Lehighton Area School District

1000 Union Street
Lehighton, PA 18235
Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 7:00 PM
SPECIAL ZOOM BOARD MEETING - Minutes

1. Opening Exercises

A. Pledge of Allegiance
Please rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance

B. Call to Order
Board President, L. Stern called the September 29, 2021 Special Board Meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

C. Roll Call

PR/AB:

PR	**Ms. Joy Beers**	**PR**	**Mr. David F. Bradley**	**PR**	**Mrs. Gail Maholick**
PR	**Mr. Richard R. Beltz**	**PR**	**Mr. Nathan Foeller**	**PR**	**Mrs. Rita Spinelli**
PR	**Ms. Barbara Bowes**	**AB**	**Mr. Stephen Holland**	**PR**	**Mr. Larry Stern**

Also Present:
Mr. Edward Rarick, Business Administrator
Mr. Jonathan Cleaver, Superintendent
Attorney Eric Filer, Solicitor
Ms. Janine Partenio, Recording Secretary

Atty. Brian Taylor, David Krause, Tom McCarroll, Tim Sharrow, Terrie Scotte, Alex Karpowicz, Tim Tkach, Scott Rehrig, Stephanie Reese, Stephen Ebbert, Ryan Bowman, Robert Mikulski, Kyle Spotts, Jarrad Hedes, Tanya Haydt, Lou Aliota, Mark McGalla, Floyd Brown, Fred Kemmerer, Gretchen Laviolette, Kaitlyn Zettlemoyer, Katherine Yaro, Kay Barry, Michelle Galloway, Laura Moyer, Melissa Volcskai, Mike Snyder, Marsha Macalush, Martha Cox, Melanie Carline, Rebecca Karpowicz, John Spinelli, Suzanne Howland, Eric Christman, Aaron Sebelin, Christina Haupt, Dache Zelrick, Daniel Williams, Tom Sanguiliano, and Virginia Fairchild.

D. Purpose of Special Meeting
Request for Meeting Regarding a Discussion on Student Safety

E. Presentation
A presentation was given by Board Member, D. Bradley - "Student Safety: A review of where we were, where we are, where we need to get to." Presentation was reviewing the Lehighton Area School District Safe Schools Report and questions on the data.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52YNyhmgCIg

J. Cleaver explained that Safe 2 Say and School Safety reports were two different things. He said Safe 2 Say is private and confidential, where the safe schools report is required to be reported to the state. He said in 2019-2020 there were no actual arrests, there were citations issued to students; however, they are reported as arrests. He mentioned that the 2017-2018 issues had been referred to the Lehighton Borough Police because the District implemented its own Police Force in 2018-2019, which have the same privileges as the Borough Police. He said that other Carbon County schools do not have their own police force so all of their issues would be reported to their local police authority and will continue to show no citations or arrests until they have their own police force. He explained how many of the citations were because of vaping or e-cigarettes.

J. Cleaver stated that issues with weapons may not be reported as OSS if the student has special needs. He said a student with an IEP may need a manifestation. He also explained that ISS and OSS are reported; however, the state does not report detentions. He mentioned the age of 12-16 was the age group with the largest discrepancies. He said there are a large number of IEP's and situations are addressed and reported as required. He mentioned that in 2019-2020 there was no drop down code available for Physical injuries in reporting and that code was not added until 2020-2021. He said there was a situation where a student was injured in 2019-2020 and it was coded under reckless endangerment since that was the code available for reporting. He explained how coding changes constantly and that

the administration and PIMS does a fantastic job with reporting.

A presentation was then given by Suzanne Howland, Floyd Brown & Stephen Ebbert regarding School Discipline explaining the safe schools report data.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1OJ8PPRBHvuhx_FgvKO5jCfY3HYWtSMWG3NpWDlu7md4/edit?usp=sharing

S. Howland reviewed information regarding vaping, theft, minor altercations. S. Ebbert explained the PAYS survey that is given to students in the Middle school and High School in grades 6, 8, 10 & 12 through Carbon, Monroe, Pike Drug and Alcohol Commission (CMP). He mentioned how based on the results shared with CMP, they have initiated a repeat offender vaping education. D. Bradley questioned the chart shown. J. Cleaver stated the District was meeting the needs of the students before it would become a serious issue. S. Howland explained the SAP program and Drug and Alcohol Screening. She stated that all of the consult hours with CMP were preventative. R. Mikulski of CMP explained the increase of hours and based on results of the survey, bullying had decreased from 4% to 2% and use of Marijuana had increased from 3.6% to 22.2% of students. He explained that there will be an in-service day on October 10, 2021 for ESAP.

S. Ebbert reviewed a bar graph. D. Bradley did not agree with the total numbers represented. S. Ebbert corrected his numbers as No Consequences - 501; One Consequence - 82, Two Consequences - 24; and 3 or more Consequences - 6. He said he would adjust the presentation and post it with the corrections.

B. Bowes wanted to know why this information had not been shared with the Board previously. J. Cleaver said it is required by law to be discussed with the Board and is usually addressed in an executive session.

F. Public Comment
D. Bradley commented that the meeting should have been held in public and was concerned that the agenda requested had four items on it. He also felt the reports should be publicly available.

E. Christman had concerns of Board Members overseeing the bullying policy who have had continuous strong negative undertones in at least three of the four identified bullying areas. He felt there is a majority of the public that feel the same way. He said some Board Members had been the biggest offenders of the policy. He listed some examples of bullying by Board Members which included improper handling of sensitive information, community harassment, name calling, derogatory comments, use of district or personal email to attack fellow Board Members (staff, students and faculty), editing recorded meetings to post on social media, harassing community members on their social media sites, spreading rumors to parents about school events or government mandates to create public discourse, and hijacking Board Meetings. He felt the bullying policy should include Board Members as well as staff and students. He mentioned that there are young impressionable minds that have access to this behavior and as a concerned parent, he hoped that would be taken into consideration.

2. Student Safety

A. Palmerton Post Office Box
MOTION by B. Bowes, SECONDED by J. Beers, to approve the board's creation of a district-wide suggestion box by entering into a rental agreement with the United States Postal Service for a PO Box in Palmerton Pa, including the addition of the free service known as informed delivery.

N. Foeller questioned if they wished to modify the motion because informed delivery is not considered a free service according to the attachment. D. Bradley did not wish to amend the motion and felt he would be able to receive the service complimentary.

Roll Call Vote:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstention
Mr. Nathan Foeller, Vice President	0	X	0	0
Mr. Stephen Holland, Member	0	0	X	0
Mrs. Gail Maholick, Member	X	0	0	0
Mrs. Rita Spinelli, Treasurer	0	X	0	0
Ms. Joy Beers, Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. Richard R. Beltz, Member	X	0	0	0
Ms. Barbara Bowes, Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. David F. Bradley, Sr., Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. Larry Stern, President	X	0	0	0

VOTE: YES - 6 NO - 2 ABSENT - 1 ABSTENTIONS - 0

B. Management of Suggestion Box
MOTION by D. Bradley, SECONDED by J. Beers, to assign a Director (J. Beers) the authority to manage the Suggestion Box (PO Box), receive the informed delivery notifications forwarding same within 48 hours to the rest of

the board, pick up the mail prior to the scheduled board meeting and provide a summarized report of the suggestions in the regular board meeting, Section VI Communications in the agenda, and provide each board member with a copy of all the communications received in the suggestion box.

J. Cleaver asked if the information could be included with the Board Packets, in order to give some extra time for review. D. Bradley disagreed. R. Spinelli requested that E. Rarick manage the box, since he was the Board Secretary and not a member of the Board. D. Bradley felt someone with a sworn oath handle the box. J. Beers was interested in volunteering. J. Cleaver asked the price of the box. D. Bradley said $70 per year. The Board opened the floor for public comment.

J. Roeder was concerned about anonymous letters being sent and them being used for more YouTube Videos which will fuel more public social media fires. He was concerned that the 5-4 or 4-5 balance would be going down the same path. J. Cleaver said it would be more work for the administration to respond to anonymous letters. J. Roeder asked if there was already a system in place. J. Cleaver stated Yes. He mentioned how any member of the public would be able to email any of the Board Members or mail a letter to the Board to the District. J. Roeder felt it would be another step to add more work and not hiring more people to do the work. J. Cleaver was not sure what the PO Box would really address.

