as the April 19th Rummage Sale, SAVE Recycling Day at Indian Valley, the Senior and Junior Proms, and a dodge ball fundraiser for Autism Awareness. Also in the next few weeks SAHS will be hosting the Indoor Guard and Percussion Competition and the Battle of the Bands.

WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

Operations Committee
William J. Brong, Chairman

Lower Salford Roof Bids

Mr. Brong informed the Board that there were seven companies that submitted bids for the Lower Salford Elementary School roof project. Apparent low bidder is Jim Miller, Inc. with a base bid of \$67,295.

Mrs. Bray added that this project is approximately 15,000 square feet and the final phase of the Lower Salford roof refurbishing.

RECOMMENDATION: Move this item forward to the next School Board meeting on April 10th for approval.

WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS (CONTINUED)

Operations Committee (Continued)

D’Huy Engineering, Inc. Quarterly Report

The Board received an update on the new high school project from Warren Gericke, D’Huy Engineering. Mr. Gericke shared highlights about the current building activities that are taking place. In areas A through E, the Terrazzo flooring is going in. An above-ceiling punch list has been completed and given to the contractors for completion. Finishes are taking place in the pool, auditorium, and administration areas. The sewer meter pit arrived today and will be hooked up to the sewer system in the next few weeks. At that time, the system will be flushed and checked for leaks before the system begins to operate. The pump station is not in place, but Franconia Township will be responsible for the pump and haul when needed for inspection. The stadium buildings are going well. It is about four weeks until the tanks for gray water arrive. Mr. Gericke concluded by telling the Board that the entire job is going well and on schedule.

Mr. Brong questioned if Certificate of Occupancy (CO) inspections would be done as the areas are complete or would one final inspection be done. He also questioned if progress on the sewer plant would delay the Certificate of Occupancy.

Mr. Gericke responded that when the classroom areas are done, the inspectors will be brought in. Partial CO inspections will be done as areas of the building are completed. Franconia Township has represented that there should be no issues related to the sewage plant and obtaining the CO.

Mr. Miller inquired if the sewage plant would be finished in time for the school’s opening.

Mr. Gericke indicated that Franconia Township intends to have the plant finished by the original completion of the high school building, May 2009.

Mr. Miller questioned if the district is retaining funds from contractors since the project is 87% complete.

Mr. Gericke responded that most of the contractors started at 10% retainage and have been lowered to 5%. Money is held until 100% of the job is complete, then the money is released.

Mr. Leer asked if more change orders were anticipated.

Mr. Gericke responded that there are no anticipated change orders at this time.

Mr. Brong mentioned that Mr. Gericke would be back to report to the Board at the end of the next quarter.

Policy Committee

Victor M. Verbeke, Chairman

Policy #807 – Opening Exercises/Flag Displays

Mr. Verbeke indicated that Policy #807 had been reviewed in committee and by the Board, with some suggested changes.

WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS (CONTINUED)

Policy Committee (Continued)

Policy #807 – Opening Exercises/Flag Displays (Continued)

Mr. Gallagher indicated that the suggestions and the draft were incorporated into the PSBA policy format. This policy now includes the proper use of the National Flag Code and reference to eighth grade students receiving a copy of the Flag Code. Code booklets will be acquired through Representative Robert Godshall's office.

Mr. MacDougall mentioned that the last sentence of the policy did not make sense.

Mr. Verbeke responded that the wording was identical to the Pennsylvania State Statute. He suggested that wording should be placed in the policy relating to policy monitoring as per Policy Governance procedures.

RECOMMENDATION: Move Policy #807 forward to the next Board meeting for a First Reading.

Second Reading of Policies

Policy #910 - Community Relations

The community relations policy has been reviewed along with the 900 series of policies and has been updated to reflect current and planned practices.

Mr. Gallagher mentioned that the updating of Policy #910 was prompted by the writing of policy to cover the televising of Board meetings.

RECOMMENDATION: Move Policy #910 forward to the next Board meeting for a third reading and final adoption.

Policy #217 - Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements have been revised due to information received from the Federal government which requires the district to include language relating to IEP students and their participation in graduation. Another revision includes the incremental increase of graduation credits.

Mr. Verbeke mentioned that a provision was added to the policy regarding diplomas for Korean War Veterans. He began a discussion as to whether or not the district could move up the number of 28 credits required for graduation by one year and also move up by one year of the scholar diploma designation.

