



# Lower Merion School District

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## **LMSD Board of School Directors Business Meeting Highlights**

### **Vol. 1, No. 1 – Highlights from the April 18, 2016 Business Meeting**

*For a complete agenda, visit the BoardDocs section of the District Website. [Click here](#) to view.*

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

##### **Featured School: Welsh Valley Middle School**

Welsh Valley Middle School assistant principal Sarah Stout presented information on Welsh Valley's commitment to Social and Emotional Learning. To view a slideshow of the presentation, [click here](#).

##### **Proposed Final Budget**

Business Manager Victor Orlando presented the District's "2016-17 Proposed Final Budget," which was unanimously approved (9-0) by the Board of School Directors. The Proposed Final Budget is a refined version of the Preliminary Budget that was approved by the Board in late January. The Proposed Final Budget is subject to change and is part of an ongoing public budget review process that began in late 2015 and concludes with approval of a Final Budget on June 13. The District is making every effort to ensure the most fiscally-responsible Final Budget, while maintaining existing programs and covering new costs related to enrollment growth, personnel and state and federal mandates, including rising retirement and special education costs. To view a slideshow of the Proposed Final Budget presentation, [click here](#). For additional information about the 2016-17 Budget, [click here](#).

#### **RECENT HIGHLIGHTS**

Superintendent Robert Copeland shared the following recent highlights and achievements from LMSD schools:

##### **Welsh Valley Middle School named a 2015-16 Mix It Up at Lunch Day Model School**

Welsh Valley Middle School was recently named a 2015-16 "Mix It Up at Lunch Day" Model School by Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Mix It Up at Lunch Day is a national campaign that encourages students to identify, question and cross social boundaries and reduce biases and prejudices. Mix It Up Model Schools like Welsh Valley embrace respect and inclusiveness as core values. [Click here](#) for more info. In addition to the school honor, Welsh Valley social studies teacher Francis Weaver is a finalist for Teaching Tolerance's "National Teaching Tolerance Award for Excellence in Teaching," given biennially to "anti-bias educators who model the passion, professionalism and leadership all students deserve."

##### **Cynwyd Teacher a Finalist for PA Teacher of the Year**

Cynwyd Elementary teacher Megan Henry is one of 12 finalists for 2017 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year. Pennsylvania's Teacher of the Year program is co-sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania chapter of the National State Teacher of the Year. Nominees are recognized by students, parents, colleagues and members of the community, honoring their achievements both in and outside the classroom. Finalists are selected from an extensive pool of

applicants across the state and participate in a rigorous interview and screening process. The 2017 winner will be announced in December 2016.

### **Mordechai Anielewicz Creative Arts Competition**

Several LMHS students earned top prizes in the annual Mordechai Anielewicz Creative Arts Competition sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. Taylor Feld earned first prize in the 3-D Arts category, while Claryse Hansberry earned second prize and Asher Gillman was awarded third prize.

### **LMSD Named one of America's Best Communities for Music Education**

The NAMM Foundation has recognized Lower Merion School District for its outstanding commitment to music education with a Best Communities for Music Education designation for the sixth consecutive year. LMSD joins the distinguished ranks of 476 districts across the entire country to receive this prestigious distinction. [Click here](#) for more info.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Robert Copeland recommended delaying expansion/construction plans for Penn Wynne Elementary until the District gains a clearer picture of enrollment for the 2016-17 school year. This will provide time for continued Board examination of expansion alternatives and additional community input. The District has already authorized the use of temporary classrooms at Penn Wynne for next school year to accommodate projected enrollment growth.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Board approved the appointments of Mr. Brian Cote as Director of K-12 Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Learning; Mr. Scott Weinstein as Principal of Harriton High School; Ms. Veronica Ellers as Principal of Gladwyne Elementary School and Ms. Gwen Nartowicz as Supervisor of Special Education (Grades 7-9).

Mr. Cote served this year as the District's Interim Director of Secondary Education and previously as LMSD's Supervisor of Instruction for Secondary Technology Integration/K-12 Data Analysis/Business Education. Prior to joining the LMSD administrative team, he served in a variety of administrative roles in the Allentown School District.

Mr. Weinstein has served as assistant principal at both Welsh Valley and Bala Cynwyd middle schools and most recently as acting principal of Gladwyne Elementary School. Prior to his service in LMSD, he spent 20 years as a high school administrator and teacher in the School District of Cheltenham Township.

Ms. Ellers is currently the principal of Hillcrest Elementary School in the Upper Darby School District and has served in a variety of administrative and teaching capacities in Upper Darby for more than 20 years. She began her educational career as a kindergarten teacher and has extensive leadership experience with early childhood education, professional development and supporting students with special needs.

Ms. Nartowicz has served as LMSD Coordinator of Professional Learning and Gifted Education. Previously, she served for seven years as a special education teacher at Harriton High School where she supported students who require Autistic Support services.

## **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES ACTIONS**

Among the items approved by the Board included professional development software, middle school science textbooks, middle school mathematics curricular materials and several overnight trips.

## **STUDENT SERVICES ACTIONS**

Among the items approved by the Board included a contract with the Lincoln Center for Family & Youth for two, full-time master-level counselors to provide additional counseling services in 2016-17 to at-risk students in the areas of mental health, drug abuse and prevention, anger management, developing positive life choices, among other topics.

## **BUSINESS OFFICE AND FINANCE**

The Board Approved a List of Bills reviewed through the Facilities & Purchasing Committee...The Board accepted a donation of a bench from the Penn Valley Elementary HSA and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Class at Penn Valley to be placed on school grounds...The Board adopted the 2016-17 Proposed Final Budget as referenced above.

## **FACILITIES & OPERATIONS**

Bids awarded for District Administration Building classroom renovations, electrical outlets at Harriton High School and improved cell signal at Penn Valley Elementary School...License Agreement approved for Nicholas Severini and World Class Soccer School for a summer soccer camp at Arnold Field from July 5 through July 8, 2016...Approved consulting services from School Bus Consultants, LLC to review the cost impact of changing school start times, part of an ongoing review of this topic.

## **POLICY**

The following policies were reviewed for a first reading: [Policy 259 \(Gender Expansive & Transgender Students – Ensuring Equity and Nondiscrimination\)](#) and Policy 354, 454, 554, 831 ([Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries with Students](#)). Both policies have been developed in support of the District's efforts to provide a safe, supportive learning environment for all students...The Board approved the [2017-18 School Year Calendar](#).

## **UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

April 20 Communications Committee @ 7:00 PM; April 27 Legislative Forum @ 7:00 PM at the LMHS - Library; May 2 Curriculum Committee @ 8:30 AM; May 6 Policy Committee @ 8:30 AM; May 9 Education Committee & Supplementary Regular Board Meeting @ 8:00 PM; May 12 Facilities/Purchasing Committee @ 8:30 AM; and May 16 Regular Board Meeting @ 8:00 PM.

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