

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

The April 14, 2005 Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:30 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

Linda Kreischer
Karl Meyer
Ronald Savitski (*Arr. 7:45 pm*)

Richard Swank (*Absent*)
Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Alan J. Lonoconus, Superintendent; Joseph Springer, Business Manager; Tresa Britch, Board Secretary; Roy Clippinger, Pat Shultz, 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 and Policy and Programs Item A on the agenda would be considered action items.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lonoconus' report included the following topics:

1.) He requested an executive session following the Board meeting to discuss personnel and negotiations matters.

2.) He and Mr. Springer attended the Federal Programs Conference. Title I funds will tentatively be lowered by \$12-13,000. President Meyer asked if the decrease was across the board. Dr. Lonoconus replied that some schools would lose funding and some schools that never received funding in the past would now receive. Mr. Dunkelberger explained that Title I is a remedial reading program for any student in grades K-4 that is struggling with reading. Mr. Yeager asked the number of students involved in the program, to which Mr. Dunkelberger replied, "110." President Meyer asked the percentage of the decrease. Mr. Dunkelberger replied that it would be approximately 6 percent.

3.) Dr. Lonoconus had just received a letter from Governor Rendell regarding Act 72. It included a table of the estimated amount of tax relief per school district and a DVD, which he would like to show at the next Board meeting depending on its length. He provided Board members with a copy of the letter and table. President Meyer asked if there was any news on potential litigation. Dr. Lonoconus replied that PSBA filed litigation to push for an extended deadline.

4.) Student presentations regarding the CSIU Technology Competition will take place at the next Board meeting.

5.) Mr. Clippinger reported that PSSA testing was held back in the secondary building due to the tragic loss of Carissa Berkheisier. He noted there would be a huge number of make-ups this year. The staff performed a field test in reading and was surveyed upon completion.

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6.) Dr. Lonoconus noted that he was proud of the staff, administrators and especially the students for their conduct surrounding the death of Ms. Berkheiser. Dr. Meyer echoed his comments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities & Services - Michael Yeager, Chairperson, reported that lunch prices have not been raised in eight years, but it is being considered. They discussed the "Regardless" projects list. Lockers need to be replaced and would be purchased and installed by the maintenance staff. The PPL review is underway.

Finance - Karl Meyer, Chairperson, reported that they discussed the budget status for 2005-2006. There have been recent additions to the tax rolls, an increase in property tax revenue of approximately \$70,000 due to new construction and Accountability Block Grant funds in the amount of \$14,000. The increase in the cost of medical benefits is expected to be less than 20 percent. The budget gap has been decreased by \$84,000.

Due to tax equalization, Columbia County taxpayers will realize a .4 mill increase (from 24.7 to 25.1 mills) and Northumberland County taxpayers will receive a .5 mill decrease (from 38.0 to 37.5 mills). There was a question as to whether the district would have to increase the income tax under Act 72 if it had already increased under Act 50. The answer is yes, it would increase \$10 for every \$10,000 earned.

Negotiations and Personnel - No report.

Activities - Linda Kreischer, Chairperson reported that there was not enough interest in Girls Junior High Soccer to form a team for this year. Some girls were already committed to other sports and will carry out their commitment.

ITEMS – TREASURER’S REPORTS

ITEMS – MINUTES/INVOICES

President Meyer asked for an explanation of check #10968 to Canton Area School District. Mr. Springer explained that it is for tuition for a student in an Alternative Education placement. The student was placed there by court order and was enrolled for 88 days. Since the student's parents are residents of the district, Southern Columbia is responsible for the tuition.

ITEMS – FISCAL

Mr. Springer noted that the district's portion of the revised Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School budget reflects a decrease of approximately \$7,400 over last year.

ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Bittner and second by Yeager, changing Laurie Wilson from Part-time Afternoon Van Driver (Run #358) to Regular Run Driver (Run #21) effective March 21, 2005, was approved. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Savitski, granting the request of Carol Reich to change the effective date of her retirement from June 30, 2005 to June 29, 2005, was approved. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

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On a motion by Yeager and second by Savitski, changing Amelia Schetroma from Substitute Cafeteria Worker to 2-Hour Cafeteria Worker effective April 15, 2005 (pending completion of all employment requirements), was approved. Her salary and benefits are as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Kreischer and second by Jones, adding the following individuals to the 2004-2005 Substitute List effective April 15, 2005, (pending completion of all employment requirements) was approved:

- Suzanne Clark (Home Economics)
- Paul Roadarmel (Van Driver)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Savitski and second by Yeager, an FMLA Leave for Tammy Kester beginning April 27, 2005, was approved. The total leave is not to exceed 12 weeks over the next 12 months. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Kreischer and second by Savitski, an FMLA Leave for James Dunkelberger beginning March 29, 2005, was approved. The total leave is not to exceed 12 weeks over the next 12 months. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

On a motion by Yeager and second by Bittner, Homebound Instruction was approved for a Middle School student until further evaluation by a physician, for a maximum of 6 hours per week at a rate of \$20 per hour. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Mrs. Lombardo explained that the Olweus survey is a requirement of the Olweus Anti-bullying Program and is an evaluation tool for the 21st Century Grant. The Board will take action on the survey at the next Board meeting.

BOARD COMMENTS

President Meyer noted that he was approached by representatives from the Redskins regarding the old bleachers and asked to whom the calls should be referred. Dr. Lonoconus replied that either he or Mr. Springer should be contacted.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

District resident, Ray Valencik noted that he thought there would be more information presented on Act 72 during the meeting. President Meyer explained that the DVD containing Governor Rendell's message would be shown at the next Board meeting.

District Resident, Florey Guarno asked for information regarding the bleacher project, specifically the amount it would have cost to bring the bleachers up to safety specifications. Dr. Lonoconus replied that he did not know the exact figure off the top of his head, but would provide the information. He noted that there was a question as to whether the foundation could take the wind load if the bleachers were brought up to code, plus a limited life span was projected. Mr. Guarno asked if it would be the same placement for the new bleachers. Dr. Lonoconus replied that they would be set back in line with the light standards. Mr. Guarno noted that he heard in a local coffee shop that the district was getting ready for artificial turf and that was the reason for the

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bleacher project. Dr. Lonoconus implied that the only way artificial turf would be installed would be if someone donated it. President Meyer added that the district cannot afford artificial turf and there was never a discussion or a plan to acquire it.

District resident, Jackie Slotterback asked if it was true that the district actually spent \$1,000 on beach balls. Mrs. Lombardo explained that there were two Communities That Care (CTC) grants; a Mobilization grant of \$150,000 for planning and mobilization and a Program and Implementation grant of \$150,000 to get programs up and running. She noted that the equal amounts of the grants indicate that both phases are equally important. The purpose of the Mobilization grant was to reward, recognize and honor volunteers; secure a Community Prevention Board; conduct risk and resource assessment; celebrate successes; promote CTC; establish partnerships and collaboratives and inform the community about CTC. Items such as imprinted beach balls, sun visors, pens, key chains, bicycle helmets, etc., were purchased as promotional items for the CTC program and were allowable expenses under the grant. The \$1,000 in question was not solely for the purchase of beach balls.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Jones and second by Bittner, the meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary