

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Meeting
Board Minutes

Slatington, PA
February 8, 2021

PURPOSE The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order virtually, via Google Meet, by the President, Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha, at 7:14 p.m. on Monday, February 8, 2021.

ROLL CALL Members present: Mr. Robin T. Distler, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., Mrs. Michelle M. Heckman, Mrs. Gale N. Husack, Mr. Robert J. Keegan, Jr., Mr. Robert L. Kern, Jr., Mrs. Donna M. Kulp, Mrs. Michele L. Martineau, and Mr. Gary S. Fedorcha (9)

Members absent: None

Non-members present: Mr. Matthew Link, Dr. Tania Stoker, Mrs. Jill Chamberlain, Mr. Greg Derr, Mrs. Michele Dotta, Mrs. Rhonda Frantz, Mr. Bryan Geist, Mr. David Hauser, Mr. Eric Hill, Mr. Eugene Marks, Mrs. Sherri Molitoris, Mr. James Schnyderite, Mr. Robert Vlasaty, Ms. Paige Craddock (Jr. Rep.) and Mr. Aidan Williams (Sr. Rep.)

VISITORS Approximately one hundred and twenty-two visitors viewed the meeting.

APPROVE MINUTES Mr. Keegan made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Kern, that the minutes of the regular board meeting held on January 11, 2021, be approved and ordered filed.

Roll Call.

YEA: Mr. Distler, Mr. Green, Mrs. Heckman, Mrs. Husack, Mr. Keegan, Mr. Kern, Mrs. Kulp, Mrs. Martineau, and Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

Motion carried.

SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS

Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit - Mrs. Husack reported that on this evening's agenda we will be voting on the general operating budget. There was a slight decrease to the Northern Lehigh School District. It is just the general operating budget. All of the special programs and other service fees that are separate to the individual students that we send to the IU is a separate fee. The IU had their audit passed.

Lehigh Career and Technical Institute - Mr. Fedorcha reported that LCTI's budget is on the agenda for approval tonight. There is a slight increase. Basically, LCTI is in a 5-year plan when figuring out the rates for the schools depending on the enrollment. The increase is because of having more students. LCTI is still running as a hybrid. One sad note, LCTI has hired an interim for the Director of Student Services because she had taken ill and has since passed away.

Legislative Report - Mrs. Heckman reported that Pennsylvania is slated to receive about 2.2 billion dollars from the second stimulus package. A lot of the money goes to the elementary and secondary schools emergency relief fund or the ESSER. This is being called the ESSER II. President Biden's nominee for Secretary of Education is Miguel Cardona who will be approved probably the end of this week or early next week. He thinks teachers should be at the front of the line for vaccinations. Those choices are currently being made at the state level and Pennsylvania is in Phase 1A of the vaccine rollout. Education workers are in Phase 1B. According to the state website, we are in the middle of Phase 1A. Governor Wolf proposed his budget. It is an ambitious budget as Mr. Link's weekly update said on Friday. It's a 3 billion dollar increase over last year, about an 11.5% increase. Mrs. Heckman highlighted some of the proposed budget. Basic education the Governor is proposing a 1.3 billion dollar investment in basic education funding. Special education he wants a 200 million dollar increase; 25 million dollar increase for Pre-K Counts; 5 million supplemental for Headstart; comprehensive charter school law reform. There is not a statewide cyber charter tuition rate. There is a proposal for a minimum wage increase to \$12 per hour.

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS
(cont.)**

Lehigh Carbon Community College - Mr. Green reported that the LCCC budget is in front of all this evening. There is a slight decrease of about \$6,000 to the district. LCCC has partnered with Amazon. LCCC was chosen as one of four schools throughout the United States to receive their training. Basically, it's in robotics and those types of things for their factory workers. LCCC has had 98 students go through the program and the plan for next year is to take on students and then every 12 weeks bring on another crew to the point there will be over 300 students going to the college next year. These are not necessarily people from the Lehigh Valley, these are people from all over the United States. According to Amazon, the program is part of Amazon's larger upscale 2025 initiative, a 700 million dollar investment to provide skills for 100,000 employees over the next 5 years. It is good for the college as well as the community.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings

Mr. Fedorcha announced that the Policy/Education Meeting on February 1, 2021, was cancelled due to the weather.

Minutes of the Technology/Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting held on February 3, 2021, were distributed.

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on February 3, 2021, were distributed.

Student Representatives to the Board Report - Mr. Aidan Williams reported that this year's spring musical has begun their practices. The musical this year is Nonsense and it's about a group of nuns trying to raise money. It will be available virtually, just like the fall play. The Artist of the Month for January was Aubrey Pollard, so congratulations to her. The student council just started their food drive today and it will run through March 5th. There are several boxes located throughout the school. Aidan shared his experience with the hybrid model. Personally, it has been a really strange senior year for obvious reasons. Throughout the year, he's only had between one and two classes actually on the campus and even then, only two days a week. It has been sometimes very stressful to try to figure out his schedule for the day, whether virtual or in-person that day, but despite that it has been helpful a lot of the times because he doesn't have to worry about being on the campus all the time. It's allowed him to work more hours and spend more time working on his dual enrollment classes for LCCC. Now that he is actually only in school for a few days a week and only for a few blocks of that, it keeps him excited for when he's actually in school with his classmates, which he never thought he would say. Despite this being an unprecedented year, he feels personally that he's been able to make the most of it.

Ms. Paige Craddock agreed that it's been pretty crazy this year and she does the hybrid model where she goes in Thursday and Friday. She's had a lot of ups and downs in her first semester and it was pretty stressful. It's been hard to motivate herself especially on the Mondays and Tuesdays where she's sitting on her bed for six hours. Her first semester she had Miss Scheckler's class. She's just one of the sweetest teachers she's ever had and she's very understanding. She really motivated her especially on the days where she wasn't in school. She gave a special thanks to Miss Scheckler. For her second semester, it's been going pretty well. A lot of her teachers have been really nice and understanding. Paige reported that the junior/senior prom has been cancelled for this year. In the case of regulations being lifted as it is possible for the event to be held on campus if everything starts to clear up. Sales of the yearbook have begun. This year, all purchases of the yearbooks will have a copy mailed to their homes. Girls' Basketball is currently one and one, a lot of their games have been postponed. Boys' Varsity has one loss and wrestling is doing pretty well. She wished all the sports the best of luck and hopes they continue through all the chaos.

Business Manager's Report - Mrs. Molitoris reported that the CLIU, LCCC, and LCTI budgets are on tonight's agenda for approval.

Mrs. Frantz reported that the big stumbling block they're facing right now with the state budget is how they're going to fund this budget. They've discussed numerous things such as raising the personal income tax as a possibility for people making over \$84,000 a year. They feel that by doing that, 76% of people would see a reduction in their personal income tax. As far as charter schools,

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS
(cont.)**

the \$9,500 may seem like a lot until you compare it to the fact that according to the way they do the calculations now, we are currently paying over \$13,000 a year. So, that would be a huge savings for Northern Lehigh. We just need to wait and see what happens. A lot of people in the House and the Senate feel it's unsustainable so we'll just have to see how it shakes out and what kind of changes they make to it.

Assistant Superintendent - Dr. Stoker reported that during the 2019-2020 school year the Federal Government issued both an accountability and a testing waiver due to the pandemic. To date, there has been neither issued for the 2020-2021 school year, which is concerning to educators. Recently, several professional organizations have joined forces to request at least an accountability waiver so that test scores acquired during the school year do not negatively impact school districts as they may not be valid, reliable, equitable or fair. Northern Lehigh School District will be writing a letter of support to Senator Pat Brown and Representative Zach Mako to advocate for this waiver from the Federal Government.

Superintendent's Report - Mr. Link pointed out that two groups, within our employees, last week was their National Week of Recognition and Appreciation. The first group was the school counselors. Mr. Link publicly thanked and recognized the five school counselors within the school district for the work that they do for all students and families every school year, but in particular the past semester. They're constantly going above and beyond to make connections with students when sometimes making connections is difficult. So, again, Mr. Link thanked them for their work and their dedication to the students, their families and the community. Mr. Link thanked another group that has certainly gone above and beyond, not only this school year but really every school year. This school year a spotlight has been placed on them for the work that they are doing, and that's the Food Services Department work group, led by Mrs. Bahnick. That group has become one of the most flexible, problem-solving type groups that he's had the privilege to work with between snow days, we're in a hybrid model this week, or we have to go fully remote. They've just figured it out; sometimes with less than 24 hours notice. Big congratulations to that group on everything they've pulled off so far and to thank them for the work that they're doing. Mr. Link turned it over to Mr. Vlasaty to share information about a donation.

Mr. Vlasaty shared that Christine Quattrocchi works for Johnson Controls in Allentown and they were looking to make some donations to local schools. Christine is not only a parent, but she is also the Assistant Cheering Coach and she's always looking for ways to help out our students and our community. Christine took the time to load up her SUV with 11,400 nitrile gloves (114 boxes) and 40 gallons of 80% alcohol hand sanitizers with pumps, and dropped them off at the high school on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. Thank you to Christine and Johnson Controls for their generosity.

Mr. Vlasaty also shared that Mr. & Mrs. Moore of Slatington made a donation of multiple DJ lighting and structural apparti to the theatre department on behalf of their son, Jesse Weiner, who graduated in 2003 from Northern Lehigh High School. Mr. Shuey and Mr. Vlasaty will go through all the equipment to see what can be utilized. It was quite a haul.

Mr. Link, at the last board meeting, shared some information on Miss Ellen Yenser, one of our teachers that had recently retired. Mr. Link shared some highlights. Ellen Yenser was hired full-time in September 1995 as a special education teacher at the Junior and Senior High Schools. She served as a temporary vacancy replacement teacher for the district before 1995. She obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Special Education and Elementary Education from Kutztown State College in 1982. Miss Yenser served in various extracurricular roles as class advisors, substitute detention and Saturday detention monitor, and student council advisor. Miss Yenser was an excellent teacher who met the individual needs of each child as she developed their special talents and interests. Miss Yenser touched the lives of thousands of Northern Lehigh students over the past 27½ school years. She truly was a gift to our students and staff and she will be dearly missed. Miss Yenser retired from the district officially on January 25, 2021, again, after 27½ years of service. It's my sincere hope, Ellen, that your retirement years bring you as much joy and fulfillment as you have brought to our students. On behalf of the Board of Education and the school district, in the near future you will be receiving an engraved apple as a token of our appreciation for all you've done for the staff, students and community.

**SPECIAL
BOARD
REPORTS
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Mr. Link shared another donation which he turned over to Mr. Schnyderite to discuss. Mr. Schnyderite shared that as we neared the Christmas Holiday, we were approached by an anonymous donor who wanted to provide a full Christmas for a family in need. Our Peters Elementary school counselor, Mrs. Kromer, worked with the donor and the local family to coordinate this donation and right before the holiday, Mrs. Kromer and Mr. Schnyderite met the donor outside of Peters Elementary and they unloaded an entire minivan of gifts and food. It took three mini trucks worth of traveling in and out to get all of the gifts. The gifts were for both children and the adults and the food was enough for an entire Christmas dinner and more. Although the donor chose to remain anonymous, he doesn't think the act should remain anonymous. Thank you to our anonymous donor for filling us all with the holiday spirit. Mr. Link also thanked the anonymous donor family.

Mr. Link shared that recently the district surveyed the parents and guardians of our students as well as all of our employees about some of their thoughts as we move into the spring semester. Mr. Link shared that on the parent/guardian survey, we received 706 responses, which is a little less than 50% of our student enrollment. On the employee side, we received 198 responses, we have about 240 or so employees within the school district. This week, the administrative team will start to data mine all those responses and what we're looking for is to run some projections on, one, if at some point we are able to start bringing more children back into the district more frequently, and what may social distancing look like on the buses, within the classrooms, within the cafeteria, and then be able to share that information out again to parents to let them know what it would actually look like. Then, also to have some conversations with our employees about that if this were to occur, what would your expectations be through a safety and education lens. So, right now, we're simply at the point where we're going to start reviewing the data that we have received. This week something new started with the Department of Health, through the Department of Education, where they are going to start sharing out weekly updates on the vaccine. As we all know, there's an extremely high demand for the vaccine but the supply is simply not meeting the demand. We're hopeful that there's some progress made there to have, in particular, our employees vaccinated as quickly as possible if they choose to participate. We continue to work with St. Luke's University Health Network, Lehigh Valley Health Network, and most recently we've been in communication with Bechtel's Pharmacy about some ways to get the vaccine to education workers, which are in Group 1B, as efficiently as possible. Hopefully these guidelines will help to guide us in guiding our employees. Mrs. Husak asked Mr. Link when he is able to share some of those survey results. Are parents looking for their kids to come back? Teachers looking to come back? Are you at a point to share that or is that going to be something down the road to share? Mr. Link commented that it will be shared "down the road", not this evening because we haven't had an opportunity to look at it together as an administrative team. A natural time to share it out will probably be at the March policy and education meeting. Mrs. Husack asked if the plan is to continue status quo within the hybrid schedule. Mr. Link commented that, yes, that would be his recommendation.

Executive Session An executive session was held at 6:00 p.m. virtually via Google Meet to discuss personnel, negotiations and legal purposes.

PERSONNEL Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Distler that the Board of Education approves the following personnel items:

Appointment Instructional	Samantha Lilly Assignment: Salary: Effective:	Temporary Professional Employee Special Education Teacher \$59,475 (Step 2 Masters on the 2020-2021 CBA Salary Schedule) January 26, 2021
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PERSONNEL**(cont.)**

Appointment Instructional (cont.)	James Fisher Assignment: Salary: Effective: Termination Date:	Long Term Substitute Social Studies Teacher Substitute Teacher Rate Days 1-30; Day 31 and beyond: \$50,750 (Step 1 Bachelors on the 2020-2021 CBA Salary Schedule) February 9, 2021 Upon return of full time teacher
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Family Medical Leave Approve the request of employee #4910 to take a twelve week medical leave of absence for their own health reasons beginning on February 10, 2021. Employee requests to use sick days during their leave of absence and plans to return to their current teaching position upon release from their attending physician.

Approve the request of employee #7144 to take a family medical leave of absence for the birth of a child, beginning on March 12, 2021. Employee is requesting to use accumulated sick days. Employee plans to return to their teaching position for the 2021-2022 school year.

Salary Adjustment Acknowledge the following teacher who has completed the requirements per the Collective Bargaining Agreement that would entitle them to a salary increase for the second half of the 2020-2021 school year:

Blasia Dunham
From: 5M
To: 5M +24

Substitutes Instructional Motion to appointment the following substitute teacher for the 2020-2021 school year at the 2020-2021 substitute teacher rates as approved on the Supplemental Personnel Salary Schedule:

Katherine Barhight* – Guest Teacher
*Pending Verification of Missing Personnel File Items

Non-Instructional Motion to appoint the following individual as substitute paraprofessional for the 2020-21 school year at the 2020-2021 substitute rate as approved on the Supplemental Personnel Salary Schedule:

Brenda Hahn*
*Pending Verification of Missing Personnel File Items

Roll Call.

YEA: Mr. Green, Mrs. Heckman, Mrs. Husack, Mr. Keegan, Mr. Kern, Mrs. Kulp, Mrs. Martineau, Mr. Distler, and Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)
Motion carried.

POLICY

Mr. Kern made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Kulp, that the Board of Education approves the following policy items:

Policy Second Reading Approve school board policy #203 - Pupils - Immunizations and Communicable Diseases, as presented after second reading.

POLICY**(cont.)**

- Policy Second Reading (cont.) Approve school board policy #209 - Pupil - Health Examinations/Screenings, as presented after second reading.
- Approve school board policy #314 - Employees - Physical Examination, as presented after second reading.
- Approve school board policy #815.2 - Operations - Livestream Video, as presented after second reading.

Board Governance Standards/Code of Conduct Approve to reaffirm the school board governance standards and code of conduct referenced in school board policy #011 – Local Board Procedures – Board Governance Standards/Code of Conduct as recommended by the Pennsylvania School Board Association.

Roll Call.

YEA: Mrs. Heckman, Mrs. Husack, Mr. Keegan, Mr. Kern, Mrs. Kulp, Mrs. Martineau, Mr. Distler, Mr. Green, and Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

Motion carried.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Mrs. Martineau made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Green, that the Board of Education approves the following curriculum and instruction items:

Pear Deck As per the recommendation of administration, approve the purchase of a district-wide license for Pear Deck at a cost of \$12,015 for Jan 1, 2021 through Dec 31, 2023, to be funded through the ESSER I grant.

Induction Program Approve the following teacher as a helping teacher in the Northern Lehigh School District Induction Program from January 2021 to January 2022:

Helping Teacher	Inductee	Stipend
Tammy Fristick	Samantha Lilly	\$800.00

Roll Call.

YEA: Mrs. Husack, Mr. Keegan, Mr. Kern, Mrs. Kulp, Mrs. Martineau, Mr. Distler, Mr. Green, Mrs. Heckman and Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

Motion carried.

FINANCIAL

Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Husack, that the Board of Education approves the following financial items:

Financial Reports Approve the Following Financial Reports:
1. General Fund Account month of December 2020

FINANCIAL
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List of Bills	Approve the Following List of Bills: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Fund months of January and February, 2021 2. Cafeteria Fund months of January and February, 2021
Tax Collectors Compensation	Upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, approve the attached resolution establishing the compensation for the Northern Lehigh School District elected qualified tax collectors for the next four year term of office commencing January, 2022 through December, 2025.
LCCC 2021-2022 Budget	Approve a resolution regarding the 2021-2022 Lehigh Carbon Community College Sponsor contribution Budget. Total expenditures equal \$54,271,488 which represents a decrease of \$2,015,169 or -3.6% over the 2020-2021 budget. Northern Lehigh's share of the total budget is \$174,534.00, a decrease of \$5,989.00 or (-3.3%). A copy of the budget was distributed electronically February 5, 2021.
CLIU 2021-2022 Budget	Approve a resolution regarding the 2021-2022 Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit Operational and Program Services budget. Total expenditures equal \$3,276,665 an increase of \$94,350.00 over the 2020-2021 budget. Northern Lehigh's share is proposed to be \$18,268.00, a decrease of \$1,283.00 from the 2020-21 budget. A copy of the budget was distributed electronically February 5, 2021.
LCTI 2021-2022 Budget	Approve a resolution regarding the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute general fund budget and Academic Center expenditures for the 2021-2022 school year. The general fund budget total is \$28,976,100.00 an increase of \$568,870. Northern Lehigh School District's portion of the 2021-2022 general fund budget is \$1,265,602.84 an increase of \$74,975.54. The expenditures for the Academic Center budget for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 total \$2,078,200.00 an increase of \$237,800. There is no cost to Northern Lehigh School District for the Academic Center budget. A copy of the budget was distributed to board members electronically February 5, 2021.
2019-2020 Audit	Accept the 2019-2020 audit and management report for the single audit ending June 30, 2020. A copy of the audit was distributed at the January 11, 2021 school board meeting.
GLVCC Membership	Approve to allow administration to continue membership in the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce at a fee of \$424.00 for the 2021-2022 school year, to be paid from the Superintendent's budget.
	Roll Call. YEA: Mr. Keegan, Mr. Kern, Mrs. Kulp, Mrs. Martineau, Mr. Distler, Mr. Green, Mrs. Heckman, Mrs. Husack, and Mr. Fedorcha (9) NAY: None (0) Motion carried.
<u>INFOR-</u> <u>MATION</u>	Minutes of the Lehigh Carbon Community College Board of Trustees meetings held on December 3, 2020. Minutes of the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute Joint Operating Committee meeting held on December 9, 2020 (Reorganization) and December 9, 2020 (Regular). Minutes of the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21 Board of Directors meeting held on December 21, 2020.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Mr. Fedorcha asked Mr. Hill if there were any comments or questions from guests.

Mr. Hill commented that there was one question from Pauline Grady. The CDC is presenting their new guidelines this week that clearly states it's safe for the kids to go back to school. Are we going to be following those guidelines or are we waiting for March?

Mr. Link commented that we will review the guidelines when they're released in their entirety and we also have been taking our guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, so, yes.

Mr. Green commented that before we adjourn, he wanted to say something to Mr. Kern and Mr. Geist, both of whom he has spent hours and hours with in gyms over the years, the District 11 Wrestling Champions are over because one team applied in AA and one in AAA, so they're not even having a competition this year. Mr. Kern commented that it's a sad state of affairs. A lot of things, he fears, that are going to happen with the progression of the individual side of things, Districts, Regionals, Super-Regionals, and eventually states, the sad part is if one participant of a team happens to contract COVID, it would basically eliminate every other wrestler from that team going further in competition. It's a unique situation and he's hoping that doesn't happen.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Keegan made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Distler, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh School District Board of School Directors adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Roll Call.

YEA: Mr. Kern, Mrs. Kulp, Mrs. Martineau, Mr. Distler, Mr. Green, Mrs. Heckman, Mrs. Husack, Mr. Keegan, and Mr. Fedorcha (9)

NAY: None (0)

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Gale N. Husack
Secretary

ATTEST: _____ President
Gary S. Fedorcha