

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Minutes

**Slatington, PA
April 8, 2002**

PURPOSE The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha, at 7:40 p.m. on Monday, April 8, 2002 in the gymnasium of the Slatington Elementary School.

ROLL CALL Members present: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)

Members absent: None (0)

Non-members present: Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr., Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha, Mr. Christopher Iacobelli, Dr. Linda Marcincin, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. David Papay, Mr. Robert Mack, Mr. Brian Geiger, Mr. Bernard Rockovich, Mr. Jeffrey Bachman, Ms. Laurie Newman, Ms. Pamela Grammes, Mr. Nicholas Sander, Mrs. Doneta J. Merkle

VISITORS Approximately 225 visitors attended the meeting, in addition to Sharon Minnich, reporter for The Times News and Elizabeth Bartolai, reporter for The Morning Call.

APPROVE MINUTES A motion was made by Mrs. Geronikos, with a second made by Mrs. Giles, that the minutes of the regular school board meeting held on March 4, 2002 and the regular school board meeting held on March 11, 2002 be approved and ordered filed.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles
Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit -- Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer
Mr. Dorshimer reported that at the CLIU School Board Member conference Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr. was honored for 24 years of dedicated school board member service.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings All board members received a copy of the minutes of the Policy/Education Committee meeting held on March 20, 2002.

Student Representative To The Board Report Pam Grammes and Nick Sander gave their student representative report for the month of April. They also distributed a written report to all board members.

Legislative Report -- Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos
Mrs. Geronikos announced that there will be a legislative meeting at the Lehigh Career and Technical Institute at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, April 12.

SPECIAL Superintendent's Report -- Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr.

**BOARD
REPORTS**
(Con't.)

Dr. Sham announced that Mr. Robert Cox has accumulated a total of 93 total points for a lifetime award for School Board Academy Boardmanship and Advanced Boardmanship and was presented with some lapel pins acknowledging this accomplishment.

Dr. Sham introduced Mr. Bernard Rockovich, business manager, who gave a presentation on where the district stands from a financial standpoint since it does have some impact on the possible reconfiguration of the two elementary schools.

Dr. Sham provided answers to some of the questions that he received with regard to the possible reconfiguration of the two elementary schools changing from a K-6 structure in both buildings to a K-3 and 4-6 structure. He also provided some 2002-2003 projected enrollments and staff distribution figures using current staff and 2002-2003 recommendations to reduce staff size associated with reconfiguring the elementary buildings. He noted that reconfiguring of our elementary schools has been a goal of the district's Strategic Plan that was developed in 1996.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

Lynn Wall – Washington Township – What mechanism will be used to assess the education levels of the students when the two buildings are combined to make sure they are all on the same level? She is concerned her son will get lost in the shuffle. Is the district aware of any other school districts that have done this? Will Y-CARE be offered at both schools? What happens to the money from the Kmart, ATT fund raising programs that the elementary schools participate in? Will this information be available on the district's web site?

Veena Barnett – Washington Township – “Could you please define 1 mill?” How much of an increase will be seen on the individual tax bill? Expressed appreciation for work the school board does. Asked that the board and administration keep the best interest of the children in mind when making their decisions and not increase class sizes. Families with more than one child will be required to do more running and have less time with their family. Parent involvement in school functions may also be affected by the reconfiguration.

Patricia Nonnemaker – Washington Township – Where is the money coming from to save a mill? Did the administration think of taking a pay cut to help the budget? She asked the district to stop their frivolous spending in special education.

Pamela Umlauf – Washington Township – Is anyone looking into grants and/or private or corporate fundraising? When decision is made, please take the best interest of the community as a whole into consideration.

Scott Lusk – Washington Township – Keep everything status quo – staff reduction will put class sizes at risk of pushing the upper limits. What is the fundraising money used for? He feels that thirty minutes maximum on the school bus is a long time for a young child on the bus.

Donna Figura – Washington Township -- She addressed the following issues: disparity in the two elementary schools, the increase in the pension for school employees, and time children spend on the bus.

Steven Uebele – Washington Township – The board and administration state that the reason for reconfiguration is for educational reasons, however, financial reasons seem to be the basis of discussions/decisions. Was hoping to see, in order, what the priorities are that lead to this proposal? What did you base your decision on to reconfigure the elementary schools? Besides this meeting, what other considerations will the board be doing in an attempt to get the parent's opinions and point of view.

Patrice Arnold – Washington Township – As a taxpayer, educator, parent volunteer and parent, she read a letter that shared her experiences as an educator and thoughts as a parent and asked the board to

think long and hard before agreeing to approve the reconfiguration of the elementary schools. Please consider the impact on everyone involved before making your decision.

Gail Freudenberger – Washington Township – Will students be academically grouped according to ability? Will we be losing some of the “good” teachers with the reduction of staff members?

Brandi Owens – Washington Township – As an elementary student she shared her concerns with the board, listing several areas that will be affected by the reconfiguration. She would like to be in the same school and same YCare as her brother. Only lives five minutes from Peters Elementary and does not want to take a bus to Slatington.

