

Manitowoc Public School District
Board of Education Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board President Stacey Soeldner. Members present were: Mr. Chris Able, Mr. Biff Hansen, Mr. Matthew Phipps, Ms. Stacey Soeldner, Mr. Matthew Spaulding, Mr. Kerry Trask, and Mr. Tony Vlaselica. Also present were Superintendent James Feil, Assistant Superintendent Jame McCall (attending virtually), Directors, and Executive Assistant Laurie Braun.

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

Public Input began at 6:01 p.m. Due to the amount of public input requests (9), Board President Soeldner allowed each person three (3) minutes to speak. Public Input included one individual thanking the Board for their hard work and hope the new board continues to do so. He also shared his concern about some election officials giving false information to voters. Three individuals thanked Board President Stacey Soeldner for her service and passion for students, and the hope for a continued focus on results. One individual shared the purpose of ALLY and listed all of the contributions ALLY has given to support MPSD and the community. One individual shared that the chaos and mistrust that has been present on the Board and within the district needs to stop. Another individual shared her support to promote inclusion for all students throughout the district. The final speaker shared his concern for Manitowoc gaining attention in a negative light and his belief that ALLY is a hate group. One member who submitted public input was not present to speak. Public input concluded at 6:25 p.m.

The Consent Agenda was presented to the Board. As requested by Board member Vlastelica, the following items were asked to be removed from the Consent Agenda; the 3-12-24 Closed Session Minutes, the Monthly Financial Report, and the Out-of-State Travel Request. A motion was made by Chris Able, seconded by Tony Vlastelica, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the March 12, 2024 Regular Board of Education Meeting, the March 21, 2024 Special Board Meeting Minutes, the Payment of Vouchers, Monthly Donation List, Personnel Report, and the second read of Policies 2431-Interscholastic Athletics, 2461-Recording of IEP Team Meetings, 5111.01-Homeless Students, 5130-Withdrawal from School, and 5420-Reporting Student Progress. Board member Vlastelica noted the closed session minutes need to be amended to reflect he was not present for the closed session and did not vote. On motion by Tony Vlastelica, seconded by Matthew Spaulding, to amend the 3-12-24 closed session minutes. Chris Able made the motion to accept the amended minutes, seconded by Matthew Spaulding, and unanimously carried (7-0). After discussion and clarification, a motion was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Biff Hansen, and unanimously carried (7-0) to accept the Monthly Financial Report as presented. The Out-of-State Travel request was discussed in further detail noting that the cost is covered by a grant. Board member Vlastelica made a motion to table the approval of this travel until the Board receives more information regarding the actual content of the training, seconded by Matthew Spaulding. The motion to table the Out-of-State Travel Request for the WEB and Boomerang Training passed (5-2) with Board members Hansen and Trask opposing.

Winona Grossman shared the Student Representative's Report including juniors have received their ACT scores and underclassmen are scheduled to take the PreACT tomorrow. Spring sports are underway and the entire student body gathered to listen to several Green Bay Packers Players speak on the importance of education. Student Senate continues to plan for the upcoming blood drive in May and AP Government Students will travel to Madison and meet with Representative Tittl. The Student Senate and Board Committee continue to meet and have conversations about how to make our district and schools come together as one.

Superintendent Feil shared a District Priority Goals update including the third quarter reading proficiency scores continue to increase from 31% to 49%, and anticipates that the final quarter will see gains as well. Mr. Feil also stated that CESA 10 will be presenting the final Facilities Assessment Report at the next Board meeting. Due to the staff survey results already being released through open records requests, it was determined that we will not be sharing the survey results at the April 23rd meeting. Mr. Feil also acknowledged that we will discontinue the quarterly surveys through School Perceptions, but will continue to define the direction the district is heading in. The hope is for the district to be student culture driven with academic success.

Board President Soeldner asked if there were any questions regarding the Directors Report. Board member Able shared his appreciation for providing the snapshot of information. Some clarification was also provided for the Act 20 screener implementation. More information regarding this will provided in the coming weeks.

Superintendent Feil Spring Election Results thanking Stacey Soeldner for her service to our district as a Board member. Mr Feil congratulated Keith Shaw and Kerry Trask as the top two vote recipients in the April 2, 2024 election.

The District Activity Update noted the Youth Apprentice Awards Night will be held on May 15, 2024 at the Capitol Civic Centre and the Quarter Century and Retirement Celebration will be held on May 29, 2024, at the Capitol Civic Centre.

Director Lee Thennes and McKinley Principal Stephanie Boncher provided a McKinley Academy Update including the planning and visioning discussions that have taken place. It was acknowledged again that the district needs to have a strong alternative program that includes a curriculum that aligns with state high school standards. Some noticeable changes will be moving from a tri-mester to a semester calendar, as well as an 8 period schedule which will allow for an easier transition for our students transferring from Lincoln to McKinley or McKinley to Lincoln. We will continue to operate as a Charter school for the 2024-2025 school year per the current agreement and moving beyond that will be decided in the next few months. Discussion surrounding any available funding took place, acknowledging there are grants available depending upon what you are searching for. Director Thennes stated that the goal for the program moving forward would be to have the instructional minutes more aligned with DPI in terms of the curriculum. We are also working to have systems that will include more involvement from the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. The Board agreed with the importance of partnering with the McKinley Board in this process to put together a plan for academic achievement. Additional information will be provided to the Board in the upcoming weeks so they are prepared to make a decision in May.

The New Music Orchestra Position for the 2024-2025 School Year proposal was presented to the Board. A motion was made by Chris Able, seconded by Kerry Trask, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the proposal as presented.

The proposal for the New Specially Designed Physical Education (SDPE) position was presented to the Board. A motion was made by Chris Able, seconded by Kerry Trask, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the proposal as presented.

Director Lee Thennes introduced the K-8 Art Department Chairperson Cassie LaPean who presented the K-8 Art Curriculum Proposal. A motion was made by Kerry Trask, seconded by Chris Able, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the K-8 Art Curriculum as proposed.

The first read of policy revisions introduced at the March 12, 2024 Board Meeting was presented to the Board. Discussion occurred regarding the eligibility requirements for policies 1630.01, 3430.01, and 4430.01. A motion was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Tony Vlastelica to keep the current policy and reject the suggested revisions to policies 1630.01, 3430.01, and 4430.01. Board member Trask made a friendly amendment to reinsert the last sentence in the first paragraph under Eligibility Requirements. The friendly amendment was not accepted. Board President Soeldner called for a vote on the motion on the floor. The motion did not carry with a vote of (2-5), with Board members Able, Hansen, Phipps, Soeldner, and Trask. A motion to approve policies 1630.01, 3430.01, and 4430.01 as presented was made by Chris Able, seconded by Biff Hansen, and carried (5-2), with Board members Spaulding and Vlastelica opposing. A motion was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Chris Able, and unanimously (7-0) carried to approve the first read of policy 5460.01-Diploma Deferral. A motion was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Chris Able, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the first read of policy 5512-Use of Tobacco and Nicotine by Students. A motion was made by Matthew Spaulding and seconded by Chris Able to open a discussion of policy 8820-School Day Closure. Board member Able made a motion to amend the first sentence under School Closure to include "in coordination with the Board President or designee, seconded by Biff Hansen. The amended motion did not pass by a vote of (1-6), with Board members Hansen, Phipps, Soeldner, Spaulding, Trask and Vlastelica opposing. Board President Soeldner amended the motion to include that the district would need Board approval for a prolonged closure of school. Tony Vlastelica made a friendly amendment to the motion to include any non-weather related events more than three consecutive days would require Board approval. Board President Soeldner accepted the friendly amendment. A call for a vote on the amended motion carried (5-2) with Board members Able and Hansen opposing. A motion was made by Chris Able, seconded by Tony Vlastelica, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the first read of policy 8710-Insurance. A motion was made by Chris Able, seconded by Matthew Phipps, and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the first read of policy 8542-Automated External Defibrillators.

Five (5) policies with suggested revisions were introduced to the Board; Policy 0151.1-Annual Board Reorganization, Policy 0167.3-Public Comment at Board Meetings, Policy 0171.4-Treasurer, Policy 0175-Association Memberships, and Policy 7540.05-Assistive Technology and Services. These policies can be reviewed and will be moved for the first read at the 4-23-24 Special Board Meeting.

Remarks from Board President Soeldner included Ms. Soeldner noting a replacement of CESA 7 Board of Control will need to be assigned.

Future meeting dates include setting the Board Organizational Meeting to be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23, 2024. The Special Board of Education meeting is scheduled for 4-23-24 at 6:00 p.m. or immediately following the Organizational Meeting.

A motion was made by Chris Able, seconded by Kerry Trask, and unanimously carried (7-0) by a roll call vote, to move into closed session at 8:17 p.m., to consider the following matter: the employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation of a public employee over which the government body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility pursuant to section 19.85(1)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes: Compensation Strategies for Staff. The Board allowed a brief recess for the public to clear the Board Room and resumed closed session at 8:22 p.m.

The Board of Education did not reconvene in open session to take action on the issue discussed in closed session. A motion to adjourn the 4-9-23 Regular Board of Education meeting at 8:52 p.m. was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Chris Able, and unanimously carried (7-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Braun, Executive Assistant


Board President / CHRIS ABLE