

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
Manitowoc Board of Education  
May 11, 2021

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Board Vice-President Lisa Johnston 7:01 p.m. Members present were: Mr. Collin Braunel, Ms. Lisa Johnston, Ms. Meredith Sauer, Ms. Stacey Soeldner, Mr. Kerry Trask and Ms. Kathy Willis. Also present were Superintendent Mark Holzman and Board Secretary Laurie Braun. Board member Nickels was absent for the start of the meeting.

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

A motion was made by Stacey Soeldner, seconded by Collin Braunel, and unanimously carried (6-0), to approve the minutes from the April 27, 2021 Organizational and Special Board meetings.

Board Vice-President Lisa Johnston acknowledged communications received by the Board. Board Member Collin Braunel shared an email that was received from a member of the public concerning the mask requirement in our district.

The Board received four (4) Requests to Provide Public Input. Mr. Tim Reis shared his views and dislike of the mask mandate in our school district. Mr. Gene Weyer shared his concern of curriculum taught in our schools, Mr. David Naidl also shared concern and dislike of the mask mandate, and Mr. Ramsey Meyer spoke regarding curriculum and Critical Race Theory. Each member of the public had 5 minutes to speak to the Board. The Board thanked the public for participating in the public input portion of the meeting.

Franklin Elementary School was the featured school showcase. Principal See Lee Vang began the showcase by sharing what the leadership team discovered while studying the trends and patterns of student learning specifically in ELA and Math. Ms. Lee Vang talked about teacher clarity and how this affects knowing what students need to learn, how they communicate learning expectations to students, and how teachers and students identify their successes. The Franklin team has implemented some changes to increase these successes. Grade level teams focus on clear learning targets for math power standards and other areas, they have also developed a Structured Learning Community process (PLC), and data analysis of student work during PLC time. With Math being the District's, Franklin's SMART Goal is to help all learners make growth toward proficiency in Math. Principal See Lee Vang assured the Board that even though the focus is on Math, they continue to measure student academic growth and engagement in other content areas. Franklin Staff shared their accounts of using these strategies to engage students, helping them become better learners, and celebrating their successes. Student and family accounts were also shared in support of this learning strategy. The Board had the opportunity to ask questions and share comments.

Director of Business Services Angela Erdmann presented the payment of vouchers for month ending April 30, 2021. A motion was made by Kerry Trask, seconded by Kathy Willis, and unanimously carried (6-0) to approve Bill List 4-1-21 through 4-30-21. The presented Bill List

reflects district operating expenses and district payroll for a total operating expense of \$6,756,086.83. Ms. Erdmann also presented the financial report for month ending April 30, 2021. The financial report for the month of April 2021 was accepted as presented.

Director of Human Resources Joyce Greenwood-Aerts presented the Personnel Report consisting of three (3) retirements, five (5) resignations, hiring three (3) replacement professional staff, and one (1) support staff. On a motion by Kathy Willis, seconded by Meredith Sauer, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the Personnel Report as presented.

Superintendent Holzman provided a presentation of the results from the Staff Engagement Survey conducted this past December, administered by School Perceptions. All MPSD Staff members were sent an email invitation to complete the survey, with a 70% participation or 539 responses. The survey included over 70 questions with participation percentages from each building, job position, and how long employed by the district. Mr. Holzman shared results showed significant improvement in most areas, some improvement in others area, and areas that we as a district need to continue to work on for greater improvement. The highest scoring results were; staff feels safe at work, co-workers are willing to help each other, the work our staff does contributes to the success of the district, our classrooms and buildings are well maintained and district principals are effective leaders. The lowest survey scores involved timeliness of implementing new initiatives, sustaining a healthy work-life balance, social/emotional needs of students are being met and student discipline is handled in a consistent manner by all staff. The survey information was shared with building principals and principals will share with their staff. Survey information will also be posted and available on our district website. Superintendent Holzman provided clarification and supporting information for any questions posed from Board members.

The proposed 2021-2022 School Calendar was presented to the Board. After receiving approval from DPI, the proposed calendar has as start date of Monday, August 30, 2021. The proposed calendar reflects additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  learning day for students and 2 professional development days for staff. After significant discussion, a motion was made by Meredith Sauer, seconded by Kathy Willis to approve the proposed 2021-2022 calendar. The motion did not pass with a (3-3) vote. Board member Soeldner made a motion to amend the calendar to have a start date of Wednesday, September 1, 2021 and remove the 2 professional development days for staff. The amendment did not receive a second motion. Discussion continued surrounding the proposed calendar. Board member Dave Nickels arrived at 8:28 p.m. A motion was made by Board member Soeldner to amend the calendar to reflect a start date of August 30, 2021 and eliminate the additional two professional development days, the motion was seconded by Board member Braunel. The amendment to the school calendar failed by a vote of (4-3). The 2021-2022 School Calendar was again opened for discussion. Board member Johnston made a motion to amend the proposed calendar to compromise and have one student instruction day and one professional development day, Board member Trask seconded the motion. Discussion of the amendment ensued and Superintendent Holzman clarified the process of changing the student days. The Board voted on the third proposed amendment, the motion failed by a vote of (3-3-1) with Board member Willis abstaining. 2021-2022 School Calendar discussion continued. Board member Trask made a motion to approve the original proposed 2021-2022

School Calendar, Board member Willis seconded the motion, the originally proposed 2021-2022 School Calendar was approved (5-2), Board member Braunel and Board member Soeldner opposing.

The Superintendent and Director's Report was acknowledged and Board members had the opportunity to review, provide comments and ask questions. Board member Sauer shared positive feedback regarding students having the opportunity to participate in prom and our distinctive outdoor graduation.

Superintendent Holzman provided a District Activity update which included the fall alternative activities have just ended, lose with our Cross-Country team competing at State finishing 9<sup>th</sup> overall. Baseball, softball, soccer and tennis are underway, along with numerous students participating in our art and music programs. We are fortunate to have so many talented students in our district and it's great to see them engaged in our extra-curriculars.

District COVID-19 Protocols were next discussed. Superintendent Holzman summarized the Board approved to keep our COVID-19 protocols in place until the end of the school year at the February 9, 2021 Regular Board meeting. It has been brought up to the Board to reconsider our district mask policy. Mr. Holzman shared that we are still seeing some positive cases in our schools and we continue to follow our protocols when a positive case is reported. Board Vice-President Lisa Johnston expressed there are approximately 20 school days left and is in favor of keeping the mask requirement in place as previously approved. Board member Sauer shared her concern of disruption this may cause families who sent their kids back to the in-person learning knowing set COVID-19 protocols were in place. Board member Trask also commented though many of our staff are vaccinated, our students are not. Board member Soeldner made a motion to modify the District COVID-19 mask protocol and make it be optional effective immediately, Board member Braunel seconded the motion. Further discussion regarding the motion took place including what other CESA-7 district schools are doing and the fact we continue to communicate with our county health professionals. Board member Braunel shared many parents feel they should have a right to choose for their child. Board President Dave Nickels made a motion to amend Board member Soeldner's motion to remove the district's mask protocol effective June 12, 2021. The modification to the District's COVID-19 mask protocol was approved (5-2) with Board member Soeldner and Board Member Braunel opposing.

Future meeting dates was the next agenda item discussed. Board member Braunel questioned the reasoning for having the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday meeting at 12:00 noon being that some Board members and the public may not be available mid-day. Board President Nickels stated the time of the meeting can always be revised. Traditionally the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday meeting had a 12:00 p.m. start time. Our current policy allows us to set the meeting dates how and when the Board deems it best. Board member Braunel also suggested that one general meeting per month should be sufficient and questioned the need for the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday meeting. Superintendent Holzman reiterated that there are certain agenda items; such as the Personnel Report that would restrict us hiring and/or accepting a resignation from staff members. Some items can wait until the following month, however the process for having meetings allows us to provide the Board with information which allows them to provide feedback. Board member Nickels

recommended the Board be diligent with scheduling the number and start times of meetings, with consideration of attending the needs of the school district as a Board.

The next Board Meeting will be scheduled May 25<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m. The Curriculum Committee has a meeting scheduled Thursday May 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. Ms. Joyce Greenwood-Aerts will be contacting members of the Personnel Committee to schedule a meeting. Angela Erdmann will be contacting the Finance & Budget Committee member to schedule a meeting as well. At this time, there will not be a Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting scheduled before the next Board meeting.

On motion by Collin Braunel, seconded by Kathy Willis, and unanimously carried (7-0), the meeting adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Braun, Secretary

  
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Dave Nickels, Board President