

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
Manitowoc Board of Education
February 9, 2021

A virtual regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Board President Dave Nickels at 7:00 p.m. Members present were: Ms. Lisa Johnston, Mr. Dave Nickels, Mr. Richard Nitsch, Ms. Meredith Sauer, Mr. Kerry Trask and Ms. Kathy Willis. Also present were Superintendent Mark Holzman and Board Secretary Laurie Braun. Board Member absent was Ms. Catherine Shallue.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members logged into BoardBook and verification of virtual connection to the meeting was confirmed.

A motion was made by Kathy Willis, seconded by Richard Nitsch, and unanimously carried (6-0), to approve the minutes from the January 26, 2021 Special Board meeting.

Board President Dave Nickels acknowledged members continue to receive some email communications. Board members can respond to these emails as an individual board member, but not as a voice of the whole board.

The Board received no requests for public input at the February 9, 2021 Board Meeting.

Washington Middle School Principal Lance Masters, along with Associate Principal Courtney Schultz and Student Support Leader Lisa Delsman presented the Washington Middle School showcase. Mr. Masters began the presentation by explaining a story of tiers, circles and swirls. A team of teachers got together last summer to review 4-5 years of student data and recognized some of challenges from that data; declining achievement scores, increased behavior incidents and declining attendance. Staff then developed a school goal to address each of these traits; "Every Student, in Every Class, Every Day will have the opportunity to demonstrate learning using their speaking, writing, interacting, reading and listening skills. Student Success Leader Lisa Delsman shared a story of "Tiers". A tiered system was developed to address attendance. This system expanded to incorporate engagement supports in and outside of the classroom, including advisory buddies and family outreach time to help students and families establish connections with the staff and school. Associate Principal Courtney Schultz shared a story of "Circles" to address behavior. The Washington Learning Community knows the success of student behavior needs to be 80% proactive. Washington is using restorative behavior practices by giving students the opportunity to share their story, reflect and understand the impact of their behavior and to repair any harm done to the relationship or situation. The goals of using the circle approach is to create a safe environment, establish expectations, promote communications, grow empathy, and to build community. Mr. Masters shared the final story of "Swirl". The swirl approach acknowledges that we have learned to change the aim of how we teach, to change every lesson as needed, share strategies, celebrate results, and engage with the community. The final message for students is "You Matter!" Board members had the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

Director of Business Services Angela Erdmann presented the payment of vouchers for month ending January 31, 2021. A motion was made by Kerry Trask, seconded by Richard Nitsch, and unanimously carried (6-0) to approve Bill List 1-1-21 through 1-31-21. The presented Bill List reflects district operating expenses and district payroll for a total operating expense of \$6,223,584.77. Ms. Erdmann also presented the financial report for month ending January 31, 2021 stating a slight change in the format that includes a YTD comparison to the previous year. The financial report for the month of January 2021 was accepted as presented.

Director of Human Resources Joyce Greenwood-Aerts presented the Personnel Report consisting of two (2) retirements, hiring five (5) support staff, extra-curricular stipends and an amendment to the extra-curricular stipends from the 01-26-21 meeting. On a motion by Lisa Johnston, seconded by Kerry Trask, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the Personnel Report as presented.

The Superintendent and Director's Report was acknowledged and Board members had the opportunity to review, provide comments and ask questions. Board member Richard Nitsch questioned the status of the second round of the CARES Act funding. Mr. Holzman stated that it is currently in the Joint Finance Committee for a 14 day review that would allow for any recommendations of change. When it passes and becomes policy, the Governor will receive the funds from the Federal Government who then provides a plan to distribute the funds to the DPI. The DPI will then create an avenue of distribution. This funding is a reimbursement program for COVID related expenses. When we receive word of the final word the district will be receiving, we will then need to complete the necessary paperwork to receive the reimbursement. Superintendent Holzman will provide progress updates to the Board. Mr. Holzman also provided clarification to the open enrollment window, how the funding for open enrollment out of the district is processed, and the challenges the district faces financially when a student wishes to return to the district.

Superintendent Holzman shared an informational presentation of the 2021 MPSD Operating Referendum. Mr Holzman explained the goal is to provide an overview of the referendum that will help share important talking points with our community. MPSD residents will vote on an operating referendum on April 6th asking for \$4.3 million annually for three years to maintain existing programs, fund capital projects and technology needs, and retain quality staff. If approved, this referendum will help all schools and all students with little to no tax impact. The current state funding formula does not meet the inflationary costs the district faces and does not cover annual increases in expenses in the district's \$80 million budget. Without the renewal of an operating referendum, the district cannot maintain current programs and services. If the referendum passes, the district will still need to make approximately \$1.3 million in budget reductions over the next three years to balance the budget. MPSD's ranks 386 out of 420 school districts in Wisconsin, spending \$11,825 per pupil. The state average per pupil spending is \$13,280, a difference of almost \$2,000 less per pupil. Superintendent Holzman also shared a property tax levy rate comparison to area districts; Reedsville, Kiel, Valders, Mishicot and Two Rivers, with Manitowoc having the lowest tax levy rate of \$7.81. It was also acknowledged that the Manitowoc Public School District paid out over \$1.9 million in

Private School Vouchers for the 2020-2021 school year, an increase of over \$427,000 from the previous year. If the referendum does not pass, MPSD will need to make \$4.3 million in budget cuts. This will result in reductions in staff, programs, capital improvements and technology. Staffing would be reduced by cutting 49 full-time staff positions district wide from all employee groups. Class sizes would increase significantly and student programs would be reduced. The failure to pass this referendum would have detrimental effects on the district likely for a decade. Superintendent Holzman will be sharing the referendum presentation and informational sessions with staff, families, and community organizations in the upcoming weeks. Board members agreed it is the utmost importance to get the facts surrounding this referendum out to the public and community.

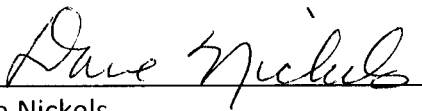
Superintendent Holzman shared we are two weeks into our blended learning model. We continue to monitor our community's health and with the burden rate moving in the right direction we would like to suggest moving back to school in a face-to-face setting for those who choose to, starting March 8th. The District is working on a plan for MPSD staff to get vaccinated within the next few weeks. The Board continued discussion surrounding some concerns with classroom size and the protocols that will be in place to keep staff and students safe to the extent possible. We will again send out a survey to families so we will know how many families will continue in the virtual model and how many will choose to come back full-time in a face to face learning model. We continue to have conversations working on the details to help get staff, classrooms and students ready for a return on March 8th. Board members acknowledged there are other surrounding districts that are returning to school and feel we can have our staff and students come back in the safe manner following the safety protocols we have in place. Superintendent Holzman again noted that as soon as we are able, we will notify staff when the COVID vaccinations will be available for staff who wish to receive it. Board President Dave Nickels shared our current Burden Rate is 318, which is in line with where we need to be and continues to trend in the right direction. Mr. Holzman also addressed the concerns for some of our secondary schools and senior students who are struggling to get the credits they need to graduate. Teacher workload was discussed. Mr. Holzman shared full-time face-to-face learning will likely look a little different than it did in the past. Administrators and staff are currently working on this so the transition from blended to face-to-face learning is as smooth as possible. After further discussion, the Board agreed to support Administrators with moving forward bringing staff and students back in a full-time, face to face learning model starting March 8th. Superintendent Holzman will provide updates to the Board as we move ahead.

Board President Dave Nickels next brought forward School Mitigation Strategies. Previously Superintendent Holzman shared a letter of agreement with Board members that Manitowoc County Schools are committed to doing what we can to keep everyone safe and healthy. Our schools will continue to use mitigation measures that include "The Three W's" – Watch your distance, Wash hands and Wear masks. A motion was made by Meredith Sauer, seconded by Kathy Willis and unanimously carried (6-0) to require the proper wearing of masks in all of our district buildings, and at all district sponsored events, for the remainder of the school year.

Future meeting dates include an Equity Advisory Ad Hoc Committee Meeting schedule February 11, 2021 (tomorrow) and a Curriculum Committee meeting February 18, 2021. Director Greenwood-Aerts and Director Erdmann will be contacting their committee members to schedule a Personnel Committee meeting and a Finance and Budget Committee meeting possibly before the next scheduled Board meeting.

On motion by Richard Nitsch, seconded by Kathy Willis, and unanimously carried (6-0), the meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Braun, Secretary

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Nickels". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Dave Nickels
Board President