

# Highlands School Board Meeting Highlights

## September 21, 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.

**ROLL CALL** – Eight members present, one absent. Absentee member: **Mr. Mark Peck**.

*The Board unanimously approved the following items:*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES-** The Board approved the Minutes of the August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT** – No Report.

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT** – **Corey Negley**, the student representative from Highlands High School, reported that the new policies create a safe learning environment. Metal detector procedures at the high school have had quicker times with the addition of a "fast lane" for students with see-through or no baggage. The cell phone policy has decreased classroom interruptions. The student body expressed concerns regarding the dress code, specifically frayed jeans.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT** - **Dr. Louis J. Baldassare**, Acting Superintendent, reported that High School students participated in Pinwheels for Peace, an international art. Social Studies students created pinwheels expressing their ideas on peace, war and progress and then **Mrs. Teresa Emeloff's** art students installed the more than 900 pinwheels in the courtyard. The installation will remain up until Tuesday to encourage a peace movement across the world.

**Mrs. Linda Spinelli**, formerly Ms. Posney, sadly passed away on Sept. 8, 2009. She was 57 years old. Mrs. Spinelli was the first GATE teacher at Highlands, arriving from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to expand a gifted education program. During her education career from 1975 to 2007, she held the positions of Teacher of the Gifted, K-5 and 6-8, and co-coordinator of the High School Gifted Program, 9-12. She also was the owner of SpinelliMedia and produced productions for children, schools, marketing firms, and others. Mrs. Spinelli was a Class of 1970 Highlands graduate. Dr. Baldassare said that "She was a great teacher, a nice person, and she left too soon. She will be sadly missed."

**Mr. Bill Heasley** made a motion to approve donating a book to the High School Library in honor of Mrs. Spinelli and **Mrs. Arlene Albaugh**, another retired teacher who passed this summer. The Board approved the motion.

**Mr. Vince Lawrence**, of Natrona Heights, who wrote the elementary music curriculum, donated time and materials on September 18 when he conducted a Teacher In-Service day for Highlands music teachers. Dr. Baldassare thanked him for his time.

Elementary Open House Night drew about 1,400 visitors to the various buildings, which equated to about 90 percent of our elementary parents.

The Citizens Advisory Committee held a meeting in conjunction with the Title Parent Advisory Committee on September 1. Items discussed included the new security measures (and improvements), information about the Title I program and the new reading program that the teachers are reviewing, and district reorganization. The parents and members at the meeting agreed that reorganization is worth at the very least investigating to find out if it is something that could offer benefits. The committee also discussed and explained Accreditation for Growth. The next meeting will be held on October 5 at 1 p.m. in the Administrative Center Conference Room.

**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT** – **Dr. Joseph Latess** reported that administrators are exploring the option of establishing department chairs.

Dr. Latess reported that the High School is undergoing the process of Accreditation For Growth, which is the former "Middle States." The High School committee is now establishing parameters for the process and Dr. Latess will keep the public posted on updates.

**CAFETERIA** – **Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Wisner**  
No report.

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

<b>September 2009 to be paid</b>	<b>\$44,998.61</b>
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**STUDENT ACTIVITIES** – **Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Wantland**

The Board approved the Student Activities Fund Financial Report, as submitted.

The Board approved the 2009-2010 Activity Sponsors, as submitted.

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

Dr. Baldassare reported that this year has shown a decrease in infractions, likely due to the new policies and procedures implemented in the Middle School and High School.

**INSTRUCTION** – **Mrs. Wisner, Mrs. Wantland**

The Board approved authorizing administration to begin studying the reorganization of the Elementary Schools according to grade levels.

The Board approved the Arts and Education Program, as submitted.

**Mrs. Cathy Russo**, Middle School Principal, presented information about the Second Step Program. The Second Step Program is funded by the Safe & Drug Free Schools grant and is in its second year of instruction at the Middle School. The basis of the program is that students who connect to at least one adult improve attendance, behavior and academics, and that a student can and will only learn better if there is an understanding that emotional and social skills impact learning. This program also is instructed in elementary schools. For more information about the program, view the PowerPoint presentation on [www.goldenrams.com](http://www.goldenrams.com), **School Board** section, on the **Board Highlights** page.

**TRANSPORTATION – Mr. Heasley, Mr. Misejka**

**Dr. Baldassare** reported on the status of the Bus Camera Installation. All cameras are installed and previously needed some adjustments. Now, all are operable. Some bus misbehavior already has been reviewed, but no major infractions have occurred.