Mr. Gallagher indicated that he had met with Mr. Varano, Mr. Hey and Mr. Barber to review the incremental increase and look at the options.

Mr. Verbeke asked if the change in the number of required credits for graduation could be moved up to the Class of 2014.

WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS (CONTINUED)

Policy Committee (Continued)

Policy #217 - Graduation Requirements (Continued)

Mr. Varano proceeded to explain the incremental increase of credits as proposed in Policy #217. This will be a significant and profound change. It includes time for students to think about what courses they want to take, time to train the faculty, and time to get community leaders' input on what is needed to prepare our students for the future. When creating a change, those in the midst of the change think it always moves too fast. But for those seeing the potential benefit to the change, things change too slowly. Mr. Varano spent time sharing rationale for the proposed incremental increase of credits. Seventy percent of the graduates from the Class of 2006 earned more than 24 credits. However, thirty percent of the graduates from the same class were students who did not earn 24 more credits. They were not very interested in high school; referred to as disconnected students.

Dr. Baumgartner mentioned that reasons for not accelerating are that the current high school building is not sized properly to deal with the increment and that finances are involved. He asked if costs would increase when the increase in credit requirements takes place.

Mr. Varano explained that students are not able to get the courses they want due to building size, personnel, and time constraints. He shared the pros and cons of early graduation and senior privilege.

There was discussion about the number of schools in Montgomery County who require more or less credits than Souderton.

Mr. Varano added that the high school faculty has been working vigorously on increasing graduation credits. Increasing graduation credits is one of many projects and changes taking place at the high school.

Mr. Kwiatkowski asked about the number credits required and/or achievable for the present seventh graders. He asked if the 29 credits for a scholar's diploma could be accelerated.

Mr. Varano responded that there are a number of opportunities for seventh graders to achieve 26 credits by the time they graduate. He also said that a scholar's diploma is more than just 29 credits; grade point average, the graduation project, and the arts are a few of the additional requirements of the scholar designation.

Mr. Jelinski asked if the high school would be dropping senior privilege and study halls in future years.

Mr. Varano explained what would be needed to get students into classes. If and when this is achieved senior privilege will be eliminated.

Mr. Jelinski then gave an example of a student who made the wrong decisions in high school during their senior year and lost interest. He asked if the district has the responsibility to keep them interested in learning and in school.

WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS (CONTINUED)

Policy Committee (Continued)

Policy #217 - Graduation Requirements (Continued)

Mr. Brong asked for clarification on what type of diploma is given to students who earn 28 or 29 credits.

Mr. Varano responded that there is only one type of diploma that a student can earn at this time. He pointed out that a few years ago, when Pennsylvania wanted to require seals on diplomas, designating levels of achievement, Souderton's Board of Directors were opposed to it.

Mr. Brong asked if students are already achieving 28 or 29 credits, why not grant scholar diplomas next year.

Mr. Varano responded that students are accepted to colleges long before the diploma is awarded. The official transcript has the important information listed, GPA, ranking, etc. The criteria is in place for the scholar's diploma, but there are too many unresolved issues that would polarize the program at this time.

Mr. Brong asked if a modified block schedule would help to put the program in place.

Mr. Varano responded that the modified block schedule would not utilize the staff appropriately. He explained why block scheduling allows more opportunities for students.

Mr. MacDougall shared that to accelerate the program would be a mistake.

Mr. Verbeke thanked Mr. Varano for coming and answering the Board's questions. He suggested additional wording that would include the superintendent monitoring the policy and reporting to the Board on a regular basis.

Dr. Amuso agreed with the suggestion and added that the report should be at the time when the Program of Studies is discussed with the Board.

Mr. Gallagher verified the suggested language to be added to the policy.

Mr. Verbeke also suggested that the same type of monitoring provision should be placed at the end of Policy #807.

Mr. MacDougall shared concern about the process of identifying policies to be monitored by the administration before policy governance is in place.

RECOMMENDATION: Keep the graduation credit requirements as proposed in the policy. Also, move the policy to the next Board meeting for a third reading and final adoption.

WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS (CONTINUED)

Policy Committee (Continued)

Policy Governance Resolution

Mr. Verbeke noted that Dr. Amuso had suggested that the Board needed to agree on Policy Governance as the model for leadership and operations before policies are developed.

Dr. Amuso stated that he wanted to be certain that the entire Board wanted to go forward with Policy Governance. He asked for clear direction from the Board.

