

**SOUTHERN COLUMBIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
800 SOUTHERN DRIVE
CATAWISSA, PA 17820**

The January 10, 2005, Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:34 p.m. with President Karl Meyer in charge of the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

President Meyer welcomed everyone, followed by a roll call of Board Members.

BOARD MEMBERS

Amanda Bell-Perry
Elsie Bittner
Hugh Jones (*Absent*)

Linda Kreischer
Karl Meyer
Ronald Savitski

Richard Swank
Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Joseph Springer, Business Manager; Tresa Britch, Board Secretary; Richard J. Roberts, Solicitor; Roy Clippinger, Pat Shultz, James Becker, Paul Caputo, James Dunkelberger and Barbara Lombardo, Administrators; district residents and members of the media.

AGENDA HEARING PERIOD

President Meyer announced that all Personnel Items on the agenda would be considered action items. District resident, Charles Porter, questioned the addition of more after school tutors. Mrs. Lombardo explained that additional students have registered for the tutoring program; therefore more tutors are needed. Mr. Porter questioned the tutor to student ratio. Mrs. Lombardo replied that under tutoring guidelines, the ratio should be low. She would like to see a one to three tutor/student ratio, but there is currently one tutor to six or seven students.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

In Dr. Lonoconus' absence, Mr. Springer reported on the following topics:

1.) He recognized the football team and coaching staff for their third consecutive State Championship. He noted that the coaches deserve a lot of credit for taking the team to state competition ten of the past eleven years. The ESPN feature is tentatively rescheduled to air on January 23rd.

2.) The second mailing for the Act 72 Homestead/Farmstead Exemption occurred in December. There was some overlap due to late responses from the initial mailing. Currently 35 percent of the applications mailed have been returned. The most common question was, "Does Act 50 go away if I return this application?" The answer is no. The Board will have to make that decision before May 30, 2005. Discussion will begin on that topic at the Facilities and Finance Committees meeting on February 3rd.

3.) Dr. Lonoconus, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Roth and Mr. Springer met with representatives from Degler-Whiting Bleachers to finalize the bid specifications. Bids will be received based on 1,500 visitors' side seating, 2,500 home seating and a 42 ft. press box. There will be four alternate bids: 1) reduce visitors' seating by 1,000, 2) reduce home seating to 2,000, 3) Add an 18 ft. second level to the press box, and 4) completely delete the visitor side. Bids will go out in the current week and will be received prior to the February 3rd Finance/Facilities meeting. Mrs. Bittner asked if deleting the visitor side meant that nothing would be done to that side, but the

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home and visitors' side would be switched. Mr. Springer responded affirmatively. Mrs. Bell-Perry asked how the base bid seating amounts were determined. Mr. Springer responded that it came from the recommendation of the Facilities Committee.

4.) Mr. Caputo also congratulated the football team for their State Championship and an outstanding season. He reported that on the past Friday, 115 students went to an FBLA competition at Penn College. Twenty-eight students advanced to state competition. They are currently awaiting the results from two competitions - web page design and multi-media. Teachers, Christina Force and Lori Shively, did a tremendous job preparing their students for the competition. FBLA currently has 126 members. The state competition will be held at Seven Springs Resort in Pittsburgh in April.

5.) Last week four members of the band qualified to go on to Regional competition on February 16th. There are 61 students currently enrolled in Band Front. This is a credit to Mrs. Stone and Mr. Thomas.

6.) Mr. Caputo and Dr. Lonoconus will be teaching a Sociology course through Alvernia College. Currently four or five students are enrolled. This is another service that can be provided for our students with little expense to the district.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following monthly committee meetings were scheduled for 2005:

Activities - 2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m., High School conference room

Curriculum - 3rd Monday at 6:30 p.m., High School conference room

Facilities & Services - 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m., District Office conference room

Finance - 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m., District Office conference room

