

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Meeting
Board Minutes

Slatington, PA
January 12, 2009

PURPOSE

The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Edward E. Hartman, at 7:32 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2009 in the boardroom located in the Slatington Elementary School.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Mr. Donald H. Dengler, Mr. Raymond J. Follweiler, Jr., Mrs. Lauren A. Ganser, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., Mrs. Donna M. Kulp, Mr. Gregory S. Williams, Mrs. Sandi L. Young, Mr. Edward E. Hartman (8)

Members absent: Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos (1)

Non-members present: Mrs. Jill Chamberlain, Mr. Greg Derr, Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. Jeremy Melber, Mr. Michael Michaels, Mrs. Laurie Newman-Mankos, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mrs. Heather Rehrig, Mrs. Diane Ruff, Mr. Michael Showak (Student Rep.), Ms. Taylor Trapp (Student Rep.), Mrs. Aileen Yadush and Mrs. Sherri A. Molitoris.

VISITORS

Approximately four visitors attended the meeting in addition to Terry Ahner reporter for The Times News.

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS

Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit – Mr. Donald H. Dengler stated that the Board will be voting tonight on the CLIU General Operating Budget. The proposed budgets for the Transportation and Special Programs departments were also distributed.

Mrs. Kulp asked about the 6% salary increase that is listed for the mechanics and clerical staff in the budgets. She hopes this would be revisited in the current economy.

Mr. Dengler stated that he would address this at the next meeting and that Mr. Green also had some questions he needed to get answers to.

Mr. Green also stated that the budget shows a budgeted amount of \$4.00 per gallon for diesel gasoline and he thinks that is high considering the current gas prices. There was discussion that this could be an amount that they originally locked in at and are obligated to pay this amount. Mr. Dengler will be checking on this issue.

Mr. Melber stated that these budgets were handed out but these are not budgets the sponsoring districts approve. These budgets are basically just estimates. Districts do not know how much they will be charged because it is based on the amount of students per month that receive services from the Intermediate Unit. He stated that these IU budgets are just a projection and the high numbers are probably because the IU and LCTI must have their budgets done before the sponsoring districts can start their budget process. He reminded the Board that they do not approve these budgets only the general operating budget.

Mr. Green's concern is that the general operating budget the sponsoring districts approve is a small amount compared to millions of dollars in the transportation and special programs budgets. He is not concerned with the \$400 and some dollar increase that Northern Lehigh is paying for the general operating budget he is concerned with the money being spent in these budgets. He further stated that approximately two years ago these are the budgets that the IU made a mistake with and came back to the sponsoring school districts and asked for hundreds of thousands of extra dollars because the budget was not done properly. He is very concerned about these budgets. He agrees that a 6% salary increase is high.

Student Representatives to the Board Report

Mr. Michael Showak and Ms. Taylor Trapp distributed their written student representative report and verbally reported on its contents.

SPECIAL
middle **BOARD**
REPORTS
(cont.)

to
Stroudsburg
planned
addressed and
for

Federal and Other Programs Update - Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha distributed her written reported and verbally reported on it. She discussed the WIDA ACCESS assessment test that will be given to all students receiving ESL services on February 20, 2009 and the All-Star celebration being held on January 22, 2009 in the middle school and hosted by Mrs. Michelle Raber, school health and physical education teacher. She stated that members of the Business and Computer Technology Departments will be meeting to begin discussions on course content and the K-12 sequence of technology skills. The Wellness and Fitness Department is working on a year-long process that involves curriculum mapping and making standards-based adjustment the health and physical education curriculum with Dr. Carolyn Kuchinsky from East University. On February 6, 2009 the Science Department will begin to examine their courses and developing curriculum maps which feature all standards that are then look for gaps between the assessment anchors and curriculum and make plans revising course content to better prepare students for the Science PSSA.

Lastly she addressed the Board with the districts PSSA Science test performance. She stated that the district falls right within the state average performance. Fourth grade state performance was 81.5 our district was at 80.3, middle school state performance was 52.7 our district had 52.8 and at the high school state performance was 35.7 and our district had 35.2. She has met with administrative staff to discuss our district performance and share some considerations. She stated that there is no previous test comparison, our district made no prior changes to curriculum or instruction prior to the PSSA and our course requirements are different. We do not require our students to take Chemistry and it is a part of the PSSA test. She further stated that this is a very long test and come April our students are tested out having just completed the PSSA for reading, writing and math. She shared with the Board suggestions from the state to increase overall scores such as, enroll more high school students in college courses, creating Classrooms for the Future that uses technology to transform teaching and learning in high schools, ensuring that all school districts have adequate resources to offer a strong curriculum and help struggling students and proposing new statewide high school graduation requirements to make sure that every student is ready for college or the workforce when they receive their diploma. Our district has decided to currently have principals work with science teachers to examine anchors and release test items, use Study Island Science Benchmark testing to gauge student progress toward standards, continue Science-It's Elementary training at elementary level, require writing in science, revise curriculum and recognize the need to work on the science courses that are required at the high school which is also on of the Project 720 goals.

