



VI. A.

**Grosse Pointe Board of Education
Minutes of the Regular Session of November 14, 2016
Mason Elementary - Gym
1640 Vernier, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236**

MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Roeske called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Board members present: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Absent: Trustee Gafa

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mason students

Also Present: Superintendent Niehaus, Deputy Superintendents Lisa Abbey and Jon Dean

Guest: Laura Claeys, Plante Moran

Vice President Roeske read a message from the Board President Mrs. Gafa, who is heartbroken because she could not attend the evening's event to celebrate the National Blue Ribbon Schools designation for Mason Elementary.

II. APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER 14, 2016

It was Moved by: Trustee Pangborn

Supported by: Trustee Weertz

THAT the Board Approve the Agenda for November 14, 2016.

Ayes: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Absent: Trustee Gafa

Motion carried by a 6 – 0 vote.

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Mason Blue Ribbon Recognition

It is with great honor Dr. Niehaus officially declares Mason Elementary, a National Blue Ribbon School for 2016. Dr. Niehaus, Dr. Middlekauff, Karen LaBarge and Ann Marie MacGillis had the opportunity to attend the ceremonies in Washington DC for the 329 schools across the United States that received the National Blue Ribbon certification.

B. Career and Technical Education (CTE) in GP Update – Brian Stackpoole and Michelle Davis

Brian Stackpoole and Michelle Davis each gave a presentation on the update of the CTE program. This program helps to engage the disengaged student and helps to reduce the dropout rate. It provides students the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners. Teachers must have the CTE certification. Trustee Ismail asked how to grow the program. They stated that the schools support the program and funding is ready and can only be used for the CTE Program. Mrs. Pangborn stated she is glad we are making the commitment at both North and South High School. Trustee Roeske thanked Brian and Michelle; he thinks this is a great program.

C. 21st Century Classroom Update – Keith Howell and various Teachers

Mr. Howell reminded people that we have three 21st Century classrooms in the District, Maire, Mason and Kerby that were developed this year. It was important to connect these classrooms to our Strategic Plan.

Sarah Neely, 21st Century teacher at Maire said that the students are saying great things with a lot of positive comments. Parents feel their students are engaged in the classroom.

Pat Brown, teacher at Kerby, says the seating is completely compatible and adaptable for the students. The students take extra care in keeping the classroom clean. The furniture moves quickly, speakers and smart tv's are incredible and he feels that they have reduced the amount of paper in his classroom.

Lisa Rheume from Mason says the classroom is going well. They just received the last of their furniture and are figuring out what works best for them.

These classrooms are in compliance with OCR. Mr. Howell stated that the teachers are doing a wonderful job and they are ready to take the students to the next level. It is the hope to move this into secondary education.

Trustee Summerfield thanked the teachers and said he feels they are doing a great job. Trustee Roeske enjoyed his tour this evening and the students were excited to show off the classroom.

Dr. Niehaus interrupted the meeting to introduce Cory Wolford, Regional Director for Senator Gary Peters to present to the Principal of Mason Elementary, Roy Bishop, a certificate from the US Department of Education congratulating Mason Elementary on the National Blue Ribbon designation.

D. Preschool and Young 5's Update – Keith Howell and various Teachers

Last year an Advisory Committee was developed to expand the Preschool and start a Young 5's program per Mr. Howell. The preschool program expanded to Ferry, Maire, Monteith and Richard. Andrea Sanders, Child Care Supervisor gave praise to Sara Meier, our Preschool Director and Jill Kloster, Assistant Preschool Director for their hard work in accomplishing so many tasks. Andrea recapped the current offerings of Early Childhood Programs that are housed in Barnes and several elementary buildings within the District. The programs have been well received by parents. Mr. Howell introduced the three teachers for the Young 5's program, Amy Zizelma, Amy Dzapu and Katy Forcillo, who spoke a little about the program. The young 5's help the student get ready developmentally for moving on to Kindergarten or First grade. Trustee Ismail asked if residents get priority? Mr. Howell explained that it is a tuition basis and once the parent signs up, their name goes into the lottery system.

E. Thomas Zaglaniczny – Facilities Director Certification with Michigan School Business Officials

Dr. Niehaus recognized Tom for receiving his Facilities Director Certification with Michigan School of Business. The process was two years to complete the training.

F. Good News Items – Mike Rennell

Mike Rennell, President of the GPEA said that most of the amazing things he was going to share have already been shared this evening. Masons teachers are a phenomenal example of what is happening in the District. This shows the commitment our staff has made with every classroom every day. He mentioned that Ferry's PTO had a fun run and raised over \$13,000. This week is American Education Week and Wednesday is National Support Personnel Day. So he would like to thank all of the support staff for all that they do.

Dr. Niehaus took this opportunity to address most people's concerns this evening. He stated to the crowd that Principal Moussa Hamka's job is not in jeopardy. My job is to coach and mentor the Building Administrators and he totally gives 100% support to the building Administration. We are human and we do make mistakes. He and Mr. Hamka met with several parents from GP South and that discussion was frank and direct to understand what Mr. Hamka was trying to do last week after the election. The students acted as messengers and the message that got home may not have been exactly what the intent started out as. For the record, Dr. Niehaus did not ask for Mr. Hamka's notes a head of time, in regard to the morning meeting. After the morning meeting, he had a conversation with Mr. Hamka and he shared with Dr.

Niehaus the notes that he read over the PA system. For the record and those that were not present when Mr. Hamka read his notes, Dr. Niehaus recited these notes.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ACTION ITEMS FOR NOVEMBER 14, 2016

No comments.

V. A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2016

It was Moved by: Trustee Weertz

Supported by: Trustee Pangborn

THAT the Regular meeting minutes of October 24, 2016 be approved as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Absent: Trustee Gafa

Motion carried by a 6 – 0 vote.

B. Approval of 21st Century Classroom Furniture, Kerby, Maire and Mason

Ms. Abbey asked the Board of Education to approve payment for the 21st Century classrooms. This had been discussed at an earlier Board meeting. A total cost for all three classrooms is \$58,358.56. Trustee Ismail clarified with Ms. Abbey that the Board is being asked to approve the purchases. Trustee Pangborn is concerned about the way this has taken place. Board received an itemized list of what was spent and done just last week. We have some severe projects that need to be done and this gets through. The community has to come to grips, this looks and sounds nice, but where is the money going to come from. This should not have been done given the deficit of our budget. Trustee Summerfield supports the idea of these prototype classrooms. We have been trying to explain 21st learning classrooms for a long time. We talked about this last spring, so it is not something new and was budgeted for. He is confident that the 21st Century Classrooms are the way of the future. Trustee Ismail asked if this was budgeted for this year or is some from last year's budget. Ms. Abbey advised that there is sufficient money in the budget for this project.

It was Moved by: Trustee Weertz

Supported by: Trustee Abke

THAT the 21st Century Classroom Furniture, Kerby, Maire and Mason be approved as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Nays: Trustee Pangborn

Absent: Trustee Gafa

Motion carried by a 5 – 1 vote.

C. Approval of Pilot Courses

1. STEM, Bots, Coding and Applications

Mrs. Bur mentioned that this was discussed at the last Board meeting. It is an EPLC and Board of Education approved course. This is a change of name from Robotics course and a change from a year long course to a semester course. Finances are covered within the curriculum textbook account.

It was Moved by: Trustee Pangborn

Supported by: Trustee Abke

THAT the STEM, Bots, Coding and Applications be approved as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Absent: Trustee Gafa

Motion carried by a 6 – 0 vote.

2. ICap Series

This is the last and final level for ICap Series. Budget for this class is \$250 per building. Textbook budget will cover. Trustee Roeske is very encouraged that this program is moving forward through the high school.

It was Moved by: Trustee Pangborn

Supported by: Trustee Abke

THAT the ICap Series be approved as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Absent: Trustee Gafa

Motion carried by a 6 – 0 vote.

D. Approval of Apple iPads – Additional Instruction Time and Interventions Grant

Ms. Abbey explained that we are able to purchase, through a grant, 67 Apple iPads and instructional software. Mr. Howell added that the grant was written last year for the 2016-17 school year, and includes training of the program. Trustee Ismail clarified that the money has been spent, used up. Mr. Howell confirmed that. Trustee Pangborn thanked Mr. Howell and let the community know that our staff does a great job with writing grants.

It was Moved by: Trustee Weertz

Supported by: Trustee Pangborn

THAT the Approval of Apple iPads – Additional Instruction Time and Interventions Grant be approved as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Absent: Trustee Gafa

Motion carried by a 6 – 0 vote.

E. Approval of Consolidation of Brownell and Pierce Wrestling Teams

Mrs. Pangborn says this is a very grueling sport and difficult as a parent to watch. She wishes that they had Middle School wrestling available years ago. Trustee Roeske mentioned that this consolidation of two teams is because of low participation at both schools and allows these students to participate. He also noted that Parcels is not included, as they have a sufficient number of interested students.

It was Moved by: Trustee Pangborn

Supported by: Trustee Weertz

THAT the Consolidation of Brownell and Pierce Wrestling Teams be approved as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Abke, Ismail, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Weertz

Absent: Trustee Gafa

Motion carried by a 6 – 0 vote.

VI. Agenda Action Items for November 28, 2016

A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2016

B. Approval of Human Resources Report for November 28, 2016

C. Approval of Audit Report from Plante Moran

Deputy Superintendent Abbey presented the Board with copies of the 2015-16 audit statement. Laura Claeys from Plante Moran, GPPSS independent auditor has provided a presentation for your review. She advised that there were some variances in the budget to actual. Originally projected a spending deficit of \$180,000 and it turned out to be \$635,000 with a fund balance of 6.9 million dollars with a difference of about \$450,000 on our nearly 110 million dollar budget. Ms. Abbey introduced Laura Claeys from Plante Moran, an expert on K-12 school financing, to do an audit presentation. Ms. Claeys informed the Board that all schools in the State of Michigan are required to have an independent audit done and filed with the State of Michigan by November 1st. Plante Moran gave an unmodified or “clean” opinion on basic financial statements. This is the highest form of assurance that you can receive from an outside auditing firm. Trustee Ismail asked Ms. Claeys what does she think our fund equity should be? Ms. Claeys suggests 10% to 15% that allows you to weather the storm.

D. Approval of Resolution to Honor Distinguished Employees

Trustee Roeske, who co-chaired this with Trustees Abke and Pangborn, announced that at the next Board meeting we will be honoring 10 District Employees.

**E. Approval of GP South Social Studies Department –
Out of the Country Field Trip to China February 16-24, 2017**

Mrs. Bur introduced Kendra Caralis, Teacher at GP South. She talked with her students about learning outside the classroom and explained about the connections that grow when you actually get to see the places you are learning about. She teaches world history and this covers a lot about European, Asian and Africa history. Her students expressed an interest in the Chinese history and culture. A group of about 12 students are interested in traveling to China. Trustee Ismail asked if there are ways to help a student who may want to attend but cannot afford to. Ms. Caralis said that there are fundraising opportunities for the students. Trustee Ismail asked if anyone has contacted the Chinese Education Department or Hanban to subsidize the trip? Mrs. Bur explained that we could look into all possibilities, but the first issue is to have the Board approve. Trustee Pangborn confirmed that this is not a class, but an interested group of students.

F. Approval of Cisco Managing Contract

Ms. Abbey explained that there is a need for a Network Maintenance contract. These are the people who oversee the day to day network operations and we contact them if we need system backup so we do not lose network time. Occasionally this contract goes out for bid. Presidio (NeTech) is our current provider and has been for the last several years. Their price came in a little higher than Sentinel. The Technology Department would prefer to keep all the CISCO support and warranties with the same vendor.

G. Approval of Resolution to Refinance Bond Debt

Per Ms. Abbey this had been discussed at the last meeting. This would be cost effective to refinance the 38 million dollar debt bond and would save the taxpayers approximately three million dollars.

VII. Information and Discussion

A. All-District Open House on November 13th fro 1-3 p.m.

Rebecca Fannon says that the Open House was spectacular. A big thank you to the 142 families who visited our schools on Sunday, November 13th.

B. Upcoming Town Hall Meetings

The District still has two Town Hall meetings planned for this year. People are encouraged to come to Maire on November 30th and Mason on December 6th from 6-9 pm.

VIII. FUTURE MEETINGS

- A. Special Session of the Board, Monday, November 21, 2016, 6:00 pm, Board Room, 389 St. Clair
(For the purpose of MASB training for the Superintendent's Evaluation)
- B. Regular Meeting of the Board, Monday, November 28, 2016, 7:00 pm, Brownell Multipurpose Room
- C. Regular Meeting of the Board, Monday, December 12, 2016, 7:00 pm, Brownell Multipurpose Room

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-ACTION ITEMS

George McMullen, GPW – A lot was said about the 21st Century Classroom. He attended the Open House the day before and a hi-light was touring the 21st Century Classroom. The demonstrations were done by students who were well versed.

Evie Kuhnlein, GP – support for Mr. Hamka

Beth Kurta, GP – support for Mr. Hamka

Sarah Ashkar, GP – support for Mr. Hamka

Amelia Abouljoud, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Daniel Kuhlein, GP - support for Mr. Hamka

Annette Abouljoud, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Benjamin Chen, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

India Dinges, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Maren Roeske, GPF - support for Mr. Hamka

Susan Trudeau, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

JeDonna Dinges, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Ponette Rubio, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Tonya Wells, GPF - support for Mr. Hamka

Bill Rapai, GP - support for Mr. Hamka

Harry Susalla, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

James Scarsella, GPW - support for Mr. Hamka

Maxwell Roeske, GPF - support for Mr. Hamka

Jay Aho, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Beth Martin, GPF - support for Mr. Hamka

Sheri Kam, GPW - support for Mr. Hamka

Julie Moe, GPW - support for Mr. Hamka

Phelan Johnson, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Mary Abouljoud, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Oliver Lanehym, GPP - support for Mr. Hamka

Greg Bowens, GP, President of the Grosse Pointe and NAACP, expressed his support for Superintendent Niehaus and Mr. Hamka, who he feels has done an amazing job in addressing racism, prejudice and bigotry, right when it happens. Reality is that our students deserve to be educated in an environment that is free of racism, prejudice and bigotry.

Val Cook, GP – she is a GP homeowner and has seen my home value rise in the last few years. Should she decide to sell the home in a few years, she knows that we have a really good school system. She asks the school board to continue to keep our school district as strong as it is. We should continue to value our administrators, teachers and school system.

Jennifer Munson, GPP – we are looking forward in this community and she is proud to be a part of it this evening.

Dean Kuhnlein, GP – his family moved back to this community primarily for the school system. After the events last week, he received a voice mail from Durham Public Schools and he shared that with the Board that he felt our School Board should have done as well.

X. OTHER COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS AND SUPERINTENDENT

Trustee Abke was looking forward to celebrate with Mason on their National Blue Ribbon award as well as the Open House. She has never been prouder of this community from what she has witnessed this evening. Together we can make this community stronger.

Trustee Ismail thanked everyone that came tonight, especially the students. He said Mr. Hamka you are here, you are not going anywhere. This is surreal for him, as his family was the first muslim family in Grosse Pointe. He can relate to what these students were saying. Good to know that the community has changed so much and cares for their neighbors.

Trustee Pangborn thanked everyone at Mason school, our staff, principal and the entire community for the last 20 years that has made Mason a National Award winning Blue Ribbon school. She spoke to the gentleman who talked about firing and people on the Board, it doesn't matter what comes up in the school system, teacher, staff, administrator, coach or others, things happen. The Community needs to know that this school system does not have knee jerk reaction. This Board of seven people does not have knee jerk reactions. There is no one member of the Board that can have someone fired. Any rumor you hear in this situation or another, this community has to understand that this Board functions completely on policy and rules. It doesn't matter what our opinions are about anything that is going on, we all still work by our policies and our rules. Not one person on this board has any more power than the other and you need to realize that. Also, because of social media, lots of things get expanded. This Board is not a side taker and we do not make rash decisions. As far as this Board is concerned, there isn't anyone in the community to have fear of things changing except for the things that we are always trying to improve on.

Trustee Summerfield congratulated the Administration, teachers, staff and students at Mason Elementary, a great honor to have bestowed on them. He also thanked all veterans; think about what it really means to serve our country. Those who serve really care about those they want to protect and love their country. They care about all of us. His 9th grade

daughter shared with him Mr. Hamka's speech about unity and inclusion. He was so pleased that she shared this, that he wrote an email to Dr. Niehaus and shared that with the audience. He shared because Mr. Hamka's speech gave her security and hope at a very difficult time and I suspect for many other students. He also thanked Dr. Niehaus for sharing Mr. Hamka's speech.

Trustee Weertz thanked Mr. Hamka. The first job of a principal is to create a safe environment for their students, not just physically but emotionally. She said that there is no secret that some in the community rushed to judge without hearing the speech and that she was not one of them. Mr. Hamka addressed the situation over the PA system and he was right to do so. And he was right to remind the students that we can disagree, exercise our right to vote for whom we want, but we don't taunt, bully or harass. We have received over 100 emails that support Mr. Hamka and this message of inclusion and she supports this message too.

Dr. Niehaus says it was an honor to be in Washington DC on Election Day and an honor to be there with his Mason friends to accept the National Blue Ribbon award. This is his first school that has received the Blue Ribbon. He says it was especially nice to see the glee in Dr. Middlekauff's eyes, who spent 19 years at Mason. Having been in all the schools, he feels that all nine schools could be Blue Ribbon Schools. Dr. Niehaus reassured the community that we have eight other elementary schools that are performing and doing just as well. He stated that he never thought he would be in Grosse Pointe, but he is and he has an opportunity to work with a great group of Board Members and Administrators. The public is invited Thursday at 4:00 pm to be a part of the Superintendent's Treasurer meeting. We have some serious work to get our 2016-17 budget in place.

Trustee Roeske says that he has been a member of this Board of Education for five years now. He did not run for reelection and now have four new members, Mrs. Gafa, Mrs. Abke, Mrs. Pangborn and Mr. Profeta. Along with these four and Mr. Ismail, Mrs. Weertz and Mr. Summerfield, we are entrusting them to protect our children. To do that, they need to support our Administrators and Superintendent. Being on the Board, you can say that my votes speak for me. He voted for Mr. Hamka and very proud of that vote and glad he is here. He also voted for Dr. Niehaus and glad he is here. Trustee Roeske went on to thank Mr. Bishop, Dr. Middlekauff and the entire team at Mason Elementary. They earned this Blue Ribbon award and all of our schools are award winning schools. We heard a lot from the community this evening and many students, especially the junior class. This junior class started when Mr. Hamka started and they have grown up together in the last three years. Our job is to protect the students and give a safe environment to learn, be successful and be the best person for the world. Trustee Roeske would say to the four Board members that were elected and the three sitting at the table this evening, if you do not support our Administrators and what they are doing to protect our children, then you need to think about why you are sitting at this table.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Roeske adjourned the meeting at 10:48 p.m.

Cindy Pangborn, Board Secretary