

Highlands School Board Meeting Highlights

September 15, 2008 Regular School Board Meeting

NOTE: This Board Highlights document includes the approved actions of the School Board Meeting. It is not meant to be an exact reflection of the meeting's minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The Board approved the minutes of the August 18, 2008 Regular School Board Meeting, as submitted. The Board also noted that a correction will be made to the June 16 Regular Board Meeting minutes changing the roll call status of Mr. Mark Peck from “absent” to “present.”

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT – Senior **Steve Peters** reported that the Senior Class is conducting a magazine drive to pay for caps and gowns. He also congratulated the Rams football team for an undefeated season and reminded the Board that the Rams will play against Mars on Thursday, Sept. 25. The game will be featured as Fox Sports Game of the Week. Mr. Peters reported that the new furniture and laptop technology available at the High School is working well and has added convenience for students and staff.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – **Dr. Galcik** reported that students have returned to classes and while numbers show a slight decrease in enrollment for Third-Day reported numbers, we have seen an increase in Kindergarten students. Last year, there were 2,852 students, and this year reported numbers show a total of 2,835.

The Elementary Open House held last Thursday invited students and their families into the schools to meet teachers and staff, and to open doors to communication between parents and the district. More than 1,460 people visited classrooms at the four elementary schools.

Instructional methods are being implemented at all levels to improve students’ learning skills.

Elementary schools are conducting research now to better compare and evaluate students’ reading skills. Fawn Elementary students who scored in the middle level of reading tests undergo weekly fluency checks online to monitor progress in the speed and accuracy of their reading. Principal **Kathi Shirey** reports that the goal is to track the progress, compare benchmarks and decipher where the students’ problem areas lie in order to improve tutoring methods. Second- to fifth-grade students also are being tested for reading skills at Grandview Elementary. Teachers are compiling data to be used in the reading comprehension plan by cross-referencing pre- and post- curriculum-based assessments. Testing also has started there using DIBELS and students will be separated into focus groups and targeted for Title I.

The innovative firefighters’ course at the High School already has engaged its students into the community at the Health and Safety Fair held this past Saturday in the Heights Plaza. The successful event resulted in an attendance of

about 538, which secured a \$25,000 grant from the Alle-Kiski Health Foundation that will be used for a scholarship linked to the course. She thanked everyone who attended and helped secure that grant.

KDKA news featured the firefighter's course on its Sept. 2 evening broadcast. The students and teacher Mike Krzeminski discussed the importance of the course and their involvement. Some of the students already are listed as junior firefighters in the community fire departments.

Dr. Galcik reported that the spotlight has been shining on the District so far this year, with coverage and accolades for athletes and students involved in the arts.

Jeff Sinclair, starting quarterback, was featured as Athlete of the Week last Wednesday in the Valley News Dispatch after he helped the team to victory with three touchdowns against Montour.

Other fall sports already are underway, and student athletes continue to practice and aspire for victory.

Highlands Marching Band also appeared in a photo spread, previewing their upcoming performance at the Alle-Kiski Band Festival scheduled for tomorrow at Deer Lakes High School.

Middle School art teachers **Dawn Kennedy-Miller** and **Louise Harvilla** have works displayed at Penn State University campus in New Kensington through Sept. 30 as part of the all-teacher "Practice What You Teach" art exhibit. The exhibit features local art teachers and their personal creations and styles.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – **Dr. Bjalobok** reported that the Title I DIBELS assessments have begun and students are being sorted into focus groups to improve learning skills. He also reported that a Strategic Planning meeting was held this week.

CAFETERIA – **Mrs. Wisner, Mrs. Fox**

The Board approved payment of Cafeteria Fund bills in the amount of \$17,619.19, as submitted. Unanimous vote.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES – **Mr. Lang, Mrs. Thimons**

The Board approved the Student Activities Fund Financial Report for July 2008, as submitted. Unanimous vote.