Mr. Williams stated that in math and reading we have federal goals that say this is how much we need to increase every year and that currently with the PSSA Science assessment there are no set goals to achieve. He would like the district to come up with a five year reasonable goal for PSSA Science assessments.

Mr. Green stated that according to the article in the paper we had almost 20% of our students at basic or below basic compared to Northwestern who had 3 ½%, Parkland 7%, Salisbury 8%, Southern Lehigh 4%, Whitehall 8% meaning we had more than twice as many students then in other surrounding districts that fell below the benchmark. He stated that other districts have Science Supervisors, Assistant Superintendents and some districts are even hiring supervisors to help with the problem and Northern Lehigh instead of hiring people we are getting rid of supervisor positions and this concerns him. He said administration has been telling the Board that they need more science teachers, they need more science curriculum, more rooms are needed because they are over crowded and the Board chooses to do nothing about it and then wonders why our test scores are wrong. He feels we are not providing the proper resources for our students.

Mrs. Ganser stated that she feels we are providing the best for our students with the resources that we have and everyone is trying the best they can with what they have available to them.

Mrs. Fedorcha stated that curriculum reports are available on the web on the nlsd.org home page. The Policy Committee on Wednesday night will be discussing the new Right to Know Policy.

Business Manager's Report – Mr. Jeremy G. Melber stated that the CLIU and LCTI budgets are on the agenda for approval. He discussed the per capita exemptions that were on last weeks agenda that were tabled. He spoke with the Slatington Tax Collector. He stated that when the bills are returned he tries to get in contact with them by looking in the phone book. Mr. Melber spoke with Attorney Stopp and they are trying to look into other options. They are going

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**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS
(cont.)**

ask the Slatington Borough if those people applied for moving permits. There is also a motion on the agenda to approve Portnoff Law Associates as our delinquent tax collector. The contract rates are the same as the prior year and language was added to the contract should the County decide to impose collection fees that the current contract with Portnoff can be canceled upon 30 day written notice. He also distributed the Single Audit Report Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2008. He stated that there was a list of deficiencies that have been answered and corrected. The auditor did say that most of the problems was due to the lack of a business manager for four months. He further stated that last year the district used \$1,000,000.00 from fund balance to balance the budget and at the end of the year the district realized in fund balance \$1,346,000.00.

where

At next months Finance Committee Meeting they will be discussing the fund balance and the Board would like the money designated.

Mr. Green asked what is the cut off date for people who live in the district who are responsible to pay the per capita tax.

Mr. Melber stated July 1st is the cut off date.

Mr. Green stated that if people move after July 1st they should have paid the per capita tax before they are granted a moving permit.

Mr. Melber stated that the moving permits are handled at the borough office and he doubts they check to see if the taxes have been paid prior to issuing a moving permit.

Superintendent's Report – Mr. Michael W. Michaels

Mr. Michael introduced Mr. Derr who invited all Board members to attend a visitation at Pleasant Valley Middle School to see their current construction project. They will be leaving the district office at 7:30 a.m. for an 8:00 a.m. visitation. He is also going to ask if they can tour Polk Elementary also.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Mr. Michaels introduced Mr. Harold Green from NLYAA who addressed the Board. He stated that the 100 lb football team had a tremendous year. He thanked the School Board and Superintendent Michaels for their support throughout the year. He also thanked Mr. Geist and Mr. Tout for their support and lastly, he thanked Dr. Marcincin for allowing NLYAA to have a pep rally for the boys prior to their game. He presented Mr. Michaels with the second place trophy to be kept at Slatington Elementary.

PERSONNEL

Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education approves the following personnel items:

Retirement
Mathematics
the

Accept the resignation of David A. Humenik from his position as High School Teacher, effective January 30, 2009. At this time he will begin his retirement form Northern Lehigh School District after 28 ½ years of service.

Unpaid
Volunteers

Approve the following unpaid volunteer aide in the Peters Elementary School for the 2008-2009 school year: Lorie Ann Brearman*.
***Pending Training**

Substitute
Instructional

Approve the following substitute teacher for the 2008-2009 school year at the 2008-2009 substitute teacher rates as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

Lauren Strasburg – Elementary Education

Non-

Approve the following individuals as substitute aides and secretaries for the 2008-2009 school

Instructional year at the 2008-2009 substitute rates as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

Nicole Breneman
Lorie Ann Brearman*

***Pending Verification of Missing Personnel File Items/Clearances**

PERSONNEL
(cont.)

