

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, September 11, 2008 in the auditorium of the Indian Crest Junior High School. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM by President Bernard S. Currie, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll call was as follows:

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

SOLICITOR: Jeffrey Sultanik, Esq.

Also present at the meeting were: Dr. Charles Amuso, Karen Berk, Brenda J. Bray, Donna Brown, R. Bradley Clemens, Molly Dugan, Tom Ferlick, Henry Franz, Frank Gallagher, Shawn Messmer, Jeff Pammer, Gail Ryan, Walt Salevsky, Jack Silva, members of the Souderton Area Education Association, representatives from *The Reporter*, *The Souderton Independent*, *Radio Station WNPV*, several major media agencies from the greater Philadelphia and Allentown area, and the public.

Mr. Currie called for a moment of silence in memory of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

WORKSHOP ITEMS

Finance Committee
R. Bud Miller, Chair

Dell Flex Lease Schedule No.811-6430840-006 to the Master Lease

Mr. Miller stated that the Dell lease agreement has been used for a few years and this flex lease schedule would be a continuation of the program. Dell has provided computers for the technology department of the school district, and when bids have been sent out for technology, Dell has come in as the lowest bidder. There were no further questions from the Board.

Recommendation: Move the Dell Flex Lease Schedule to the next Board meeting for a vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mrs. Tracy Cole, Franconia Township, spoke about concerns with Policy #603 – Budget Development. She asked the Board to reconsider the intent of the policy that incorporates a local tax index and a prioritized spending list.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Bernard S. Currie

An Executive Session was held on August 28, 2008 to discuss personnel items and negotiations. The session lasted 60 minutes.

An Executive Session was held prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel and negotiation matters. The session lasted approximately 30 minutes.

At this point, Mr. Currie updated the public on negotiations. He read a prepared statement that reviewed negotiations to date, the issues on the table, the presence of the state mediator and her role in the negotiations. He also spoke about the negotiation process and announced that the state mediator had called a meeting for Friday, September 12th. The Board is committed to negotiate all weekend if necessary in order to get the students back in school on September 15th. **EXHIBIT A**

Mr. Verbeke indicated that the benefits of a quality education need to be balanced. He is supportive of the Board's negotiating team for a fair contract.

Dr. Baumgartner shared his concerns about the children being out of school. He supports the Board's position and stated that teachers should be teaching while negotiations are taking place.

Mr. MacDougall addressed the need for students to be back in school. He stated that if the teachers wanted to negotiate they would return to the classroom. Mr. MacDougall also shared his support for the Board's negotiating team.

Mr. Jelinski echoed the sentiment that children need to be back in school. He spoke about the great teachers in the District, and that the teachers should be in class while negotiations take place. Mr. Jelinski also supports the efforts of the Board's negotiating team.

Mr. Kwiatkowski also talked about the impact of the strike on the lives of the students. He would like to see the teachers back in school while negotiations continue, and also supports the Board and the negotiating team.

Mr. Brong, a member of the Board's negotiating team, stated that he was willing to give use vacation days to get this agreement settled. He supports the Board and would like to see children back in school on Monday.

Mr. Leer, also a member of the Board negotiating team, expressed his pride over the moves that the Board had made on Labor Day. He shared his support for the Board's team.

Mr. Miller thanked the public for coming out to the meeting and showing their community support. He asked the teachers to think about the children, go back to work, and continue negotiations. As a taxpayer, he asked the team to negotiate under the current economical conditions that exist. He voiced his support to the Board's team and asked the community to respect the teachers and each other.

CONSENT/ACTION AGENDA

Dr. Amuso presented the Consent/Action items A-G for approval. He asked Board members to remove items from the agenda if more discussion was needed.

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

RESOLVED, That the Board approve the Consent/Action items as presented:

PERSONNEL – PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Recommendation for Employment

DAWN T. HERSMAN

Replacement for
Heather Williams (childrearing)

Education

Ohio State Univ. (BS) 1993
Ohio State Univ. (M.Ed.) 1996

Gifted Support, Salford Hills & Vernfield Elem.

LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE

Effective: First Semester–2008-2009 School Year

Experience

2007-2008-SASD-Lower Salford Elem.-Classroom Aide
2004-2007-Licking County Schools, Ohio-Substitute Teacher
2002-2003-Alexandria Elem., Ohio-Intervention Specialist
2000-2002-Lakewood Middle School, Hebron, Ohio-Sixth Grade Social Studies

Recommended Salary - \$20,523 – M(1)♦

SAMANTHA KEMPS

Replacement for
Douglas R. Henning
(Teacher on Assignment/Dean of Students)

Education

Millersville Univ. (BS) 2007

Sixth Grade Science, Indian Valley Middle School

LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE

Effective: 2008-2009 School Year

Experience

Nov. 2007-June 2008-Souderton Area S.D.-Indian Valley Middle School-Long-Term Substitute-Math
Sept.-June 2007-Springfield S.D.-Per-Diem Substitute- Math Teacher

Recommended Salary - \$37,323 (pro-rated) – B(1)♦

♦ 2007-2008 Salary Guide-Salary to be adjusted pending approval of a new Professional Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Recommendation to Approve Request for Extension of Childrearing Leave

DAWN GLOWACKI

Fourth Grade, Salford Hills Elementary

Through the second semester of the 2008-2009 school year. Mrs. Glowacki is planning to return to work for the 2009-2010 school year.

CONSENT/ACTION AGENDA (CONTINUED)

PERSONNEL – SUPPORT STAFF

Recommendation to Accept Resignations

REBECCA CLEMMER Substitute Café/Playground Aide, West Broad St.
Effective: September 3, 2008

JOLEEN NASE Special Education Aide, High School
Effective: August 29, 2008

Recommendation to Approve Transfer

MARY CANNON Cafeteria/Playground Aide, Vernfield Elem.
Replacement for Beginning: 2008-2009 School Year
Michele Kellner (resigned) Wage: \$9.37 per hour
Hours: 1 per day

MICHELLE CWIKLA From: Cafeteria Aide, Indian Valley Middle School
Replacement for To: Café/Playground Aide, Franconia Elementary
Vicki Freed (resigned) & Beginning: 2008-2009 School Year
Josephine DeSanto (transfer) Hours: 1.5 per day
Wage: \$9.37 per hour

JOSEPHINE DeSANTO From: Special Education & Café/Playground Aide,
Replacement for Franconia Elementary
Barbara Batten (transfer) To: Special Education Aide-One-to-One, Franconia
Beginning: 2008-2009 School Year
Hours: 6.75 per day
Wage: \$10.40 per hour

Recommendation to Approve Supplemental Contracts for Coaching Positions for the 2008-2009 School Year

TARA AMBRUCH	Head Field Hockey Coach (IV)	\$2,073.00
KEVIN PAULL	Head Soccer Coach (IV)	2,242.00

Recommendations for Doctor and Dentist Assignments for 2008-2009

Dr. Heather Hart	Medical Director	\$2500.00
------------------	------------------	-----------

Physicians (\$13.00 per physical - \$100 retainer per elementary school)

TriValley Primary Care (Souderton Office)

Dr. Heather Hart	E. M. Crouthamel Elem. Penn View Christian School	Grace Christian School Salford Hills Elem.
Dr. Lori Rousche	Senior High School	
Dr. Daniel Cochran	Senior High School	West Broad Street Elem.

CONSENT/ACTION AGENDA (CONTINUED)

Recommendations for Doctor and Dentist Assignments for 2008-2009 (Continued)

Physicians (Continued) (\$13.00 per physical - \$100 retainer per elementary school)

TriValley Primary Care (Lower Salford Office)

Dr. Curt Carlier & Dr. Susan Underwood Indian Valley Middle School

Dr. Joseph Ulasewicz Lower Salford Elem. Franconia Elem.
Oak Ridge Elem. Vernfield Elem.

Upper Bucks Orthopaedic Associates

Dr. Richard Godshall (et. al.) Senior High School - Sports
(\$ 75 per home varsity football game)

Dentists (\$5.00 per examination)

Dr. John Nase Indian Valley Middle School

Dr. Bruce Tollin Lower Salford Elem.

Dr. Michael Boraski Franconia Elem.

Dr. Tracy Reinhart and/or Penn View Christian School E. M. Crouthamel Elem.
Dr. George Reinhart West Broad Street Elem.

Dr. Marc Lipkin Oak Ridge Elem. Salford Hills Elem.
Vernfield Elem.

Recommendation to approve a temporary construction easement and a permanent sightline easement for Harleysville Savings Bank, pending the finalization of language by the solicitors' office. This item was discussed and reviewed by the Operations Committee on June 19, 2008. The Committee recommends approval by the Board of School Directors. **EXHIBIT B**

First Reading of Policy #603 – Budget Preparation

Recommended revisions have been made to comply with Act 1 and local procedures developed during the budget preparation process for the 2008-2009 Budget. Recommendation to move to the next Board meeting for a Second Reading of Policy #603 – Budget Preparation.

Recommendation for Employment of Community Education Fall 2008 Staff and Salaries

EXHIBIT C

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

There were no discussion/action items.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

The next meeting of the North Montco Technical Career Center Joint Operating Committee is scheduled for Monday, September 15, 2008 at 7:30 PM. The meeting will be held in the Administrative Conference Room at the Technical Career Center, 1265 Sumneytown Pike, Lansdale, PA. The public is invited to attend.

On Wednesday, September 24, 2008 at 7:45 PM a meeting of the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Board of Directors will take place in Conference Rooms B3/B4, Montgomery County Intermediate Unit, 1605 West Main Street, Norristown, PA. The public is invited to attend.

The next regularly scheduled School Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 25, 2008 beginning at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be held in the Tinner Board Room, located at the District Administrative Offices, 760 Lower Road, Souderton, PA. The public is invited to attend.

REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR

Jeffrey Sultank, Esq.

No report from the solicitor.

UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

There was no unfinished/new business from the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Judi Whitmire, from Lederach, spoke about the negotiations and the resulting tax impact in the district.

Becky Alderfer, of Lower Salford Township, spoke about upcoming elections and the current economy.

Lisa Gallagher, from Souderton, called for the community to show support, at the next football game, for the athletes and the students, and to help the community heal.

Tracy Coyne, of Souderton, talked about academics vs. athletics and tax increases.

Karen Peterson, Josie Lane, Souderton, questioned the district's fund balance, and suggested that taxpayers be given alternatives before the money is spent. She also asked for binding arbitration.

Karen Peterson, Hunsberger Lane, Souderton, questioned the information being released to the media and stated that she wants her children back in school. She also spoke about teachers welcoming raises for merit and administrative salaries.

Elaine Cash, of Harleysville, referred to the Top 50 School Districts posted in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. She spoke about per pupil spending levels at Souderton and teachers being respected.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

Rose Buetikofer, of Harleysville, expressed concern that Board members did not reply to her correspondence. She requested more money to be allotted for per pupil spending.

Gail Sine, from Harleysville, spoke about the salary increase proposal. Asked the Board and teachers to meet in the middle.

Lolita Paff, from Telford, spoke about the teachers returning to the classroom and referred to salary information received from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. She asked for binding arbitration now.

Tina Zaro, from Harleysville, addressed the damaging effects of the strike on the children. Students feel that the teachers do not care about them. She encouraged Harrisburg lawmakers to get involved in correcting this situation.

Maureen Walters, of Lower Salford Township, stated that teachers should be paid a fair salary for their profession and reminded the Board members that they were elected to represent all taxpayers.

Dr. Jack Parry, from Franconia Township, talked about the health care plan and employee contributions. He supports the Board for trying to keep taxes down and maintaining a fund balance.

Amanda Carbone, from Lower Salford Township, spoke about the increase in salaries for teachers and also mentioned that the original reason for striking was to protest unsafe working conditions.

Joanna McClintock, from Upper Salford Township, supported increased teacher salaries and asked the Board to establish a fair starting salary for teachers.

Bob Solomon, from Lower Salford Township, asked the Board to be fair and step up as community leaders.

Michael Wilson, of Lower Salford Township, referred to a recent event where a student in the community was giving back to the community. He asked the Board to put aside their feelings towards teachers.

James Sheridan, resident of Franconia Township, spoke about the “Strike-Free School Act” and urged the community to get involved. Pennsylvania needs to stop teacher strikes and get the students back to school.

Maureen Benner and Andrea Farina, both from Franconia Township, spoke about the attendance boundary line established for the middle school transition. They challenged the Board to do what was best for the students and revisit the decision.

Kate Farmer-Smith, from Lower Salford Township, expressed concerns about the negotiation process and asked the Board to change their head negotiator.

Geri Kraynack, from Lower Salford Township, urged the community to get along despite their differences, and asked for both parties to reach an agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

J. R. Passarella, from Franconia Township, spoke about transcripts not being available for students to send out to colleges. He also talked about salary increases and the use of binding arbitration to reach a settlement. He supported fair pay for the teachers.

Richard Kapusta, from Telford, spoke about the increasing property taxes in the Souderton Area School District, and thanked the Board for their efforts in the negotiation process.

Stuart Margolies, from Harleysville, spoke about the unfairness to students and teachers and wanting students back in school.

Danica Pascavage, from Harleysville, stated that she does not want to risk her children's education. She asked the Board to pay the teachers fairly so they don't leave the district.

Joanne Murray, from Harleysville, thanked the Board for their commitment to get the job done and get students back in school. She talked about the negotiation schedule and a need to for a change in the Board's negotiating team. Mrs. Murray accused the Board of stalling negotiations, and asked for an explanation of the fund balance and what the funds could be used for.

Joanna Cavacini, from Souderton, talked about respect going both ways and asked why teachers could not negotiate while students and teachers were in school. She talked about being a health care professional and not abandoning her patients.

Claire Gorton, from Harleysville, shared her disappointed that negotiations were not started earlier, and also talked about salary parity among school districts.

Becky McCormick, from Telford, asked the Board to be fair and reasonable in negotiations.

Marc Gagne', from Harleysville, wanted to hear the union's side of the issues. He asked why the negotiations had lead to a strike.

Hugh Donnelly, from Franconia Township, urged the community to get involved in Board meetings and to contact legislators in Harrisburg to make changes in taxation and strike laws.

Jill Basile, from Lower Salford Township, talked about the salary increases being out of line. She spoke about the community getting together and starting a special interest group to stop teacher strikes in Pennsylvania. Taxpayers and the community need to be informed of the strike bill in Harrisburg.

Ernest Rosato, from Upper Salford Township, thanked the Board and administration for their efforts. He commented on the negotiation schedule, the union's demands, and their leadership.

Donna Scheuren, from Harleysville, commended the Board for their efforts. Taxpayers need to get more involved in schools at the state and local level. She spoke about the teacher's retirement system and how the taxpayers will be taxed to replace the mismanaged funds.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

Howard Breithaupt, from Telford, thanked the Board for not raising taxes this year. He indicated that the education profession is known for not being a high paid profession.

Susan Mohr, from Lederach, shared concerns about tax increases that may or may not come to pass. She also spoke about PSSA results, and shared concern about high administrative salaries.

Steve Steklenski, from Lower Salford Township, talked about the union's demands being out of line. He agreed with the Board that the existing teacher's pay scale should be changed to make the scale more attractive for teachers who are just starting.

Vicki Caporino, from Souderton, talked about the children asking why teachers are striking, and shared concern that the students do not have a voice in this issue. The teachers need to hear the students. She asked if the teachers could be fired for the work stoppage.

Mary Nelligan, Lower Salford Township, spoke about Souderton's low SAT scores, and how senior citizens on fixed incomes are having a hard time paying their bills. She asked the Board to stay firm.

Will Kelly, Lower Salford Township, noted that there were 17 teachers who voted against the strike who should be applauded for doing so. A change is needed in union negotiations and asked the Board to stay firm.

Laraine Walter, from Franconia Township, talked about how both sides needed to negotiate. She questioned the Board's integrity and asked the Board to end the strike so the community could begin healing.

Danielle Beldham, from Telford, shared information about a strike when she was a senior at Spring-Ford in 1989, and how it affected students and parents. The students felt uncomfortable in their classes after the strike. She asked the Board to reach common ground.

Melissa Kelly, from Souderton, asked about the average citizen's salary in the Souderton area, and the number of resumes that come in for teaching positions during a year. She also was concerned about how the teachers' salary scale is set up.

Mark Bainbridge, from Souderton, showed his support for the teachers and supports paying them what they deserve. He is concerned about the information that is being reported in the press. He asked the Board to get the job done.

Charl Wellener, from Souderton, thanked the Board for their efforts, and spoke about putting an end to teacher strikes.

Kelly Mowery, from Harleysville, spoke about communications between herself and Board members. She also addressed administrator raises for the last three years, and now it was time to treat the teachers the same way.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

David Lord, resident of Telford, talked about the PSEA and their role in the Souderton strike. He shared information taken from the NEA Web site on how the local unions are pushed to raise salary benchmarks.

Shelby Kay Fantuzzi and Samantha Hickman, both seniors at Souderton Area High School, addressed the maturity level of the community and the Board. They asked the Board and community to respect the teachers and get the students back in school. Samantha also spoke about instituting merit pay for teachers to keep good teachers at Souderton.

Senator Rob Wonderling, resident of Lower Salford Township, came to speak as a parent and as someone who serves in the Pennsylvania Senate. The Board members and teachers are public servants, who must be accountable to the all taxpayers. Both sides need to get together and talk as soon as possible. He spoke about legislation that has been introduced in Harrisburg to stop teacher strikes and stated that the Pennsylvania Constitution must be changed in order to prevent strikes. He congratulated the community group that is forming to stop teacher strikes, and encouraged the group to include the union president in their discussions. Senator Wonderling also spoke about the fiscal liability of PSERS, future funding of the retirement system, and the need to set aside money for future funding. He shared that the majority of constituents that have contacted his office are in agreement with the Board, and that current economic conditions do not warrant the salary increases teachers are seeking.

Mr. Currie thanked everyone who came out and addressed the Board. He reiterated that the Board values the teachers. The Board will make itself available and take as much time as it takes to settle a fair contract. We want the students back in school on Monday, the community needs to get together, and the union needs to negotiate.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Miller, with a second by Mr. Brong to adjourn the meeting. On a vote of 9 to 0, it was

RESOLVED, That the Board adjourn the meeting at 10:00 PM.

Respectfully,

Brenda Jones Bray
Board Secretary