



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**City Council Chambers**

**14400 Dix Toledo, Southgate, MI 48195**

**BOARD OF  
EDUCATION**

PRESIDENT

DR. DARLENE L. POMPONIO

**DATE: October 24, 2017 -7:00 p.m.**

VICE PRESIDENT

JASON CRAIG

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Kupser, Pomponio

SECRETARY

ANDREW A. GREEN

**BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED:**  
**BOARD MEMBERS UNEXCUSED:** Reed

TREASURER

JASON R. KUPSER

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:** Chretien, McLachlan, Pastor  
**ADMINISTRATION EXCUSED:**

TRUSTEES

TIMOTHY O. ESTHEIMER  
NEIL J. FREITAS  
REBECCA REED

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.  
Dr. Pomponio read the District Mission and Vision Statements.

**REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

2017/18-53 It was moved by Mr. Green the board revise the agenda to move student government representatives to Item G from H, supported by Mr. Kupser.

**ADMINISTRATION**

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Kupser, Pomponio  
NO:

SUPERINTENDENT

LESLIE CHRETIEN

**CITIZENS COMMENTS ON DISCUSSION OR ACTION ITEMS**

None

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

DIRECTOR

THERESA MCLACHLAN, C.P.A.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES**

National Junior Honor Society: Promethean Chapter President Alex Moon, Vice President Brooke Goudreau and Treasurer Ciera Melendez gave the board an overview of the NJHS program at Davidson Middle School. They were joined by co-advisors Ms. Sladich and Ms. Lavis. Students must have a high academic average, outstanding character, citizenship, leadership and service to be considered eligible for membership in the NJHS. The purpose of the NJHS is to promote these five ideals. NJHS has several celebrations and field trips planned including Greenfield Village/Henry Ford Museum and Chicago.

CURRICULUM/FEDERAL

PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

JILL PASTOR

**PRESENTATIONS**

2016/17 Audit Report: Yeo & Yeo, Kristi Krafft-Bellsky- Board members were presented with the documents from the Audit Results-June 30, 2017. Ms. Krafft-Bellsky gave the board a power point presentation of the report and the procedures; internal control testing and evaluation, risk assessment, examination of documents, analytical analysis, asset/liability approach and peer review. The auditors must report on financial statements, expenditures of federal awards and are required to communicate these to the board. Expenditures, revenue and fund balance were reviewed.

DIRECTOR OF

HUMAN RESOURCES

GERARD L. MORIN

The unmodified opinion gives the district the highest level of assurance. The school's financial records and statements are fairly and appropriately presented and in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. This includes; the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Future Challenges: State economic/political condition. Retirement rate increase. State revenue fluctuations. Enrollment trends. Rising healthcare costs. Pension obligation over \$70 million. New accounting pronouncements.

Discussion took place regarding; the fund balance and policy, MPSERS and OPEB.

HR Report: Jerry Morin, Director of Human Resources- Reviewed the staffing and layoff numbers district wide. Mr. Morin spoke of the difficulty finding qualified Special Education Teachers, especially substitutes. He explained the premiere substitute program which now includes a special education premiere sub and the rates of pay substitutes receive. There has been one MSP CHRI audit, all findings were successfully addressed. Our auditor commented that we had the fewest findings of any district downriver.

Contract negotiations began last year and are going well. Contract language will be updated to bring it in line with changes in current laws and practices. Compensation or benefit discussions will not take place until Theresa McLachlan conducts a presentation on the district's financial status on October 30.

Staff attendance and coverage issues are being addressed. With a higher unfilled rate on Fridays, we have increased our rate of pay for subs who work on Fridays to try and help with this problem.

The HR Department has taken over the SafeSchools required tutorials from the Curriculum Department. The time staff spend on these has been shortened by implementing short refresher tutorials to those personnel who have taken and passed the full version in previous years.

Discussion took place about the pay rate for substitute teachers and how our district compares to surrounding districts as well as the effort we make, as a district, to make a sub feel welcome and comfortable while working for us. Additional comments revolved around the sub shortage in the state and the need for the legislature to allow retired teachers to be eligible to sub.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Anti-Bullying- Dr. Pomponio- Next meeting November 10, 2017 @ 4:30 p.m.

