

**NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Board Minutes  
Slatington, PA  
September 7, 2004**

**PURPOSE** The regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors was called to order by the President, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., at 7:35 p.m. on Tuesday, September 7, 2004 in the boardroom located in the Slatington Elementary School.

**TEMPORARY SECRETARY** Mr. Green appointed Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos as Temporary Secretary for the meeting in the absence of Board Secretary, Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer.

**ROLL CALL** Members present: Mr. Robert J. Cox, Mrs. Susan H. Fullas, Mrs. Lauren A. Ganser, Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos, Mr. William H. Hazzard, Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr., (6)

Members absent: Mr. Franklin D. Beers, Mr. Bryan C. Dorshimer,  
Mr. Raymond J. Follweiler, Jr. (3)

Non-members present: Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr., Mrs. Lynne Fedorcha, Mr. Philip Bertolino, Mr. Robert L. Kern, Jr., Dr. Linda Marcincin, Mrs. Karen Nicholas, Mr. John Hrizuk, Mr. Robert Mack, Mr. Brian Geiger, Ms. Christine Stafford, Atty. Charles Stopp (Solicitor), Mr. Jeffrey Bachman, Ms. Laurie Newman-Mankos, Ms. Ashley Kunkle, Ms. Jessica Fidler, and Mrs. Doneta Merkle

**VISITORS** In addition to Sharon Minnich, reporter for the Times News, Terry Ahner, reporter for The Chronicle, and Stacy Duck, reporter for The Morning Call, approximately 15 visitors attended the meeting.

**SPECIAL BOARD REPORTS** Lehigh Career and Technical Institute -- Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos  
Mrs. Geronikos reported that LCTI received their accreditation from the American Welding Society. LCTI was mistakenly placed on the Average Yearly Progress list of schools that needed to be improved. It was appealed and they were removed from the list.

Legislative Report -- Mrs. Lori H. Geronikos  
She attended, along with several other board members and administrators, a seminar given by CLIU on referendum and she shared the information she received from the seminar with the board.

Lehigh Carbon Community College -- Mr. Mathias J. Green, Jr.  
Mr. Green briefly reported that attendance is once again up. Money from the state is once again down.

Committee Reports and/or Meetings -- All board members received a copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on July 26, 2004, minutes of the Technology/Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting held on August 4, 2004, minutes of the Policy/Education/Staffing Committee meeting held on August 16, 2004, and minutes of the Community Relations Committee meeting held on August 18, 2004.

Student Representatives To The Board Report -- Attorney Stopp administered the following Ceremonial Oath of Office to Jessica Fidler: I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, obey and defend the Constitution of the United States and the constitution of this commonwealth, and that I will discharge the ceremonial duties of my honorary office with fidelity.

Ashley Kunke and Jessica Fidler distributed a written report and reported on its contents to the board.

Solicitor's Report -- Attorney Charles Stopp  
Attorney Stopp shared one informational item with the board where taxing entities are pursuing parsonages attached to churches for taxing purposes.

**SPECIAL** Federal and Other Programs Update -- Mrs. Lynne B. Fedorcha

**BOARD  
REPORTS**  
(Con't.)

Mrs. Fedorcha distributed PSSA charts and Adequate Yearly Progress Reports for informational purposes.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Nicholas P. Sham, Sr.

Dr. Sham reported that the opening of school early in the day was as good, or better than previous opening days. He especially commented that both Slatington and Peters Elementary schools had a efficient opening.

Executive  
Session

President Green requested a brief Executive Session at 7:55 p.m.

The board reconvened at 8:35 p.m. Mr. Green reported that the board discussed negotiations. He also announced that the board drifted into another issue that needed to be brought public to be in compliance with the Sunshine Fund.

Dr. Sham stated that what started the conversation was an issue that occurred on Friday that revolved around a call he received from one of the secretaries in the district who felt uncomfortable about a visitation that was occurring with two board members and one of our local community people who has been extremely vociferous at our board meetings. They were there to view a possible environmental problem to see how it was being taken care of by the district. Dr. Sham was concerned about the community person that was there in that capacity. He questioned the board member as to why that person was there and the board member responded that because of this person's dissatisfaction with the district adopting a resolution on the taxable line of credit they thought they would bring him along in an effort to show the person why we might want to go out for a taxable line of credit and also as a means of beginning to smooth things over out in the community. Dr. Sham stated that if any community person wants to visit our buildings they should go through various procedures in order to do that.

