

# COCALICO SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Denver, PA

A special meeting of the Cocalico School Board was called to order on Monday, October 2, 2017 by the President, Mr. Allen Dissinger, who welcomed all those in attendance.

### Board Members Present

John Lorah	Randall Renninger	Desiree Wagner
Juanita Fox	Barry Harting	Allen Dissinger
Douglas Graybill		

### Administrators Present

Dr. Ella Musser	Dr. Stephen Melnyk	Dr. Nathan Van Deusen
Sherri Stull		

### Guests Present

Kurt Eckenroad	Mary Rinehart
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Mr. Dissinger introduced Mrs. Sherri Stull, Business Manager, who presented the District's 2016-2017 year-end financial results. Mrs. Stull provided a comparison of the 2016-2017 results to that of the prior year's (2015-2016) revenues and expenditures, and explained the reasons for certain variations between the two years. The report also provided an analysis of the District's budgeted numbers in contrast to actual year-end performance. Mrs. Stull made recommendations for the future use of funds, referencing the District's five-year Capital Reserve Plan and one-time expenditure instructional initiatives. She added that the District's local audit firm would be providing the Board with a more in-depth financial summary of the 2016-2017 school year, along with the annual audit report, in November.

Mrs. Stull then introduced Mr. Kurt Eckenroad, Director of Buildings & Grounds, who reviewed the various capital projects tentatively scheduled over the next five years. He emphasized the necessity to replace the deteriorating metal panels above the High School gymnasium and auditorium, as well as the need to update the Service Center building and fuel pumps station. After thanking Mr. Eckenroad for his report, Dr. Ella Musser, Superintendent, reviewed the listing for one-time expenditure instructional initiatives which included STEM training and materials, high school and middle school curriculum materials, professional development, and furniture/equipment.

Dr. Nathan Van Deusen, Assistant to the Superintendent for Elementary Education, presented a proposal for the addition of an Emotional Support Classroom at the Middle School. He shared that by doing so, the District would be equipped to keep students needing such supports at Cocalico School District rather than having to transport them to placements outside the District. Dr. Van Deusen further explained that a cost

analysis of an in-house program disclosed the potential for savings when at least nine Cocalico students are in the class. Mrs. Mary Rinehart, Director of Special Services, added that in addition to the Emotional Support teacher, there would be two special education paraprofessionals assigned to the classroom, as well as a Home School Visitor. She spoke of the increased mental health needs of such students and how the Home School Visitor position would not only support this classroom, but would become a support to students throughout the District.

Dr. Stephen Melnyk, Assistant to the Superintendent for Secondary Education, reviewed preliminary academic performance reports for the 2016-2017 school year. He reported that PSSA scores for each of the District's three elementary schools and the Middle School remain above the state averages in all three areas of testing: English Language Arts, Math and Science. Dr. Melnyk shared that the High School Keystone Exam results, which assess performance in Algebra I, Biology and Literature, were exemplary with 86.1%, 80.4% and 86.5% of students scoring Proficient or Advanced, respectively. He added that 74% of high school students taking Advanced Placement Exams scored a 3 or higher on at least one of the exams, consequently showing proficient or advanced performance on college-level assessments. Dr. Melnyk also reported that Cocalico's average SAT and ACT scores were comparable to those taken by their peers across Pennsylvania, and NOCTI Exam results measuring job readiness skills for CTC students were also exceptional, with 93% of students tested scoring competent or advanced overall.

Dr. Melnyk continued his presentation with a review of the District's Chapter 339 K-12 School Counseling Plan Outline. The Plan identifies stakeholder groups; lists career lessons to be covered at the Elementary, Middle School and High school levels; describes action plans to be utilized to achieve goals; provides counselor calendars for each building level; and defines the delivery systems to be implemented. In closing, Dr. Melnyk commended those individuals from the various stakeholder groups who devoted their time to serve on the Cocalico School Counseling Program Advisory Council.

Dr. Musser and Dr. Melnyk provided an introduction to the "Profile of a Graduate Project." According to area business leaders and colleges, our students are academically prepared for the workforce but need other skill sets necessary to succeed in furthering their education, securing and retaining good jobs, and generally just succeeding in life. As such, Dr. Musser emphasized the importance of mastering the skills necessary for effective communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and content mastery. She provided a timeline for developing Cocalico's "Profile of a Graduate" and shared an invitation to be part of the District's Community Advisory Forum on November 16<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Melnyk commented about the connections to career development in the 339 plan.

Under miscellaneous items, Mrs. Stull shared information on a proposed amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution regarding property tax reduction. She explained that this November 7<sup>th</sup>, Pennsylvania voters will be asked if the state constitution should be amended to allow local taxing authorities to exclude from taxation up to 100% of the assessed value of homestead approved properties. Currently, only 50%

of the median assessed value of all homestead property within a local taxing jurisdiction may be excluded. Mrs. Stull added that there is no action necessary on the part of the District or School Board until legislation is enacted. Voter approval of the proposed constitutional amendment would, however, enable future tax reform. Dr. Musser reminded Board Members of the upcoming Education Law workshop hosted by Kegel Kelin Almy & Lord, and scheduled for Tuesday, November 14, 2017.

Time was given for questions and answers after each presentation. There being no more business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned.

Sherril L. Stull  
Secretary