

MANITOWOC PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education Meeting Minutes
August 22, 2023

Board President Stacey Soeldner called the Special Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 5:00 p.m. Members present were: Mr. Chris Able, Mr. Biff Hansen, Mr. Matthew Phipps, Ms. Stacey Soeldner, Mr. Matthew Spaulding, Mr. Kerry Trask, and Mr. Tony Vlastelica. Also present were Superintendent James Feil, Directors, and Executive Assistant Laurie Braun.

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

The Consent Agenda was next presented to the Board. On motion from Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Chris Able, the Board unanimously approved (7-0) the Consent Agenda consisting of the minutes from the August 8, 2023 Regular Meeting and Closed Session Meeting.

The Personnel Report was taken before the CESA 7 Update due to receiving notification that Dr. Colleen Timm was running late. Director of Human Resources Mike Nault presented the Personnel Report that consisted of eight (8) resignations, the hiring of four (4) professional staff, fifteen (15) support staff, and acknowledging the five (5) teachers who changed their respective teaching assignments for the 2023-2024 school year, and a list of current Administrator and Teacher vacancies. A motion was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Chris Able, and unanimously carried (7-0), to approve the Personnel Report as presented. Board member Trask questioned the status of our current math program and the math coaches that were hired. Director of Educational Programs, Heidi Schroderus stated that unfortunately we had to pull some of these math coaches and place them in a classroom teaching position to fill the open positions. Acknowledging this is not the perfect scenario but it was needed after exhausting all measures. It is no way a reflection that we are giving up on the math program. It was also asked the status of the McKinley Administrator position. Mr. Nault shared that some discussion took place surrounding the programs at McKinley and the role of the Administrator there. We conducted one interview for this position today and have a second interview scheduled this Thursday. Mike Nault provided an update of the tech ed vacancy at Washington Middle School and shared that we have been approved for a Tech-Ed Internship for the second semester. This has been a team effort from all of our directors and administrators to fill these roles in a very challenging environment.

CESA 7's Administrator, Dr. Colleen Timm provided an overview of services CESA. Dr. Timm shared they service approximately 90,000 students and over 8,000 educators within 39 school districts. CESA 7 assists districts with compliance work and helps implement any requirements at no cost to the district. They also provide supports around our core academics and licensing. Dr. Timm also shared they provide a lot of mental health work to aide with behaviors to allow teachers to focus on academics. The big focus is to ensure that every student is next level ready, as well as providing academic and career planning support. The CESA's look forward to partnering with our district to help with the success of our students.

The Monthly Donations List was presented to the Board consisting of two donations; one from the Green Bay Packers and one from Lean on Me Lakeshore. No action from the Board was necessary as the donations were within the parameters of district policy. The Board thanked the donors for their contribution to our district.

Superintendent Feil shared a District Activity Update including welcoming new teachers with New Educator Week training and activities. Fall Sports are in full swing and we were able to celebrate a Ships win against Appleton West on our first football game. This week we welcomed back all staff and witnessed excitement with the SFA training that was taking place. The Jefferson Elementary Playground project is completed and will be revealed next week Wednesday. Board members are invited to attend. Mr. Feil also shared that he had a conversation with a 1975 Lincoln alumni who has shown a great interest in the Lincoln Tower and the possibilities of restoring it.

Director Erdmann presented the out of state travel request for the newly hired Energy Specialist, Jim Hapeman. Mr. Hapeman will attend the Cenergistic Energy Training in Dallas, TX. A motion was made by Chris Able, seconded by Ketty Trask and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the out of state travel request.

A motion was made by Matthew Phipps, seconded by Biff Hansen and unanimously carried (7-0) to approve the annual Depositories for District Funds as presented. Director Erdman stated our primary banking is with BankFirst National.

The recognition of the District's Board Attorney Services was next presented. The District currently is utilizing the services of Attorneys James Macy and William Fischer with vonBriesen Attorneys at Law and Attorney Mary Gerbig with Buelow Vetter.

Remarks from the Board President included Ms. Soeldner asking Board Members if they which school they would like to be assigned to as the Board Building Liaison. The school building assignments are as follows: Franklin Elementary - Board Member Phipps, Jackson Elementary - Board Member Hansen, Jefferson Elementary - Board Member Vlastlica, Madison Elementary - Board Member Able, Monroe Elementary - Board Member Spaulding, Riverview Elementary - Board Member Soeldner, Washington Middle School - Board Member Spaulding, Wilson Middle School - Board Member Trask, Lincoln High School - Board Member Hansen, and McKinley Academy/Stangel Learning Community - Board Member Soeldner. Board President Soeldner also asked if any Board members are interested in attending the WASB State Education Convention in January to let Board Secretary Laurie Braun know. Board member Trask stated he will attend.

Future meeting dates include the next Board meeting is scheduled for September 12th at 6:00 p.m. Board members are also invited to the Welcome Back for All Staff next Tuesday, August 29th at 2:00 p.m. and Board members are invited to the Jefferson Playground reveal August 30th at 3:45 p.m. A brief update with the Assistant Superintendent Jame McCall. Mr. Feil stated we have a plan in place along with the SFA Coordinators and the Director Team to move forward in the absence of Ms. McCall. Superintendent Feil also mentioned that we will need to call a special meeting possibly next week to discuss the district budget. This special meeting will need to happen before our next Board meeting.


Continuation of the Strategic Plan and Review Session commenced. Board President Soeldner shared information from an exercise regarding who makes the determination of certain district roles and recommendations. The responses to the questions really varied which illustrates how differently we view the roles between the Board and the Superintendent. The reason for this discussion was to acknowledge the interaction between the Board and the Superintendent and the importance of having directives and parameters to ensure the Board and Superintendent are on the same page. This will help establish what we want for our governance model. Board President Soeldner proposed that the Executive Committee meet and put together a recommendation to the Board of the guidelines that the Board has set for the

Superintendent. The Board held significant discussion surrounding the work the previous model did at the committee level, what worked and what didn't work. Some Board members shared their view on not going back to silo committees and others shared that a lot of the work that needs to get done can be done more efficiently in a committee setting vs. a Committee of the Whole. It was also stated that the bylaws and policies clearly state what the roles are and is clarified by the State Statutes. The budget also provides a guideline of where the money is being spent, this is an overarching parameter that the Superintendent cannot spend district funds unless it is in the budget. Board President Soeldner stated that the past committees were not Board driven and that is why they did not work. Board member Hansen stated that if the past committees weren't working, it was not the committee system but the people who were on the committee and where the direction was coming from. Board President Soeldner asked the Board if we should reach out to CESA or WASB to help design a model that would work best for our district. Board President Soeldner suggested moving towards a Committee of the Whole model because it offers everyone to get the same information at the same time and discuss. We could incorporate this in the second meeting of the month, we would deliberate on the items and then bring those items forward to the full Board to vote on. Board member Hansen stated that committees offer a way for information to be shared and any questions answered before bringing it to the full Board, reminding the Board that any Board member can attend committee meetings and be part of the discussion. Committees also allow for Board members to share their strengths in a specific committee. After lengthy discussion Board President Soeldner offered provide a presentation of different committee and governance models at the next meeting. The Board could review the options, deliberate and potentially make a decision on what model we would like to adopt. Board members agreed to this plan.

Board President Soeldner next shared that Superintendent Feil would like to make a recommendation to have a Community Engagement group to discuss controversial issues. Superintendent Feil asked if we want to wait until things are in the headlines or do we want to be proactive. Superintendent Feil would like to open up the concept due to having concerns of what certain groups are promoting in the community. Board members discussed the access students have to inappropriate information on district chromebooks. Mr. Feil also shared the significant focus on social and emotional learning rather than academics. The Board also addressed the directive being discussed of allowing transgender students to participate in sports. Board President Soeldner stated that WIAA has a policy addressing this and as a district we would need to be in compliance with the WIAA policy or we would not be allowed to compete. Board member Hansen stated as a district we can work on educating parents regarding the inappropriate use of chromebooks, but we need to welcome every kid as diverse as they are, include them in as much as we can, and focus on educating our kids. Superintendent agreed he will inform the Board if there is an issue out there and if needed it can be added to the agenda for further Board discussion.

On motion from Biff Hansen, seconded by Matthew Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted (7-0) to adjourn the August 22, 2023, Special Board of Education Meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Braun, Board Executive Assistant



Board President, Stacey E. Soeldner