Finance-Mr. Kupser said they will hold a meeting before the end of the year.

Policy-Dr. Pomponio-Next meeting November 10, 2017 @ 5:30 p.m. to discuss NEOLA updates.

Legislative -No report. Dr. Pomponio said they will review the viability of this committee.

Curriculum-Dr. Pomponio-Committee met October 19 to discuss the approved and updated curriculum adoption forms. The Curriculum Director updated the committee on the upcoming curriculum review of the ELA and Science for Davidson Middle School. The Wellness Policy components were discussed in regard to nutrition being integrated throughout the districts' curriculum. The Wellness Committee met with Food Service Director-Mr. Connors to review the policy and nutrition throughout the curriculum. Next meeting November 16, 2017 @ 4:30 p.m.

Personnel- Mr. Green-committee met 10/23/17, pay considerations for the interim superintendent were reviewed. Future meeting date to be determined.

Grounds & Maintenance- Dr. Pomponio-Next meeting will be November 14, 2017 @ 6:00 p.m.

*All committees hold open meetings at Southgate's board offices or other location that will be posted. Dates of meetings, committee members, agendas and minutes are posted on the web page.*

## DISCUSSION

Finance- Theresa McLachlan- Plante Moran will be at the first meeting in November to give a presentation on our transportation RFP and to address different aspects the board would like to discuss.

Curriculum- Ms. Pastor- The initial screenings and all of the extensive assessments for K-2 student are complete. Reading Specialist are completing the Individualized Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) and will be meeting with the parents of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade students who need some additional support. The district received \$43,470 for the 35a or Additional Time Grant. This is funding that is provided to help support our K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in literacy/reading development. This is approx. \$66 per student.

A 3-year grant from "Kids Read Now" was received for Fordline's K-3 students totaling \$9,550. Students will get to choose 9 books for summer reading. The students will leave with 3 books and once the parents email, call or text that they have completed the books, a new one is mailed approximately one time a week. If the company does not hear from the parents they reach out about once a week to remind them to read. Each student will receive a minimum of 4 books. Each book has four questions designed to help students makes connections; 1. Text to text, 2. Text to self, 3. Text to world, 4. Creative/critical thinking question.

Current Grant Allocations-

- 31a-\$1,436,684.68
- Title Ia-\$628,101
- Title IIa- \$130,837
- Title IV-\$10,000

Grand Total=\$2,195,622.68

Superintendent-Ms. Chretien provided updates from Rob Kakoczki-PMC who was unable to attend the meeting. Clark Construction is wrapping up the punch list items. Doors and frames continue to arrive from the supplier, these are mostly exterior. Second shifts and weekends are being worked to complete the replacement, targeting early November for completion.

The RFP for the lighting and curtains in the auditorium is being developed, this also includes some sound component. That packet should be brought to the board by Nov. 28. The bid for the 2018 roofing replacement at AHS has been posted. That bid packet will be brought to the board by Nov. 28.

Board President Update-Dr. Pomponio-WCASB is holding a general meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Paul Sala will facilitate the conversation regarding rules and responsibilities in relation to ensuring that zero tolerance changes with the recent zero tolerance laws for suspension and expulsion trends and ways Wayne RESA can support the district. The MASB is hosting their annual leadership fall conference November 9 through 12.

### **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

None

### **CONSENT**

2017/18-54 It was moved by Mr. Craig supported by Mr. Estheimer, the board approve the October 10, 2017 Board Regular Board Meeting minutes and the HR update as presented.

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Kupser, Pomponio

NO:

### **ACTION**

1. Out of State field trip request from Shelters: Ms. Chretien informed the board this is for Shelters and Fordline, she now has the form from Fordline as well for this field trip.

2017/18-55 It was moved by Mr. Estheimer supported by Mr. Craig, the board approve the Shelters and Fordline elementary request for an out of state field trip in May for 5<sup>th</sup> grade Safety Patrol members.

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Kupser, Pomponio

NO:

### **EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES**

None

### **INFORMATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Estheimer reported on the Shelters students newly created Kindness Club. This is a student driven, 5<sup>th</sup> grade club whose purpose is for 5<sup>th</sup> graders to promote and model kindness throughout the building and beyond. The overall goal was researched from the Teacher Tolerance Fall 2017 publication. A study by Deborah Ginsberg reported that simple acts of kindness make happier people, but the truest acts of kindness are secret and not done for notoriety but for happiness that comes from within. Ms. Guentner is the club staff sponsor and is working towards all members finding happiness and true acts of kindness. She is over the moon with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade excitement. Mr. Estheimer stated he had been contacted by three students and they are extremely excited about it.

The clubs first official appearance was at the Boo Bash, the Kindness Club passed out free glow bracelets to all the students and children telling everyone that wore a bracelet, kindness brightens everyone's world. The club is also selling kindness bracelets for \$1.00, no profit being made, just enough to pay for the bracelet production and orders. The bracelet is more of a permanent way to show a united kind front at Shelters where the glow bracelets were just for that day. The Kindness Club hopes to do many non-monetary things in the future to spread happiness and joy within Shelters and the community.

Over 600 people attended the Boo Bash, pictures may be viewed on the PTO Facebook page. Fordline hosted their Halloween party on the same night. Councilmen Phil Rauch and Chris Rollet made donations to each elementarys Halloween parties from Sweet Arrangements in Wyandotte. They supplied items for the sweet tables for each of the elementary schools. He thanked Mr. Rauch, who was in attendance at this meeting, on behalf of the PTO groups for the generous donations.

He wished all a safe and Happy Halloween.

Mr. Green addressed the viewing audience, on a serious note, regarding the parent Facebook page. The information was inaccurate and it caused a disturbance with some people and panic with some parents. The teachers, administration and school board does care about the children in our district. He does appreciate parents concern and care in wanting to keep our schools safe, but there is a process. If parents have a problem he asked that they please call their administrator first. If a parent does not get anywhere with administration, contact the superintendent or any one of the board members and they will check into it.

A comment was made that the board and this administration won't do anything about problems and this bothered him. He asked parents to go through the proper channels, make sure the information is accurate and we will all do our best as a board to help the administration and the Superintendent in making Southgate Schools the best they can be.

Grogan is having their Book Fair, it will culminate with the Oktoberfest on Friday. Grogan parents are encouraged to help out with this event.

Dr. Pomponio announced this week is Spirit Week and DMS. The Halloween Dance is October 25 at 6:00 p.m. she mentioned that Mr. Rauch and Sweet Arrangements in Wyandotte, generously donated popcorn to this dance. Southgate Parks and Recreation Department has a proposal on the ballot Nov 7. This is a great way to invest back into the community.

## WORK ITEMS

1. Appointment of permanent superintendent-Ms. Chretien asked the board to address the need for a permanent superintendent and begin the conversation on how to proceed. External posting with the assistance of an outside agency or, as she would recommend, appoint Jill Pastor, who has been approved as Interim Superintendent, to be the next superintendent of the district. She spoke about the positives of having someone internally take on that position.

Mr. Morin shared information on how the process would work going with an agency to help us find an external candidate. He agrees with Ms. Chretien's recommendation. An internal candidate would not cause as much change in the direction the district is headed and the momentum. If the board thinks the district needs to be turned around and go in a different direction they would want to look at an external candidate. He believes we are headed in the right direction as a district and a strong internal candidate such as Ms. Pastor would continue that. She also possesses strong financial skills.

The board Personnel Committee gave him the task of researching external search agencies. Proposals and literature were received from three of the more prominent search agencies in the state of Michigan. All three would devote a great deal of time with the board to determine what are the most important personal characteristics of their next superintendent. As he considers this, what came to mind was, trust. Administrators, prior to Ms. Chretien have abused that trust, and some people are still having difficulties trusting. Even if a good external candidate was found it would take them years to build up the level of trust that Ms. Pastor already enjoys. She is a known element, already has the district's respect. That level of trust is what has made Ms. Chretien so effective in her job and what helped her turn the district around and bring the district out of deficit. The staff and administrators had trust and confidence in her and were willing to look at concessions. If an external candidate was brought in at that time, that didn't have that same level of trust, he doesn't know that we would have been able to pull that off.

