

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

The April 10, 2006 Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:36 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 (*Absent*)

Hugh Jones (*Absent*)

Karl Meyer

Charles Porter

Ronald Savitski

Thomas Slusser

Paul Starr

Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Alan J. Lonoconus, Superintendent; Daniel Rodgers, Business Manager; Debra Olson, Substitute 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.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lonoconus' report included the following topics:

1). He requested an executive session following the meeting to discuss a personnel matter and to consult with counsel regarding pending litigation.

2.) He then opened the floor to the principals for reports in regard to staffing and class sizes. Mrs. Shultz, Elementary Principal, stated that kindergarten registration took place in late March and 88 students went through the registration/screening process. She stated that the last few years there has been an increase of students being registered for kindergarten after the initial registration and before school starts in August. Last year 25 students registered after the registration, so it is hard to state a number of students that will be in kindergarten in the fall. She also stated that last year the Board hired an additional 2nd grade teacher late in the summer for the bubble at that grade level and she plans to move a 2nd grade teacher to 3rd grade to follow that large number of students. She also informed the Board that if numbers were high in kindergarten when it gets closer to the start of school and a teacher cannot be hired, hiring more kindergarten aides would be a huge help to the teachers. At this point she has 2 kindergarten aides split between the 6 classrooms. She noted that an aide per classroom would be great, but even hiring possibly 2 more aides would be a big help if class sizes were larger. Mrs. Shultz also talked about move-ins over the summer increasing the number of students in each class each year. In the past few years, class sizes have increased after all activity over the summer months. Kindergarten has 108 students with 6 teachers for an average of 18 students per classroom, 1st grade has 99 students with 5 teachers with an average of 20 students per classroom, 2nd grade has 116 students with 6

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teachers with an average of 20 students per classroom, 3rd grade has 105 students with 5 teachers with an average of 21 students per classroom and 4th grade has 109 students with 5 teacher with an average of 22 students per classroom.

Mr. Becker gave his report stating his attendance numbers: 5th grade - 101 students, 6th grade - 105, 7th grade - 114, 8th grade - 117 when school started and currently 101, 110, 115, 116 respectively. For next year, he foresees class sizes of 5th grade - 109, 6th grade 101, 7th grade - 110 and 8th grade 115. He did state that he sees increases from year to year. A question of class sizes in 5th and 6th grade was asked of Mr. Becker and he stated that they vary from 20 to 27 students depending on the type of class. They can be as big as 27 in science or social studies, but math and reading could be lower because of students being pulled out to special education classes or to a more advanced math class. He would like to keep his staff status quo based on the current numbers.

Mr. Caputo gave a report on his projected number of students in high school next year. He stated that 9th grade has 116, 10th grade 100, 11th grade 118 and 12th grade 124 with a total of 458 High School students. The scheduling requests are complete at this point for next year. He stated that to honor the requests of the student body and maintain the current curriculum he would need every staff member back next year. He stated that it is not as easy to explain class size in High School because of the diversity of the course selections for students. He asked Mr. Tom Donlan and Mrs. Sandra Lutz, high school Guidance Counselors, to attend the meeting and give a report and take questions from the Board. Both guidance counselors spoke in regard to course selection and the diverse selection of courses offered at Southern. They reiterated what Mr. Caputo said about the complexity of scheduling. They also touched on AP courses and honors course when questioned by Mr. Porter on class sizes of the AP and honors courses. The guidance counselors also stated how important it is to offer the courses that are currently offered to make it possible for the students wanting to go on to universities to acquire everything they will need to be selected at that university. Mrs. Lutz stated that when a student takes an AP course they have the option of taking a test at the end of the year to have that course count for credit at the university the student would attend. Mr. Porter asked what percentage of students take the test? Mrs. Lutz said she is not sure why but the percentage is small. She thought it could be because of the cost of the test which is \$74 or possibly the student is overwhelmed by the course because of the college level type course and chooses not to be tested. Mr. Yeager asked if the district could give an incentive to take the test, such as if a student does well on the test, the school would pay for the test. Mr. Caputo replied that we do not at this time but he would be more than welcome to entertain that idea. Mr. Porter stated that at a committee meeting Mr. Caputo had the idea of doing a rotation of the AP courses from year to year. Mr. Caputo said that it was not his idea. Mr. Porter said if those were not his words he apologizes for putting words in his mouth. Mr. Caputo said he does not see having a formed rotation with AP courses worthwhile. Mr. Caputo said that the reason Southern students are so successful is because of the diversified courses offered and the hard work put in over the summer by administrators to make the scheduling work out. There have been instances where an AP course could not be offered because the teacher is needed to teach a lower level class and then the students who signed up for it are told that the district will try and provide that course next year. Mr. Lonoconus brought up that Mr. Porter had asked a question of Lanny Conner's schedule in regard to prep periods. Mr. Caputo stated that during Mr. Conner's planning periods, he does behind-the-wheel driving with Driver's Education students. He is also the leader of the Student Support Team and does paperwork for that, as well as the Driver's Education course. He also stated that Mr. Conner has 283 students on his roster, which is a large number of students to have. Amanda Bell Perry asked Mr. Caputo how many students

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Mrs. Breech has. Mr. Caputo said he would have to get that information, or she could count them herself since she had that data available. Dr. Lonoconus said that Mr. Caputo had the exact number of Mr. Conner's students because Mr. Porter had asked him prior to the meeting and he had told Mr. Caputo so he could prepare to answer Mr. Porter's question.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Activities - Paul Starr, Chairperson, reported that there was no meeting held prior to the board because of the Strategic Planning Meeting held. At that point Mr. Yeager asked if all board members could get a copy of the strategic planning progress on paper. Al said yes all board members could get a copy. Dr. Lonoconus also stated that Mr. Sharrow hopes to interview for the Boy's soccer coach. 2 applications were received. If possible they would like to bring a name to the next board meeting. The girl's soccer coaches were also brought up. The head coach and assistant coach would like to switch positions. The board discussed it and decided that if that is still what the coaches would like to do they should make a motion to do that at the next meeting. Dr. Lonoconus stated that he would talk to the two coaches and if that is what they want to do they should give the board a formal letter stating that. The reason for the switch is because head coach, Frank Fullmer's, son will be going off to college and he isn't sure he will have the same amount of time to devote to the head coach position. Mr. Sharrow told Dr. Lonoconus that he didn't see any problem with the switch.

