



## 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

April 29, 2019, Business Meeting

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

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

The meeting opened with Welsh Valley Middle School Principal Mr. Christopher Hall sharing information about the new 8<sup>th</sup> grade thematic program, "Viewpoints." The 48 students in the program approach their curriculum through a lens of social justice, asking questions such as, "Who writes history?" and "Whose responsibility is it to speak up in the face of injustice?" They take part in community service projects, innovative experiential learning and will end the year with visits to the African American and Native American Museums in Washington, D.C. along with participating in a social justice project.

The next presentation was from Supt. Copeland, who presented the final proposed budget. The District is not applying for exceptions for next year, so no preliminary budget was filed. The budget is driven by the goal of maintaining small classroom size while continuing student programs, in light of enrollment growth, associated personnel costs and special education mandates. The District expects no increase or just a minimal increase in state and federal funding. Budgeting must take into consideration uncertainty about 1) current and future tax revenue, 2) the state budget and 3) the result of pending litigation. To fund the budget, the District will be increasing the tax rate 2.3%, which comes out to about \$166 dollars for the average home assessed at \$250,000. The public inspection deadline of the final proposed budget is May 20, a Board vote set for June 10.

#### **AUDIENCE RECOGNITION**

There was no audience comment on action items.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S HIGHLIGHTS**

Mr. Copeland share that once again this year, LMSD Science Olympiad teams had great showings at the State Tournament, which was held this past weekend at Juniata College. The Harriton High School Team came in first in the state, with the Lower Merion Team winning third place. In the middle school division, Bala Cynwyd placed third in the state and Welsh Valley finished 11<sup>th</sup>.

LMSD teams also had strong showings TSA state conference. Harriton took home the state title with 13 first place finishes. LM had 14 competitors finish in the top three. Fifteen Welsh Valley students took home state championships for individual or team events. And Bala Cynwyd students took home one first place, one second place and two third places, with a total of 19 Top Ten finishes.

Lower Merion Senior Olivia Dughart was recently featured in Philadelphia Magazine for her senior project. She's launching Philly's first-ever "Key of She" Jazz Conference, which is all about the influence of women in jazz music.

Three LMSD students have been named as Presidential Scholar semi-finalists. Sixteen total finalists were named for the state of Pennsylvania, so having three from our District is quite an honor. They are Tai Groeneveld, Sarah Xi and Ziwen Zhou. Congratulations to them!

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Board approved personnel actions across the District, including staff hires, re-hires, relocations and reclassifications for the 2018-2019 school year. Among them, the upcoming retirement of Ms. Anne Heffron, principal of Merion Elementary School. Ms. DiBonaventura and Dr. Gilbert on behalf of the entire Board, thanked Ms. Heffron for her extraordinary leadership and dedication.

The Board also noted with sorrow the passing of Mary Murray, who was a secretary at Lower Merion High School. She worked in the District from August 1970 until her retirement in August 1996.

### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

Dr. Vann Lynch reported on the April 2, 2019, Curriculum Committee Meeting, where Dr. Eveslage shared a presentation on the work of the Strategic Plan Focus Exploration teams. Focus explorations are initiatives that will be brought to scale during the upcoming school year, in areas including Residencies (community partnerships), Grading, Homework, Restorative Practices, Sleep and School Start Times, Habits of Mind, Elementary Report Cards, Challenge Success and Digital Portfolios. The Committee also heard a presentation on the selection of "The Little Book of Lykke" for a K-12 One Book project.

The Board approved the quote to purchase "The Little Book of Lykke" for the One Book project.

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

The Board approved agreements for Students receiving Non-District Educational Services, and the following:

- Agreement with the Chester County IU for 2 behavior specialist consultants
- Agreement with Abington Speech Pathology Services for speech therapists
- Agreement with School Threat Assessment Consultants for a one-day workshop for administrators
- Special Education Service Cost Plan with the MCIU, which will be funded by IDEA funds

### **BUSINESS OFFICE AND FINANCE**

Ms. DiBonaventura gave reports on the April 3 and 24, 2019, Finance Committee meetings, where the budgets for Student Services, Staffing and Information Systems were presented.

She noted that 40% of LMSD students receive services including IEPs, GIEPs and 504 Plans. The District spends more than \$47 million on Special Education, including 43 out-of-district placements for a cost of more than \$2.7 million. Other parts of the budget include Counseling, Health Services and Clinical Services. Health Services serves 14,000 students, in our 10 LMSD schools and 20 non-public schools.

Ms. DiBonaventura noted that the Staffing budget includes not just teachers and administrators, but Food Service employees who serve 3250 meals each day, and IS department that manages more than 14, 675 devices on the District network, a Facilities department that manages nearly 13,000 hours of use of District facilities by community groups and other organizations and a transportation department that takes more than 9650 students to more than 120 locations each day. LMSD has more than 1550 employees, plus coaches and activity sponsors, substitutes, temp/seasonal employees, contractors and volunteers who must have clearances. As enrollment increases, staffing must increase as well.