Mr. Verbeke mentioned that Dr. Amuso drafted a motion, which he summarized for the audience.

Dr. Baumgartner and Mr. Kwiatkowski shared their thoughts about Policy Governance and how it would improve the work of the School Board.

Mr. Brong shared concern about going through the process too quickly.

Mr. Miller added that the key to Policy Governance is to have a strong CEO who is trusted by the Board.

Mr. Verbeke indicated that it is important to define the role of the Board and superintendent. Once those roles are defined, then the Board needs to step back and let the superintendent do his job. The Board would have the final say.

Mr. Verbeke indicated that the Policy Committee will focus on policy outcomes and ends.

RECOMMENDATION: Move the Policy Governance Resolution to the next Board meeting for a vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Hugh Donnelly, from Franconia Township, shared his thoughts about the importance of teachers being responsible to teach every child. Students who don't take advantage of the teaching and resources available will find out in years to come that they made a mistake. Programs need to be available for all students.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Bernard S. Currie

There was an Executive Session on March 13, 2008 following the Board meeting to discuss personnel items. The meeting lasted 30 minutes.

An Executive Session was held this evening prior to the Board meeting to discuss personnel items. The meeting lasted approximately 15 minutes.

CONSENT/ACTION AGENDA

Dr. Amuso presented the consent/action agenda and recommended approval of the items listed. He asked Board members to pull-off items from the agenda if more discussion was needed.

Mr. Brong questioned the check listing for Bayada Nurses.

Mrs. Eves explained that the expense is for nursing services required for special education students.

Mr. Miller asked about transactions listed for SAEA.

Mrs. Eves responded that the funds are membership dues that are deducted from employee earnings and turned over to the Souderton Area Education Association (SAEA) on a regular basis.

Mr. Clemens indicated that the deduction from employee earnings per pay period is according to the SAEA contract. Mrs. Bray will forward information to the Board regarding the total deduction year-to-date for 2007-2008.

There was a motion by Mr. Miller, second by Dr. Baumgartner, and on a vote of 9 to 0, it was

RESOLVED, That the Board approve the items listed in the consent/action agenda as presented:

Recommendation to Approve Minutes of the March 13, 2008 School Board Meeting.

Recommendation to Approve Financial Statements and Check Listings for February 2008.

EXHIBIT A

Recommendation to Approve Requests to Attend Conferences/Workshops

EDWARD GALLAGHER	2008 Navy Football Coaches Clinic
Mathematics/Football Coach	Annapolis, MD
Souderton Area High School	April 4-5, 2008 (Friday-Saturday)
	Est. Expenses: \$470.53
	Sub. Expenses: <u>0.00</u>
	Total Est. Expenses: \$470.53

KAREN HEISEY	Wrath of Math
Student Support Teacher	Malvern, PA
Salford Hills Elem.	April 11, 2008 (Friday)
	Est. Expenses: \$125.00
	Sub. Expenses: <u>0.00</u>
	Total Est. Expenses: \$125.00

CONSENT/ACTION AGENDA (CONTINUED)

Recommendation to Approve Requests to Attend Conferences/Workshops (Continued)

BRENDA JONES BRAY 2008 School District Conference
Director of Business Affairs Malvern, PA
June 5, 2008 (Thursday)
Est. Expenses: \$236.83
Sub. Expenses: 0.00
Total Est. Expenses: \$236.83

PERSONNEL – ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Recommendation to eliminate the positions of Supervisor of Special Services and Director of Pupil Services effective January 1, 2008, and to approve the position of Director of Pupil Services/Special Services and the attached job description, and to approve the transfer of Frank T. Gallagher to the position of Director of Pupil Services/Special Services at a pro-rated annual salary of \$116,715 effective January 1, 2008. **EXHIBIT B**

PERSONNEL – SUPPORT STAFF

Recommendation to Accept Retirement

KAREN WAMPOLE Food Service Asst., Salford Hills Elem.
Years Employed by SASD: 31 years
Effective: June 13, 2008

Recommendation to Accept Resignation

BERNARDO CARMONA Full-Time, Second-Shift, Custodian, EMC Elem.
Effective: March 21, 2008

Recommendation to Approve Transfer

BRITTANY MOSHEIM From: Substitute Custodian
Replacement for To: Part-Time Custodian, Indian Valley M. S.
Eric Wengert (resigned) Beginning: March 28, 2008
Wage: \$9.46 per hour
Hours: 4 per day

Recommendation for Employment

NANCY SMERECKI Title I Teaching Assistant, West Broad St. Elem.
Replacement for Beginning: March 28, 2008
Beth Ann Mulford (transfer) Wage: \$12.77 per hour
Hours: 6 per day

Recommendation for Supplemental Contracts for 2007-2008

THOMAS JERNIGAN Social Studies Advocate (IV) \$100.00
(Replacement for Alyssa Picard – May through June 2008)

TODD BAUER Developmental Baseball Coach (IV)
\$25.00 per hour – 5 weeks/6 hours per week

CONSENT/ACTION AGENDA (CONTINUED)

Recommendation for Supplemental Contracts for 2007-2008

MICHAEL FELICIANI Developmental Track Coach (IV)
\$25.00 per hour – 5 weeks/6 hours per week

Recommendations for Employment of Aquatics Staff

TODD BRONSDON Lifeguard \$ 6.00 per hour
MICHAEL EACHUS Lifeguard \$ 6.00 per hour Instructor \$10.00 per hour
CHRISTOPHER BARONE Lifeguard \$ 6.00 per hour Instructor \$10.00 per hour

Requests for Out-of-State/Overnight Field Trips

Souderton Area School District – Elementary Challenge Students – Fifth Graders

Date: April 28-29, 2008 (Monday-Tuesday)

Destination: Dingman’s Ferry, Pocono Environmental Education Center, Pocono, PA

Purpose of Trip: Enrich fifth grade environmental curriculum: develop group cohesiveness
for Indian Valley Middle School

Number of Students: 46

Number of Chaperones: 18 -- 3 Teachers, 15 Parents

Requesting Teacher/Sponsor: Bertina Hsu-Miller, Jean Frey, Beth Ann Mulford

Trip will be financed by students and fundraising activities.

Vernfield Elementary School – Fourth Grade Students

Date: May 21, 2008 (Wednesday)

Destination: New Jersey State Aquarium, Camden, NY

Purpose of Trip: Culminate study of the ocean and ocean life.

Number of Students: 87

Number of Chaperones: 28 -- 5 Teachers, 7 Professional Staff, 16 Parents

Requesting Teacher/Sponsor: Tracy Borro

Trip will be financed by students.

Recommendation to Approve Audit Engagement Letter with Gorman & Associates for the
2007-2008 Independent and Single Audits. **EXHIBIT C**

Recommendation to Approve the Transfer of \$4 Million from the General Fund to Establish
a Debt Service Fund. **EXHIBIT D**

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

No items for discussion.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

The next scheduled School Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 10, 2008 beginning at
7:00 PM. The meeting will be held in the Tinner Board Room of the Souderton Area School District
Administrative Office Building, 760 Lower Road, Souderton, PA. The public is invited to attend.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS (CONTINUED)

A meeting of the Board Committee-as-a-Whole will be held on Tuesday, April 15, 2008 at 6:30 PM to continue discussions on the 2008-2009 Budget. The meeting will be held in the Tinner Board Room of the Souderton Area School District Administrative Office Building, 760 Lower Road, Souderton, PA. The public is invited to attend.

There will be a Middle-Level Realignment Presentation to the Board and parents on Wednesday, April 16, 2008 beginning at 6:30 PM. The meeting will be held in the Tinner Board Room of the Souderton Area School District Administrative Office Building, 760 Lower Road, Souderton, PA. The public is invited to attend.

The next North Montco Technical Career Center Joint Operating Committee Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 21, 2008, in the Administrative Conference Room at North Montco, 1265 Sumneytown Pike, Lansdale, PA. The meeting will begin at 7:30 PM. The public is invited to attend.

The next meeting of the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Board of Directors will take place on Wednesday, April 23, 2008, at 7:45 PM in Conference Rooms B3/B4, Montgomery County Intermediate Unit, 1605 West Main Street, Norristown, PA. The public is invited to attend.

REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR

Mark Fitzgerald, Esq.

There was no report from Mr. Fitzgerald.

UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

No unfinished or new business from the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Jelinski, second by Mr. MacDougall to adjourn the meeting. On a vote of 9 to 0, it was

RESOLVED, That the Board adjourn the meeting at 8:42 PM.

Respectfully,

Brenda Jones Bray
Board Secretary