Facilities & Services - Michael Yeager, Chairperson, reported on the marathon meeting they had last Thursday that went past 12:30 a.m. A presentation was given by a management group who wants to provide a proposal. The energy project was put off and they discussed that they could contract bids. The baseball field would be put out on bid again. The road was discussed and storm water run off was a concern. The high school bleacher replacement is on schedule. The electrical service at the transportation garage was discussed. The middle school office addition was passed by and not discussed. Mobile office space was discussed for the Transportation Garage. It may be cheaper to build an office within the building space already there. The elementary school sewer pipe has a 10ft bow in it and it goes under the gymnasium. Roto-Rooter has had to be called out twice in the last 2 weeks to unclog it. We are looking at having a camera device put through it to see where the bow is and how to get to it under the floor. There was discussion on a bid for baseball and softball fence cap, whether it is cheaper to price it out and do it ourselves or to go with the original bid. The generic pipe only comes in white and black and would be labor intensive. The Board gave approval to go ahead with the plan to get the yellow at the original bid.

Finance - Karl Meyer, Chairperson, reported that Mr. Clippinger gave a presentation at the last meeting and made requests for additional funding for professional education, assessments and the Reading Apprenticeship program. Time clocks are being researched to see if they are capable of uploading to our current software. Security cameras and the \$15,000 in grant money were discussed. The CSIU budget, replacement/leasing of photocopiers and the asbestos 3-year proposal of \$1,250 were also discussed. Two bid proposals for buses are moving forward. Three retirements were discussed: Mrs. Sandra Lutz, Mr. Gary Wilson and Mr. Walt Betsko. The June 30th budget deadline was discussed. The administration has no idea what the district will receive from the state at this point. A tax increase was discussed: a 1 mil increase in Columbia County and a ½ mill in Northumberland County. A request that all the Board members get a copy of the Capital Reserve Budget was made.

Negotiations & Personnel - Amanda Bell-Perry, Chairperson, reported that The Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds position was discussed. Thirty-five applications were received.

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Dr. Lonoconus is still waiting for rankings from some of the Board members. The presentation from the management company at the April 17th meeting has disrupted the timeline.

ITEMS – TREASURER’S REPORTS

Members of the public did not have copies of all of the Treasurer’s Reports.

ITEMS – MINUTES/INVOICES

ITEMS – FISCAL

ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Slusser and second by Starr, the addition of Edward A. Price (Bus/Van Driver) to the 2005-2006 Substitute List effective April 3, 2006 (pending completion of all employment requirements) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Slusser, employment of Jessica Heckman (teacher) as Junior Varsity Softball Coach for the 2005-2006 school year with 10 points and a salary of \$1,525.00 was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Porter and second by Yeager, to designate Kirk Peiffer as a Volunteer Assistant Baseball Coach for the 2005-2006 school year (pending receipt of favorable clearances and a negative Tuberculin test) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Slusser, a Leave of Absence without pay for Glenn A. Heim, Sr. (2nd Shift Custodian) beginning March 8, 2006, for a maximum of six months was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, employment of the following student teachers as After School Tutors (pending completion of all employment requirements) effective as listed, at a rate of \$10 per hour, which will come from proceeds of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant was presented for approval:

- Charlene Feyers - effective March 28, 2006
- Nicole Johnson - effective March 29, 2006
- MacKenzie Bartell - effective April 11, 2006

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Slusser, the resignation for retirement of Sandra Lutz (Secondary Guidance Counselor) effective July 30, 2006, was presented for approval. Mrs. Lutz has been with the district since August 1985. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Porter and second by Slusser, the resignation for retirement of Walter Betsko (Secondary Art Teacher) effective June 9, 2006, was presented for approval. Mr. Betsko has been with the district since January 1972. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

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On a motion by Savitski and second by Starr, the resignation for retirement of Gary Wilson (5th Grade Teacher) effective June 9, 2006, was presented for approval. Mr. Wilson has been with the district since September 1974. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Slusser asked if anything had been done about the prior discussion of having a safety committee. Dr. Lonoconus that nothing had been done to this point, but they would look into it. Mr. Porter said the reason they have not accepted the PPL or Chevron plans is that they are looking at local contractors and they may possibly offer a better deal. Mr. Porter asked about the fundraising for saving a local mill by an Honor Society Student at the High School. Mr. Caputo stated that if the mill project turns out to be in private hands the money will be turned over to the Historical Society. Mr. Porter asked how much had been raised so far and Mr. Caputo said the money is still in the collection cans. Mr. Porter also questioned how many fundraisers are done in a year at the school and there was not an exact number known. Dr. Lonoconus stated that they could look into the matter, and Mr. Porter stated he didn't want them to do a lot of work; he was just looking for a ballpark figure. He said that there is a policy on fundraising and he would like to see it followed. Dr. Lonoconus stated that it is.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

Mr. Gotshall asked questions in regard to contributions to the CSIU and on the points for coaches and how the points benefit them.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Porter and second by Slusser, the meeting was adjourned at 9:41 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary