



# Lower Merion School District

301 East Montgomery Avenue ♦ Ardmore, PA 19003-3399

[www.lmsd.org](http://www.lmsd.org)

## LMSD Board of School Directors Business Meeting Highlights

Dec. 17, 2018, Business Meeting

For a complete agenda, visit the [BoardDocs section](#) of the District website.

The meeting opened with members of the Merion Elementary School orchestra performing “Linus and Lucy” and “Canon in D.” The performance by the young musicians, representing the nearly 200 in elementary band, orchestra and chorus at their school, was enjoyed by all in attendance.

### **AUDIENCE RECOGNITION**

While audience recognition at the beginning of the meeting is reserved for comment on Action Items on the Agenda, Board President Dr. Gilbert made an exception to allow the Harriton High School students in attendance to share their thoughts on renaming what has been known as the “Mr. Harriton” show.

Thirteen students, including a past Mr. Harriton and contestants for the upcoming show, voiced their opposition to changing the name to the student-selected “Mx. Harriton.” The name change was initiated by the Administration to encourage female students to enter as contestants and to comply with the District Policies meant to ensure equity for all students regardless of gender or gender identity. The students cited their own research that found 95% of Harriton students surveyed are against the name change, including members of the GSA. The students added that the show is meant as a parody of traditional beauty pageants and stated they felt student voices had not been adequately heard in consideration of the change. They also expressed concerns that their fundraising efforts would be hampered by the name change as sponsors and students might not be as supportive. They noted the fundraising goes to the Lower Merion Township Scholarship Fund and other local and national organizations.

Dr. Eveslage, Assistant Superintendent and past principal of Harriton High School, thanked the students for attending and eloquently voicing their concerns. He explained that discussions about changes to the show had been ongoing since 2012. He offered to hold further discussions with students about the name change, but noted that entertainment norms change over time. Past types of entertainment that parodied certain groups of people are no longer considered acceptable. He noted that no women have ever been contestants and that illustrates the lack of inclusivity in the show. He expressed confidence that the students and sponsors will not allow the name change to derail the show.

Dr. Gilbert stated that the Board stands behind its policies both to promote inclusivity and to promote student voice and urged the administration to continue to work with students toward both goals. She also thanked the students for speaking.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

Demographers Dan Farina from the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) and George Sundell from Sundance Associates shared updates on projections of student enrollment. The projections were performed this fall.

The full presentations can be found here: <https://www.boarddocs.com/pa/lmsd/Board.nsf/Public>

Both demographers concluded that enrollment growth will continue. They based their conclusions on factors including the popularity and reputation of the District, current grades with large populations, an increase in families choosing public school over private school, additional residential construction, more students coming from older apartment units and an increase in housing sales to families with young children.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Mr. Copeland shared the following highlights:

- LMHS senior, quarterback Matt O'Connor was selected as a Mini Max winner by the Pa. Maxwell Football Club
- Students from the HHS Environmental Club will be featured on Lower Merion Township TV discussing their school's sustainability efforts
- Students from Bala Cynwyd Middle School supported the Interfaith Hospitality Network's "Empty Bowl Project," helping the organization raise \$40,000 to fight hunger and homelessness
- The community is invited to participate in the LMSD Martin Luther King Junior Afternoon of Service at LMHS on Jan. 18, 2019, from 1-3 p.m.

Mr. Roos, District Solicitor, shared that the Pa. Supreme Court unanimously ruled in favor of the District, reversing a lower court ruling. This decision allows the District to argue its case in Commonwealth Court in the Wolk litigation.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Board approved personnel actions across the District, including staff hires, re-hires and reclassifications for the 2018-2019 school year.

## **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

Dr. Vann Lynch reported on the December 4, 2018, Curriculum Committee Meeting, where the committee heard presentations on Commonwealth and Keystone Achievement and Growth Data and reviewed the contract with Bena Kallick for the Strategic Plan.

The Board approved the following:

- The overnight trips:
  - HHS World Affairs/Model UN to Philadelphia Jan. 31-Feb. 3, 2019
  - TSA teams from HHS, LMHS, BCMS and WVMS to National Harbor, Md., June 28-July 2, 2019
- The contract with Dr. Lynne Dorfman for Text Dependent Analysis Professional Development
- The contract with Dr. Bena Kallick for Professional Development

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

The Board approved agreements for Students receiving Non-District Educational Services.

### **BUSINESS OFFICE AND FINANCE**

Mr. Driscoll gave a report on the December 13, 2018, Facilities/Purchasing Committee Meeting reviewing the items that were recommended for tonight's agenda.

