

Centennial hires another new principal

By Gary Weckselblatt Staff Writer | Posted: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 10:00 pm

The Centennial School District hired its second new principal in two weeks Tuesday night, naming Travis Bloom the principal at Klinger Middle School.

Bloom, an assistant middle school principal in the East Penn School District, is scheduled to begin work at Klinger on Nov. 24. Michael Lecker was named interim principal following the departure of Michael Johnson, who left at the end of the school year for a job in the Lower Merion School District.

“Sometimes, there’s a little apprehension when moving to a new job,” Bloom told the school board following its unanimous support on his behalf Tuesday night. “But I’ve talked to the experts — the kids — and I’m very excited to start.”

Bloom, who will be paid a salary of \$122,316, is the second new principal named in the district this month. At its last meeting, Sept. 9, the board named Shawanna V. James-Coles principal at Davis Elementary School, effective in mid-October.

James-Coles, who spent nearly two decades with the School District of Philadelphia, the past five as an instructional specialist, will be paid \$120,055.

“I believe each of these people are true leaders,” Superintendent Joyce Mundy said. “They add to our already strong team and make it an exciting time here.”

Mundy said the district’s interview team of parents, faculty, staff and board members “really help the process. When a person is hired they are so excited to be here because they already have met everybody and know what to expect.”

In addition to Bloom, the board also hired an interim business manager as a temporary replacement for Christopher Berdnik, who left for a similar position with the Bensalem School District. John E. Schank, longtime business administrator in Upper Merion, will be paid \$85 per hour for an approximate work week of 24 hours, through June 30.

Mary Martin of Martin Tax & Financial Services was also hired to perform business management services through June 30. She will be paid \$80 an hour for a maximum of 20 hours per week.

School board President Jane Schrader-Lynch told the new finance team “we really need your help.”

Earlier, she described Bloom as “a vibrant leader ... (who) will empower students and staff, alike, to grow and to achieve.”

Bloom began his career as an educator as a ninth-grade history teacher in the Allentown School District before becoming an assistant principal in the Muhlenberg School District. He holds a degree in secondary education from Kutztown University and a masters in educational leadership from Wilkes

University.

He is pursuing his doctorate in educational leadership and management from Drexel.

Mundy said Bloom “brings a wealth of experience in building strong school culture, integrating technology and effective secondary curriculum.”