Roll Call Vote:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstention
Mr. Stephen Holland, Member	0	0	X	0
Mrs. Gail Maholick, Member	X	0	0	0
Mrs. Rita Spinelli, Treasurer	0	X	0	0
Ms. Joy Beers, Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. Richard R. Beltz, Member	X	0	0	0
Ms. Barbara Bowes, Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. David F. Bradley, Sr., Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. Nathan Foeller, Vice President	X	0	0	0
Mr. Larry Stern, President	X	0	0	0

VOTE: YES - 7 NO - 1 ABSENT - 1 ABSTENTIONS - 0

C. Policy Review Recommendations
MOTION by B. Bowes, SECONDED by R. Beltz, for the Board as a whole to instruct the Policy Committee to seek stakeholder input, review policy, and make recommendations necessary to update policy 247, and 249 at the October Policy Committee Meeting currently scheduled for October 6, 2021, at 6:45 pm.

B. Bowes explained that the policy was enacted by Lehighton Area School District in 2008 and felt it should be updated to include the new hazing law from 2019. She asked if the District received a notice from PSBA regarding an updated policy. J. Cleaver said he would have to check. B. Bowes explained the law passed in November of 2019. D. Bradley said he had checked with all of the other Districts on BoardDocs and all have been updated.

Roll Call Vote:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstention
Mr. Stephen Holland, Member	0	0	X	0
Mrs. Gail Maholick, Member	X	0	0	0
Mrs. Rita Spinelli, Treasurer	X	0	0	0
Ms. Joy Beers, Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. Richard R. Beltz, Member	X	0	0	0
Ms. Barbara Bowes, Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. David F. Bradley, Sr., Member	X	0	0	0
Mr. Nathan Foeller, Vice President	X	0	0	0
Mr. Larry Stern, President	X	0	0	0

VOTE: YES - 8 NO - 0 ABSENT - 1 ABSTENTIONS - 0

3. Communications

A. Public Comment
R. Bowman was concerned why the Special Meeting was held via Zoom and not in-person. J. Cleaver explained that he had concerns about the request for individuals to have face coverings. He mentioned how the request was ignored at the last Board Meeting and he was concerned for the safety of the staff and everyone in attendance. He hoped that the next meeting everyone would be able to follow the directions and have their masks on or they would have to continue having Zoom Meetings.

R. Bowman was impressed with the amount of students, parents and guardians that have reached out. He felt the services provided to students had improved greatly since he was in attendance at Lehighton. He said it confirmed what he thought was how the metrics reporting data was not up to snuff with the situations the District deals with.

He was happy to see the students were getting the help they needed.

R. Bowman asked if there was a cost associated with referrals. J. Cleaver said there is a cost associated with the service with CMP and is paid by one of the grants that the District receives. He said he could get that amount for him.

R. Bowman felt the hazing and bullying policies warrant a policy review. He questioned the policy review process. J. Cleaver said the administration presents the psba policy to the committee where they discuss and adjust the policy. He said it is then brought to the Board for first reading and it would go to the public for any changes. He said it would be a whole month before it is readdressed at the committee meeting again and then brought back to the Board for a final reading and approval.He said it is about a 2 month review time for each policy and 4 different opportunities for the public to comment on the policies.

R. Bowman said he believed there were isolated incidents that may have been embellished but he was concerned as a parent that the incidents may warrant a third party investigation to review all factors and individuals involved to better clarify policies or procedures or additional professional development needed.

R. Bowman said J. Roeder brought up a good point with management of the suggestion box and confidentiality. He asked if J. Cleaver had reviewed any information sent to him last week on a confidentiality policy. J. Cleaver said he had been looking at different confidentiality agreements and currently there is not one that addresses expectations of employees. R. Bowman felt there should be a policy implemented to ensure that the suggestion box would not push confidential information publicly. He suggested implementing a parent ad hoc committee and would be happy to participate in that committee.

D. Bradley was concerned about L. Stern's actions as president for making the Special Meeting a zoom meeting.

B. Adjournment
MOTION by R. Spinelli, SECONDED by J. Beers, to adjourn the Meeting.

The September 29, 2021 Special Board Meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Edward Rarick, Board Secretary
by Janine Partenio, Recording Secretary