The Board approved the List of Bills reviewed through the Facilities and Purchasing Committee as well as the November 2018 LMSD Financial Report.

The Board accepted the Ranier and Company Financial Statements and Single Audit Report

The Board accepted with gratitude the donation of \$1000 from Jeff Westphal to support District arts or athletic programs, \$200 from an anonymous donor to cover outstanding student lunch debt and a Gaga pit for PVES valued at \$5287.34 from the PVES Class of 2019.

The Board confirmed a debt service transfer and a capital projects transfer as set forth in the 2018-2019 general fund budget.

### **FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS**

The Board approved the following items:

- A resolution to authorize acquisition of 1860 Montgomery Ave., Villanova
- A contract to furnish and install a gymnatorium projector at CYES
- Bids for the purchase of 17 school buses
- Authorization for transportation contractors to use drivers and aides on their list
- Individual work order with Element Environmental Solutions for work at 1860 Montgomery Ave.
- Individual work order with Gilbert Architects for work at 1860 Montgomery Ave/
- A quote from ePlus Barracuda
- A quote from ePlus VMWare
- A quote from Presidio for Cisco Smartnet and Sourcefire Support renewal
- Fleetio advanced plan annual subscription

- Change order for repairs to storm water basin at HHS

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Robinson gave a report on the Dec. 7, 2018, Policy Committee Meeting, where the policies below were discussed.

The Board approved second readings on:

- Policy 150: No Child Left Behind (Repeal)
- Policy/AR 263: Student Surveys
- Policy 257: Title I Parent/Family Member Involvement
- Policy/AR 209: Health and Dental Examinations
- Policy/AR 357, 457, 557: Outside Employment and Outside Business Interests

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The Board heard first readings on:

- Policy 210: Use of Medication
- Policy 246, 346, 446, 546 Prohibited Harassment

### **OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Actman reported on the Nov. 28, 2018, Communications Committee meeting, including updates on emails sent to Stoneleigh supporters after the agreement of sale for the Spring Mill Road properties, communications with HHS students about parking on N. Ithan Rd., Superintendent's meeting with local clergy, Superintendent's meeting with LMHS and HHS Class of 2017 alumni and communication about the work of the School Safety Task Force.

### **AUDIENCE RECOGNITION**

A Villanova resident representing the homeowner's association of the Wrenfield community requested residents of that community have input into the development of the field space on Spring Mill Road.

A Villanova resident who has a conservation easement on his extensive property near 912 Spring Mill Road stated he pays a lot of taxes and wants peace and quiet.

A Villanova resident who lives near Spring Mill Road questioned the cost and logic in building fields on Spring Mill and transporting students to those fields. He stated his son had attended Gladwyne Elementary in a double-wide trailer and still graduated from Dartmouth.

A Villanova resident who lives across from the Spring Mill property questioned the expense to build baseball fields, which he maintained will get little use. He also questioned the amount of parking planned for the site.

A Villanova resident from the Wrenfield development questioned whether the District had conducted studies on the effect sports fields will have on property values and tax revenue, traffic and safety of pedestrians in the area.

A 2018 HHS graduate spoke in support of changing the name of the Mr. Harriton show. He explained that it was promoted as a talent competition among upperclassmen boys, not as a parody, though that may have been its origins. He stated that language matters and that Mx. Harriton can bring the school pride in the future.

Mr. Copeland explained to the community members that all LMSD secondary school have teams that need to go off-site for practice or games due to a lack of field space. He added that parking is not a likely problem as not very many middle school parents attend games as they are during the workday. Finally, he said traffic studies for the Spring Mill area have not been conducted, but the District would only be sending a bus from the middle school to the fields and back and that impact of that bus is expected to be minimal.

Dr. Gilbert thanked the community members for attending and assured them that the District will work to address their concerns.

**SUNSHINE ACT**

Mr. Roos, Solicitor from Wisler Pearlstine, reported when the Board of School Directors met in Executive Sessions and the topics discussed.

**UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

Board Meetings: (at 8:00 p.m. in the Administration Board Room)  
Monday, Jan.14 – Education Committee and Supplemental Regular Board Meeting  
Monday, Jan. 28 – Regular Business Board Meeting

Committee Meetings: (at 8:30 a.m. in the Board Room, unless otherwise noted)  
Tuesday, Jan. 8 – Curriculum Committee  
Friday, Jan. 11 – Policy Committee  
Thursday, Jan. 24 – Facilities/Purchasing Committee



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