



**Grosse Pointe Board of Education
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 24, 2014
Multipurpose Room, Brownell Middle School
260 Chalfonte, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236**

MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Dindoffer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Board members present: Trustees Dindoffer, Gafa, Jakubiec, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Valente

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Trustee Jakubiec.

Also Present: Superintendent Harwood; Deputy Superintendents Dean and Fenton

II. APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 24, 2014

It was Moved by: Trustee Valente

Supported by: Trustee Gafa

THAT the Board Agenda be amended to include an agenda item under *Information and Discussion* to ensure and include Board discussion on Special Education issues.

Ayes: Trustees Dindoffer, Gafa, Jakubiec, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Valente

Nays: None

Motion carried by a 7 – 0 vote.

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Presentation of Financial Award by the Grosse Pointe Rotary

Superintendent Harwood shared the gift of two financial awards from the Grosse Pointe Rotary for each high school athletic department. The Rotary group conducted a 'run' that raised money to offset the "pay to participate" fees at both North and South for students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to take part in a sports program. Dr. Harwood thanked the Rotary for their generous gifts.

B. Legislative News

Superintendent Harwood shared current Legislative News with Board members noting: the Governor has submitted his budget for the 2014-2015 school year calling for 6 new program/categoricals; has increased the foundation from \$83 to \$111 per pupil, plus \$55 per pupil across the board; has allowed the MPSERS rate to remain flat; and has increased GSRP and CEPI funding, PILT payments and School Lunch. His budget also decreases special education funding and First Robotics and eliminates the Student Centric Grants and the Post-Secondary credit transfer grants for early middle college. Categories unchanged include: the Durant Debt Service (noting that this is the last year for this payment); District Dissolution Grants, Best Practices (no change in criteria), Technology infrastructure grants (will be eliminated in 2015-16); Performance Funding grants, Renaissance Zone Reimbursements; and Vocational Education. New Programs include: Fiscal Emergency Fund; Year Round School Pilot; Dual enrollment incentive; \$250,000 from the Michigan Department of Education to conduct a Career Readiness Study; \$250,000 to help pay for low income students to take AP courses; and \$27.8 M for Educator Evaluations.

C. Good News Items

Superintendent Harwood's good news included the recent trip by South High School choir students to Europe.

He noted that the students performances in France and England were phenomenal, and the represented as good ambassadors of the school district.

Staff Recognition:

Dan Quinn was a guest on the *All Things Required* radio show with discussion about year-round schools. North teacher, Sue Speirs worked at Wayne State University in a lab with district students and was recently featured in the *New York Times* for their work there.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ACTION ITEMS FOR FEBRUARY 24, 2014

No one came to speak at this time.

V. AGENDA ACTION ITEMS FOR FEBRUARY 24, 2014

A. Approval of Human Resources Report for February 24, 2014

Dr. Dean shared that the Human Resources Report was basically routine in nature with the exception of the passing of Kerry Pytel from Parcels Middle School. He noted that the district has two occupational therapists in place at this time that are not listed on the report as they are not employees.

It was Moved by: Trustee Roeske

Supported by: Trustee Jakubiec

THAT the Board approve the Human Resources Report for February 24, 2014 as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Dindoffer, Gafa, Jakubiec, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Valente

Nays: None

Motion carried by a 7 – 0 vote.

B. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2014 and Revised Regular Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2014

It was Moved by: Trustee Jakubiec

Supported by: Trustee Pangborn

THAT the Board approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2014 and Revised Regular Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2014 as presented.

While Trustees Jakubiec and Pangborn thanked district staff for adding more dialogue to the minutes, President Dindoffer shared her concern about staff summarizing topics which could lead to the danger of misrepresenting or misconstruing what was said by a speaker. She noted that the Board would get more counsel on what should be contained in minutes from legal counsel and the Board Policy Committee.

In a roll call vote,

Trustee Dindoffer, No

Trustee Gafa, Yes

Trustee Jakubiec, Yes

Trustee Pangborn, Yes

Trustee Roeske, Yes

Trustee Summerfield, Yes

Trustee Valente, Yes

Motion carried by a 6 – 1 vote.

C. Approval of Reinstatement Panel

Board Policy 5611, Due Process, calls for the Board to appoint a Reinstatement Review Panel composed of two Board members, one administrator, one teacher, and one parent to review a petition for reinstatement of a student following expulsion when such a petition is received during the school year. Hence, the appointment of a standing panel is a prudent provision to make as part of the Board of Education's organizational items.

The Board is asked to approve a Reinstatement Review Panel to serve from January through December, 2014 to handle any requests for reinstatement that are presented.

A panel and alternates have been identified with the assistance of the PTO Council and GPEA.

It was Moved by: Trustee Gafa

Supported by: Trustee Roeske

THAT the Board approve the Reinstatement Panel agenda item as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Dindoffer, Gafa, Jakubiec, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Valente

Nays: None

Motion carried by a 7 – 0 vote.

D. Approval of E-Rate Bid for Cell Phones

The district currently has a cellular phone contract with Verizon for \$4,300 per month. This includes a total of 72 Smart phones (29 for administrators, 13 for NIS, 8 for technology and 22 for building engineers and maintenance staff). There are 21 standard cell phones assigned to engineering and custodial staff and 2 mobile data cards for laptop computers, managed by technology for remote support and special project use.

If the district considers changing vendors at this time, cell telephones currently in use in the district are not compatible with the new vendor's network and replacements would need to be purchased.

The administration is asking the Board to approve the contract with Verizon for cell telephone service at an estimated cost of \$46,269.72 per year for a contract term of one year with a net amount of \$26,836.44 after E-rate reimbursement.

It was Moved by: Trustee Valente

Supported by: Trustee Summerfield

THAT the Board approve the E-Rate Bid for Cell Phones as presented.

Ayes: Trustees Dindoffer, Gafa, Jakubiec, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Valente

Nays: None

Motion carried by a 7 – 0 vote.

VI. AGENDA ACTION ITEMS FOR MARCH 24, 2014

A. Approval of Human Resources Report for March 24, 2014

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2014

C. Approval of Bids

1. Mason Restroom (Phase 2)

2. Richard Restroom (Phase 2)

3. South Restroom (Phase 4)

Trustee Gafa asked Mr. Fenton if a list could be made of projects that might need to be put on hold if the technology bond does not pass tomorrow leaving a need for the remaining sinking fund dollars to be used for technology infrastructure needs. Other Board members also expressed concern about completing projects in

light of the importance of the district's technology needs. President Dindoffer reminded the Board of the need to complete school restroom projects in order to make them functioning for students and staff.

D. Approval of Resolution Recognizing Distinguished Volunteers

President Dindoffer asked Trustee Gafa if she would be available to chair the Distinguished Volunteer Committee along with Trustees Roeske and Pangborn serving as committee members alongside her.

E. Approval to Create a Special Education Ombudsman

Vice-President Roeske addressed the creation of a special education ombudsman to assist the special education parents who have been speaking at board meetings about their concerns and issues. He and President Dindoffer felt that the time is now to appoint an impartial, non-employee to assist with communication and help navigate problem solving between the Board, administration and special education parents. He said that funding will come out of the general fund. The details of the position have yet to be determined, but a solution has been provided to assist the parents that both Mr. Roeske and Mrs. Dindoffer wish to put in place at this time. Trustee Roeske would like this person in place by May 1st. Superintendent Harwood said that a sub-committee of the Board would be helpful to create as the administration moves forward to create the position for the ombudsman.

VII. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

A. Board Discussion on Special Education Issues

Trustee Valente proposed a resolution to fellow Board members to vote on addressing mandating inclusion of special needs students in "specials" at the elementary level and "electives" in the middle and high school level. These classes include art, music and physical education. The issue is with parents that believe that separate art, music and gym classes are the norm and violate the "least restrictive environment" mandate of special education laws.

President Dindoffer said that she would like more time to digest the main ideas of the resolution and be able to understand the request.

Superintendent Harwood and Ms. Hayes shared the issues surrounding least restrictive environment from information they received from WCRESA and differing information from the Michigan Department of Education. Ms. Hayes said that changes will be made following the Michigan Department of Education information that her department received.

It was Moved by: Trustee Valente

THAT the Board approve and adopt the resolution (co-authored by Trustee Pangborn) provided which eliminates the practice of "fake gen-ed" for special needs students. Classes taught by a general education teacher must contain a natural percentage of non-disabled peers with students with EIPS starting with the 2014-2015 academic year.

Supported by: Trustee Pangborn

Trustee Jakubiec asked for more specific wording of Mrs. Valente's resolution and that it be tabled for further review. He suggested three weeks for the administration to draft a new resolution incorporating the spirit of the original resolution but needing a plan to implement it. He asked questions on the impact of the proposed resolution and discussed potential unintended outcomes from the wording of it.

President Dindoffer suggested a third party from the Michigan Department of Education or WCRESA to educate the Board on best practices and special education services. She also asked the Board to act as a committee of the whole before consideration of appointment a subcommittee for special education issues.

President Dindoffer asked administration to prepare a resolution with better defined expectations regarding a percentage of special needs students to be included in general education classes for the March 17, 2014 meeting. Mr. Summerfield, Ms. Valente and Ms. Pangborn agreed to assist in drafting the resolution.

In a layered motion,

Moved by: Trustee Valente

Supported by: Trustee Dindoffer

THAT the resolution be tabled until the March 17, 2014 Board Meeting.

Ayes: Trustees Dindoffer, Gafa, Jakubiec, Pangborn, Roeske, Summerfield and Valente

Nays: None

Motion carried by a 7 – 0 vote.

B. Monthly Financial Report/Health Care Report

Mr. Fenton and Dr. Dean shared information from the financial reports and health care reports respectively. Documents for both reports are available on the district's website.

VIII. FUTURE MEETINGS

- A. Board Policy Committee Meeting, Wednesday, March 5, 2014, 6:00 p.m., Board Room
- B. Regular Meeting of the Board, Monday, March 17, 2014, 7:00 p.m. Brownell Multipurpose Room
- C. Regular Meeting of the Board, Monday, March 24, 2014, 7:00 p.m., Brownell Multipurpose Room

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-ACTION ITEMS

George McMullen, Grosse Pointe Woods, spoke in support of the Technology Bond on tomorrow's ballot.

Phillip Moe, Grosse Pointe Woods, thanked the Board this evening for what was accomplished in conversation regarding an inclusive preschool program for special needs students.

Julie Moe, Grosse Pointe Woods, quoted a comment in an article written by a Rochester Community Schools Principal that addressed the issue of inclusion of special needs students. She asked for the same thing in the Grosse Pointe Public Schools.

Karen Grobbel, Grosse Pointe, thanked the Board for opening up the discussion and starting to work in a positive direction for special needs students.

Joanne Murphy, Grosse Pointe Park, thanked the Board for taking the special education issues discussed at tonight's and previous meetings seriously. She shared her experiences of past practices in special education in the district.

Marlene Pierce, Grosse Pointe Park, asked that the agenda item for a Special Education Ombudsman include wording that the person selected should not be accountable to the district administration, but rather to the Board.

Charles Chapman, Grosse Pointe, shared his experience and questioned the employment of his daughter's previous teacher.

Jennifer Munson, Grosse Pointe, thanked the Board for the conversation this evening. She also spoke about the Birmingham Superintendent creation of a preschool for special needs students in that district. She supports the plans shared this evening to correct or modify issues concerning special needs students.

Judy Ignagni, school district psychologist, shared her experience on how special education services are delivered in the district. She expressed her appreciation for special education administrators Stephanie Hayes, Sue Lucchese and Lilli Loder noting their commitment to the long term needs of every student they serve.

Kara Shall, Grosse Pointe, addressed the dedication of current special education teachers in the district. She thanked the Board, however, for leading the district on best practices for students.

Kim Maddalena, Grosse Pointe City, and Vice-President of the GPEA, addressed the negative comments made by current Board member, Cindy Pangborn, regarding the technology bond.

Gary Abud, Shelby Township and Grosse Pointe School employee, also addressed negative comments made public by current Board, Mrs. Pangborn, in relation to the Technology Showcase on February 4, 2014.

Suzanne Jabara, Grosse Pointe School employee, highlighted derogatory comments made by a current Board member at the February 10, 2014 Board meeting regarding the Technology Showcase.

Cheri Burley, GPEA President, also addressed the negative comments made by Trustee Pangborn regarding the students presenting at the Technology Showcase. She added that the Board member slandered the teachers and support staff with her inappropriate comments.

Colin Moulder-McConley, Grosse Pointe Park, asked voters to vote Yes on the Technology Bond.

Kelly Mozena, Grosse Pointe Woods, asked the Board when was it decided that the school system should “make do” with what was used yesterday? She noted that the technology currently in the schools is useless. She asked residents to vote Yes on the Technology Bond.

Mickey Shield, Grosse Pointe Park, commented that by Wednesday morning, Grosse Pointe and Harper Woods voters will have cast their vote on the Technology Bond. She hopes everyone will vote No.

Renee Jakubowski, Grosse Pointe Park, spoke regarding personal devices used in some schools that were provided by the Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education and the PTO's.

Kathy Abke, Grosse Pointe, thanked the original technology committee that worked so hard on the technology bond. She will be voting Yes tomorrow on the technology bond.

Kelly Boll, Grosse Pointe, is against the technology plan and will be voting No tomorrow noting it will create short term assets with long term debt.

Beth Kinkade, Grosse Pointe, is appalled at the technology her children are using in the schools.

Allison Baker, Grosse Pointe Park, listed her top ten reasons to vote Yes on the technology bond tomorrow.

Julie VanTol, district employee and Poupard teacher, said that the Poupard staff is very grateful to Drs. Harwood and Dean for their vision for staff and students in the district.

Denise Sharples, district employee, spoke in support of Dr. Harwood and the central office administration.

Christopher Pratt, district employee, spoke about his return with the South choir from England and France and the wonderful performances given by the students. He also shared his respect and admiration for Superintendent Harwood who works well with his staff and has a clear vision for leading the district into the 21st century.

X. OTHER COMMENTS FROM BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT

Trustee Valente thanked fellow Board members for their work with the special education resolution presented this evening. She also thanked the parents who attend Board meetings consistently to make effective changes in special education programs.

Trustee Jakubiec thanked: the elementary classroom at Maire for the valentines made for Board members; Grosse Pointe Rotary for their generous support of the high school athletic programs; our governor and

legislators for their funding increases for schools this year. He added that voting No on the bond proposal tomorrow just means that you are looking for a better solution for the technology changes needed in the schools.

Trustee Pangborn also thanked the Maire students for the valentines. She asked everyone to vote noting that the amount of the bond is too high and the Board and administration should be able to come back with a better plan.

Trustee Summerfield thanked the Maire students for the valentines also. He hopes that everyone takes the time to vote. He will be voting Yes.

Trustee Gafa thanked the students at Maire for the valentines as well as the Rotary for the support of the high school athletic programs. She said she followed the students on tour with Mr. Pratt in England and France noting their wonderful performances. She noted North's musical "Oliver" was the weekend of March 6, 7 and 8. Mrs. Gafa added that this is the right (technology) bond for the right time, vote Yes.

Trustee Roeske quoted the Budget Model Utility report. He encouraged residents to vote on the bond tomorrow. He noted information on the district's website for those still wondering which way to vote. He concluded that this is the right bond at the right time.

Superintendent Harwood commended the Special Education administrative team Stephanie Hayes, Lillie Loder and Sue Lucchese on their passion, dedication and hard work for special needs students. He appreciated the opportunity to travel with the South High School choir students, Chris Pratt and all of the parent chaperones to France and England. He added that tomorrow is an important day for the district and encouraged everyone to vote.

President Dindoffer offered condolences to former Board President, Alice Kosinski, on the passing of her husband this week. She also thanked the Maire students for the valentines they provided to Board members. She, too, encouraged the community to vote tomorrow for this important vote. She will be voting Yes.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

President Dindoffer adjourned the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

Judy Gafa, Board Secretary