The Board approved the 2008-2009 Activity Sponsors, as submitted. Unanimous vote.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE – **Mr. Peck, J. Wisner, R. Lang**

Mr. Peck reported that there was one incident of student discipline that was discussed in executive session.

INSTRUCTION – **Mrs. Thimons, Mrs. Wisner**

No report.

TRANSPORTATION – Mr. Misejka, Mr. Heasley

The Board approved the 2008-2009 bus schedules, as submitted. Unanimous vote.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Mr. Misejka, Mr. Heasley

The Board approved the use of facilities, as submitted. Unanimous vote.

The Board approved the following bids:

- High School pool windows replacement by Architect for \$58,800. Unanimous vote.
- High School pool doors replacement by Architect for \$29,300 . Unanimous vote.
- High School courtyard windows replacement by Del Rey for \$275,595. The motion received a 6-3 vote, with Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Wisner and Mr. Heasley voting "No."
- All other windows and exit doors replaced by Del Rey for \$484,495. The motion received a 6-3 vote, with Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Wisner and Mr. Heasley voting "No."
- Grandview doors replacement by ABSpec for \$170,340. The motion received a 7-2 vote, with Mrs. Wantland and Mrs. Wisner voting "No."

The Board approved the change order with Reno Brothers for the Pool Pac bid, resulting in a credit of \$7,000.00. Unanimous vote.

The Board approved a five-year proposal to Siemens for the Middle School Interior Security System at a cost not to exceed \$3,712.00 that is renewable annually. Unanimous vote.

PERSONNEL – Mrs. Wantland, Mr. Peck

The Board unanimously voted to pass the following motions:

The Board ratified the 2008-2009 Substitute Teacher Call List, as submitted. As per Board Policy #405 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #414, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check.

The Board approved the 2008-2009 Substitute Aide Call List, as submitted, As per Board Policy #505 (Pre-Employment Drug Test) #514, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Criminal Record Check).

The Board approved the following Cheerleading Sponsor for the 2008-2009 school year, in accordance with Board Policy #404 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #415, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check. Salary as per Board/HEA

Collective Bargaining Agreement.

A. **Beth Kendra**
Middle School
Effective September 16, 2008

The Board approved the hiring of the following Classified Employee, in accordance with Board Policy #504 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #515, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check.

A. **Dawn Sienko**
Alternative Cafeteria Worker
Effective Immediately

B. **Brittany Howells – Ratify**
Classroom Aide – K/4
Effective August 26, 2008

C. **Michael Malinowski**
In School Suspension Aide – High School
Effective September 23, 2008

The Board ratified the hiring of the following summer workers:

A. **Albert Beucker**
B. **Matthew Beucker**
C. **Shawn Bell**

The Board ratified the following request for Leave of Absence, in accordance with Board/HEA Collective Bargaining Agreement:

A. **Erin Johnson**
Learning Support Teacher
Heights Elementary
Family and Medical Leave
9 weeks/1st Semester

The Board accepted, with regret, the resignation of **Dorothy Swartz**, Transportation Aide – effective immediately.

The Board accepted, with regret, the resignation of the following part-time cafeteria employees:

A. **Jodi Bowser**

Cafeteria Alternate
Effective Immediately

B. Mary Ann Geraci
Cafeteria Alternate
Effective Immediately

The Board accepted, with regret, the resignation of **Rachel Becker** – Biology Teacher – High School, effective September 29, 2008.

The Board accepted the change of position of **Joyce Diller** from full-time personal care aide to part-time substitute personal care aide effective immediately.

The Board extended the Business Manager's contract for five years.

The Board approved the hiring of the following Professional Staff, in accordance with Board Policy #404 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #414, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check. Effective August 26, 2008; salary as per Board/HEA Collective Bargaining Agreement:

A. Cynthia Baskin
Biology Teacher - High School
BS Degree, Step 4
Effective September 22, 2008

The Board ratified the appointment 2008-2009 School Year Curriculum Managers, Program Facilitators, Team Leaders, and Grade Level Leaders.
The Board accepted, with regret, the resignation of **Norene Yandura** – Life Skills Aide, Fawn Elementary, effective immediately.

The board accepted, with regret, the resignation of **Nathan Petrak** – In School Suspension Aide, High School, effective immediately.

FINANCE/TAX – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Thimons

The Board voted unanimously to pass the following motions:

- The Board accepted the Treasurer's Report for July 2008, as submitted and subject to audit.
- The Board approved approving Tax Refunds in the amount of \$1,968.88, as submitted.
- The Board approved payment of General Fund bills, as follows:
To Be Ratified \$551,438.51

To Be Paid \$361,185.61

TOTAL \$912,624.126

* Mrs. Wisner voted "No" against Check #1103.

The Board approved payment of 2007 Bond Issue bills in the amount of \$141,194.16, as submitted.

The Board approved the renewal of the lease with Natrona Heights Baseball/Softball Association Inc., for the use of the fields adjacent to California Avenue.

The Board approved the renewal of contract with Riso to lease Duplicating Machines at all buildings at a cost not to exceed \$1,885.00 per month, in accordance with State Bid.

The Board approved Henderson Brothers, Inc. of Pittsburgh, PA (as recommended by the selection committee) to act as District consultant in the formulation and implementation of the IRS required Employee 403b Plan Document upon review and approval by the solicitor and Administration. This appointment is for an indefinite term with a 60-day notice of Intent to Terminate by either party. Services shall be provided at no cost to the District as retained as the consultant outlined on the group record keeping agreement.

The Board approved the LERTA program, as submitted in cooperation with the Borough of Tarentum for tax abatement.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Thimons, Mr. Peck

The Board approved the library donation, as budgeted in the amount of \$10,000.00. Mrs. Wisner abstained from this vote, 8 voted "yes".

Rev. Philip Beck, chairman, presented a report regarding the Stakeholders Committee. Mr. Beck reported that the committee met and commended the Board for its support of Act 77. He also suggested the Board and/or Administration should submit long-term faculty plans to the board.

FORBES ROAD CTC – Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Thimons

Mrs. Fox reported that 1,012 students are enrolled into the programs, which decreases the cost per student for each district. She also regrettably reported the death of a faculty member there, who helped the students greatly.

PSBA/NSBA – Mrs. Wisner

Mrs. Wisner requested that the Board support House Bill 1373, regarding taking oil and drilling. She also encouraged that Board members attend the meetings and workshops AIU supports

POLICY – Mrs. Wisner, Mr. Heasley

The Board voted unanimously to approve the first reading of the following policy:

A. 907 – School Visitors

ATHLETICS – Mr. Heasley, Mr. Lang

The Board approved the Athletic Fund Report for August 2008, as submitted. Unanimous vote.

The Board approved **Mr. Mike Choma** as Volunteer Statistician for the Highlands Football Program for the 2008-2009 school year, in accordance with Board Policy #404 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #414, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check. The motion received a vote of 8 yes and 1 no, with Mr. Misejka voting no.

The Board approved the hiring of the following athletic personnel for the 2008-2009 school year, in accordance with Board Policy #404 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #414, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check: (Salary as per Board/HEA Collective Bargaining Agreement.) Unanimous vote.

Soccer

Greg Meyer – Ratify Girls Varsity Coach

Amy Kanzic – Ratify JV Girls Coach

Angela Kanzic – Ratify Middle School Girls

Andrew Masarik – Ratify Vol. Asst. Coach Var. Boys

Basketball

Mike Foster Vol. Asst. Coach JV Boys

Bill Celko 9th Grade Boys Coach

Aaron Rea JV Boys Coach

Wrestling

Luke Pollick Head Coach

TECHNOLOGY – Mrs. Fox, Mr. Misejka

No report.

2008 Highlands School Board Members

Debbie Beale - President
Laura Thimons - Vice President
Carrie Fox William Heasley
Ron Lang Ron Misejka
Mark Peck Karen Wantland
Judy Wisner