

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF SOUTH LYON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
DISTRICT #63-240 COUNTIES OF
OAKLAND, LIVINGSTON, AND WASHTENAW
HELD IN SOUTH LYON CITY & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Dashner called the September 21, 2021 regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Anthony Abbate, Craig Dashner, Stephanie Junkulis-Pierce, Eric Kennedy, Martin Leftwich, Dan Schwegler, Jennifer Urtel

Absent: None

Administration Present: Mr. Steve Archibald, Superintendent, Ms. Lisa Kudwa, Asst. Superintendent
Mr. Brian Toth, Asst. Superintendent, Ms. Stacy Witt, Asst. Superintendent

Administration Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board, administration and the audience joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Dashner offered an opportunity for public comments. The following comments were made.

- *Brenton Montie (external VP for SLEA)* thanked the Board for the \$125 supply reimbursement for this year. He shared some of the items that teachers were able to purchase last year to help teachers help students succeed.
- *Geno Montes* emphasized that he is not in favor of students having to wear masks. He believes it is putting a mental strain on kids. He asked the Board to think of what is best for kids and stand up to the Health Department.
- *Charles Howton* stated that South Lyon Schools is getting over \$6 million from the state. He believes the district is following the mask mandate because of funds that they receive for PPE. He noted that South Lyon Schools consists of several counties. Brummer is in Livingston County. Livingston County does not have a mask update. He asked why they are following a mask mandate for Brummer that is in Livingston County. He feels it is wrong for our kids to be required to wear masks. He believes the Board is caught up in the politics of everything.
- *Ron Yarbrough* stated that he has two children who attend SLHS. His freshman daughter was yelled at today by her teacher for wearing her mask improperly. This is wrong and unacceptable. It needs to end. The board should stand up to Oakland County.
- *Joe Cusumano* asked why the Board did not apply what they had in place at Brummer because it is not in Oakland County. He suggested that the Board give leniency where they can. He also did not feel it is very clear at high school and middle sports events whether they have to wear masks. He asked the Board to hold the line where they can.

- *Kyle Opalinski* indicated that he is fighting for the children. He personally emailed the Board the reasons why he felt the mask requirement was wrong. He understands that the Board cannot go against what the Health Department has stated. The Board of Commissioners voted for this mask mandate prior to listening to any of the health experts. He asked that the mask mandate be removed!
- *Pam Pavlichet* asked why the Board did not attend the OC Health Division meeting. They should have been there to represent the people in our district. She stated that wearing masks is making the immune system weaker. There are negative effects of wearing masks. She asked the Board to do their own research and stop masking the healthy children!

Mr. Dashner spoke to the idea presented to the Board that taking COVID money leads to a mask mandate is false. The COVID money was pushed down by the federal government to the state government. The state government pushed it to the schools. Mr. Archibald or Ms. Witt could explain the process by which it follows. It is given out based on a federal formula. There are requirements to it. Ms. Witt stated that masks are an allowable purchase, but also includes hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies and custodial needs. The money is not just for masks and does not indicate that you have to buy masks with it. Mr. Dashner emphasized that the district can purchase masks with it, but it does not say that we have to mandate masks or does it say that people have to wear masks. The mask mandate comes from the Oakland County Health Division. Administration has checked with our attorney, and the law gives the Health Department the authority to make this order. While the Health Department cannot make law, they can issue a public health order that has the weight of law. Mr. Dashner felt the audience was asking the Board not to follow that law. Laws have to be followed by the school board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Dashner asked the Board to approve the agenda as presented, unless they had any additions or deletions.

Moved by Mr. Abbate, supported by Ms. Urtel to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes – 7, Nays – 0. Motion carries.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Dashner asked the Board to approve the August 17, 2021 regular meeting minutes.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, supported by Mr. Leftwich to approve the August 17, 2021 minutes as presented.

Ayes – 7, Nays – 0. Motion carries.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Mr. Schwegler, supported by Mr. Abbate to approve the following bills:

- *June 2021 Prepaids*
- *July 2021 Prepaids*
- *August 2021 Prepaids*
- *August Wires & ACH Transactions*
- *August 2021 Revenue Report*
- *September 2021 AP Board*
- *September 2021 Bond Run*

Roll Call: Mr. Schwegler-yes, Ms. Junkulis-Pierce-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Leftwich-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

HIRING OF INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Mr. Toth indicated that since the August 17 Board of Education meeting, we have continued to add new teachers to our staff. He asked the Board to approve the hiring of all the teachers listed below on the agenda. He introduced Lisa Hrit, Hardy 3rd grade teacher and Carrie Creason, Sayre 2nd grade teacher who were present and thanked them for being at the meeting.

1. ***Lisa Dreasky*** – Social Worker at South Lyon High School
2. ***Colleen Patterson*** - 3rd grade Teacher Hardy Elementary
3. ***Michelle Aimar*** - Art Teacher at Bartlett and Kent Lake
4. ***April Jackson***-Special Education teacher at Salem/Kent Lake
5. ***Lisa Hrit*** - 3rd grade at Hardy
6. ***Meagan Atkins*** - Speech Pathologist at Bartlett
7. ***Sara Cheadle*** - 4th grade VLP Teacher at Bartlett
8. ***Julia Dixon*** - 5th grade VLP Teacher at Bartlett
9. ***Caitlin Myers*** - Resource Room Teacher at SLEHS
10. ***Melissa Harmala*** - Kindergarten VLP Teacher at Bartlett
11. ***Vincenza Zaia*** - Spanish Teacher at SLHS & MMS
12. ***Erich Stephenson*** - PE Teacher at SLHS
13. ***Rebecca Willens***- Art Teacher at CMS & MMS
14. ***Kaiia McCurry*** - 1st grade VLP Teacher at Bartlett
15. ***Krystle Balagna*** - 1st grade VLP Teacher at Bartlett
16. ***Cathy Cherico*** - Resource Room Teacher at SLHS
17. ***Ashley Swanson*** - Kindergarten Teacher at Sayre
18. ***Douglas Farmer*** - Counselor at SLEHS
19. ***Carri Creason*** - 2nd grade Teacher at Sayre
20. ***Brooke Gira*** - 1st grade Teacher at Brummer
21. ***Joanna Hanson*** - 5th grade Teacher at Hardy
22. ***Jennifer Steger*** - SLP at Brummer
23. ***Amanda Hughes*** - Kindergarten at Salem

Moved by Ms. Junkulis-Pierce, supported by Mr. Kennedy to approve the hiring of the teachers listed above as described. Mr. Dashner and the Board welcomed the new teachers.

Roll Call: Mr. Abbate-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Mr. Leftwich-yes, Ms. Junkulis-Pierce-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFT

Mr. Toth stated that Bosch has graciously given the High School Robotics Team, Team 3641 The Flying Toasters, a \$5,000 grant to cover the entry fees for competition this coming season. He asked the Board to accept the gift in accordance with Policy 7003.

Moved by Ms. Urtel, supported by Ms. Junkulis-Pierce to accept the \$5,000 gift in accordance with Policy 7003 with thanks.

Roll Call: Mr. Dashner-yes, Ms. Junkulis-Pierce-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Mr. Leftwich-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFT

Mr. Toth stated that the Bartlett Robotics Team has received the gift of money at a total of \$1600 for the upcoming season from the following companies:

- *Success Mortgage Partners - \$100*
- *Michigan Institute for Neurological Disorders - \$250*
- *The Michigan State Fair - \$1,000*
- *Salvatore Prescott & Porter PLLC - \$250*

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, supported by Mr. Schwegler to accept the gift of money totaling \$1600 in accordance with Policy 7003 with thanks.

Roll Call: Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Ms. Junkulis-Pierce-yes, Mr. Leftwich-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

BOND 2020 TECHNOLOGY DEVICE PURCHASES

Ms. Witt stated that presented to the Board today is a request to purchase Chromebooks and accessories in accordance with the device purchasing schedule for Bond 2020. These are devices to address the one-to-one student devices initiative and to meet hardware specification requirements for DRC Insight's MSTEP and WIDA online tests. Due to the Sept. 30, 2021 expiration of SPOT bid purchasing prices, we are requesting the Board to review and approve at tonight's board meeting. Bids were received from the Spring 2021 SPOT/REMC bid on April 15, 2021 for the student devices. Six bids were available on the SPOT/REMC competitive bid results for the items listed. The quantities and cost are within the projected purchases for mobile computing devices identified in the Bond 2020 for technology. The District may consider purchasing these devices and accessories from the School Aid Fund Equalization (SAF Equalization) Grant if the items are an allowable expense and funding from the SAF Equalization grant is available. Administration's recommended action is to award the purchases as follows:

- Inacom TSG for 725 of the HP Chromebook 11 G8 EE in the amount of \$153,700.00 using Bond Funds.
- Inacom TSG for 725 of the Chromebook Management Licenses in the amount of \$21,496.25 using Capital Funds. Device purchases total \$540,800.
- Inacom TSG for 300 of the 45-Watt Power Supply for HP Chromebooks. Device purchases total \$11,400.00 using Capital Funds.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, supported by Ms. Junkulis-Pierce to award the technology device purchases as presented.

Roll Call: Mr. Leftwich-yes, Ms. Junkulis-Pierce-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

2020 BOND UPDATE – IDS/BARTON MALOW

IDS/Barton Malow provided the third quarterly 2021 update for the Board of Education on the 2020 school bond. Mr. Charlie Haas, IDS architect and project manager for the 2020 Bond first thanked the Board for allowing them to provide the update this evening. He began by introducing team members Aubrey Robichaud, architect and lead designer with IDS and Stephanie Buhagiar, project manager with Barton Malow. Mr. Haas indicated that the presentation would focus on bond projects with a recap of summer 2021 construction which will comprise what they have going on in terms of construction. Ms. Buhagiar narrated the summer construction school projects which included paving and flooring replacement along with playground equipment for the Early Childhood Center, as well as a design focus on the Bartlett addition and renovation. Mr. Haas closed with a brief update on their next steps. The next quarterly Board of Education update is scheduled to be added to the December 7 agenda. The full presentation with pictures can be found on the district's website located with the September 21st agenda enclosures.

LEGISLATION

Mr. Archibald noted that there was nothing to report this evening.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Dashner acknowledged the following board committee reports:

- **Legislative** – Mr. Leftwich stated there was no report.
- **Policy** – Mr. Abbate stated they met today and discussed tweaking some administrative regulations.
- **Finance** – Mr. Schwegler noted the district is currently going through an audit. There was some talk about additional funds coming our way, but he noted there are expenses that will align with them. It won't make that much of a budget impact. We are going to end up with a larger fund balance than expected. There was also a discussion about the reimbursement to teachers. Given that it hasn't been updated for four or five years, they bumped that up to keep pace with increased costs over time.
- **Facilities & Grounds** – Ms. Urtel noted that IDS/Barton Malow provided an update this evening.
- **Curriculum & Communications** – Their next meeting is scheduled in November.
- **Oakland Schools Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** – Neither Ms. Urtel nor Mr. Leftwich was able to make their last meeting.

OTHER

Mr. Archibald stated that he will be recommending a slight adjustment to the high school boundary due to a new subdivision being developed across the street from Pearson Elementary School.

REPORTS

- **South Lyon Educational Foundation** – SLEF had their first teacher shopping day which was a huge success. It was a joint effort between SLEF and the Salem/South Lyon District library. Over the summer, thanks to the generosity of the community, SLEF collected thousands of high-quality books for SLCS teachers to select for their classroom library. There was a lot of help given from our library staff and many of our student volunteers from both high schools to help to make this day happen. The BOO Bowling fundraiser is back and is scheduled to happen on Sunday, October 10. Everyone gets to dress up, and there are a lot of prizes and raffles. The *South Lyon Stronger Together* store is open again. It has t-shirts, beanies, hoodies, tumblers and is a great way to support the foundation and community. They are still looking for volunteers specifically in the areas of finance and marketing. She asked if anyone is interested to please reach out. The store can be found online (www.sleffoundation.org). The deadline to order merchandise is Sunday, October 17.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Dashner offered a second opportunity for public comments. The following comment was made.

- *Joe Cusomano* thanked the Board for enduring the last 18 months. He asked Mr. Dashner to finish his comments when he was interrupted earlier.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Dashner acknowledged the following correspondence:

- Resignations
 - *Cindy Helton*
 - *Brooke Leiberman*
 - *Kelsey Masserant*
 - *Jessica Ritter*
 - *Domonique "Niki" Rose*

MEETING DATES

Mr. Dashner noted the following meeting dates.

- October 5, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- October 19, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- November 9, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- December 7, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- January 18, 2022, (Tuesday) Organizational/Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- February 8, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- March 1, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- March 15, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- April 19, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- May 3, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- May 17, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- June 6, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- June 21, 2022, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

BOARD COMMENTS

- **Mr. Leftwich** did not have any comments to share.
- **Ms. Junkulis-Pierce** congratulated all of the new teachers and welcomed them to the district. She thanked all our custodians and transportation staff. Again, this year will be challenging for them. She truly appreciates all of the hard work they are putting in. She thanked the IT Team for all the work and time they have been putting in to keep up with our technology. She also thanked Bosch and other donors for Bartlett's robotics team. She thanked the teachers and staff who have left the district and is sad to see them leave. She also thanked all the community members and parents who came out to speak this evening and to those who send emails to the Board. The Board listens to everything they say and appreciates their feedback. She respects both sides of comments regarding masks. According to legal opinion, the district must follow the mask mandate at this time. She is also interested in looking into how our teachers are enforcing masks.
- **Mr. Schwegler** greatly appreciates the generosity coming from local businesses and community members. It is great to see so much support for the Robotics Team. It is impressive to have so many vacancies. Thank you to everyone who joined our staff.

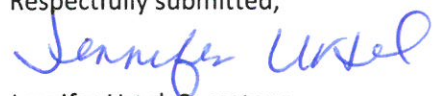
- **Mr. Abbate** welcomed all the new staff. He thanked all the administrators and interview teams noting that a lot of work is involved. The Board recognizes that people in general will feel uncomfortable wearing masks. Our administration brought a proposal for mitigation going into the fall that included masking as a recommendation, not as a mandate. They supported that. The other half of the community was very upset with that choice. The Board did not set this mandate. Our lawyers stated this is a legal order, and there is no recourse. It is the responsibility of the Board to be good stewards which means acting responsibly. Exposing our staff is a liability. We will all get through it. The Board carries forward and does what's right for the organization, because they must. The Board is doing what is expected of them at this time. He asked everyone to keep things in perspective.
- **Ms. Urtel** welcomed the new teachers. The schools are back in session, and the kids are happy to be in school buildings. They are excited to be playing sports. She attended Friday's football game, and it was fun and exciting. She hopes they keep that momentum moving forward.
- **Mr. Kennedy** is glad to be able to fill 23 teaching positions. He welcomed our teachers and staff.
- **Mr. Dashner** thanked all the donors and staff school wide. Everyone has been going through a lot of challenges in their jobs. We are getting hit by the latest TikTok challenge where students think it is great to tear things off of walls and film themselves doing it. We are wasting money buying new soap dispensers, towel holders, bathroom doors or putting them back on the wall because kids see a video and want to emulate it and do destruction to our property. There is no excuse for it. It is wrong. He hoped parents look at things like that and have discussions with their children and help them understand how wrong things like that are. To people concerned with how teachers are handling issues with masks are best handled at the lowest level possible. He encouraged parents to first reach out to the teacher, and if there is no resolution there, go to the building staff. The Board will not get involved until the parents tell the Board that administration has not done anything. The Board gives administration the ability to run the schools. The Board will get involved if something doesn't get solved somewhere along the way. He attended the new teacher orientation. It reminded him of why he had gotten involved on the Board. He heard great stories and helps him realize how much the people in the school system care. The Board understands parent concerns with the mask wearing. The Board is following a mandate that is legal. Many things are codified in law that they must follow. The Board did discuss the possibility of Brummer not following that mandate. This would leave the district in a place where only one building out of an entire district that they would have to create a policy for. You could have a student going to elementary school without a mask, and the student's older brother or sister in middle or high school that must wear a mask. It would be a minefield no matter what the Board did, so they decided to be consistent throughout the district. We are all stuck between a rock and a hard place, and people are not going to be happy no matter which way it goes.

ADJOURN

Moved by Mr. Abbate, supported by Mr. Kennedy to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Ayes – 7, Nays – 0. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Urtel, Secretary
Board of Education