Mr. Morin said the candidate pool seems to be pretty shallow at this time. He doesn't think we are going to find anyone that's going to be better at the job than Ms. Pastor but it's possible we might. He asked the board if it was really worth the gamble when we already have someone good right here. His personal recommendation is that we appoint Ms. Pastor as superintendent. He asked the board to make a decision sooner rather than later so if we have to fill the curriculum directors position we have time to do that before there are actual vacancies. Continuity would be best for the district. This is a difficult time of the year to complete a search because it is the "off season". The process generally begins in January and takes 3 to 4 months with a start date for a new superintendent of July 1 to match the fiscal year.

Discussion took place about the options and costs for an agency to perform an external search which can run between \$4500 to \$6000 dollars for the district and the pros and cons of seeking an external candidate versus an internal one and the timeline it involves. Board members shared their personal opinions regarding Ms. Pastor's experience in the district and rapport with staff and administration as well as her understanding of the districts' needs and direction we are heading. The possibility of offering Ms. Pastor a trial period before offering the permanent position to her were also discussed.

Personnel Committee Chairperson, Mr. Green stated it is the recommendation of the committee to offer Ms. Pastor the job permanently.

Ms. Pastor responded to the board's questions about her willingness to accept the permanent position. She said she always and truly considers herself a teacher first and stated that while it never was her goal to become the superintendent, she would be honored to. She lives in the district, her daughters graduated from this district and we are on the right path of a five year plan that she does not want to derail from. She commented that she has been through several superintendents and has seen some of the damage they can do. Ms. Pastor told the board, because of the beliefs she has in the district, she couldn't quit. She has been asked to serve and she will serve in the best capacity. She may not make the best decision every moment of every day but that will be how she will learn. She will not serve 30 days or 60 days and then tell the board she wasn't interested, that is just not who she is.

Ms. Chretien added that she never wanted to be a superintendent either and wouldn't have been a superintendent in any other district she has worked in, other than Southgate. She said when you have worked in this district there is a strong pull, it just gets under your skin and you become loyal very quickly. Her time as superintendent has been incredibly rewarding even if it wasn't enjoyable every single day. Ms. Pastor's reaction is very similar to what Ms. Chretien's was. Our administrative team has become very strong, most of the best administrators think like teachers.

Discussion took place regarding superintendent compensation, retirement and what the appropriate action should be for proceeding with seeking an internal or external candidate.

Ms. Chretien told the board she did get an attorney opinion on this; it is very important that a public meeting be held to have discussion about how the board feels, what was/was not considered and that has happened tonight. From this point forward the board can handle the action as they wish.

The board will bring to action at the next meeting; to recommend an appointment of Ms. Pastor as the permanent superintendent pending the agreement of a contract. There would be a final action item of the approval of the contract

If approved Ms. Chretien and Mr. Morin will post the position of Curriculum Director internally. This does not require board approval as it is a contractual item.

2. Board Goals: Dr. Pomponio review of the board's SMART goals.
- Student Achievement- by Dr. Pomponio
  - District Processes and Procedures- by Dr. Pomponio
  - Policies and Procedures- by Mr. Green
  - Visibility and Marketing - by Mr. Kupser and Mr. Estheimer
  - Transportation- by Mr. Frietas and Mr. Craig

Discussion took place about the Plante Moran RFP for transportation and the layout of the SMART goals for future work session discussion.

## ADJOURNMENT

2017/18-56 It was moved by Mr. Craig supported by Mr. Green the board adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Kupser, Pomponio

NO:

*Respectfully submitted by: Theresa Grzechowski*

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Andrew A. Green-Secretary  
Board of Education

*For detailed conversation, Board meetings may be viewed in their entirety on our website: [www.southgateschools.com](http://www.southgateschools.com)*























