

**SALINE AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

MINUTES

**Liberty Media Center
Tuesday, December 8, 2009
6:30 PM**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** of the Regular Meeting of December 8, 2009, at 6:30 PM by Board President Friese.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ITEMS OF INTEREST AND INQUIRY**

A. Public

No public comment at this time.

B. Administration

Superintendent Graden reported that work has begun on the basics for the 2010-2011-school calendar. The plan is to release the major vacation/break dates in late December or early January. We are also monitoring the current layout of conferences, exams, etc. and are gathering feedback.

Thank you to Board President Friese, his wife Diane, and their friends for putting on a great fundraiser for the Foundation for Saline Area Schools this past weekend. They raised over \$500 and presented a check at the Foundation meeting this morning.

Superintendent Graden wrapped up his lunch tour at Woodland Meadows today. It began with Pleasant Ridge on November 16th. It was a nice change to sit with each building and discuss the budget situation face-to-face.

It is the season where we begin to monitor the weather conditions closely. We are also working with local officials to try to make sure roads near the schools are among the first to get plowed after fresh snowfall.

Ms. Staci Nazareth and the Middle School Library are proud to announce their very own online Amazon bookstore, customized with Middle School aged readers in mind. They are constantly adding to the categories to make shopping for books easier. A portion of the proceeds goes toward the support of the Middle School library. This holiday season; give the gift of reading that gives twice!

There will be another Community Conversation held on Monday, December 14th at Liberty School beginning at 6:30 PM.

Assistant Superintendent Laatsch reported that plans are underway to look at a countywide International Baccalaureate School. A survey was conducted of approximately 728 parents recently. Of the 117 Saline respondents 49% indicated that they were very interested and would consider sending their child to a program like this. In addition, 39% stated they were interested but would need more information.

Even in these difficult financial times, the county is collectively looking at consolidating costs to offer such a school as we are all trying to still expand our opportunities for our students.

Assistant Superintendent Laatsch recently visited Westwood Cyber School. Glen Taylor, a Saline resident, runs this school that looks to help struggling kids. Some of the ways that they work with technology in conjunction with teacher mentors and content area experts is very interesting and effective.

Each school will have an updated school improvement plan posted on our building website at the end of the year. In addition, we are developing a district improvement plan, which will be developed as soon as possible.

In the near future all data test results (NWEA, MEAP, MME, ACT, and AP) will be online on the instructional services website.

National African American Parent Involvement Day will be held on February 8, 2010. Assistant Superintendent Laatsch has information posted on his blog about this event as well as sending out information to the District email and building loops to encourage participation.

Assistant Superintendent Laatsch also spoke about the great work he witnessed in the classrooms of Ms. Robke, Ms. Widman, Ms. Harsh, and Ms. Stripp.

Assistant Superintendent Wall thanked the custodians, grounds, and HVAC staff for the great job in keeping up with the service requests. Since July 1, 2009, they have received 1,178 work order requests and have completed 1,153 of them.

The pool heater at the High School complex failed early last week. We have been diligently working on fixing the problem and upgrading the efficiency at the same time. We worked with Alltech and a local engineering firm to find a good economic solution with a concern about on-going utility usage. The old pool heater was 70% efficient around \$42,000 original price \$30,000-\$45,000 in operation, 1m BTU heater. The new heater is \$25,000-\$30,000 is 97% efficient, with \$20,000-\$24,000 in operation costs. Funding for this purchase is from the pool allocation in the CARES millage.

The athletic stadium and baseball lots are closed for the winter; this helps save money by not snow plowing the lots during the winter. Also, we will be closing Henne Field for the winter for the same reason.

C. Board of Education Members

Congratulations and thank you to the High School students in Fiddler's Restring for their excellent Holiday Hometown Concert that supported the local Toys for Tots Program.

Board President Friese thanked the group of Board Members, Administrators, Teachers, and Community Members who teamed up with the Saline High School Dance Team and danced their way to raising over \$2,000 for Ele's Place at last Friday's Dancing through the Decades event. Trustee Hynek also thanked Dance Team Coach, Jeanette Marks, for all her help in coordinating and teaching the dances.

4. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED**

5. SCHEDULED REPORTS/PUBLIC STATEMENTS

A. No scheduled reports

6. ACTION ITEMS

A. **MOTION** made by Trustee Slawson, seconded by Trustee Hynek **that pursuant to the provisions of MCL 168.642(4), the Board of Education does hereby determine to conduct its regular school election at the November election annually, commencing with the year 2010.**

Assistant Superintendent Wall reviewed the information that was presented at the last Board Meeting with reference to moving the election to November.

Trustee Slawson said that she received a telephone call from someone wondering if the Board was just trying to extend their own terms by changing to the November election schedule.

Superintendent Graden indicated that this was the proper procedure according to our school attorney, Thrun. The Board as a whole can change the cycle; therefore, existing Board Members who have been elected will continue to serve through that cycle. He also indicated that many districts are considering this move and if for some reason Ann Arbor moved and we did not we could potentially bear the burden of the whole cost of elections alone.

Trustee Hoefft expressed concern that we may lose our marketing power if we switched to the November ballot when all other groups/organizations are on the ballot as well. Generally in the May election, we are only voting on school related issues and they are less likely to become lost on the ballot.

Superintendent Graden indicated that MASB has taken a stance that they feel that Districts should not move. They feel it is easier to generate communication points in May. In the November elections with the presidential cycle it will make it more difficult.

Ayes – Trustee Cattell, Board President Friese, Trustee Hynek, Secretary Lesch, Vice President Medley, and Trustee Slawson.

Nays - Trustee Hoefl

MOTION CARRIED

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Non-staff Budget Reductions – Superintendent Graden

Superintendent Graden gave a presentation on the proposed midyear non-staffing budget reductions.

Trustee Slawson spoke about a school in Wyoming, Michigan where the staff started a petition to give back raise, donate to benefits, etc. through a payroll deduction. She wondered if Saline would entertain such a petition. Superintendent Graden indicated that they have not approached the bargaining units about this and the bargaining units have not approached them.

Trustee Slawson stated that this has now become a political issue in Lansing and that this problem is not going to be addressed in an election year. Things will not change without a shared sacrifice by all parties – it won't save jobs otherwise.

Superintendent Graden then reviewed the issues for the 2010-2011 school year. He indicated that he has been asked about school configurations quite frequently. He will be speaking with the Board to form a committee to look in-depth at possible changes to school configurations for next year. Rough estimates indicate that closing a building could save between \$500,000 - \$600,000 next year.

Trustee Slawson asked if any other bargaining groups beside the SEA don't pay any premiums for health care. Superintendent Graden indicated that currently SASAA, SASMA, and the non-affiliates do not pay for health care although talks have begun to provide some cost.

Trustee Hynek asked about the opener for health care in the current contract and wondered whether both sides have to agree? Assistant Superintendent Wall will be looking at this to determine which committee group this would fall under.

They are currently looking at other Districts in county to see what they are doing with regard to Pay to Participate options.

There is also a proposal for paying an extracurricular fee that will be charged for groups like Student Council, French Club, Quiz Bowl, etc.

Trustee Slawson asked about School of Choice and whether Superintendent Graden had heard anything from Ann Arbor about the possibility of their District opening up to Schools of Choice. Superintendent Graden indicated that he has not heard from Ann Arbor but if they open up to Schools of Choice we will need to look at this issue further. The grade configuration issue must be resolved first and then we can look at School of Choice issues.

A discussion was then held on the Race to the Top funding opportunities that are being proposed by the federal government. Trustee Slawson indicated that if it is good for kids and brings us in into the 21st century that is a good thing. Board President Friese stated that the opportunity to get those funds is very limited.

Trustee Slawson stated that in the Education Digest the President of the MEA stated that they would not support lessening the requirements to become a teacher but they also wouldn't fight it. We need to start the discussions now – we need a pay/benefit structure that doesn't come out of the 1950s.

Losing any of the teachers would be a crime because this issue can be solved. Saline has always been insulated and isolated from these issues before. They have had a great tradition of site based sharing and she is really disappointed that just because the Washtenaw Education Association says one thing, Saline goes along with it. Saline is different – it is a great place to live and raise kids. Her neighbors are being foreclosed on – they can't afford to live here anymore and that is why you are losing students.

B. Retreat Agenda – Superintendent Graden

Superintendent Graden went over the agenda for the Board Retreat, which will be held on Thursday, December 10th at 6:00 PM in the Union School Boardroom.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION made by Vice President Medley, seconded by Trustee Hynek to authorize the following items as part of the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval** of the Regular Board of Education Minutes of November 24, 2009.
- B. Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of December 8, 2009, in the amount of \$296,267.91.
- C. Receive and File** letter from Community Education Director Puffer accepting the resignation of Sarah Andrews as a Pooh Corner Co-Instructor effective November 16, 2009.
- D. Receive and File** letter from Executive Director Callan to hire Karen Lyos as a Food Service Assistant on Step 1 of the ESP Contract effective October 19, 2009.

E. Receive and File letter from Executive Director Callan to hire Jonathan Shirilla as a Paraeducator on Step 1 of the ESP Contract effective November 2, 2009.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED**

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Cecelia Fellin applauded Trustee Slawson for her comments and wanted to know what the future plans are for working through the contract with the SEA. Just because the Washtenaw Education Association voted not to reopen the contracts that shouldn't be the end of it.

Superintendent Graden stated that while the groups don't negotiate in public they have been meeting two or three times a week regarding various issues and the impacts and what might they want to do to work together.

Ms. Fellin then stated that the Board should consider how the students would react to them playing the "shell game". Although it is an opportunity for kids to learn how to be flexible – they really should consider the effect on the children.

10. ITEMS SCHEDULED ON NEXT AGENDA

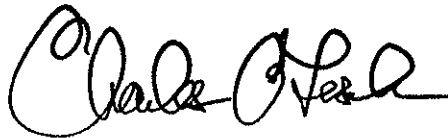
A. Budget Amendment – Assistant Superintendent Wall

B. Closed Session – Collective Bargaining – Superintendent Graden

12. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of December 8, 2009, at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Chuck Lesch, Secretary

By: Patti Waltz, Recording Secretary