

SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES

- (1) The Board of School Directors of the Lebanon School District met as a committee-of-the-whole on Monday, February 13, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the board conference room of the senior high school as advertised in the Daily News on December 15, 2011.
- (2) President Thomas L. Schaffer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
- (3) On roll call by the secretary, the following board members were present: Mrs. Debra L. Bowman, Dr. Anne V. Dall, Mrs. Rose Marie R. Kotay, Mr. Michael J. Kuhn, Mr. Richard L. Mase, Sr. Mr. Thomas L. Schaffer and Mr. Cornell L. Wilson. Mr. John Shott arrived at 7:11 p.m. and Mr. Corbett Blouch was absent. Also present were Dr. Marianne T. Bartley, superintendent of schools; Mrs. Mary A. Harrell, secretary; Mr. Curtis O. Richards, business manager and treasurer.
- (4) Also present were Dr. Barbara Heckard, assistant superintendent for assessment and accountability; Mr. Tom Jordan assistant superintendent for HR; Mr. Chris Danz, high school principal; Mr. Craig Boltz, director of buildings and grounds; Mr. Ted Graeff, director of information management and technology; Mr. Tim McCormick, assistant director of information management and technology; Mr. Fred Shattls, director of ESOL; Mr. Brian Hartman, assistant director of buildings and grounds; Mr. Bob Hoffman and Mr. Scott Shonk, Beers and Hoffman Architects; Mr. Charlie Fairchild, Fairchild Services; Mr. Charles Blankenship, Lebanon Valley Economic Development; Mr. George Horn, district residents; and the following media representatives: Mr. John Latimer of the Lebanon Daily News and Ms. Laura LeBeau of WLBR.
- (5) Dr. Bartley discussed the Lebanon Virtual Academy. Mr. Ben Brewer is coordinating this effort. This is a new and exciting choice for students and families interested in virtual school. The Lebanon Virtual Academy serves students in grades 6 to 12. This allows a student to earn a Lebanon High School diploma, attend the Lebanon County Career and Technology Center, as well as participate in Cedar athletics and extracurricular activities. It gives parents another choice.
- (6) Next, Dr. Bartley shared information about our Hybrid Learning Initiative. Next year we will be offering an innovative new opportunity to selected freshmen and sophomores to personalize the learning of core subjects. By better integrating digital resources into the classroom, we feel we can achieve our goal to unleash student learning potential and provide access to a world-class 21st century education.

Students will be instructed by a core group of teachers who will be blending digital resources into their lesson plans, such as digital textbooks,

digital workbooks, adaptive content, online assignments, and discussion boards. These digital resources will allow students to learn at their own pace while tailoring the lesson to the student's optimum learning style. Teachers and students will also have access to real-time data on their progress.

Students in the hybrid-learning environment will come to school every day and learn in a normal classroom environment. Students who take part in this pilot should be prepared to work well both in teams, and by themselves. They will be completing more assignments online than they have in the past while having a much more rigorous and personalized interaction with their teachers. Students who are part of the original pilot will still be taking all required courses for graduation, and, their curriculum will align with state standards and college-preparatory assessments.

As a member of the Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13, Lebanon is part of the Pennsylvania Hybrid Learning Initiative, a partnership that includes five intermediate units, Harrisburg University, Kutztown technology infrastructure and application company Dellicker strategies, and Education Elements, a California based company specializing in creating blended education programs.

Lebanon is one of 25 schools across the state that is committing to the program and the only one in Lebanon County. Our Leadership Team looked at how our instruction is delivered and wanted to see how we can be more efficient.

Next year will be the pilot phase of a three-phase program that will gradually expand Hybrid Learning to include all high school grade levels in the next three to four years and eventually the entire district.

We will be selecting approximately 100-125 freshmen and 100-125 sophomores from those who complete an application. Students who apply must agree to participate in at least one extra-curricular activity, such as band, student government, or a sport. Should more than 125 students apply for each grade level, students will be selected at random. We will mirror our demographics.

Some cost savings for supplies like textbooks that will no longer be used can be transferred to pay for the technology resource.

We feel this could reduce the dropout rate as this is about creating customized learning to allow struggling students to complete their studies at a slower pace.

Before we started this we took a walk through our renovated classrooms - -- the whole renovation fits well with this. Our teachers are excited about this - -- we are working together to make this happen. We'll be a district of choice - virtual, traditional or hybrid.

- (7) In updating the board about our renovation process, Mr. Fairchild reported that they have hit very hard and dense rock in the East area. We are exploring the possibility of blasting the rock. This has a potential cost and timesavings. Dr. Bartley asked Mr. Fairchild to work with Maine Blasting to determine the risks and the benefits. Dr. Bartley feels we need a fair analysis. We could see a potential savings of \$150,000 by blasting. Charlie explained the process by which they would blast if the analysis comes back that this is a safe and legal way to go. We expect to make the decision in March, based on what Mr. Fairchild brings back to the board.

Mr. Hoffman shared that we are looking at curbing the wall to try to minimize the amount of blasting.

- (8) Mr. Hoffman shared that the cost to renovate Northwest Elementary would be about \$19 million. This building was built in 1975 and needs a significant amount of work. This is going to be a big decision for us as the cost is high but we have an obligation to keep that building strong. Mr. Hoffman explained that the cost includes amounts needed to become LEED certified. If we do not go for the LEED it would drop to approximately \$15.2 million.

About \$4 million in reserve funds could be put toward the project in next year's budget but the district would still have to float a \$15 million bond. Mr. Richards shared that the bond would require a 4 to 7 mill increase.

Dr. Bartley shared information that was printed in the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) newsletter regarding Plan Con. School construction plans under Plan Con put on one-year moratorium, with funding available 'as available'. This period of delay in PDE paying back the debt incurred by our renovation is just another challenge we face with our budget. Mr. Richards shared that this has put us in a position of having to use more of our funds to make debt payments on the high school project without knowing when we will receive the state reimbursement.

Because the state is not reviewing new projects, there is no telling when or what kind of reimbursement the district might receive from the state should we go forward on the Northwest project. The state is not doing its part on reimbursement. Dr. Bartley shared that a decision on whether to go forward with the Northwest renovation project or continue to put band-aids on items like a failing heating and air-conditioning ventilation system must be made before the final budget is adopted in June.

- (9) Next, Dr. Bartley shared the following update on our budget. Governor Corbett's education budget will provide the district with about \$70,000 less than this year's subsidy. Another cut would be Corbett's proposed elimination of the Accountability Block Grants which means \$400,000 less for Lebanon.

In January we introduced a preliminary \$56 million budget that includes a 5.6 percent tax increase, or 6.72 mills, based on flat funding from the state.

Dr. Bartley shared that the board does not want to adopt a final budget in June with that large a tax hike, but with the cuts made last year, which included eliminating positions and a district-wide pay freeze, it will be difficult not to. We feel this is a very interesting and dynamic time. We already cut 19 and a half positions last year; that has an impact on instruction --- on the day-to-day operations. Dr. Bartley is glad we moved the June meeting date back to June 28; giving us more time to see what the governor's final budget will look like.

In a per pupil spending report provided by IU 13, Lebanon falls 21st out of 22 schools in the Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13; we are spending less than 20 other districts in the IU. In a district where 80 percent of its student population is economically disadvantaged, this shows a tremendous inequity in our public schools. Despite the obstacles we are optimistic.

The only good news is that President Barack Obama's budget released Monday calls for modernizing 35,000 schools nationwide.

- (10) Dr. Bartley reported that we are one of the successful applicants selected to be awarded over \$1.4 million from the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant. We are looking to see if we can use this money to help fund Summer School. We believe we can if we mesh it with the activities that are provided during Summer School. The emphasis of this grant includes components other than academic.
- (11) We are asking for approval to appoint Berkheimer as our Tax Collection Agency. We are making this shift because we feel they can better serve our district.
- (12) Mr. Charles Blankenship, Lebanon Valley Economic Development, shared information about the Local Economic Revitalization tax Assistance Act (LERTA). The LERTA program will give tax breaks for five years to developers who make improvements to commercial and industrial properties.

For the first three years of the program, a commercial developer will not pay any increase in real estate tax resulting from land or building improvements to a property. In years four and five, 50 percent of the new assessment will be forgiven. The tax abatement will not affect the properties' current tax rates. City Council passed LERTA in October.

