

Highlands School Board Meeting Highlights

January 19, 2009 Regular School Board Meeting

NOTE: This Board Highlights document includes the 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 November 17, 2008 and December 2, 2008 Regular School Board Meetings and the December 2, 2008 Reorganization meeting, as submitted.

- *Mrs. Karen Wantland added two corrections to the minutes for approval.*

SECRETARY'S REPORT – No report.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT – No report.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – Dr. Karol Galcik discussed a topic close to students, the District and taxpayers: Graduation Competency Assessments, or GCAs. She said, "GCAs will change the procedures we already have in place to determine if a student is ready and capable to complete high school.

The Highlands School Board, administration and faculty see the eminent problems with the GCA proposal that already is being developed by state legislators. Some of the issues we perceive include unfair evaluations by paper-and-pencil standardized testing, eliminating District-established options for graduation assessments, a costly price tag in development of the GCAs and the extreme effect on a student who is denied a high school diploma because of his performance on these tests.

The GCAs are not simply another set of tests issued by the state to determine if the education system is working or is competent in educating our children. The GCAs do not take into consideration the various types of students a District has –career and technical education students, drop-out risks and minorities have proven to take a hard hit on these types of tests.

GCAs already have a high price tag associated with them. Governor Rendell's proposed spending for just three of the 10 required GCAs was \$15 million in last year's budget proposal. This would be an added cost to a system that already requires Districts to have localized assessment requirements for graduating students. In addition, the proposed funds for developing the GCAs could be used to establish many other much-needed programs or initiatives that would benefit students and families.

Please consider contacting your local representative in opposition to GCAs."

In other news, she reported that several students in Mr. Mike Krzeminski's high school social studies classes last month attended the Greater Pittsburgh Civics Fair at Heinz History Center. At the fair, they presented projects displaying what they have learned about American politics, discussed the recent historical election, and heard reports from local noted representatives and lecturers.

Sixteen students placed in three categories at the fair, including winning second prize for a class project that resulted in a modern voter's guide.

Teachers also were recognized last month. Teachers Melinda Eckenrod, Pat Hassler and Sherry Armstrong were nominated by past students who are now attending St. Vincent College as "Great Teachers" through the St. Vincent College Great Teacher Recognition Program. Students nominated someone who has made a positive influence on their personal and intellectual development. Congratulations to those three on their nominations.

Dr. Galcik also recognized the nine Board of Directors that volunteer their time and talents to Highlands School District. January is School Director Recognition Month, and this year's theme is "Opening Doors, Inspiring Generations." The public of the District puts their trust in these directors and in turn, they govern as best they can to ensure students and families are receiving the most the District has to offer. The principals then presented each board member with a plaque recognizing their service.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – No report.

CAFETERIA – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Wisner

The Board approved the Cafeteria Fund Financial Report for November 2008, and approved payment of Cafeteria Fund bills in the amount of \$86,335.79 and ratification in the amount of \$69,755.28, as submitted. *Unanimous vote.*

STUDENT ACTIVITIES – Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Wantland

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

The Board *unanimously* ratified the appointments of the following 2008-2009 Activity Sponsors/Advisors:

Barbara Summers

Ski Club- Sponsor
High School

Nancy Davis

Student Council – Advisor
Grandview Elementary

Julie Wolfe

Student Council – Sponsor
Grandview Elementary

The Board *unanimously* approved the Varsity Cheerleading Competitions, as submitted.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE – Mr. Peck, Mrs. Wisner, Mr. Lang

The Board *unanimously* approved the expulsion of Case 09-01.

INSTRUCTION – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Wisner

The Board *unanimously* approved the changes to the Program of Studies for the High School and Middle School, as submitted.

TRANSPORTATION – Mr. Misejka, Mr. Heasley

Mr. William Heasley reported that new bus procedures regarding altercations on the buses or at bus stops would be in place after meetings with administration, the transportation committee and Mr. Roenigk of W.L. Roenigk bus company were held. The procedures will be sent to parents in the form of a letter, posted on the www.goldenrams.com web site and inserted in the student handbook.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Mr. Misejka, Mr. Heasley

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

The Board approved Kimball Architects as the District Architect.

Lang, Misejka, Peck, Thimons, Fox, and Beale voted for Kimball. Heasley voted for Eckles Architects. Wantland and Wisner abstained from the vote.

PERSONNEL – Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Thimons

The Board approved the hiring of the following Professional Staff, in accordance with board Policy #404 (Pre-Employment drug test), #414, Act 34, 151 and FBI Record Check. Salary as per Board HEA Collective Bargaining Agreement:

Catherine McCue

Chemistry Teacher – High School

BS Degree, Step 1

Effective January 20, 2009

Peck, Wantland, Wisner, Fox, Heasley and Beale voted Yes. Lang, Misejka and Thimons voted No.

The Board *unanimously* approved the hiring of the following Classified Employees, in accordance with Board Policy #504 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #514, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check:

A. Kelly Hay

Confidential Secretary – Business Office

Salary: \$13.70 per hour

Effective January 20, 2009

B. Jeanie Layhew - Replacement

Library Aide – Heights Elementary

Effective January 20, 2009

The Board *unanimously* 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 *unanimously* 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 Record Check.

The Board *unanimously* approved the Confidential Secretary Agreement effective July 1, 2008 – June 20, 2013.

The Board *unanimously* ratified with regret the release date for **Dr. Michael Bjalabok**, Assistant Superintendent, to January 12, 2009.

