

**SALINE AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

MINUTES

**Union School Boardroom
Tuesday, November 10, 2009
6:30 PM**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** of the Regular Meeting of November 10, 2009, at 6:30 PM by Board President Friese.

Board Members Present

Trustee Cattell, Board President Friese, Trustee Hoeft, Student Representative Hogikyan, Trustee Hynek, Secretary Lesch, Vice President Medley, and Trustee Slawson

Central Administration Present

Superintendent Graden, Assistant Superintendent Laatsch, and Assistant Superintendent Wall

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ITEMS OF INTEREST AND INQUIRY**

A. Public

Williams Soisson respectfully requested that the Board review the policy regarding the use of the school telephone system to contact the entire district. When he gave the information to the school it was for emergency purposes and he felt that it was being used for political purposes.

B. Administration

Superintendent Graden received an update from the Washtenaw County Road Commission regarding their commitment to keeping the main roads open. They will be approving overtime for main road clearing, however, for subdivision and unpaved roads they will not be clearing on overtime unless there are four or more inches of snow, or an ice/blowing/drifted weather issue.

We are continuing to monitor our attendance rates – today we were at 6.5% absent – which is inside our typical range.

Congratulations to Hema Karunakaram on her semifinal performance on the Jeopardy Teen Challenge.

Superintendent Graden passed around a poster from the Michigan Art Education Association celebrating their 60th anniversary. Work from three Saline students is highlighted.

Assistant Superintendent Laatsch spent time this past week observing writing lessons at Pleasant Ridge and Woodland Meadows. There are a lot of great things going on the classrooms at our buildings.

A meeting was held recently regarding the best practice in reading instruction to promote K-8 reading alignment. There were approximately 40 teachers K-8 in attendance.

Assistant Superintendent Wall, Board President Friese, Vice President Medley, and SEA President Heim were in Lansing today meeting with our representatives in order to get a better handle on the budget cuts and what the impact will be on our District.

C. Board of Education Members

Secretary Lesch congratulated Coach Mike Smith and the entire Varsity Girls Cross Country Team on their State Championship.

Student Representative Hogikyan congratulated the Women's Swim and Dive Team on their recent SEC Championship.

Student Representative Hogikyan also said that many students were beginning to receive acceptance letters from colleges. She stated that the good news speaks to the quality of education provided here at Saline.

The National Honor Society recently held a blood drive, which received a lot of student participation. On December 5th, a canned food drive is planned.

Trustee Slawson spoke about the recent defeat of the WISD Enhancement Millage. She stated that 61% of the people in Saline voted no and have sent the message that the school district should live within their means and still provide the best education product for our students. The people of Saline were the second highest group that came out to vote.

Board President Friese announced that he and his wife would be hosting a "Christmas in the Barn" fundraiser on December 5th from 11:00 AM until 4:00 PM in their home. All proceeds will go to the Foundation for Saline Area Schools. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Congratulations to Mr. Scott Theisen, Saline Varsity Baseball Coach, who was recently named the Baseball Coach of the Year by the Michigan High School Coaches Association. The MHSCA honor was awarded to him based upon the votes of his peer coaches from across the State of Michigan. Under Coach Theisen's leadership our Varsity Baseball Team has finished the last two years as the Division 1 State Runner-Up. Coach Theisen has also been nominated for the National Baseball Coach

of the Year and is a member of the Michigan High School Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Board President Friese also spoke about the SOS group that met in Lansing today. Approximately 1,500 people showed up at the Capital Building. Hopefully the Legislature will figure out how to fund education in the State of Michigan.

4. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Item 7F in the Consent Agenda should read that Sarah Williams is being hired as a part time Paraeducator.

MOTION made by Vice President Medley, seconded by Secretary Lesch to approve the agenda as revised.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED**

5. SCHEDULED REPORTS/PUBLIC STATEMENTS

A. There were no scheduled reports at this meeting.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Enhancement Millage Review – Superintendent Graden

Superintendent Graden thanked everyone that voted last Tuesday. As everyone knows the millage did not pass. There will be a meeting at the ISD on Friday with all of the area superintendents.

Trustee Slawson indicated that she is getting a number of phone calls from concerned citizens regarding the millage.

Board President Friese stated that the projected allowance is a \$375 - \$600 reduction per student. Trustee Slawson stated that all budget items need to be reviewed. Proposal A doesn't work anymore and we shouldn't presume to think that Lansing is going to fix that because they are not going to. She stated that we have to protect our fund balance. The last thing she wants is for people to lose their jobs but we must remember that the students are the most important things. We do not have an infinite pot of money – this is it. The voters spoke incredibly loud saying to live within your means and do what's best for kids. She also stated that we would get through this and be a better school district.

Vice President Medley indicated that we would not be the same school district.

B. MASB Conferences – Board President Friese

Board President Friese indicated that in the past Board Members have been able to take classes with the MASB at a cost to the District. All members have completed the

CBA 101 New Board Member Course, so he felt that the Board should forgo taking any more classes at a cost to the District until it is in better shape.

Vice President Medley stated that this is a symbolic move and cuts will be necessary in the future so he felt the Board should take the first one.

Trustee Slawson stated that 91% of expenditures come from people. The ESP just gave up a \$0.5 million. She agrees to do this but felt that the Board needs to remember that they are a very tiny part of the budget.

Secretary Lesch indicated that every little bit helps.

Trustee Cattell brought up the subject that perhaps the Board should look at not being paid for attending Board Meetings in the future.

Trustee Slawson felt that she did not require the Board issued laptop and returned it to Superintendent Graden.

Trustee Hoeft said that this is the time to gather information, listen to staff, and make educated decisions on where to go from here.

Trustee Cattell agreed that we need to take in all the information and figure out the best possible solutions for the District.

C. Union Facility Review Committee – Superintendent Graden

Superintendent Graden reported that they will still be holding the November 12th meeting and begin discussions about the bare bones cost to relocate to Liberty. He will report back at the next Board Meeting.

Trustee Slawson asked if sinking funds could be used to move the staff to Liberty and Assistant Superintendent Wall indicated that the physical move could not use sinking fund dollars.

D. Strategic Planning – Superintendent Graden

Superintendent Graden made the recommendation to hold off on the Strategic Planning Process until January after the financial issue has been addressed. He indicated that he wished there had already been a plan in place prior to these financial issues.

Trustee Slawson talked about the importance of setting goals and how she felt that a disservice was being done to the Superintendent by not setting them. Board President Friese stated that the Superintendent has a policy manual and administrative regulations to follow and that is what his appraisal will be based upon.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION made by Trustee Slawson, seconded by Trustee Cattell to authorize the following items as part of the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval** of the Regular Board of Education Minutes of October 27, 2009.
- B. Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of November 10, 2009, in the amount of \$439,120.34.
- C. Receive and File** letter from Executive Director of Human Resources Callan to hire Daniel Cameron as a Paraeducator on Step 1 of the ESP Contract effective November 2, 2009.
- D. Receive and File** letter from Executive Director of Human Resources Callan to hire Lisa Keene as a Custodian on Step 1 of the ESP Contract effective October 26, 2009.
- E. Receive and File** letter from Executive Director of Human Resources Callan to hire Jeffrey Rust as a Bus Monitor on Step 1 of the ESP Contract effective September 30, 2009.
- F. Receive and File** letter from Executive Director of Human Resources Callan to hire Sarah Williams as a Part time Paraeducator on Step 1 of the ESP Contract effective October 7, 2009.
- G. Receive and File** memorandums from Superintendent Graden approving field trip requests for:

- Close Up Trip to Washington, DC (February 7-12, 2010)

Ayes - All Present – **MOTION CARRIED**

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. David Rhoads, City Council Member and Saline resident stated that the City is going through the same thing as the schools are right now. He has a lot of confidence in the people in the room tonight as well as the staff of Saline Area Schools. The current system of funding education simply doesn't work. He called upon the community to consider donating funds to help educate our students. He currently has no students in the District but presented the Board with two checks (one from his local company and one personal check) for \$292.00 each which is the amount of predicted shortfall for each student this year.

Gretchen Waters spoke about serving on the Long Range Planning Commission and said that they found that you must look at the 91% of the budget, which is compensation and fringe benefits for help. You can't always look to the other 9% of the budget to solve the entire problem. She encouraged the District to look at renegotiating with the labor unions. She spoke of instances in her current position where labor unions have asked to

have their contracts reopened and renegotiated up to 20% pay cuts in an attempt to help keep jobs.

John Crzyka spoke about Saline having some of the best sports programs in the county. He indicated that perhaps the District could look into raising the rates for Pay to Participate in the athletic programs as a way to help offset the costs. He also asked the unions to please help the District out by reopening contracts. He indicated that many of the parents of students voted for the millage and came to Saline for a purpose or reason. He indicated he would do whatever he can to support the District.

Paul Borger extended an invitation to support the Board as they look at everything in controlling costs. He stated that contracts are made and can be broken. He encouraged the Board to allow the community to come in and be more active with the approval/suggestion process. He is able to volunteer to help.

Ian Magenta, High School Student and Golden Sting Reporter, stated that there was a lot of concern among the students at the High School and rumors were beginning to start. He asked for a statement for the student newspaper. Superintendent Graden agreed to speak with him during the break.

9. CLOSED SESSION

MOTION made by Secretary Lesch, seconded by Vice President Medley to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 7:20 PM, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at 8:50 PM., for the purpose of collective bargaining.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Trustee Cattell – Aye
Board President Friese - Aye
Trustee Hoeft – Aye
Trustee Hynck - Aye
Secretary Lesch – Aye
Vice President Medley – Aye
Trustee Slawson - Aye

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED**

RE-ENTER OPEN SESSION at 9:12 PM.

Superintendent Graden announced that there would be an Expulsion Hearing on Monday, November 16th at 6:00 PM in the Union School Board Room.

MOTION made by Trustee Slawson, seconded by Trustee Hoeft to direct Superintendent Graden to contact each board recognized bargaining unit to request the current contracts be opened for review of wages and benefits to seek savings.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED**

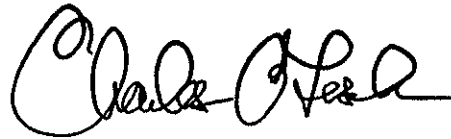
10. ITEMS SCHEDULED ON NEXT AGENDA

- A. **Set Retreat Date** – Board President Friese
- B. **Board Policy Committee Report** – Trustee Hynek
- C. **Next Meeting Held at Liberty School in the Media Center**

11. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of November 10, 2009, at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chuck Lesch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chuck Lesch, Secretary

By: Patti Waltz, Recording Secretary