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Mary D. Birks



Mary D. Birks has been a member of the Mt. Lebanon SD School Board (Allegheny County) since 2009, presently serving as Vice President. She has been PSBA liaison for the Board for the past four years, providing comprehensive reports each month on all issues impacting public education, meeting regularly with both her State Senator and House Representative. She has chaired the policy committee for her local board, and served as a member of the board for Pathfinder School for Exceptional Students. As a member of the NSBA Federal Relations Network, Mary provides her Congressman with information on upcoming federal legislation, noting its potential effects on local districts. She presently serves as a member of the PSBA's Future of Membership Taskforce, working with other members from across the state to make recommendations for the recruitment, training and retention of future school board directors. Birks regularly attends and actively participates in the Annual Leadership Conference and Region 14 legislative meetings, expanding her knowledge through the training offerings and networking opportunities.

Her work to support public education began through leadership positions within her local PTA, serving her community as Council President from 2006 to 2008.

Her background in communications and public relations provided her the skills necessary to build teams

working towards a common goal, actively advocating for policies and programs benefiting all students in the district. She was a member of the district's Internal Assessment Team, trained to utilize Baldrige Quality Assessment tools in order to understand the value of systems and processes throughout the district. Findings from this assessment led to major administrative changes in the district, ultimately saving hundreds of thousands of dollars as well as allowing for an expansion of leadership opportunities available to teachers.

As Manager, Educational Programs for GSWPA, Mary managed the Leaders in Training for Tomorrow (L.I.F.T.) which provided leadership and Girl Scouts' focused programs for girls in three school districts in Allegheny County, as well as two schools in Erie. Birks saw firsthand how cuts to public education can adversely affect students in struggling districts. She is a strong supporter of the Basic Education Funding formula, providing information to her State Senator, a member of the Basic Education Funding Commission.

Birks believes in the power of public education and the state's responsibility in providing a 'thorough and efficient system of public education' for our students and the communities in which they reside. Only then can we expect to be competitive both nationally and within the global marketplace.

Mary appreciates your vote for the office of President elect, believing it a privilege to work with other directors and to educate members on how best to provide essential advocacy for public education.

Birks holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from the University of Pittsburgh and is Executive Director for Outreach Teen & Family Services, a children and family counseling agency, serving clients in Allegheny and Washington counties. She and her husband of 27 years have two grown children and reside in Mt. Lebanon.

Mary Birks - President Elect Candidate



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