Negotiations & Personnel - To be announced

Policy - 3rd Monday at 6:30 p.m., High School Library

ITEMS – TREASURER’S REPORTS

ITEMS – MINUTES/INVOICES

President Meyer asked if the \$3,000 invoice for postage was for the Act 72 mailing (check #10310) Mr. Springer explained that it was our regular postage account with Pitney Bowes. That amount was put into our account and then is drawn down as postage is used on a daily basis. President Meyer also questioned the purchase of calculators for the Bullying program (#10317). Mrs. Lombardo replied that the calculators were purchased for the tutoring program and supplies were purchased for the Anti-Bullying program. He asked for clarification on the check to Andrews, Wagner and Beard (#10395). Mr. Springer responded that it was for Labor Counsel. He questioned the check to ePlus Technology, Inc. (#10438). Mr. Springer responded that he didn't know the exact items off the top of his head, but it was most likely technology equipment purchased through the technology budget. He questioned the check to Synergy Systems Group, Inc. (#10619). Mr. Springer replied that the district pays Synergy quarterly for the Family Support Specialist. Mr. Dunkelberger explained that the Family Support Specialist serves as a liaison between families and county agencies. She does individual and group counseling with students, and is instrumental in the district's tobacco cessation program.

Mr. Savitski noted that check #10424 was a third payment and questioned the number of total payments. Mr. Springer responded that an even payment is sent about every other month to pay for Southern Columbia's share of the Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School (CMAVTS) Budget, which is annually approved by the Board. Mr. Savitski asked if the budget

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remains the same. Mr. Springer replied that the CMAVTS budget is set by the consortium of Board members from sending districts that make up the Joint Operating Committee. Southern's share is based on a formula adopted by the Boards of sending districts.

Mrs. Bell-Perry questioned the initials ACDA under check #10332 and the purpose. Mr. Caputo replied that when students travel, there are meal allowances. This particular item was for the students that attended the American Choral Directors Association concert.

Mr. Springer pointed out that check #10402 covered the cost of the first mailing of the Act 72 Homestead/Farmstead Exemption applications.

ITEMS – FISCAL

ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Swank and second by Bittner, Susan Stone (Teacher) was approved as Assistant Field Hockey Coach for the 2005-2006 school year with 15.5 points (salary to be determined). The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Savitski, Dennis Hartranft was approved as Assistant Bowling Coach for the 2004-2005 school year (pending completion of all employment requirements) with 4 points and a salary of \$592. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Swank and second by Yeager, Edward Hinterliter was approved as an Elementary Girls Basketball Coach for the 2004-2005 school year (pending completion of all employment requirements) at a rate of \$7.70 per hour/70 hours maximum. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Kreischer and second by Yeager, adding Kenneth T. Goodman, Jr. (Transportation Aide) to the 2004-2005 Non-instructional Substitute List effective December 15, 2004, (pending completion of all employment requirements) was approved. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Savitski and second by Yeager, adding the following individuals to the 2004-2005 Instructional Substitute List effective January 11, 2005 (pending completion of all employment requirements) was approved:

- Amy Bohm (Elementary)
- Kathleen Clark (Elementary)
- Nicole Fisher (Elementary)
- Megan Hockenbroch (Elementary)
- Kathleen Crisp (Elementary)
- Melissa Bembenek (Art K-12)
- David Townsend (K-12)
- Todd Troutman (K-12)
- Nicole Dodge (Elementary)
- Robert Eick (Elementary)
- Matthew Hoffman (Elementary)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

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On a motion by Yeager and second by Swank, the following individuals were approved as after school tutors effective January 11, 2005 (pending completion of all employment requirements), at the rates listed, which will come from proceeds of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant:

- Cynthia Doby (\$20/hour)
- Helen Hilderbrandt (\$20/hour)
- Christopher Novakoski (\$20/hour)
- Polly Sharrow (\$20/hour)
- Jayme Toczylousky (\$20/hour)
- Robert Visnosky (\$20/hour)
- Jaime Van Horn (\$10/hour)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Savitski, an FMLA Leave was approved for Pamela Pheasant on an intermittent basis beginning December 8, 2004. Total leave is not to exceed 12 weeks over a 12-month period. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

President Meyer asked for some details of the American Drug and Alcohol Survey. Mr. Dunkelberger explained that the survey had been administered annually up until the 2003-2004 school year. The information from the survey helps to monitor students' behavior. The survey results help drive grants like CTC and programs like Project ALERT and D.A.R.E. The survey will take 30 to 40 minutes to administer and will be administered to students in grades 6, 8 and 10. President Meyer asked if the survey has been useful. Mr. Dunkelberger replied that it has been very useful. He distributed a detailed report, which included a comparison over multiple years. Mr. Yeager asked how seriously the students take the survey. Mr. Dunkelberger replied that he could provide reliability and validity data. Mr. Yeager questioned the cost, to which Mr. Dunkelberger replied that it would depend on which reports were needed. He added that the cost of the Adolescent detailed report is \$250 and the Multi-year comparison report is \$125. The Safe and Drug Free Schools Grant would cover the cost. Mr. Yeager asked if the survey is a requirement of the grant. Mr. Dunkelberger responded that it is identified by the grant as one of the assessment tools that can be used. President Meyer asked if parents would be able to approve the survey. Mr. Dunkelberger responded that parent permission is required and copies of the survey would be available in the office for parents.

