



**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Lapeer Community Schools Board of Education
held on Thursday, October 4, 2012 at
the Administration and Services Center**

Mike Keller, President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise Becker, Peggy Bush, Wendy Byard, John Nugent, Mike Keller, Gary Oyster

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Nolan.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Scott Warren, principal of Murphy Elementary School, presented a video in which Murphy students led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATION – Murphy Elementary School

Mr. Warren explained that 4th and 5th grade students have a morning program, run by parent volunteers, where students make daily announcements and showcase student work. He presented the program that had been run that morning for the Board and guests.

Mr. Warren introduced teacher Karen Allmen who presented information on Murphy's school improvement plan for writing. Mrs. Allmen explained that the teachers were using the book "An Ethic of Excellence: Building a Culture of Craftsmanship with Students" written by Ron Berger as a model to improve student writing. Teachers are using models, multiple drafts, and positive critique to help students improve their writing skills. The school's plan is to begin with writing and then incorporate this technique into other areas.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Mike Keller read the following statement: *A Board meeting is a meeting of school district business held in the public; it is not a public meeting. The Board is not going to respond to those making public comment, but will direct the Superintendent to follow up with the presenter. Thirty minutes is set aside for public comment so each presenter is being asked to keep their comments under 3 minutes. The Board does not comment in public on any student or employee, and ask the presenters to be respectful of any person they comment about.*

Bill Gavette addressed the Board of Education.

REPORTS

Student Advocacy and Communications Committee – Denise Becker reported on the SAC Committee meeting that was held on September 27 when policy revision recommendations and committee goals/measurement tools were discussed.

Teaching, Learning, and Technology Committee – John Nugent reported on the TLT Committee meeting that was held on September 27 when the following items were discussed: field trips; policy revision recommendations; dual enrollment procedures; attack the gap instructional strategy; K-12 instructional strategies; and committee goals/measurement tools were discussed.

ACTION ITEMS

Consent Items

1. That the minutes from the September 6, 2012 Regular Meeting be approved as presented.
2. That the meeting minutes from the September 20, 2012 Work Session be approved as presented.

3. That the following policies be approved as presented for first reading: Policy 2271 PROGRAM Postsecondary Enrollment Option Program; Policy 2370 PROGRAM Academic Exceptions Expanding and Extending Student Learning; Policy 2623 PROGRAM Student Assessment; Policy 3419 PROFESSIONAL STAFF Group Health Plans; Policy 4419 SUPPORT STAFF Group Health Plans; and Policy 5461 STUDENTS Academic Exceptions Expanding and Extending Student Learning.
4. That the following overnight/out of state field trip requests be approved as presented: Lapeer West Fashion/Graphic Arts/Visual Arts Students to New York City on May 17-20, 2013; Rolland-Warner 7th Grade Band to Mackinac Island on May 10-11, 2013; Rolland-Warner Students to Washington, D.C. on November 3-8, 2013 and November 2-7, 2014; Zemmer Students to Lansing, Michigan on November 18-20, 2012; and Lapeer East Symphony Band Students to New York University on April 11-15, 2013.

Moved by Mr. Oyster, supported by Mrs. Byard, that reading of the policies and minutes be waived and the consent agenda items be approved as presented. Roll call: Becker-aye; Bush-aye; Byard-aye; Keller-aye; Nugent-aye, Oyster-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board members thanked Murphy students for leading the pledge digitally and thanked Mr. Warren and Mrs. Allmen for the presentations. A request was made that the district review its policy on political activity in the schools once the November election is over. Board members hope that the district can get some data from students on issues they are dealing with outside of school that is effecting their learning so interventions can be put in place. Board members are pleased that Mott Community College is purchasing the buildings they are using in the City of Lapeer. Having a college in our town creates options for students and people in our community.

Mr. Oyster shared the following:

We hear a lot lately about “reinventing” Michigan, most notably our public education system. In his most recent newsletter to constituents and in an op-ed commentary in a major Detroit newspaper last month, Sen. Phil Pavlov made a case for the progress that has been made in improving Michigan’s K-12 education system. While we would expect the chair of the Senate Education Committee to be looking at the status of education from his position at the top, isn’t allowing him his own assessment the same as letting a student grade himself?