Lori Vernon – Washington Township – When students leave sixth grade and enter seventh grade in the middle school, with the reconfiguration, they would all be on the same level, receiving the same instruction. Parents and community members should have volunteered to participate in the Strategic Plan that would have allowed for their input. This concept has been in the works for six years. With regard to Title I – if we reconfigure we will be able to have Title I services for all of the children who need it.

George Cabala – Washington Township – Are there any financial or educational alternatives on the table? How many board members are affected by this reconfiguration?

David Oertner – Washington Township – This district has done some very good things over the past several years; however, he is concerned about this reconfiguration move. How much would it cost the average taxpayer if the reconfiguration were not done? Urged the board to keep the elementary configuration the way it is.

Tina George – Walnutport -- Addressed length of time students will be on the busses. Had a problem with the district planning on bussing students who, because of the location of the residence, would not need a bus if the reconfiguration didn't take place. This doesn't seem logical. Is a copy of the cost analysis on file – both with the reconfiguration and without the reconfiguration so she can see where the district will be saving money? Will the district need two new teachers if the reconfiguration does not happen? She expressed concerned with cutting teachers. Her son is presently in a class with thirty-three students. If this move didn't save money, would it still have occurred for educational reasons? How will you deal with 6th grade students reading on a third grade level for library books.

Recess President Fedorcha called for a short recess at 10:10 p.m. The board reconvened at 10:15 p.m.

Executive Session An Executive Session was held at 6:30 p.m. in the Superintendent's Office for personnel issues. Another Executive Session was held following the meeting for personnel issues.

PERSONNEL A motion was made by Mrs. Geronikos, with a second made by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approve the following administrative transfers:

Administrative Transfers Approve to administratively transfer Donna Marushak from her position as grade 5 teacher in the Peters Elementary School to the middle school, filling a new elementary position that has been created as a result of the transition to a middle school concept. This transfer is effective with the 2002-2003 school year.

PERSONNEL
(Con't.)

Approve to administratively transfer Ellen Drake from her position as grade 6 teacher in the Slatington Elementary School to the middle school, filling a new elementary position that has been created as a result of the transition to a middle school concept. This transfer is effective with the 2002-2003 school year.

ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles,
Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (7)
NAY: Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Green (2)
Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Newhard, with a second made by Mr. Dorshimer, that the Board of Education approve the following items listed under Personnel:

Summer Custodial/Maintenance Employees Approve to employ ten (10) regular and two (2) alternate summer custodial/maintenance employees to work from June 17, 2002 through August 31, 2002. Rate per hour is \$5.15 for first-time employees and \$5.40 for returning employees, pending approval of the 2002-2003 budget.

Unpaid Leave Approve the request of Julia Witmer, high school chemistry teacher, to take a four-day leave, without pay from April 22-26, 2002. In addition to the unpaid days, she will be using her one personal day.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles
Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)
NAY: None (0)

POLICY A motion was made by Mr. Green, with a second made by Mrs. Geronikos, that the Board of Education approve the following items listed under Policy:

Legal Per Tax age, and Notification Enumerators within twelve (12) months of his or her becoming a resident or inhabitant, in accordance with the School Laws of Pennsylvania, Section 680, as amended August 16, 1972, Act 138.

Tax Levies Under Act 511 **RESOLVED** by the Board of School Directors of the School District of Northern Lehigh, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, under and by virtue of the Authority vested in it by the Local Tax Enabling Act of 1965 (Act 511) and its amendments, that a Per Capita Tax in the amount of Five Dollars (\$5.00), as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966, be and the same is again hereby levied, assessed, and imposed on each resident or inhabitant over eighteen (18) years of age in said District; a 1% Real Estate Transfer Tax, as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966 and revised on April 12, 1987, be and the same is again levied, assessed, and imposed; an Occupation Privilege Tax in the amount of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) on occupations as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966, be and the same is again levied, assessed, and imposed; and an Earned Income Tax of 1%, as originally enacted by the Board of School Directors of Northern Lehigh School District on April 11, 1966, be and the same is again levied, assessed, and imposed for general school purposes for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2002. Please note that Real Estate Transfer Tax, Occupational Privilege Tax, and Earned Income Tax are split equally with the municipality.

POLICY (Con't.)

Per Capita Tax Resolution **RESOLVED** by the Board of School Directors of the School District of Northern Lehigh, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, under and by virtue of the authority vested in it by Section 679 of the Pennsylvania School Code of one thousand nine hundred forty-nine, and its amendments, that a Per Capita Tax to provide revenue for general school purposes be and the same is hereby levied, assessed and imposed in the amount of Five Dollars (\$5.00) on each resident or

inhabitant over eighteen (18) years of age, in the territorial limits of the Northern Lehigh School District.