Mr. Dunkelberger explained the need for the DIBELS and AIMSWeb Probes. Currently there are no standardized probes to assess students' reading performance. Different grades are using different assessment tools. This would standardize assessment and would be a good visual for parents during IEP meetings. It would provide a graph of the student's performance. Mrs. Bittner asked the cost. The AIMSWeb would cost \$200 annually and the DIBELS is free and is provided by the University of Oregon.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Yeager asked for an update on the June 1st deadline to drop the instrumental program. Solicitor Roberts stated that a deadline can be imposed. He noted that it should be reworded, but the Board needs to decide if they want to go ahead with it. Mr. Clippinger noted that the High School Principal and Band Director should work on the wording. Mr. Thomas will be invited to

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attend the next Board meeting. Mr. Yeager expressed his concern that it will put the district in a bind. Solicitor Roberts didn't think so. He noted that the wording should be changed and that it is a matter of policy and the Board needs to decide whether or not they want to do it. Mr. Yeager asked if any other curriculum would benefit from such a stipulation. Mr. Caputo stated that he would look into it.

Mrs. Bell-Perry mentioned the holiday party and asked why Board members were not invited. Mr. Becker explained that he was responsible for arranging the event. He felt that the staff never has a chance to get together outside of work and this was an opportunity to do so. Board members were invited last year, but were just overlooked this year. Mrs. Bell-Perry noted that alcohol was served and she was concerned that the district could be held responsible should something happen. It was determined that the party was not sponsored by the school district. Individuals paid for their own meals and beverages.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

District resident, Mr. Richard Gotshall, asked if the public would be informed regarding the Board's decision on Act 72. Mr. Springer noted that it is the Board's desire to inform the public. It has not yet been determined how the information will be disseminated. That will be discussed at future Board and Committee meetings.

Mr. Porter asked if there was a policy against alcohol being served at SCA events and questioned the CTC banquet in particular. Mrs. Lombardo replied that no grant funds were used to purchase alcohol.

Mr. Porter noted that he went through the game receipts and developed a breakdown per game, which he distributed to Board members. Mr. Swank noticed the increase and noted that growth seems to be significant. Mr. Porter said that he just wanted to offer the information to the Board.

Mr. Porter noted that at the last Facilities meeting, a 3-year plan to bring expenditures in line with revenues was discussed. Mr. Springer noted that the plan is centered on the budget deficit. They have no idea what the state will do, but a pretty good idea of what Act 50 will do. He added that it would be foolish to plan several years in advance without knowing what the state or federal government will do. Mr. Porter noted that at the end of the three-year period, only 8-10% of the fund balance would remain. Mr. Springer noted that in the first and second years, the district met its goals at the time of budget adoption. Based on actual results, the district is ahead of its goals. He believes they will meet the third year target. After that point, it will not be as difficult to plan a budget. Mr. Porter asked if there was a plan to reduce recurring expenses. Mr. Springer noted that the district has reduced staff - an English teacher, Business teacher, Lead teacher and custodian were cut. A cafeteria monitor has not been replaced during the current year and a maintenance worker was furloughed. There are more tough decisions the Board will have to make.

Mr. Porter asked if budgetary transfers are required in order to expend money. Mr. Springer replied that it comes down to the way a district operates. If the money is not in an account, then it is not spent. We require the Board to approve transfers between major functions, for example Maintenance to Transportation.

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Mr. Porter noted that when the original budget is compared to the ending budget, there is a \$378,000 difference. He asked if additional money coming in is added to the budget. Mr. Springer replied that additional grant monies would be included in the adjusted budget column. President Meyer noted that the Board and administration go through the budget process and they have done better than planned each year. Mr. Porter noted that the district is drawing over \$300,000 from the fund balance every year and that is not being addressed. Mr. Springer did not agree. He noted that the plan the district has in place does address that issue and the district is currently ahead of its goal.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Swank and second by Kreischer, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary