

# Board of Education Meeting

Liberty School Board Room

November 14, 2023 at 6:30 PM



## MINUTES

### Mission

*We, the Saline Area Schools, will equip all students with the knowledge, technological proficiency, and personal skills necessary to succeed in an increasingly complex society. We expect that our students, staff, and the Saline Community will share in these responsibilities.*

### OPENING

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Education was called to order at 6:30 pm by President Michael McVey.

**Board Members Present:** Susan Estep, Brad Gerbe, Lauren Gold, Michael McVey, Jennifer Miller and Jennifer Steben.

**Board Members Absent:** Tim Austin

**Central Administration Present:** Superintendent Laatsch, Assistant Superintendents Ellis & Owsley, Executive Directors Clary, Davis and Martin

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### 3. SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOGNITION

*Saline High School Marching Band  
SHS Girls Varsity Field Hockey Team*

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

#### STUDENTS

**Bella Rodriguez, Student** - spoke regarding racism

**Aliyah Corrao-Taylor, Student** - spoke regarding racism

**OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS** - None

**EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Theresa Stager, Principal  
Saline High School*

Highlighted point of pride at Saline High School

5. **RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMENT**

<b>AGENDA</b>
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6. **REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Trustee Gerbe asked that the HR Report listed as part of the Consent Agenda be pulled from the consent agenda so that a discussion can be facilitated before approving.

**MOTION** made by Secretary Miller, support by Vice President Steben **to approve the agenda as revised.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

7. **STUDENT SHOWCASE**  
**Woodland Meadows Safeties & Student Leadership**

*Advisor: Emily Petrous & Matt Pelletier*

Woodland Meadows students who participate in the “Safeties and Student leadership” presented to the board about their program and how they support the students at Woodland Meadows. To be part of the leadership or safeties teams, students must complete an application process, there are teacher/adult recommendations and students must demonstrate good attendance and positive behaviors. The students shared some of the things they do throughout the year.

8. **SCHEDULED REPORT**

a. **Audit Report**

*Presenter: Plante Moran, Jeff Higgins, Partner*

Summary presentation of the audit was presented by the district’s independent auditing firm, Plante Moran. Based on the results, they were able to provide the highest level of assurance on the district’s financial statements. Very appreciative to the Finance Office for the work they did to make the audit process go so smoothly.

b. **Bond Update**

*Presenter: Rex Clary, Director of Operations*

Ameresco and Lecole Planners were included to help present updates on Bond projects, specifically regarding the installation of solar integrated roofing. Ameriesco is a leading cleantech integrator and renewable energy asset developer and operator. They are excited to be working with Lecole Planners to integrate solar into the Saline Area School district. They are proposing a roof integrated project. The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act allows for direct pay option for Investment Tax Credit for public k-12 schools. Ameresco performed a Solar Proof of Concept to utilize the new ITC. The bidding will take place in Nov/Dec 2023 with Board approvals being sought shortly thereafter. Final engineering and continual progress towards the summer of 2024 with 2025 being targeted as initial mobilization.

**9. ACTION ITEMS**

- A. MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Trustee Estep **to approve the re-appointment of Stephanie Gray and Lori Byron to the Saline District Library Board for a two-year term beginning December 1, 2023 as recommended by Superintendent Laatsch. Both Gray and Bryon currently serve on the SDL Board and their term expires November 30, 2023.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

- B. MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Secretary Miller **to approve the purchase of (2) Model Year 2024 77 Passenger Schools Buses in the amount of \$318,792.00 and (1) 2024 Lift Bus at a cost of \$186,554.00 for a total purchase of \$505,346.00 as recommended by Rex Clary, Director of Operations.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

- C. MOTION** made by Treasurer Gerbe, support Trustee Estep **to approve the recommendation of A.R. Brouwer to award contracts in the total amount of \$1,200,038.00 for Bid Pack #4 for the new Operations Center as submitted by Rex Clary, Director of Operations.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

- D. MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Secretary Miller **to approve the purchase of 40 Epson L530U Projectors in the amount of \$80,600 as submitted by Jay Grossman, Director of Technology.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

- E. MOTION** made by Treasurer Gerbe, support Secretary Miller **to adopt the Annual Summer Tax Resolution as submitted by Assistant Superintendent Miranda Owsley.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

10. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

(B. Added Discussion Item pulled from consent agenda, Human Resources Report)

A. **Board Finance Committee Meeting Updates**

*Chair, Brad Gerbe*

Met prior to the Board Meeting. Had an overview of the Audit report with stakeholders at Plante Moran. Also a discussion regarding the fund balance. As we move into discussion regarding Strategic Planning, it's important to keep the fund balance in mind. Our credit rating is positively impacted by our fund balance. The finance committee will not meet again until 2024.

B. **Human Resources Report**

*Facilitator, Brad Gerbe*

Did not ask for the report to be pulled to question or consider a hire but to have discussion on the process of hiring and if the board were to have concerns.

10. **ADMINISTRATION / BOARD UPDATES**

**Superintendent Laatsch:** Recently attended the Black Student Union meeting at Saline High School. Was encouraged that the majority of students do feel supported by teachers and administration. But there needs to be more support regarding the language regarding Hate Speech.

**Student Representatives Clark & Iadipaolo:** Caroline thanked Superintendent Laatsch for the Field Hockey recognition. Will be attending the next BSU meeting. Mateo is getting ready to leave for the Capstone service learning trip to Ecuador.

**Treasurer Gerbe:** In light of recent social media posts and comments from BSU, I do not condone racist behavior and support strong consequences regarding that sort of behavior. Attended a meeting regarding safe gun storage. I do support these efforts. Firearms are the leading cause of death of children. Happy Thanksgiving to all.

**Secretary Miller:** Policy Committee is looking at possible policies/resolutions around safe gun storage. This will be discussed at an upcoming Policy Committee Mtg. Acknowledge Woodland Meadows Veteran's Day activities. Good luck to all students participating in the end of trimester finals. Participated in the recent BOE bldg tours. Regarding racist vandalism, I appreciate hearing from the students this evening and encourage you to send your thoughts and ideas to the Board for consideration. Appreciate the work of the DEI AC and all stakeholders regarding the Hate Speech Statement and the work that needs to be done to strengthen the statement as well as operationalizing it. Congratulations to Caroline on receiving the Erica Reilly Scholarship for her performance on the SHS Field Hockey team.

**Vice President Steben:** Appreciate the Student Recognition portion of the agenda. Attended FSAS meeting. We are moving through the grant process currently. Nice to see requests coming from new staff and courses. #givingtuesday is a wonderful way to support the FSAS.

**Trustee Estep:** Acknowledging the needed ongoing work regarding racism, bullying and harassment. Happy that the Hate Speech statement is going back to the DEI AC for additional work. Recently attended the MASB conference. Lots of great sessions and excited to share some resources. As part of the MASB ALC conference, also attended the Resolutions & Bylaws committee meeting. Particularly pleased to have worked on and passed an amendment to the Curriculum & Standards which included a statement that “School Boards should not be required by state law to provide students alternative curriculum materials or allow students to “opt out” of classes or classroom exercises in core curriculum courses”. Also supported a revision to the Civil Rights resolutions as MASB strongly supports the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act in Michigan and the protection it affords individuals from discrimination based on religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, height, weight, familial status and marital status.

**Trustee Gold:** Regarding the racism that takes place everyday in our country, everyone should stop and think about why it happens and how we can make sure it doesn’t happen again. It should be a sentinel event. Treat it with the same alarm as physical harm and everyone should treat it that way. We have a moral responsibility to treat it as the outrage it is.

**President McVey:** The CEO, Richard Culatta CEO of ISTE/ASCD visited our district on November 2nd. Very impressed with our school district, not just in technology but overall very impressed with what he saw.

**11. CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION** made by Treasurer Gerbe, support Vice President Steben to **authorize the Consent Agenda as printed:**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

- A. **Approval** of the Board of Education Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2023
- B. **Approval** of the Board Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2023
- C. **Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of November 14, 2023, in the amount of \$2,697,461.69
- D. **Approval of Payment** of Bond Series III Accounts Payable of November 14, 2023, in the amount of \$498,265.65
- E. **Approval of Payment** of 2023 Bond Fund Series I Accounts Payable of November 14, 2023, in the amount of \$866,337.12
- F. **Approval** of 2024 Board of Education Regular Meeting Calendar (move to discussion item)

- G. **Receive and File** Human Resources Report
- H. **Approval** of the following Policy Updates as recommended by Neola, Inc. and supported by the Board Policy Committee:

Po2370.01	Online/Blended Learning Program
Po7450.03	Student Technology Acceptable Use and Safety
Po8305	Information Security (Technical Correction)
Po8531	Free and Reduced-Price Meals

<b>CLOSING</b>
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12. **ITEMS SCHEDULED ON NEXT AGENDA**

- A. Teaching & Learning Update - Continuous Improvement
- B. Closed session - Superintendent's Final Evaluation

13. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**STUDENTS**

**OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS**

**Changming Fan, Community Member** - Spoke regarding Climate Control

14. **NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Education Meeting will be held on December 12, 2023, at 6:30 PM.

15. **CLOSED SESSION**

**MOTION** made by Secretary Miller, support Trustee Gold **to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 9:30 PM, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at 9:45 PM, for the purpose of Collective Bargaining 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act. Under Section 8(c) a simple majority vote is sufficient to enter into a closed session.**

**Ayes - All Present - MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

16. **RE-ENTER OPEN SESSION**

**MOTION** without objection **to re-enter Open Session of the Regular Board of Education Meeting at 9:45 PM.**

**MOTION** made by Secretary Miller, support Vice President Steben **to approve on this day, November 14, 2023 the letter of agreement between Saline Area Schools and the Saline Area Schools Administrative Association (SASAA)**

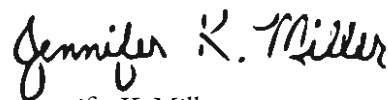
Ayes - All Present- **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

17. **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Estep, support Treasurer Gerbe **to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of November 14, 2023, at 9:48 PM.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer K. Miller  
Board Secretary

*Recorded by: Betty Jahnke*