March 10, 2022

The Board of Education voted tonight on raises for three current administrators. This vote is a clarification of a vote taken last month regarding these employees. The initial vote generated some discussion prompting the Board to clarify its decision this evening. I’d like to take this opportunity to explain why I recommended this action be taken by the Board.

First, The District wishes to stabilize its administration during a dynamic and trying time. It’s crucially important to maintain continuity and institutional knowledge in a time when other districts are seeing competent, crucial administrators and staff leave simply because those employees are seeing better, more competitive compensation. We’ve seen it locally in Weatherly and Crestwood and it’s happening throughout the state. We are one of the largest districts in the Commonwealth in the midst of one of the largest commercial development centers in the Commonwealth, so our leadership and continuity in Administration is vital.

From a purely fiscal perspective we are saving over $120,000 per year by not replacing two recently retired administrators. We are also delegating duties of those retired employees to the subject administrators. Furthermore, the salary schedule implemented this evening is similar to other districts. Again, in order to retain these key roles, it’s important to stay competitive with surrounding districts. We are implementing these raises incrementally over a long term four year period.

It’s important to note that we will also be evaluating wages for other positions like support staff to ensure we are attracting qualified applicants and rewarding those workers accordingly. These workers are vital to our success and paying them accordingly is a priority.

It’s easy for critics and naysayers to simply say with generality and gross disregard for facts “look at them just giving away our tax dollars again”. The historic problem is, however, that those who criticize without complete understanding of the basis for these tough decisions often only criticize for the sake of criticizing while rarely offering solutions. We, however, don’t have the luxury to just complain. We must act and in this case I’m certain that this Board’s action on my recommendation is in the long term best interests of this district, it’s students and taxpayers.

Yours in Education,

[Signature]

Dr. Brian T. Uplinger
Superintendent of Schools
Hazleton Area School District