

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

The March 19, 2007, Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:35 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 (<i>left 8:55 pm</i>)	Karl Meyer	Thomas Slusser
Elsie Bittner (<i>Absent</i>)	Charles Porter	Paul Starr
Hugh Jones	Ronald Savitski	Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Richard Beierschmitt, Acting Superintendent; Daniel Rodgers, Business Manager; Richard J. Roberts, Solicitor; Roy Clippinger, Joseph Shirvinski, Roger Nunkester, James Becker and Robert Mehalick, Administrators; district residents and members of the media.

AGENDA HEARING PERIOD

President Meyer announced that immediately following the Agenda Hearing Period, the board would be entering into a brief executive session for personnel matters. He then announced that all items on the agenda would be considered action items including the addendum items.

The board entered into executive session at 7:39 p.m. and reconvened the regular meeting at 8:00 p.m. with all members present except for Mrs. Bittner.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Beierschmitt's report included the following topics:

- 1.) He congratulated Mr. Randy Young for being named Educator of the Year for 2006 by the Columbia County Conservation District. The award acknowledged his dedication to education in the environment.
- 2.) He commended Mr. Clippinger and the teachers and staff for all of their work and organization involving the PSSA testing process.
- 3.) Mr. Porter reported on the exit audit from the Auditor General. They met with two auditors on March 13th. The auditors noted that Mr. Rodgers complied with all of their requests in a timely manner and provided all of the requested documentation. They said that if it weren't for two ethics problems, the district did well. The first issue is that two board members did not file their ethics statements and one board member filed late. The remedy is to have the Board Secretary pass out the ethics forms and announce at a meeting that the forms were distributed and record it in the minutes to form a paper trail and document that the board members and administrators received the forms. At that point, it would be up to the board members and administrators to return their forms. The second part was that the district is in violation of part of the ethics law. He noted that it was a violation by former superintendent, Mr. Lonoconus. The auditors contacted the Ethics Commission and they did not prosecute for two reasons; because the money was returned and the board made a rescission agreement. They did not refer to prosecution themselves because of the same reasons. They recommended that in order to protect

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the district and to verify that all superintendents and administrators know the school code, it should be put into policy. The policy should mimic the law. Mr. Beierschmitt and Mr. Rodgers were present at the exit conference and they agreed to look up the law and pass it on to the Policy Committee. The consequences of violations should be included in the policy and as an added measure, it should be included in the next superintendent's contract. President Meyer questioned the nature of the violation. Mr. Porter replied that he believed there were two. One dealt with doing business with a company where a family member is employed and the other pertained to the bidding and quote process. Mr. Rodgers noted that the auditors recommended that an official quote form be developed. Mr. Beierschmitt stated that the administrators and the Athletic Director agree that they should have a copy of the form on hand to record quotes that would eventually be presented to the Business Manager. Mr. Porter noted that the auditors and the Ethics Commission reemphasized that they need citizens to report infractions to them. They are the agencies that validate any infractions to determine the extent of violations. Mr. Rodgers added that out of all of the districts involved in a four-year audit this year, Southern Columbia was one of the only districts without a financial finding. Mr. Rodgers acknowledged the services of Mr. Joseph Springer. He noted that much of the audit was for Mr. Springer's years of service and felt that it was necessary to credit him for his excellent work.

President Meyer noted that he was remiss in not doing it at the beginning of the meeting, but he requested a moment of silence for Derek Cowl, a graduate of Southern Columbia who recently died in a fire.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Curriculum - Mike Yeager, committee member, reiterated Mr. Clippinger's statement in the Friday Letter that more participation is needed for Curriculum Committee meetings. The discussed the PSSA testing. Make-up testing was currently underway. Three of the five fourth grade classrooms were between 57 and 60 degrees during the time of testing. Mr. Beierschmitt noted that Mr. Geffken has been continually working on the heating issues. The average number of special needs students in the regular population is eight to twelve percent and currently some of the district classes are at 28 percent. Because of that situation it has been more difficult for Mr. Clippinger to meet with teachers because of the time they spend in meetings and writing IEPs. Mr. Clippinger noted that some changes are being discussed and evaluated. He noted that the board would be hearing about those changes in the upcoming months. Mr. Yeager reported that the Pennsylvania Department of Education could now come and observe before, during and after PSSA testing to investigate that the district is preparing and administering the tests correctly. Beginning in April, there will be three grades (4, 8 and 11) tested on science. The science PSSA will drive the science curriculum. Mr. Clippinger noted that he and Mr. Shirvinski are more interested in an activity-based science program to motivate students to learn.

Mr. Yeager noted that with all of the requirements such as PSSA testing, the amount of time in class is decreasing. He stated that it would behoove all of the districts to petition the state to go to 185 days and use those five days for testing. Mr. Beierschmitt noted that he would be meeting with the Secretary of Education next week and would mention it. Mr. Yeager asked the board's opinion on having one of the teachers of Connected Math come to the board and teach a lesson of Connected Math or to have them tape one of their classes so board members would understand the concept. President Meyer stated that he would definitely be interested, but would like it limited to a 15- or 20-minute presentation.

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Mr. Porter asked about the possibility of using Act 80 days on days where things are not otherwise being accomplished, such as a party day or a movie day. Mr. Shirvinski noted that they do not have movie day in K-4.

Policy - Hugh Jones, Chairperson, reported that the committee is still working on the Electronic Devices policy and plan to have a first reading ready for next month. He asked the administration to supply the committee with Title 65 of the Ethics Law mentioned earlier in the meeting.