The Board *unanimously* ratified, with regret, the retirement of **Dr. Robert D. Hower**, effective December 31, 2008.

The Board *unanimously* ratified the appointment of **Dr. Kutar Shergill** and Dentists **Drs. Kuniak and Marchi** to provide district health services for the 2008-2009 school year.

The Board *unanimously* approved the internship of the following person as per Board Policy #404 (Pre-Employment Drug Test), #414, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Record Check, effective January 20, 2009.

A. Christopher Lantz

School Psychologist – Administrative Center

No salary/No cost to District

The Board *unanimously* approved the Agreement and Release regarding Varley vs. Highlands School District.

The Board *unanimously* ratified, with regret, the resignation of **Cynthia Baskin** – biology Teacher – High School, effective January 7, 2009.

The Board *unanimously* approved the Agreement and Release between Highlands School District and Dr. Karol Galcik.

FINANCE/TAX – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Thimons

The Board *voted unanimously* on the following motions:

The Board accepted the Treasurer's Report for the month of October and November, 2008, as submitted and subject to audit.

The Board approved Tax Refunds for December 2008 and January 2009 in the amount of \$4,624.33, as submitted.

The Board approved payment of General Fund bills, as follows:

To Be Ratified	\$1,935,508.00
To Be Paid	<u>\$ 695,755.67</u>
TOTAL	\$2,631,263.67

The Board approved payment of 2007 Bond Issue bills for December 2008 and January 2009 in the amount of \$260,154.39, as submitted. *Judy Wisner voted "no" on checks #1136, 1137, 1138 and #1139.*

The Board *unanimously* adopted the Act 1 Resolution indicating that the District will not raise the rate of any tax for the support of its public schools for the 2009-2010 fiscal year by more than the index established by the Department of Education for the district of 5.9%. A copy of the entire resolution will be placed in the Official Minute Book.

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

Mrs. Wantland reported that the Valley News Dispatch reported incorrectly about a topic discussed at the agenda meeting.

FORBES ROAD CTC – Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Beale

No report.

PSBA/NSBA – Mrs. Thimons

Mrs. Thimons reported that she attended the District Level Leadership Conference on January 9 and 10. The conference discussed relationships with superintendents and assistant superintendents and different ways to develop and understand goals of the Board and district officers.

POLICY – Mrs. Wisner, Mr. Heasley

The Board *voted unanimously* to approve the second reading of the following policies:

- A. 505 – Employment of Substitute and Short-term employees
- B. 405 – Employment of Substitute Professional Employees
- C. 303 – Employment of Administrators
- D. 404 – Employment of Professional Employees
- E. 407 – Student Teachers
- F. 916 – School Volunteers
- G. 0006.1 – Attendance at meetings via Electronic Communications
Wantland and Wisner voted No on Item G.

The Board waived the first reading of the following policies:

- A. 801-AR – Exempted Records
- B. 801-AR-1 – Disclosure/Production of Certain Records
- C. 801-AR-2 – Fees for Public Records Requests

ATHLETICS – Mr. Heasley, Mr. Lang

The Board *voted unanimously* to approve the following motions:

The Board approved the Athletic Fund Reports for September, October and November, 2008, as submitted.

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.)

Swimming

Gene Witt - Ratify Assistant Coach

Baseball

Erik Bergstrom Assistant Junior Varsity Coach

Richard Gonzalez Asst. Coach (Volunteer)

Joseph Novak Jr. Varsity Head/Varsity Asst. Coach

Charles Simoni, Jr. Asst. Coach (Volunteer)

Stanley Watychowicz Asst. Coach (Volunteer)

Softball

Jessica Erdeljac Asst. Middle School Coach (volunteer)

William Heasley, Jr. Junior/Varsity Asst. Coach

Heasley abstained from vote.

Katie Stobert Middle School Coach

Beth Wichrowski Vol. Varsity Coach

Michael Zendarski Head Varsity Coach

Track

Chester Foster Head Varsity Coach

Michael Foster Assistant Varsity Coach

Andrew Masarik Vol. Asst. Middle School

Kristen Pastorek Asst. Middle School Coach

Chris Rice Asst. Middle School Coach

John Rzeczkowski Vol. Asst. Middle School Coach

Jeremiah Silliman Asst. Varsity Coach

Andy Yant Vol. Varsity/Middle School coach

Winter Sports

Stephanie Glaister

Substitute Ticket Taker/Seller

TECHNOLOGY – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Wisner

Mrs. Karen Wantland reported that walkie-talkies have been purchased and distributed throughout the District. Cables for cameras have been pulled at the High School. She also reported that necessary change orders for the doors are underway and they will be deciding which building to complete next soon. She also reported that the Raptor System is operating well in the District.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Board approved Dr. Louis Baldassare to perform the Superintendent search for the District at a cost of \$5,000.00.

Fox, Heasley, Lang, Misejka, Peck and Beale voted Yes. Wantland, Wisner and Thimons voted No.

The board approved hiring Mr. Ira Weiss as District Solicitor for an additional year with terms same as the current contract.

Fox, Heasley, Lang, Misejka, Peck, Wantland and Beale voted Yes. Wisner and Thimons voted No.

2009 Highlands School Board Members

Debbie Beale - President

Carrie Fox - Vice President

Laura Thimons

William Heasley

Ron Lang

Ron Misejka

Mark Peck

Karen Wantland

Judy Wisner