

MANITOWOC PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2023

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Board President Stacey Soeldner at 6:00 p.m. Members present were: Mr. Collin Braunel, Mr. Matthew Phipps, Ms. Stacey Soeldner, Mr. Matthew Spaulding, Mr. Kerry Trask and Ms. Kathy Willis. Also present were Superintendent James Feil, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning Jame McCall, Directors, and Executive Assistant Laurie Braun. Board member Tony Vlastelica joined the meeting virtually at 6:03 p.m.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Network connection and access to BoardBook were confirmed.

Public Input began at 6:01 p.m. The Board received eleven (11) requests from the public to speak. The Board heard input from several members of the public thanking the Board for their time and their efforts to improve our schools, other members of the public voicing concerns with Board transparency, the number of closed session meetings, the high cost of the SFA program, the possibility of losing some of our best staff if the SFA model is adopted, the high cost of the restructuring within the district, the amount of time it is taking to fulfill open records requests, concern for how Special Education Students will be included in the SFA model, submitted letters from staff who fear job elimination with the SFA model, questions if the SFA model meets DPI standards and requirements, concern for our students future and the need for the Board and our teachers to work together, and finally concern for the SFA model only being used in a few Wisconsin Charter Schools and no Wisconsin Public Schools. Public input concluded at 6:40 p.m.

On motion from Collin Braunel seconded by Matthew Spaulding, the Board unanimously approved (7-0) the Consent Agenda as presented, consisting of the minutes from the 1-25-23 Special Board and Closed Session Meetings, the 2-1-23 Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting, the 2-1-23 Executive Committee Meeting, and the 2-2-23 Finance & Budget Committee Meeting.

Director of Business Services, Angela Erdmann presented the payment of vouchers for the month ending January 31, 2023. A motion was made by Collin Braunel, seconded by Matthew Phipps, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the Bill List dated 1-1-22 through 1-31-22. The Bill List presented reflects district operating expenses and district payroll for a total operating expense of \$6,628,940.10.

Information for the Second Friday Enrollment Numbers was shared by Director Erdman. Ms. Erdmann stated this is done annually and serves as an estimate of projected state aid for our district and also provides a means of tracking open enrollment amounts. Enrollment headcounts for the number of students served in January is 4,760, down 35 students from the September 2022 count.

The Personnel Report was presented to the Board by Interim Director of Human Resources Mike Nault. The Personnel Report consisted of seven (7) retirements, five (5) resignations, the hiring of seven (7) support staff, and several extra curricular stipends. On motion from Collin Braunel, seconded by Kathy Willis, the Board unanimously approved (7-0) the Personnel Report as presented. Board members acknowledged and thanked staff who will be retiring for their service and many years of dedication as educators to this district.

Superintendent Feil provided a 2023 Referendum Update sharing information scattergram of where we were at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. Mr. Feil provided a summary of these scattergrams we are a low funded low achieving school district, with an operating referendum that is not keeping up with inflation or the shortfalls our our state funding. Mr. Feil noted that our district currently pays out over 2

million dollars to private schools and open enrollments out of the district. Mr. Feil stated we continue to look at many of the reasons why we are low funded and the options available to the district. Lengthy discussion took place of the affects to the district if the referendum does not pass, such as staff layoffs, larger class sizes, fewer improvements to our aging facilities and a lower chance of becoming a high achieving school district. Board members expressed their support and need for passing the referendum. We need to collaborate with community organizations to share the facts with our community in a positive, persuasive yet effect manner.

A District Activity Update was shared by Superintendent Feil including acknowledging the Chamber Awards of Distinction where MPSD had seven staff members nominimated for the Education Impact Award. Nominees included Lee Thennes, Cory Erlandson, Joshua Moreau, Rebekah Nyenhuis, Melanie Shimek, Stephanie Stevens and Kyle Wagner. Our own LHS Business Education Teacher Melanie Shimek received the Education Impact Award. Congratulations to those who were nominated and to Melanie for being presented with the award. Mr. Feil also noted this week is Elementary School Parent/Teacher Conferences, 4K Enrollment Packets will be mailed this week to families and 4K Open House is scheduled for March 7th. Mr. Feil has scheduled Referendum Presentations at our district buildings with staff as well as Public Presentations scheduled for February 21st, March 8th and March 16th. Youth Art Series takes place in March, with an open house scheduled at the Rahr-West Museum on March 5th. March will also bring ACT Testing for our LHS juniors, as well as Parent/Teacher Conferences for our Middle School Students.

Brett Norell presented the Strategic Plan for our District. Mr. Norell thanked the Board for allowing him to facilitate this plan and taking this on with the desire to advance the district. Mr. Norell shared the plan hasn't changed since we last presented other than the leadership team has been working on the metrics to create the baseline data, and also to develop the tools to get that data. Many of these things are being worked on or are already available. The Dashboard will be displayed on our district website in a format that is easy to follow. It was recommended to provide monthly updates to the Board and discuss a section at each Board meeting. Mr. Norell will have ongoing communication and provide support as this plan is put in place. The Board was given the opportunity to ask questions and to provide comments. On motion from Collin Braunel, seconded by Matthew Spaulding, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the Strategic Plan recommendation as presented.

Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, Jame McCall provided her recommendation for the Success for All (SFA) & Literacy Curriculum. The presentation was a means to share information and the facts in order to make the best decision possible for our district. Ms. McCall acknowledged that we have very kind and talented staff in our district, however we are lacking the systems for assessments and progress for adjusting instruction. Ms. McCall also noted that our current resources are not aligned withing the curriculum cycle, we have a high percentage of students who are labeled as students with disabilities, we have student engagement concerns and also have a lack of parent involvement. Ms. McCall shared how we compare against the state with reading, math, science, social studies, and the 6 year decline in district scores. The presentation also included information from the Houghton Mifflin (HMH) Literacy Curriculum. Ms McCall stated if the HMH Literacy Curriculum was adopted, you would see an increase in test scores, however it would not be a substantial increase. A comparison of the SFA and the HMH curriculum was provided sharing the strengths and weaknesses of each. Ms. McCall also reiterated that SFA is a whole school reform, not just a reading program and includes a high investment in the professional development for our teachers. Ms. McCall shared the metrics that will be used to measure success. We will use 3 data sets to get an accurate visual of what is going on. We want a preschool that focuses on readiness, a relevant and viable curriculum, systematic instruction, increased parent participation, increased student engagement, resources aligned with district priorities, increased

student achievement, increased professional development for teachers aligned with district goals, assessment systems for instructional purposes, and focus resources to align with student achievement. The Board and the public had the opportunity to ask questions. Some discussion was had regarding the Hayward School District and how they have increased their test scores to exceeding expectations based on the 90 90 90 Book and creating a successful program at a cost no where near the cost of SFA. The Board acknowledged Hayward is a smaller district than MPSD and has some different demographics. Ms. McCall also noted that the scheduling will be a hurdle we need to get through, but has a team working on this. Clarification was also provided how specials will be structured, the writing curriculum cost, obtaining and retaining staff, and how we will meet the needs for the Special Education students and students with IEP's with the SFA program. The Board also discussed concerns for staff morale, our ability to replicate the success Ohio is experiencing with SFA, and do we have 80% buy in from our teachers for SFA. Ms. McCall also provided more information surrounding our 4K, 5K, and the transitional Kindergarten and the Board's overall goal and focus is we want better for our students and student achievement in our district. The Board was granted a brief recess at 9:18 p.m. The recess concluded at 9:23 p.m. On motion from Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Tony Vlastelica, the Board approved (6-1), with Kerry Trask opposing, to accept the recommendation to adopt the Success for All Program.

On motions brought forward from the 2-1-23 Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting, the Board approved (7-0) the Jefferson Playground Project as presented.

Board members Willis and Trask shared an overview of the 2023 WASB State Education Convention. Ms. Willis stated the delegate group lost quorum and were only able to address and pass 12 of the 19 resolutions that were presented. Mr. Trask thanked the district for allowing the Board to go and appreciated the conversations that he had with other Board members throughout the state. Board member Willis shared she won \$500 from Delta Dental for our district.

Remarks from the Board President included any members interested in attending the March 22, 2023 WASB Day at the Capitol to advocate for students should let the Board Executive Assistant know so they can be registered. Board members Spaulding, Trask and Braunel will attend along with Superintendent Feil. The Executive Committee also discussed having a governance discussion at our next meeting February 28, 2023 and Board member Braunel shared an update from the School Forest meeting. Mr. Braunel and Ms. Soeldner also shared they met with some of the Student Senate members from Lincoln High School and the opportunity for Student Senate Representation at our Board Meetings. Ms. Soeldner also had a conversation Dave Diedrich about having a joint meeting with the MPSD Foundation on March 29th for a noon meeting.

Future meeting dates include a scheduled Finance & Budget Committee Meeting tomorrow, 2-15-23 at 5:30 p.m., a Curriculum Committee Meeting 2/23/23 at 5:00 p.m., an Ad-Hoc Student Behavior Advisory Committee Meeting 2/27/23 at 4:15 p.m., and the next Special Board Meeting on Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Collin Braunel and unanimously carried by a Roll Call Vote to move into closed session at 9:47 p.m. for the purpose of considering the employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of a public employee over which the government body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility as authorized by section 19.85(1)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes; to Review Potential Resignation Agreements. The Board was extended a brief recess before convening into closed session to allow the public present to exit the Board Room.

On motion from Kerry Trask, seconded by Matthew Spaulding, the Board reconvened to open session by unanimous vote (7-0) at 10:08 p.m.

A motion was made by Kerry Trask, seconded by Kathy Willis, and unanimously carried (7-0) to accept the resignation agreements as presented for Jason Bull and Pam Lensmire as presented to the Board.

On motion from Collin Braunel, seconded by Kathy Willis, the Board unanimously voted (7-0) to adjourn the 2-14-23 Regular Board Meeting at 10:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Braun, Board Executive Assistant



Board President, Stacey E. Soeldner