The Board approved the 2009-2010 bus schedules, as submitted.

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Mr. Misejka, Mr. Heasley**

The Board approved the use of facilities, as submitted.

The Board approved authorizing district/administration to continue formalizing Act 77 program including preparation of a tentative contract and financing options available.

- ***Mrs. Wantland voted "NO".***

**Mr. Joe Capazzoli**, Buildings & Ground Supervisor, reported that the High School Swimming Pool is filled and ready for re-inspection. A mold inspection was conducted and should be returned in five to six days. There are some electrical repairs needed for inspection. The pool should be ready for swimming season.

**PERSONNEL – Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Thimons**

The Board ratified, with regret, the resignation of **Cindy Spondike**, Cafeteria Alternate, effective September 1, 2009.

The Board approved eliminating 2 Aide positions as follows:

- In-School Suspension Aide – Middle School
- In-School Suspension Aide – High School

The Board approved the 2009-2010 Substitute Custodian 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 2009-2010 Substitute School Nurse Call List, as submitted. As per Board Policy #405 (Pre-Employment Drug Test, #414, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Criminal Record Check).

The Board approved the 2009-2010 Substitute Aide Call List, as submitted. As per Board Policy #505 (Pre-Employment Drug Tests, #514, Act 34, Act 151 and FBI Criminal Record Check).

The Board approved ratifying the 2009-2010 Substitute Teacher Call List, as submitted. As per Board Policy #405 (Pre-Employment Drug Test, #414, Act 34, Act 151, and FBI Criminal Record Check).

The Board approved the 2009-2010 Substitute Security Guard 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 adding a Full-time Aide position to be shared between the High School Office and the Printing Department (Administrative Center).

The Board approved rejecting Grievance #10-01.

The Board approved the appointment of the 2009-2010 School Year Curriculum Managers, Program Facilitators, Team Leaders, and Grade Level Leaders.

The Board approved the Act 93 agreement, as submitted.

- ***Mr. Lang voted "NO".***

The Board approved a \$5,000 stipend for **Mr. Patrick Graczyk** for Title I Coordinator position.

#### **FINANCE/TAX – Mrs. Thimons, Mrs. Wantland**

The Board approved accepting the Treasurer's Report for the month of July 2009, as submitted and subject to audit.

The Board approved the Tax Refunds for August 2009 in the amount of \$1,398.12, as submitted.

The Board approved payment of General Fund bills for August 2009, as submitted.

The Board approved payment of 2007 Bond Issue bills for September 2009 in the amount of \$418,714.95, as submitted.

- ***Mrs. Wisner voted "NO" on Checks # 11484 and 1185.***

The Board approved Harrison Township's request to cooperate in the Sheriff's Sale of all the Bouchat properties.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH** – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Thimons, Mr. Peck  
No report.

**Mrs. Karen Wantland** made a motion to release funds to the Allegheny Valley Community Library contingent upon the release of state funds through the approval of the state budget. The motion passed.

- ***Mr. Misejka and Mr. Lang voted "NO". Mrs. Wisner abstained.***

**FORBES ROAD CTC** – Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Beale

**Mrs. Fox** reported that the new directors were introduced to the Board representatives. A re-cap of the beginning of classes also was presented. Students began attending the fall semester on August 26. Several joint meetings for superintendents, principals and counselors will be planned this year to promote and improve communications.

**PSBA/NSBA** – Mrs. Thimons

The Board approved the Resolution Urging the Pennsylvania General Assembly to approve a 2009-2010 State Budget that maintains the Commonwealth's Commitment to Adequate and Equitable Basic Education Funding.

**POLICY** – Mr. Heasley, Mrs. Thimons

No report.

**ATHLETICS** – Mr. Lang, Mr. Heasley

The Board approved the Athletic Fund Report for August 2009, as submitted.

The Board approved establishing the Volleyball Coach salary of \$2,400 per year.

The Board approved **Dr. Shergill** to do Spring Sports at a stipend of \$6,000.

**Dr. Baldassare** reported that the Community Track & Field is not open to the public when in use by classrooms, students or school events.

**TECHNOLOGY** – Mrs. Wantland, Mrs. Wisner

No report.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Mr. Ron Lang** made a motion to permit Mr. Ira Weiss, Solicitor, to pursue recuperating any monies expended through the lawsuit by Timothy McCue. The motion passed.

- ***Mrs. Wisner, Mrs. Wantland, Mr. Heasley 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*