Mrs. Geronikos stated that at last week's school board meeting, for the first time in her life, she felt afraid to be on the board in one of the district's buildings. And it was because of the terroristic threats made by this individual. She defined terrorist according to Webster "the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce especially for political purposes". She felt that this is exactly what took place at last week's board meeting. She wants the board to take action to prevent people from coming in and threatening and/or possibly hurting members of the board, members of the administration, teachers, and the people who work for the district. Additionally, as co-chairman of the policy committee that she chairs with Mrs. Ganser, she felt that Mrs. Ganser used extremely poor judgment in allowing someone of this caliber to enter our schools. She feels that there has been a breach of security and definitely a breach of policy and a breach of HIPPA regulations because there are documents in the building where this individual was permitted to go that are confidential.

Mrs. Geronikos also addressed the fact that Mrs. Kulp never requested permission from the board to videotape our school board meetings. Permission to do that needs to be requested, in writing according to school board policy #902. Mrs. Geronikos stated that she has no idea if Mrs. Kulp was recording her, taking it somewhere and splicing it, putting words in her mouth and sending it out to the media.

Mrs. Geronikos also stated that she wants a request in writing to videotape the board meetings. She wants to know exactly what is going to be done with the tapes. This request needs to be done in accordance with our board policy.

Mr. Cox seconded all of what Mrs. Geronikos has stated. He also indicated that he was hesitant to walk out into the parking lot after last week's meeting based on some previous threats that were made over summer that stated that Mr. Cox and Mr. Green should be tied to the back of a pickup truck and drug through town.

There was another issue that was brought to the attention of the administration. Dr. Sham reported that he received a call that a complaint was lodged against the school district that the district was in violation of some environmental issues at the athletic complex. An individual allegedly took approximately 100 pictures and gave them to the Slatington borough manager. There was no basis for the complaint. It seems as though it was to once again give bad public relations to the district.

The borough immediately investigated the situation. The zoning officer looked into the situation and found that there was nothing relevant with the complaints. The zoning officer later called the district about the pictures and it is suspected that the same community person who made the visit may have been involved with the pictures. Mr. Geiger was called approximately 15 minutes later by the zoning officer who indicated that he looked at the pictures and he had some concern about liability because the individual that took the pictures was on various rooftops of the district without permission. Several of the pictures were taken from the rooftops; however, how the individual got on the rooftops is not known. The pictures were given to the borough police for possible prosecution for trespassing. The borough police did determine that this individual was on the rooftops of the buildings and Mr. Geiger was directed by the superintendent and the board president to prosecute for trespassing.

Mr. Cox asked if it was true or not true that someone on the board may have called the borough and asked what they were going to do about this.

Mr. Geiger stated "yes", he was present at the time the board member called the borough office. The borough manager was in the police station at the time. The person that called in wanted to know what he was going to do. Mr. Geiger heard the borough manager explain to the individual that he did turn the pictures over to the bureau within the borough to look at them and they had no environmental concerns with the pictures. The individual calling also claimed that there was something else on the property that needed to be dealt with.

Mr. Cox asked if there was any doubt as to who that board member was? Mr. Geiger responded "no", unless Mr. Kasten didn't say the right name when he was on the telephone or the secretary that called to let him know that he had a telephone call announced the wrong name.

Mrs. Geronikos questioned Dr. Sham asking him if he felt that there was some kind of attempt to prevent Slatington Elementary School from opening. Dr. Sham responded that he couldn't answer that question.

Mr. Cox asked that in light of the fact that the board could possibly pursue criminal prosecution that they step back into executive session.

Mr. Green asked if anyone had any public comment on the issue.

Mrs. Ganser made a comment. She stated that she did go up to the trailer buildings with Mr. Beers and Mr. Edwards. If they were not permitted in there Dr. Sham had the opportunity to tell them that they couldn't be in there. She stated that she was accused of taking the pictures. She does not know when she would have taken 100 pictures from the top of the roof.

Mr. Green stated that he doesn't think anyone has accused her of taking pictures.

Mrs. Geronikos stated that she asked her if she was taking pictures, she never accused her of taking them.

Mrs. Ganser stated that she is the board member who called Mr. Kasten because she was getting calls from people telling her that these pictures were in circulation and she wanted to know what was going to be done with them.

Mr. Green stated, "in order to keep the facts straight, what you're saying is that it's all Dr. Sham's fault that he could have stopped all this when you were in the building violating policy."

Mrs. Ganser said that she never said that. She said that she was trying to be an advocate for the community. The problem was mentioned in a public meeting several weeks before so it was public knowledge that there was a problem in that building so she was just trying to smooth that over with this individual. She reported that she did call Mr. Kasten and in kidding, because they have a kidding relationship, she asked him "who are you passing the buck to now, is anybody doing anything about these pictures, is everybody doing what they have to do?" With regard to the other issue on the

property, the enforcement officer called her and told her that he was at the site and whatever fluid is leaking from the ground is a mineral oil and it is not hazardous. She had seen this in the pictures and she was concerned. He said that he spoke with the district about some tires and salt and that it was all going to be taken care of. She stated that she is not the problem she is trying to be part of the solution.

Mr. Green countered, stating that she knew she was violating the policy when she went into the building. Mrs. Ganser said she did not know that. She said she knocked on the door and asked permission.

Mr. Green stated that she should know the policy, she wrote the policy. You had to know you were in violation of the policy by doing that. Mrs. Ganser stated that she did not write the policy. Mr. Green stated she was co-chair of the policy committee.

Mrs. Newman-Mankos requested permission to speak because it was her office that was visited. She stated that she wasn't there because she was at a meeting, however, her secretary was very upset. She stated that when you walk into her office area you are in her office. She resents the fact that one of the people walked into the psychologist's office as well. He just wandered around the entire complex of offices. She stated she is enraged if any of the confidential materials were seen by people who shouldn't have seen them. Mr. Geiger has been wonderful about the environmental situation. It has been worked on.

Mrs. Fullas asked what is the policy for board members if they want to visit a building? Mr. Green didn't have the policy at his fingertips but stated that board members have no powers, rights, authority, titles, interest, etc. than anyone else has. So just as anyone else, if we want to go into a building we should report to the office, announce that we are there, and sign in.

Mrs. Fullas asked Mrs. Ganser if she did that.

Mrs. Ganser said she knocked on the door and asked if Mrs. Newman-Mankos was there and that is when she was told that she was not there and that they could come back at another time. The secretary then stated she would call Dr. Sham and check with him.

Mrs. Fullas asked Dr. Sham if she called him to OK the incident. Dr. Sham stated that no she didn't call to OK it, the secretary called him and said that she was very uncomfortable about the fact that a board member was there. He said that he didn't feel that this was the time or place to become confrontational because he was dealing with an individual who has a history of demeaning, belittling, and being overbearing. He felt that his position was to deal with it, get it over with, and deal with the situation at a later date.

Mrs. Geronikos stated that the only time a board member has power is when they are sitting as a group at a board meeting. There have been reports that individual board members are trying to micromanage some of our maintenance staff. She heard reports that individual board members are telling maintenance staff that the board is their boss. Mrs. Geronikos stated that Dr. Sham's the boss and it is the board's job to go to Dr. Sham if there are any issues and let him deal with it.

Mr. Green said that he received a confidential letter which states that members of the district staff are tired of board members coming into the district and roaming around the district doing and saying what they want and they are tired of it and they are threatening a lawsuit against the board.

Executive  
Session

The board moved into an Executive Session to discuss a possible legal issue at 9:09 p.m. The board reconvened at 9:43 p.m.

Mr. Green announced that he received a piece of correspondence from Rev. Zimmerman that he was forming a committee of community members to study community problems. Mr. Green will participate on that committee and he also appointed Mrs. Geronikos to serve on that committee.

This committee is a branch-off of the Northern Lehigh Connections. It is a community forum that will be held at 4:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church located on Route 873.

**PERSONNEL**

Mrs. Fullas made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Geronikos, that the Board of Education approves the following items listed under Personnel:

Resignations  
Instructional

Accept the resignation of Mark Mielnik from his position as physical education teacher in the high school, effective when a replacement can be found.

Appointment  
Non-Instructional

Angela Schoenberger\*  
 Assignment: Lunchroom Aide  
 Senior High School, replacing Veronica Gabovitz who was administratively transferred to the middle school.  
 Salary: \$9.17 Per Hour (Step 0 on the 2004-2005 Educational Support Staff Hourly Rate Schedule)  
 3 Hours Per Day/5 Days Per Week  
 Effective Date: September 3, 2004  
 \*60-Day Probationary Period

Administrative  
Transfer

Nancy Wagner  
 From: Special Education Learning Support Aide at Peters Elementary School  
 To: Certified Paraprofessional Title I Aide At Peters Elementary, replacing Cheryl Babinchak, who resigned.  
 Salary: \$10.45 Per Hour (Step 2 on the 2004-2005 Educational Support Staff Hourly Rate Schedule)  
 Effective Date: September 7, 2004

Salary  
Adjustment

Acknowledge the following teachers who have completed the requirements per the Collective Bargaining Agreement that would entitle them to a salary increase for the 2004-2005 school year:

1. Scott DeLong
 

From:	Step 4B	\$37,950
To:	Step 4M	\$39,900
  
2. Kristie Ahner
 

From:	Step 11B+24	\$41,900
To:	Step 11M	\$44,000
  
3. Kelly Kromer
 

From:	Step 4B	\$37,950
To:	Step 4B+24	\$38,100

Professional  
Contracts

According to Article II-1108, subsection (b) of the School Code: "A temporary professional employee, initially employed by a school district on or after June 30, 1996, whose work has been certified by the district superintendent to the secretary of the school district, during the last four (4) months of the third year of such service, as being satisfactory, shall thereafter be a "professional employee" within the meaning of this article." Therefore, it is recommended to approve "professional employee" status as per the school code for the following teachers, who have satisfactorily completed three years of service to the Northern Lehigh School District:

Amanda Glassic  
 Kelly Kromer  
 Brian Pfinstl  
 Roxanne Sagala

**PERSONNEL**

(Con't.)

Rescind Band Front Advisor – Lauren Zielenski – Approved May 3, 2004

Previously  
Approved  
Co-curricular  
AppointmentCo-Curricular SADD Advisor – Christina Dieter -- \$510.05  
Positions Freshman Class Advisor – Michael Hammond -- \$577.38  
04-05 Band Front Advisor – Lauri Stehly & Crystal Stehly – Share Stipend of \$1909.15Substitutes Approve the following substitute teachers as part of the CLIU Guest Teacher Program for the 2004-2005 school  
Instructional year at the substitute teacher rates of \$70.00 for 1-10 non-consecutive days; \$80.00 for 11-20 non-consecutive days; and \$90.00 for 21+ non-consecutive days:Thomas Billowitch – All Subject Areas  
Suzanne Borovies – All Subject Areas  
Dianne Moser – All Subject Areas  
Patricia Passick – All Subject Areas  
Dennis Pearson – All Subject Areas  
Joanne Petersen – All Subject Areas  
Barbara Schieck – All Subject Areas  
Samantha Sontag – All Subject Areas  
Kristin Stuby – All Subject AreasNon- Approve the following substitute secretary/instructional aide for the 2004-2005 school year at the  
Instructional 2004-2005 substitute rate of \$7.25 per hour: Kimberly Kurtz – Instructional Aide/Secretary

Approve the following substitute cafeteria workers for the 2004-2005 school year at the 2004-2005 substitute rate of \$7.25 per hour: Kimberly Kurtz

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Fullas, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazard, Mr. Green (6)

NAY: None (0)

**POLICY**

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

Conferences Approve the request of Philip Bertolino to attend a conference on November 11, 2004 in Philadelphia, PA. Expenses for this conference include \$139.00 for registration, \$40.00 for travel, \$15.00 for meals for a total cost of \$194.00 and will be funded through Title IIA.

Approve the request of Ronald Klevenhagen to attend the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual PEITOAC Conference on September 20 and 21, 2004. Expenses for this conference include \$130.00 for registration, \$35.00 for membership fee, for a total cost of \$165.00 and will be funded through the general fund.

Approve the request of Robert Cox to attend the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference in Hershey, PA on September 28, 29, and 30, 2004. Expenses for this conference include \$285.00 for registration, \$45.00 for meals, \$447.00 for lodging for a total cost of \$777.00 and will be funded through the general fund.

**POLICY**

(Con't.)

Board Policy - Revisions To Existing Policy      Approve revisions to existing school board policy #826 – Operations – HIPAA Compliance, after second reading.

Second Reading      Approve to replace existing school board policies with recommended PSBA policies as follows: #203.1 – Pupils—Blood Born Pathogens, #314.1 – Administrative Employees – Blood Born Pathogens, #414.1 – Professional Employees – Blood Born Pathogens, and #514.1 – Classified Employees – Blood Born Pathogens with new PSBA school board policy #203.1 – Pupils – HIV Infections, #314.1 – Administrative Employees – HIV Infections, #414.1 – Professional Employees – HIV Infections, and #514.1 – Classified Employees – HIV Infections as presented after second reading.

First Reading      Approve revisions to existing school board policy #122 – Programs – Extra-Curricular Activities, as presented after first reading.

Approve revisions to existing school board policy #123 – Programs – Interscholastic Athletics, as presented after first reading.

Approve revisions to existing school board policy #438 – Professional Employees – Compensated Professional Leaves, as presented after first reading.

Approve to replace existing school board policy #227 – Pupils – Drugs/Alcohol with PSBA recommended policy #227 – Pupils – Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia, as presented after first reading.

New Board Policy      Approve new school board policy #915 – Community – Concession Stand Operation, as presented after second reading.

Second Reading

Homebound Instruction      The homebound instruction program is provided to children of school age who cannot attend school. It is recommended that the Board of Education grant homebound instruction for Student #687700 for five hours per week beginning on September 7, 2004 and continuing until October 19, 2004.

ROLL CALL:      YEA:      Mr. Cox, Mrs. Fullas, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazzard, Mr. Green (5)

                    NAY:      Mrs. Ganser (1)

Motion carried.

**NEW****BUSINESS**

SAP Agreement For 2004-2005      Mrs. Fullas made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Geronikos, that the Board of Education approves to authorize the superintendent to execute a letter of agreement for the 2004-2005 academic year with KidsPeace National Centers, Inc. and Lehigh County Mental Health-Mental Retardation to cooperate in the ongoing functioning of the Student Assistance Program in our district.

YEA:      Mr. Cox, Mrs. Fullas, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazard, Mr. Green (6)

NAY:      None (0)

Mr. Cox addressed the fact that the Board has become aware of two Board Members making entry onto school premises on Friday, September 3, 2004.

Mr. Cox made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hazzard, that the Board of Education goes on record to confirm that the Board Members were neither authorized nor invited to act on behalf of the Board with respect to such entry. The Board Members involved are to be reminded and instructed in

writing that any Board Member seeking entry onto district buildings may only do so in two instances, namely:

1. by prior official Board action taken at a public meeting or,
2. by following the same security and other procedures any person is required to follow before entering school buildings.

**NEW  
BUSINESS**  
(Con't.)

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Fullas, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazard, Mr. Green (6)  
NAY: None (0)

**FINANCIAL**

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

PC Abatement Approve abatement and exonerations of per capita taxes, for the residents that fall within the guidelines, as presented.

Extended Construction Account Bills Approve payment of bills from the Extended Construction Account, for the month of September 2004, as presented.

Construction Account Bills Approve payment of bills from the Construction Account, for the month of September 2004, as presented.

Cash Management Portfolio Report Approve the Arthurs Lestrangle Cash Management Portfolio for the month of July 2004, as presented.

NLMS Student Activities Statement Approve the Northern Lehigh Middle School Student Activities Account fund statement for the month of July 2004, as presented.

NLHS Student Activities Statement Approve the Northern Lehigh High School Student Activities Account fund statement for the month of July 2004, as presented.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Fullas, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazard, Mr. Green (6)  
NAY: None (0)

**CORRES-  
PONDENCE**

President Green acknowledged receipt of a piece of correspondence concerning some board members from one of the district's associations threatening potential legal action.

**INFORM-  
ATION**

All board members received copies of the minutes of the Lehigh Carbon Community College Board of Trustees meeting held on August 5, 2004, minutes of the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit Board of Directors meeting held on July 19, 2004, and minutes and LCTI Director's report for the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute Joint Operating Committee meeting held in June 23, 2004.

**RECOG-  
NITION OF  
GUESTS**

Christina Connelly – Slatington – Had three things to discuss. Asked if Mrs. Kulp was taping to please turn it off while she spoke. 1) made the board aware of bats over the band room door at the high school, 2) the parking lot in front of the middle school is potentially dangerous and should be made one way, 3) asked if school psychologists could be on staff for two weeks during the summer to do evaluations or testing of students so they are ready for the start of school.

Mrs. Ganser reported that one of our students, Carley Heintzelman, wrote and was awarded a grant that was presented to ALERT, Northern Lehigh Connections, and MESH. This individual traveled to Washington for a rally and received several interviews.



**ADJOURN-**  
**MENT**

Mr. Cox made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Geronikos, that the regular meeting of the Northern Lehigh Board of School Directors be adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

YEA: Mr. Cox, Mrs. Fullas, Mrs. Ganser, Mrs. Geronikos, Mr. Hazard, Mr. Green (6)  
NAY: None (0)

Respectfully submitted,

Lori H. Geronikos  
Temporary Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_ President  
Mathias J. Green, Jr.