City Council designated properties North of Cumberland Street as the LERTA zone, making only those commercial and industrial properties eligible for the program. Mr. Mike Kuhn asked why the entire city was not made a LERTA zone. Mr. Blankenship told the board that properties on the city's Southside do not need incentives to be developed.

Unlike the city's other tax-abatement programs, such as Keystone Opportunity Zones, LERTA's do not have an expiration date. The program will remain in effect until council and the school district vote to end it.

- (13) Dr. Bartley stated that the Community Health Council requested permission to conduct another Social Norm Survey next year. This is a voluntary survey and it would help the health council get funding for things such as drugs and alcohol prevention. We would be a partner in the Community Health Council's community initiative.
- (14) Dr. Bartley shared that our elementary principals recorded commercials for Kindergarten registration on WLBR and WQIC; flyers were also distributed.
- (15) In discussing policy updates, Dr. Bartley stated we have several Special Education policies on for a first reading. We reviewed the updates received from PSBA and agree that we need to make the changes to stay in compliance.
- (16) We have applied for the Keystone Opportunity Grant. If we are selected, we could receive up to \$1 million annually for the next 5 years.
- (17) The following correspondence was received from the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association: PMEA was writing to congratulate Dr. Bartley on being selected to receive the 2012 Outstanding Superintendent Award given by the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association. Our music faculty was most articulate in describing the kinds of music support Dr. Bartley provides for our schools. They are convinced that Dr. Bartley deserves the recognition PMEA grants to chief school administrators who recognize the importance of music and the arts in school curriculum. The award will be presented during the PMEA Annual In-service Conference Opening General Session on Thursday, April 19, which begins at 8:45 a.m. in the Lancaster County Convention Center Heritage Ballroom. Everyone congratulated Dr. Bartley for this very deserving award.
- (18) Mrs. Kotay announced that board members would find in their packet board hearing reports for the following recently conducted disciplinary hearings:
- Case 2011/2012 - #28
 - Case 2011/2012 - #29
 - Case 2011/2012 - #30
 - Case 2011/2012 - #31
 - Case 2011/2012 - #32
- (19) Mrs. Kotay, chairperson of the Board Committee on Suspension and Expulsion of Students, stated a recommendation is included from the committee on suspension and expulsion of students on the hearing reports. A copy of the hearing reports are included with these minutes.
- (20) After a brief time of discussion, it was decided to take a vote on Case 2011-2012 - #28; Case 2011-2012 - #29; Case 2011-2012 - #31; and Case 2011-2012 - #32.
- (19) RESOLUTION #14627 – It was moved by Mrs. Kotay and seconded by Mr. Mase to accept the committee's recommendations as set forth in the hearing

reports for Case #28, Case #29, Case #31 and Case #32. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

- (20) Mrs. Kotay announced that board members would find in their packet a board hearing report for the following recently conducted disciplinary hearing:

Case 2011/2012 - #30

- (21) Mrs. Kotay, chairperson of the Board Committee on Suspension and Expulsion of Students, stated a recommendation is included from the committee on suspension and expulsion of students on the hearing report. A copy of the hearing report is included with these minutes.

- (22) The board adjourned the regular meeting at 8:20 PM to go into an executive session to discuss the recommendation of Case 2011-2012 - #30.

- (23) The board reconvened the regular session at 8:25 PM.

- (24) RESOLUTION #14628 – It was moved by Mrs. Kotay and seconded by Mr. Kuhn to accept the committee’s recommendations as set forth in the hearing report. The following vote was recorded:

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| Mrs. Debra Bowman – Aye | Dr. Anne Dall – Aye |
| Mrs. Rose Marie Kotay – Aye | Mr. Mike Kuhn – Aye |
| Mr. Richard Mase – Aye | Mr. Tom Schaffer – Aye |
| Mr. Cornell Wilson – Nay | Mr. John Shott – Aye |
| Aye <u>7</u> | Nay <u>1</u> |
| Absent <u>1</u> | Abstain <u>0</u> |

The motion passed.

- (25) Dr. Bartley and the board members discussed the remaining items on the agenda, but no official action was taken.

- (26) The president requested that board members remain for an executive session to discuss personnel matters following the meeting.

- (27) With no further business to come before the board at this time, a motion was made by Mr. Shott and seconded by Mrs. Kotay that the meeting adjourn. All members voiced consent and President Schaffer declared the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Harrell
Secretary of the Board