

SAULT STE. MARIE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN 49783
REGULAR MEETING, BOARD OF EDUCATION
Phone 906/635-6609

Minutes – Monday, September 11, 2023

50. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Curtis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Sault Area Middle School, 684 Marquette Avenue and via Zoom.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Land Acknowledgement was recited by William E. Odbert.

51. **A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD**

Board Members Present: Michelle M. Ribant, Amy L. Goetz, Melissa S. Pingatore, William E. Odbert, Christine M. Curtis, Kenneth D. Dunton

Absent: None: Caitlin L. Galer

52. **B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Member Kenneth D. Dunton, supported by Member William E. Odbert, that the Board of Education adopt the agenda as revised removing Items II. A 3 & 4, III B and D to be moved to the October Agenda.

Yeas: Ribant, Goetz, Pingatore, Odbert, Curtis, Dunton

Nays: None

Absent: Galer

Motion Carried.

53. **II. COMMUNICATIONS AND BOARD REPORTS**

A. REPORTS TO THE BOARD

1. Business Report – Mrs. Michelle Bennin

Mrs. Bennin sought approval of the August general fund Bills Lists in the amount of \$2,747,981.24 and food service bill list in the amount of

\$33,155.68. She noted that August financial statements are unaudited as this point in time and adjusting entries may need to be made, which would effect the ending balances.

Mrs. Bennin noted that if you compare the August cash flow to the current month column of the general fund statement of revenues and expenditures, there is a substantial difference in receipts compared to revenues and total expenditures on each report. This is a result of most of the cash flow being revenue or expense in the prior year. The difference is also reflected on the charts with an increase to the cash balance and slight decrease to fund equity for the month. Both months end balances are financially healthy balances.

There are no state sources of revenues as the state aid payments for July and August are recognized in fiscal year 2022-2023 and will not be received until October, as there is no September payment.

2. Swimming Lessons Partnership – Carl McCready

Mr. McCready is in discussion with Steve Habusta of LSSU to partner for an elementary swim project for grade 4 students. Mr. McCready indicated that parents would like to see swimming lessons. Mr. McCready began working with Lincoln teachers, and all 4th grade teachers are excited to start a two-week session of a swim lesson program at 1.5 hours per lesson. There may be breaks in sessions due to SAPS and LSSU school calendars being different. LSSU will provide in-water instructors and in-water aides as well as have a lifeguard on staff. SAPS is responsible for transportation. Should be able to get implemented this year.

The cost of the program is \$15,000.00 and covers LSSU staff and pool costs associated with the program and is an “at-cost” program for the University.

Mr. Habusta spoke and indicated this program was modeled after a Virginia plan for a 4th grader learn to swim program. He indicated this is the perfect age to pilot the program and would like to expand the program to schools in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. The board was very receptive to the program.

54. **B. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Superintendent Kronemeyer reported on a great first day and week of school.

She reviewed the safety protocols and explained the three different levels (Wednesday of the first week of school was the district was placed in secure mode) as she wanted to keep the kids in the buildings. Shelter in place is a

protocol for medical emergencies or student incidents to get students out quickly without everybody observing the emergency/incident. The third mode is lockdown. The terms are used intentionally.

Mrs. Kronemeyer also reported the board recommend Kelli Fenlon to the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) for Special Education.

Mrs. Kronemeyer also requested the Board approve new hires and teacher Tenure.

Mrs. Kronemeyer unveiled a PowerPoint presentation on the bond proposal showing the upgrades to SAHS as well as the new elementary campus.

Mrs. Kronemeyer also reported that the Early Learning Center has 75 students enrolled to date.

Tri-Share has five applications to date.

Enrollment is holding. Washington 228; Lincoln 368; Middle School 498; Malcolm 93; High School 758 (including 93 area students for CTE)

55. **C. *AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION***

Dennis McShane – parent spoke in support of Jennifer Hopkins employment. He indicated there was no policy in place at the time she was placed on leave in June 2023 and urged the board not to vote to terminate Jennifer Hopkins’ employment. Mrs. Hopkins has demonstrated over the years how student-oriented she has been.

Cara DeNuccio – parent/former employee also spoke in support of Jennifer Hopkins continued employment. She indicated that the policy adopted after June 2023 should not be relevant as she was placed on leave in June. The district has spent time and money and none of her actions hurt kids. Everything she did was to benefit students. District gains nothing by termination. Ms. DeNuccio felt that Jennifer Hopkins was being held to a different standard than other employees.

Logan Pavlat – student SAHS spoke in support of Jennifer Hopkins’ continued employment. He indicated that since she has been their class advisor that he has felt nothing but happiness and excitement in participating in school events, homecoming, etc. All students in his class are getting engaged in activities. Time and money on this issue is a waste and money could be put toward students or purchasing more books for the library shelves.

III. ACTION ITEMS

56. **A. CONSENT RESOLUTION – Superintendent Amy Scott-Kronemeyer**

1. Minutes – Regular: August 14, 2023, Closed: August 14, 2023
2. August General Fund Bill List in the amount of \$2,747,981.24 and Food Service Bill List of \$33,155.68.
3. New Hires – reviewed by Superintendent
 - a. Susan Talentino – Counselor - Malcolm High School
 - b. Amanda Stoneman – Native American Advisor – Malcolm High School
 - c. Sara Eisenger – ELA Teacher – Sault Area Middle School
 - d. Theresa Thompson – Native American Advisor – Sault Area Middle School
 - e. Lorie Zenker – Science Teacher Grade 8 – Sault Area Middle School
 - f. Angela Germain – Paraprofessional (CI) Middle High School
 - g. Dr. John Wilkinson – Music Teacher – Sault Area Middle School
 - h. Kerry Lake – Intramural Volleyball Coach – Sault Area Middle School
 - i. Joshua Williams – Paraprofessional (CI) – Lincoln Elementary School
 - j. Eli Moran - Playground Supervisor – Lincoln Elementary School
 - k. Kristen Trinkle – Paraprofessional – Washington Elementary School
 - l. Zach Ellis – Playground Supervisor – Washington Elementary School
4. Tenure
 - a. Brooke Brehm – Lincoln Elementary School
 - b. Tracy Casebier – Lincoln Elementary School
 - c. Amanda Lewis – Lincoln Elementary School
 - d. Margaret Boucher – Washington/Lincoln Elementary School
 - e. Caitlyn Schmitigal – Washington Elementary School
 - f. Kimberly Badenski – Sault Area High School
 - g. Brandon Tomkinson – Sault Area High School

It was moved by Member Michelle M. Ribant, supported by Member Melissa S. Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda items as presented.

Yeas: Ribant, Goetz, Pingatore, Odbert, Curtis, Dunton
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Galer
Motion Carried.

57. **C. PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) – Superintendent**

Amy Scott Kronemeyer

It was moved by Member William E. Odbert, supported by Member Amy L. Goetz, that the Board of Education approve the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) as presented.

Yeas: Ribant, Goetz, Pingatore, Odbert, Curtis, Dunton
Nays: None
Absent: Galer
Motion Carried.

58. **IV. BOARD GOVERNANCE AND BOARD POLICY ISSUES**

Amy Scott Kronemeyer passed along a request from Angie MacArthur, EUPISD Superintendent, as to the requirement of meeting twice a year with EUPSBA, according to bylaws. This has historically been in October and May. The EUPISD is looking for feedback from local superintendents to gauge their board's interest in continuing this schedule. Superintendent Kronemeyer inquired whether the board would like to have an in person/dinner meeting and if not, do they want to continue at all. If they choose to do it a different way, what would that look like. The following dates were floated as possibilities: October 10, October 16, November 6 or November 7.

Christine M. Curtis finds these meetings informative but sometimes difficult to make it to the meetings. She would like to see the meetings locally or by zoom.

The Board felt October would be the best and overall felt the meetings are well worth continuing, as they provide good information.

Bond Update: Mrs. Kronemeyer will be doing presentations at each school, questions being answered via que code and adding those questions to Q & A on the district web site. She indicated that she will be presenting to outside agencies/boards, including to the City Council.

59. **V. FUTURE PLANNING**

October 9 – Board of Education Meeting – 7:00 p.m. – Sault Middle School
November 13 – Board of Education Meeting – 7:00 p.m. – Sault Middle School

60. **VI. CLOSED SESSION**

A. MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION – M.O.M.A. 15.268 §8(c) and (a)

It was moved by Member Kenneth D. Dunton, supported by Member William E. Odbert, that the Board of Education approve the Board of Education go into

closed session in accordance with the Open Meetings Act 15.268 §8(c) for strategy and negotiations and 15.268 §8(a) for periodic personnel formative assessment.

Yeas: Ribant, Goetz, Pingatore, Odbert, Curtis, Dunton

Nays: None

Absent: Galer

Motion Carried.

The Board went into closed session at 7:47 p.m.

The Board reconvened in open session at 8:12 p.m.

61. ***VII. ADJOURNMENT***

There being no further business to come before the Board at 8:15 p.m., it was moved by Member Kenneth D. Dunton, supported by Member William E. Odbert, that the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Ribant, Goetz, Pingatore, Odbert, Curtis, Dunton

Nays: None

Absent: Galer

Motion Carried.

Christine M. Curtis, Board President

Melissa S. Pingatore, Board Secretary

Terri S. Ferroni, Recording Secretary