



Wednesday Morning

Highlights of Tuesday Evening's Abington School Board Meeting
Vol. XXIX No. 14
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**WEDNESDAY MORNING AND MATERIALS PRESENTED AT SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS
ARE AVAILABLE VIA BOARDDOCS ON OUR WEB SITE FOR EACH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN AT LAST NIGHT'S SCHOOL BOARD MEETING:

The School Directors approved: The second and final reading of School Board Policies in the Human Resources section ... Ratification of the Agreement with the Abington Transportation Association (ATA) ... Personnel Appointments and Changes ... The District's Financial Report and Payment of Bills ... Permits for Buildings and Grounds Use ... An Advertisement for Bids ... Awards of Contracts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS ... Mr. McGarry complimented the Administration, the Solicitor's office, and members of the Abington Transportation Association (ATA) for their excellent work in crafting the new ATA three-year agreement. He thanked ATA members for the fine work they do for our students and for the school district every day.

The Junior High School staff was complimented on an excellent program that introduced the school to sixth-grade parents and students. Also complimented was the Abington Educational Foundation's Harlem Wizards fundraiser and the Abington team comprised of teachers and administrators, Abington team head coach Dr. Jeffrey Fecher, and the many staff and community volunteers who helped make the excellent sold-out event successful.

REPORTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT ... Dr. Sichel noted the retirement of Dr. Mark Pellico, principal of Abington Junior High School. Dr. Pellico has served the district and our students in various roles, such as school psychologist, guidance department chair, pupil services director, and as principal of Abington Junior High School. Dr. Sichel commented that Dr. Pellico will be greatly missed.

BOARD HONORS ... Dr. Viola proudly presented three news video clips last night. Both NBC10 and 6abc Action News featured the Copper Beech Science Fair, hosted by the school's PTA and staff. One hundred and one students from kindergarten through sixth grade presented 70 individual and team projects. Volunteer judges reviewed students' project boards and discussed the projects with the presenters and awarded ribbons. Some of the project topics included: experiments with plants, space, research projects on coin flips, jumping rope, pulleys, coding, rockets, and more. The categories for the science fair projects were: Animals, Plants and the Human Body; Chemistry and Physics; Earth Science and Space; Computer Science and Mathematics; and Engineering and Electronics.

Dr. Viola also presented a 6abc Action News video clip of a visit by Temple University Athletic Director Dr. Patrick Kraft and Head Football Coach Geoff Collins to hold a mock interview and a question and answer session with sixth grade student Brian Donahue, Jr., and his classmates in response to the business letter Brian created as part of a classroom writing exercise. Sixth grade teacher, Mr. Alexander Price, gave his students an assignment to write business letters to professionals of their choosing. It was an opportunity for students to write in a real-world context, using persuasive techniques. Every student's letter in this exercise was mailed in the hopes that professionals would read and provide feedback on their letters. Brian's letter persuaded Dr. Kraft and Coach Collins to visit Brian's class for an amazing session with Brian and his classmates. They commented that Brian's letter drew their attention with its skillful writing and message about his experiences with football, his kindness, his big heart and caring for others, and his intelligence. Dr. Kraft asked him who he would select for his team's staff and Brian selected several classmates. When asked who he would select for his quarterback, he paused and then selected his brother, Charlie, who is in third grade at Copper Beech and attended the interview. Copper Beech students asked many terrific questions about Temple, about athletics, and academics.

These video clips can be viewed with the BoardDocs materials for last night's meeting, available via the district website, and photos from both events can be viewed on the district website and Facebook.

HONORS ... Congratulations to Abington Senior High School students Sarah Joyce, Kelly Jawork, and Samantha Rivera, who were honored by The National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) with the Award for Aspirations in Computing (AiC). The Award for Aspirations in Computing helps to identify and build a talent pool for the technical workforce and helps academic and corporate organizations celebrate diversity in computing by honoring young women at the high-school level for their computing-related achievements and interests. Award recipients are selected through a lengthy application process based on their aptitude and aspirations in technology and computing; leadership ability; academic history; and plans for post-secondary education. These young women were honored at the NCWIT Philadelphia Chapter award banquet last week.

The National Center for Women & Information Technology provides a long-term community for female technologists, from K-12 through higher education and beyond, encouraging persistence in computing through continuous engagement and ongoing encouragement at each pivotal stage of their educational and professional development. Thousands of technically inclined girls and women are offered opportunities to learn through computing-related activities, network at virtual and in-person meetups, receive visibility for technical achievements, and grow leadership and entrepreneurial skills by leading computing outreach programs in their local communities. Additionally, they gain exclusive access to scholarships, internships, and job opportunities. All of these benefits are made possible by NCWIT Alliance Members, AiC peers in the network, and adult influencers who serve as volunteers and mentors. This collective investment is making a considerable and sustainable impact on future technology and innovation by increasing women's meaningful participation. Mr. David Daubenspeck is the faculty member who sponsored the young women and assisted them in the applications.

We are pleased to announce that Abington School District has again been recognized as one of the Best Communities for Music Education with the Best Communities For Music Education Award by The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation. The NAMM Award is based on music program funding, qualified teachers, commitment to music education standards, and access to music instruction. This is the tenth consecutive year that Abington has been honored with this award. Only six other schools in Pennsylvania have received this recognition ten or more times.

BOARD AUTHORIZES ADVERTISEMENTS FOR BIDS AND AWARDS OF CONTRACTS ... The Board authorized an advertisement for bids for desktop, notebook, and Chromebook computers and related components.

The Board awarded contracts to: West Interactive Services Corporation for an automated communication system and mobile application; Pennsylvania School Boards Association for electronic school board document management system; Singer Equipment Co. for a replacement three-door freezer at Roslyn Elementary School; SMS Building Systems, LLC for wireless access point installation at the elementary schools; and to CDW-Government, LLC for wireless and wired network hardware for the elementary schools.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE ...

Last night, the Board approved the retirement, effective September 1, 2017, of Dr. Mark Pellico, principal of Abington Junior High School, who has served Abington for 26 years in various capacities and as the principal at the Junior High School since 2012. We wish Dr. Pellico good luck, health, and a pleasant, well-earned retirement.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR ... (meetings at the Administration Building, unless otherwise noted)

Next Board Meeting: April 25, 2017 7:30 p.m.

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AND COMCAST CHANNEL 43 FOR EVENTS IN ABINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT.**

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WEDNESDAY MORNING is distributed to the community and staff of Abington School District to highlight actions taken at School Board Meetings. It is not intended to take the place of the minutes of the meeting. Citizens are encouraged to attend meetings; for information, call 215-884-4700. Compiled by Byron L. Goldstein.