Finally, she noted that the IS Department handles more than 10,000 helpdesk tickets each year, and that 85% of those helped say the quality of service is excellent. The IS Department budget covers replacing machines that are reaching the end of their useful lives, and paying for various services that protect the integrity of the network and the safety and privacy of data. Each month, about 47 million attempts to infiltrate the system are blocked.

Mr. Driscoll gave a report on the April 25, 2019, 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 March 2019 LMSD Financial Report and tentatively adopted the 2019-2020 Proposed Final School District Budget authorizing expenditures of \$280,076,847.

The Board accepted with gratitude the donation of trees, valued at \$200, from the Penn Valley Civic Association to be planted at PVES; a donation of \$500 from Drs. David and Mary Eschelman on behalf of the Dr. David J. Eschelman Charitable Trust to the GES Library renovation project; and up to \$1700 from the BHES HSA towards a table and chair for the library makerspace.

### **FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS**

The Board approved the following items:

- Contracts for additional security cameras, District-wide sealcoating, tennis court restoration at LMHS, restoration of the masonry façade at PVES, a Kubota tractor, asphalt improvements at GES, a Ford F-650 for Nutritional Services, Upfit for the Ford F-650 and a school bus snow-clearing machine
- Master agreement for professional service with Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.
- Individual work order with Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.
- Master agreement for professional services with Environmental Control Systems, Inc.
- Proposal from Air and Gas Technologies for service on the LMHS CNG compressor
- Parking lease with Presentation BVM Church for parking and 8% of snow removal costs
- Facilities lease agreement with Hines Rowing Center for 2019-2020
- Independent consultant contract with Daniel J. Luner for photography and multi-media projects
- Addendum to Mobile Lighting Service Agreement for rental of lights at HHS
- Presidio quote for Cisco spare switches
- Presidio quote for Cisco StealthWatch

- Statement of Work from Presidio for core network rebuild project
- Quote and addendum with Remind 101 for communications app
- Statement of Work from ePlus Technology for temporary desktop technician
- Statement of Work from ePlus Technology for vCenter upgrade
- Statement of Work from ePlus Technology for MS Exchange upgrade
- Quote and general terms from Oracle for Java SE and Desktop subscriptions

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Robinson gave a report on the April 5, 2019, Policy Committee Meeting, where the policies below were discussed.

The Board heard Second Readings on:

- Policies 314, 414 and 513 Blood Borne Pathogens

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The Board heard first readings on:

- Policy 246 Harassment, Bullying and Hazing
- Policy 705 Safety and Security
- Policy 214 International Exchange Students
- Policy 246 Prohibited Harassment by and of Students (for repeal)
- Policy 249 Bullying (for repeal)
- Policy 261 Anti-hazing (for repeal)
- Policy 709 Building Security (for repeal)
- Policy 710 Key Control (for repeal)
- Policy 805 Emergency Preparedness (for repeal)
- Policy 819 Police-School Procedures (for repeal)

The Board approved the nomination of Ms. Finger to act as the District's representative to the MCIU for a three-year term starting on July 1, 2019. Dr. Gilbert thank Ms. Pollard who has served in this capacity since 2012.

Dr. Gilbert then asked Ms. Actman to share her report from the Legislative Committee meeting and forum on April 1, 2019. The Committee hosted a forum for several local representatives to Harrisburg who took part in a moderated discussion and answered student and audience questions on education issues. The representatives told Ms. Actman they look forward to participating in a similar event in the future. At that event, the committee heard a presentation on a school fair funding initiative and voted to bring a resolution to the full Board in support of that resolution.

The Board voted to support the resolution urging the Pa. General Assembly to adequately invest in schools and students according to the state's fair funding formula. The resolution will be sent to the representatives and governor.

**AUDIENCE RECOGNITION**

An HHS student urged the District to use the Remind system to send out snow day notifications and shared his extensive research on student parking at HHS. He asked whether the District will be providing more student parking spaces at HHS. Mr. Copeland said that additional spaces will not be opened to students, as adding additional newly licensed drivers would likely cause additional traffic and safety concerns.

**SUNSHINE ACT**

Ms. Brooks, 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, May 13 – Education Committee and Supplemental Regular Board Meeting

Monday, May 20 – Regular Business Board Meeting

Committee Meetings: (at 8:30 a.m. in the Board Room, unless otherwise noted)

Tuesday, May 7 – Curriculum Committee

Thursday, May 9 – Finance Committee (to discuss finance and bond issues related to the new MS)

Friday, May 10 – Policy Committee

Wednesday, May 15 – Finance Committee

Thursday, May 16 – Facilities/Purchasing Committee

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