There are five key areas where our state government, and only our state government, can reform the way public K-12 education operates. What has been done in each of these five reform areas in the period of time since the current administration took office?

Tenure reform: Needed legislation was passed, but where is the data that it is working? How many ineffective teachers have been let go since the tenure law was revised? How many ineffective high-seniority teachers have been laid off since first-in last-out language became a forbidden topic of teachers’ contracts? A recent survey by Education Trust-Midwest found that last year 99.6% of teachers state-wide were ranked “effective” or “highly effective”. Obviously it will take another year or two to determine if the old tenure law was the problem, or if ineffective teachers remained in their jobs for other reasons.

Pension reform: Incomplete; in an e-newsletter to constituents last month, Sen. Pavlov’s own assessment of the recently passed Senate Bill 1040 states, “Unfortunately, we missed the mark this time around in terms of getting a complete reform for the long-term.” The senator himself voted against SB1040, one of three in his party to do so. In the meantime, local schools will pay 3.7% more this year than last year in contributions to employees’ pension funds.

Equity in funding: Nothing accomplished yet; each student in the Marine City/St. Clair district (Sen. Pavlov’s resident school district) is still worth at least \$500 more in state aid than any other public school student within his Senate district. Similar gaps in funding exist around the state. Yet all students continue to be compared with each other in state test scores and in compiling “college readiness” statistics.

Closing the fiscal year gap: In 2011-12, school districts state-wide had to borrow \$690 million to maintain cash flow from July 1 (the start of their fiscal year) to mid-October (when the state's fiscal year kicked in). This meant that \$15 million in state aid to those districts went to banks in the form of interest payments instead of to students. Despite the fact that over 50 local school boards from Escanaba to Temperance have passed resolutions asking the governor and legislature to resolve this problem, no proposals for change have been brought forward.

ISD reform: The intermediate school system was designed to service a state-wide system in the early 20th century that included thousands of one-room schools. In its current form, it provides vocational education, special education and school management and training services through mandatory consortiums of local school districts that are arbitrarily assigned according to county boundary lines. Local districts cannot form their own cost-efficient consortiums with neighboring districts to provide vocational and special education services because they are forced to accept these services through ISD's. This has created a level of expensive bureaucracy that is outdated, unnecessary, and bleeds funding away from the local districts that would know best how to provide these services. Nothing has been done to "reinvent" this system.

Honest evaluation of the progress toward "reinventing" public school education in Michigan would show incomplete progress in two out of five reform areas and no progress to date in the other three. While Sen. Pavlov paints a rosier picture of progress, the best he can point to at this time, according to his latest newsletters, is an increase in the number of charter schools, virtual classrooms and dual enrollments with colleges, along with what the senator calls his excitement at seeing "communities across our state embracing new ideas and models that put students' needs first". For one political party to take credit for this local action and call it "reinvention" is just as counterproductive to true reform as the other party's preference for inertia and the status quo. Until partisan politicians leave educating to the experts at the local level, and instead compete to be the first to truly reform our state's funding inequities as noted above, any progress we have seen in improving education will likely turn to more disappointment.

Mr. Keller commented on HB 5923 which came as a result of the Governor commissioning the Oxford Foundation to propose a rewrite of the Michigan School Aid Act. He wants our district to continue to be proactive, as we have been with the Lapeer Virtual Learning Center, and continue to seek to offer other choices to our families.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Superintendent Matt Wandie thanked Mr. Warren and Mrs. Allmen for their presentations. Mr. Wandie stated at the all staff meeting on "opening day" that adults have the power to overwhelm the culture of a building. He feels the leaders in our buildings are doing that. He shared with the Board that he and COLT are attending staff meetings at all buildings in the district and recognizing employees with years of service.

Mr. Wandie spent the morning at Lapeer West High School and thanked Ms. Cornell and Ms. Noble for letting him into their classrooms. He encouraged the students to get involved in the Task Forces.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mrs. Bush, supported by Mr. Oyster, that the meeting be adjourned. Roll call: Becker-aye; Bush-aye; Byard-aye; Keller-aye; Nugent-aye, Oyster-aye. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.

John P. Nugent, Board of Education Secretary