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May 24, 2017

Honorable David Volkman, Executive Deputy Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of Education
10th Floor, Harrisstown 2
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Dear Secretary Volkman:

I previously wrote to you requesting that the Penn Hills School District be placed into Financial Recovery and that a Chief Financial Recovery Officer be appointed for the District. While I realize this is not something your Department does without deep due diligence and deliberation, I write to again reinforce the need for outside oversight of this District.

Attached is an article illustrating just another example of the inability – or simply lack of desire – for the current sitting Board to avail themselves of available expertise, in order to forge a workable solution to their massive debt and deplorable financial situation. As you will read, when a vacancy occurred on the school board, the current board members selected a current employee to fill the position on the Board. While on the face of this, the selection may have some merit, it is the process however, with which I take issue. The Board held little (if any) discussion and review of other, more qualified candidates. For example, with all the serious issues this District faces, the current Board passed over a doctorate graduate from MIT without careful consideration of his qualifications. I do not criticize the candidate they chose, I criticize the process. In light of the fact that the wife and daughter of the candidate they selected are both District employees, it appears they once again simply voted “one of their own” to sit on the Board.

This is a District desperately in need of fresh insight and oversight. I once again implore you to take action for the betterment of this District before it's too late. With their most recent vote to increase taxes, yet again, residents are suffering greatly from the decisions of this Board. I feel strongly the financial situation will not, nor cannot improve without the intervention of the Commonwealth. Each action the Board takes confirms my belief.

I look forward to discussing this matter with you. Thank you for your attention to this very serious matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony DeLuca".

Tony DeLuca
State Representative
32nd Legislative District

Cc: Will Danowski, Secretary of Legislative Affairs
Office of the Governor