Approve the following individuals as substitute cafeteria workers for the 2008-2009 school year at the 2008-2009 substitute rates as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

Nicole Breneman

Approve the following individuals as a substitute custodian for the 2008-2009 school year at the 2008-2009 substitute rates as approved on the Supplementary Personnel Salary Schedule:

Willie McCowan*

***Pending Verification of Missing Personnel File Items/Clearances**

YEA: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams,
Mrs. Young, Mr. Hartman (8)

NAY: None (0)

**CONFER-
ENCES**

Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education approves the following conference item:

\$44.00, Linda Thompson – Pennsylvania School Counselors Association 53rd Annual Conference –
Guidance April 15-18, 2009 – Milton Hershey School, Hershey, PA – Registration: \$285.00, Travel:
Lodging: \$288.00 – Total Approximate Cost: \$617.00 – Funding: Peters Elementary
Counselor Budget

YEA: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams,
Mrs. Young, Mr. Hartman (8)

NAY: None (0)

Mr. Williams made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Ganser, that the Board of Education approve the following conference item:

February Heather Rehrig – National Association of School Psychologist 2009 Annual Convention –
\$299.00, Travel: 24-28, 2009 – Marriott, Sheraton, and Westin Hotels, Boston, MA – Registration:
\$1,599.00 – Funding: \$333.00, Lodging: \$787.00, Meals: \$180.00 – Total Approximate Cost:
School Psychologist Budget

Mrs. Ganser asked if it was necessary to travel this distance and spend this kind of money on a conference. She stated that she knows that there are local resources at our IU for autism training which would be less expensive in our current economy.

Ms. Rehrig stated that this is a national conference and they tend to have the best of the best when it comes to instructors and having the most up to date research.

Mr. Williams stated that he feels we should be sending some of our people to these kind of conferences for our staff to talk with the best of the best. He does not know the quality of any of these conferences but it is something that is budgeted. He has no idea where we are going to get the best bang for our buck. The way he looks at it is we budget an amount we are willing to spend on conferences for the year and then it is up to administration to decide what conferences are the best to attend.

Mr. Michaels stated that if something needs to change it should happen during the budget process. He has not researched the psychologist conferences but stated that sometimes it is a good idea to get out of our local area to hear a different take on things.

ROLL CALL:

YEA: Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Young, Mr. Hartman (5)

NAY: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser (3)

Motion carried.

Mr. Hartman stated that this is something that will be discussed during budget time.

CONFERENCE
(cont.)

Mr. Michaels suggested discussion stating that if you attend a national conference it has to be within so many miles or every three years you can attend a national conference.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Ganser wanted to discuss the issue of one board meeting per month being held on the second Monday of the month with committee meetings being held during the first week of the month.

Mr. Michaels stated that this is the first time he has ever seen a district that held two board meetings a month on consecutive Monday nights. He stated normally there is a week between the two board meetings a month.

Mr. Williams stated that we were just here last week and the meeting has been going on for 50 minutes and he does not think any of it was worthless. Having said that he is not opposed to having one board meeting a month but lets do it the right way. He suggested Administration doing some research, check different school districts. If the committee structure wants to change there is a lot of options there. Do we want to change our committees from 4 down to 2? Are we going to remove our committee meetings? There are some districts that do not have committees; they have workshops that the entire board attends. He shared information he could find on other local school districts; Whitehall, Northwestern, Palmerton, Salisbury, Catasauqua, Northampton, Southern Lehigh and Northern Lehigh. Total number of nights for regular board meeting per month by district; Whitehall (1), Northwestern (2), Palmerton (1), Salisbury (1), Catasauqua (1), Northampton (2), Southern Lehigh (2) and Northern Lehigh (2). Committee meetings were all over the board. Comparing total number of nights for board meetings and committee meetings being held per month by district; Whitehall (2), Northwestern (6), Palmerton (2), Salisbury (3), Catasauqua (2), Northampton (4), Southern Lehigh (5) and Northern Lehigh (4).

Mr. Green stated that many years ago Northern Lehigh had one board meeting and one committee meeting per month. Sometimes at your public meetings you would have something that you wanted to table it and then it could not be voted on again for an entire month. The reason for two public meetings a month was that if you were going to be here anyway why not make it a public meeting giving the Board the right to vote. If it is a committee meeting you can not vote.

Mrs. Kulp liked the idea of putting the committee meetings together. She thinks it would be better use of administration and board time. She also thinks more Board members may be able to hear about things they are not currently able to hear about because they are not on that committee.

Mrs. Ganser stated that her thought was to have the committee meetings the first week of the month and then the regular voting board meeting the following week. This would give the committees an opportunity to get things on the agenda for a vote that was discussed during the committee meetings.

Mrs. Kulp is asking administration for guidance and if they think it is feasible and something administration would want the Board to do.

Mr. Michaels stated that certain months or times of the year you may need to have two meetings a month for either budgeting or hiring. Mr. Michaels also stated that he feels that technology should be taken out of Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting and put in with curriculum. He stated that technology should be educationally driven not hardware driven.

Mr. Williams stated that looking back at his chart with all committee meeting being on one night like Whitehall, their meetings start at 4:00 and he feels this would be very difficult for many people. The last committee meeting starts at 7:10. Theoretically depending on how things are going the board could be together for 4 or more hours.

Mr. Michaels stated that normally board members are coming and going during those meetings and there is normally a light snack served.

Mr. Michaels asked that he be able to address this issue at the administrative team meeting tomorrow and gather information from the administrative staff.

OLD BUSINESS
(cont.)

Mr. Hartman stated that he has no issue with going to one board meeting a month but he feels that all the committee meetings on one night would not work.

Mr. Williams stated that he hopes that the night for the meetings stay the same because they currently are nights people are use to being out. He further stated that you can say that you can reduce the number of nights for Board members to be out or you can keep the number of nights the same and have all Board members attend all committee meetings. He also asked that if there are additional board meetings a month needed that it be determined when we set the meeting dates for the year so we do not waste advertising money to advertise for additional meetings.

Mr. Follweiler stated that he belongs to many organizations and he knows the first Monday of the month many other organizations have their meetings on that day. He also said that no matter what you do you will not be able to stay away from all other meetings being held.

Mr. Hartman stated that the Board will go into executive session immediately following tonight's meeting to discuss negotiations.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Williams made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Ganser, that the Board of Education approves the following new business item:

State
Ethics
Commission

The Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors designates Sherri A. Molitoris to receive and file Form SEC-1, Statement of Financial Interests from the Northern Lehigh School District Board members and designated employees as required by law, and the Northern Lehigh School District Board of Directors requires: the Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Special Education, Business Manager, Director of Support Services, District Solicitor, Elementary Principals, Middle School Principal, Transition High School/Middle School Assistant Principal, High School Assistant Principal, High School Principal, Technology Coordinator, Assistant Technology Coordinator, Food Services Director, and School Psychologists to file Form SEC-1, as required by the regulations of the State Ethics Commission.

YEA: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Young, Mr. Hartman (8)
NAY: None (0)

FINANCIAL

Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dengler, that the Board of Education approves the following financial items:

List Of
Bills

Approve the Following List of Bills:
General Fund month of December
Cafeteria Fund month of December
Athletic Fund month of December
Refreshment Stand Fund month of December

Financial
Reports

Approve the Following Financial Reports:
NLMS Student Activities Account month of November
NLHS Student Activities and Scholarship Accounts for the month of November

Per Capita
Abatements

Approve abatement/exoneration requests of per capita taxes, for the residents that fall within the guidelines, as presented.

Delinquent
Tax Collectors
Portnoff

RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves Portnoff Law Associates as delinquent real estate tax collectors for the Northern Lehigh School District for the 2009 tax year.

Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 2009-2010 Budget

Approve a resolution regarding the 2009-2010 Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit Operational and Program Services budget. Total expenditures equal \$2,213,429.00 an increase of \$83,193.00 (3.76%) over the 2008-2009 budget. Northern Lehigh's share is proposed to be \$19,386.00 an increase of \$493.00 from the 2008-2009 budget. A copy of the budget was distributed at the January 5, 2009 school board meeting.

FINANCIAL
(cont.)

Lehigh Career and Technical Institute Center 2009-2010 increase of Budget 2009 school board

Approve a resolution regarding the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute general fund budget and Academic Center expenditures for the 2009-2010 school year. The general fund budget total is \$21,719,820.00 an increase of \$705,140.00 or 3.36%. Northern Lehigh School District's portion of the 2009-2010 general fund budget is \$865,512.08. The expenditures for the Academic Center Budget for the period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 total \$1,193,270.00 an increase of \$43,350.00 or 3.77%. A copy of the budget was distributed at the January 5, 2009 school board meeting.

YEA: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Young, Mr. Hartman (8)
NAY: None (0)

INFORMATION

Minutes of the Lehigh Carbon Community College Board of Trustees meeting held on December 4, 2008 was distributed.

Mr. Williams asked about issues going on with the connect-ed system. He stated that he read the notice on the district web site and the problem seems to be with people who have a digital phone system. He asked if there was anything the Board could do to help assist with any problems the district may be having. Mr. Hrizuk stated that he is trying to work with the companies to get these issues resolved. He stated that the problem is intermittent which most time is hard to fix because it is not doing it all the time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Ganser made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Williams, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors is adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

YEA: Mr. Dengler, Mr. Follweiler, Mrs. Ganser, Mr. Green, Mrs. Kulp, Mr. Williams, Mrs. Young, Mr. Hartman (8)
NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Williams
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Edward E. Hartman