- Homebound Instruction Grant homebound instruction for a 9th grade student, Student No. 05-16000, for five hours per week for a two-week period.
- Conferences Approve the request of Bernard Rockovich to attend a PASBO Workshop on April 26, 2002 in Hershey, PA. Expenses for this conference include \$115.00 for registration, \$36.00 for travel, for a total cost of \$151.00 and has been included in the 2001-2002 budget.
- Approve the request of Bernard Rockovich to attend a PASBO Workshop on May 17, 2002 in Hershey, PA. Expenses for this conference include \$115.00 for registration, \$36.00 for travel, for a total cost of \$151.00 and has been included in the 2001-2002 budget.
- NLMS Student Activities Fund Statement Approve the Northern Lehigh Middle School Student Activities Fund Statement for the month of March 2002.
- NLHS Student Activities Fund Statement Approve the Northern Lehigh High School Student Activities Fund Statement for the month of March 2002.
- YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles
Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)
- NAY: None (0)
- Conference A motion was made by Mrs. Escott, with a second made by Mrs. Giles, that the Board of Education approve the request of Donna Marushak and Ellen Drake to attend the Lehigh University Middle Level Partnership conference in Bethlehem, PA on April 19, 2002. Expenses include \$100.00 each for registration, \$10.80 for travel for a total cost of \$210.80 and will be paid for through Curriculum and Instruction funds.
- ROLL CALL: YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mrs. Giles,
Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (7)
- NAY: Mr. Dorshimer, Mr. Green (2)
- Motion carried.
- FINANCIAL** A motion was made by Mr. Cox, with a second made by Mrs. Ganser, that the Board of Education approve the following financial items:
- Treasurer's Report Approve the report of the Treasurer, Mr. Cox, for the month of April 2002.
- Reports (Info Only) All board members received the April 2002 Revenue and Expenditure Reports for the Cafeteria, General, and Capital Reserve Funds.
- General Fund Bills Approve payment of General Fund bills, as presented.
- FINANCIAL**
(Con't.)
- Extended Financing Construction Bills Approve payment of bills from the Extended Financing Construction Account, as presented.

- Renew Agree-
ment With
Altronics
Security
System Approve renewal of a service agreement with Altronics Security Systems for monitoring of a burglar alarm system and openings/closings for the Slatington Elementary School, Peters Elementary School, Middle School, Senior High School in the amount of \$2,356.50. This reflects an increase of \$121.50 over last year's fee, but includes the addition of the Portable Classrooms at Slatington Elementary School.
- Renew Agree-
ment With
Ehrlich Pest
Control Approve renewal of a service agreement with Ehrlich Pest Control for pest control service at the Slatington Elementary School, Peters Elementary School, Middle School and Senior High School in the amount of \$2,856.00. This reflects an increase of \$660.00 over last year's fee. (Last year Ehrlich inadvertently did not charge the district for the second visit per month to Peters Elementary).
- Renew Agree-
ment With
SimplexGrinnell Approve renewal of a service agreement with SimplexGrinnell for the monitoring of fire alarm systems at the Slatington Elementary School, Peters Elementary School, Middle School and Senior High School in the amount of \$1,456.00. This reflects an increase of \$16.00 over last year's fee.
- Contract With
Progressive
Telecom Approve to contract with Progressive Telecom for four (4) pagers. There is no cost to the district for the pagers; however there is a \$10.00 per pager activation fee and an annual service fee of \$51.00 per unit for a total cost of \$204.00. This reflects a decrease of \$921.60 due to the fact that we are contracting with a different service.
- Renew Agree-
ment With K.L.
Fulford Assoc. Approve to renew a five (5) year agreement with K.L. Fulford Associates, Inc. for the operation and management of the Peters Elementary School sewage treatment facility. Fees for this service will be \$9,300.00 per year. This reflects an increase of \$39.96 per year over the last five (5) year contract.
- CTC Assoc.
Data Cabling
Phase II In
Middle School Approve to authorize CTC Associates (approved State ITQ contractor #: ME2081366-31) to install data cabling for Phase II of the Middle School Renovation Project in accordance with State ITQ contract guidelines and pricing in the amount of \$13,547.00. It is also recommended that the old cabling be removed at an additional cost not to exceed \$450.00.
- YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles
Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)
NAY: None (0)

**INFORM-
ATION**

All board members received a copy of the minutes of the Lehigh Carbon Community College Board of Trustees meeting held on March 7, 2002.

Mr. Fedorcha asked board members if they would agree to hold the April 29, 2002 special school board meeting in the high school auditorium beginning at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Dorshimer questioned the need for this special meeting and requested that he go on record opposing the additional special board meeting. The meeting will be duly advertised in accordance with school board policy.

**ADJOURN-
MENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Newhard, with a second made by Mrs. Ganser, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors be adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mr. Dorshimer, Mrs. Escott, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Giles
Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Green, Mr. Newhard, Mr. Fedorcha (9)
NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Jane J. Escott
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Gary S. Fedorcha