Negotiations - Karl Meyer reported that he and Mr. Porter met with some of the teachers and representatives and would meet with them again on April 19th.

Vo-Tech - Mike Yeager reported that they are working on the calendar. Mr. Porter asked if they discussed administrative salaries. Mr. Yeager replied negatively.

ITEMS – TREASURER’S REPORTS

On a motion by Yeager and second by Savitski, the Treasurer’s Reports were presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS – MINUTES/INVOICES

On a motion by Jones and second by Porter, the minutes of February 12 and 19 (as revised), 2007, were presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Savitski and second by Yeager, General Fund invoices in the amount of \$344,587.47 and Capital Reserve Fund invoices in the amount of \$2,3520.00 were presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS – FISCAL

On a motion by Jones and second by Savitski, the following items were presented for approval:

- A. Budgetary transfers in the 2006-2007 budget to ensure proper accounting (**per Exhibit A**).
- B. To authorize Berkheimer Associates to obtain tax return information from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in order to crosscheck the earned income tax rolls.
- C. The 2007-2008 Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School General Operating Budget in the amount of \$6,363,158; Southern Columbia Area School district’s cost is \$453,858.
- D. The 2007-2008 Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit General Operating Budget in the amount of \$1,817,669.

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

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ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, the following items were presented for approval:

- A. To accept the resignation of Jared Miller as Assistant Track & Field Coach and to approve him as a Volunteer Track & Field Coach effective March 13, 2007.
- B. To accept the resignation of Albert Cihocki as Assistant Girls Basketball Coach effective March 13, 2007. Mr. Cihocki had served in the position since November 1993.
- C. An FMLA Leave for Anthony Pecora (6th Grade Teacher) on an intermittent basis beginning March 19, 2007, not to exceed 12 weeks in the next 12-month period.
- D. To contract with John Rossi for School Psychologist services as deemed necessary by the Director of Special Education and Student Services effective March 22, 2007 (pending receipt of favorable clearances and a negative Tuberculin test) at a rate of \$60 per hour, which will be paid by ACCESS funds.
- E. An FMLA Leave on an intermittent basis for Tresa J. Britch beginning March 20, 2007, not to exceed 12 weeks in the next 12-month period.
- F. Employment of Kristen Zaccaro as an After School Tutor effective March 20, 2007 (pending completion of all employment requirements) at a rate of \$10 per hour, which will come from proceeds of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant.

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, the following items were presented for approval:

- A. A motion to approve Homebound Instruction for a high school student beginning April 12, 2007, until further evaluation by a physician for a maximum of 6 hours per week.
- B. A motion to approve the 2007 Summer Fun-da-Mentals program for grades K-12, June 25th through July 26th, Monday through Thursday (with the exception of July 4th), 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Transportation will be provided and all costs will be covered by proceeds of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant.
- C. A motion to authorize district participation in the CSIU Summer Arts Program 2007 at a district cost of \$1,500.
- D. An Agreement with Bloomsburg Area School District pertaining to Cooperative Sponsorship of Swimming upon terms approved by the administration.

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- E. A Request for Cooperative Sponsorship of a Sport (Swimming) with Bloomsburg Area School District (per Exhibit C).

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Savitski, the 2007-2008 School Year Calendar was presented for approval. Prior to voting Mr. Porter stated that he would like to see January 21st treated as a make-up day and he would like January 2nd to be an instructional day. He made a motion to amend the calendar accordingly. Mr. Slusser seconded the motion. By roll call vote, the motion failed; 5-No, 3-Yes (Bell-Perry, Porter and Slusser voted Yes). Mr. Porter made another motion to amend the calendar to designate January 21st as a make-up day. Bell-Perry seconded the motion. By roll call vote, the motion failed; 5-No, 3-Yes (Bell-Perry, Porter and Slusser voted Yes). President Meyer then called for a vote on the original motion. By roll call vote, the motion passed; 6-Yes, 2-No (Porter and Slusser voted No).

BOARD COMMENTS

Mrs. Bell-Perry noted that the board would need to decide if they plan to retain FMS, Inc. It was agreed that the topic would be discussed at the next Facilities Committee meeting. Mr. Porter asked for a report on the status of the driver education program. Mr. Becker reported that the current waiting list consists of 45 students with 18 being seniors. He noted that Mr. Conner does not have very many available periods in his schedule. Mr. Porter asked if Mr. Conner could work after school or on weekends to see additional students. Mr. Becker replied that Mr. Conner has done that in the past, but he is a Track and Field Coach, which makes after school driving difficult.

Mr. Porter asked about the national vendor grant. Mr. Rodgers explained that he has been in contact with a representative and is arranging for him to attend an upcoming meeting. Mr. Porter asked if the grant could be used for any of the priority list projects. Mr. Rodgers replied that he was unsure and noted that it seems to be a matter of interpretation. He added that it appears that the grant would be geared toward exterior projects.

Mr. Porter noted that the fuel bid is the only bid in which the district does not reserve the right to reject any or all bids. Solicitor Roberts replied that the district could not reserve that right if participating in the consortium because the CSIU needs to know an amount. The choice would be whether or not to participate with the CSIU.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

District resident, Mr. Richard Gotshall, reported that he presented a resolution to Dr. Meyer and asked the board to give it consideration.

Mr. Becker stated that he received a field trip request that wasn't included on the agenda, and that the board's consideration would be appreciated due to the limited time involved.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Porter, an FBLA Field Trip to New York City on April 11, 2007, with the district to cover the expense of two substitutes was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote (Bell-Perry left at 8:55 p.m. and was absent for the vote).

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ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Jones and second by Savitski, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary