



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Anderson High School
15475 Leroy
Southgate-48195

**BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

PRESIDENT

TIMOTHY O. ESTHEIMER

DATE: November 4, 2020 7:01 p.m.

VICE PRESIDENT

ANDREW A. GREEN

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Lamos, Pomponio,

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Sage

SECRETARY

DR. DARLENE L. POMPONIO

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Pastor, Baker-Herring, Wilson

TREASURER

RICK LAMOS

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. Estheimer explained the format for the Superintendent interviews.

TRUSTEES

JASON CRAIG
NEIL J. FREITAS
SHAWN SAGE

INTERVIEWS FOR SUPERINTENDENT

Ms. Sharon Irvine was the first candidate to be interviewed by the board. Board members took turns asking questions of the candidate.

Mr. Martin's interview began at 7:45 p.m. with questions from each board member.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Ms. Shannon Swauger read the following statement: Thank you for the opportunity to speak once again this evening to offer my support for Mr. Jason Martin as the next Superintendent for the Southgate Community School District.

ADMINISTRATION

SUPERINTENDENT

JILL M. PASTOR

When I spoke last time, I offered many reasons why I "want" Mr. Martin to be our next Superintendent, and while all of those still ring true, tonight I'd like to direct your attention as to why we "need" Mr. Martin to be our next Superintendent in our district.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

DIRECTOR

BARBARA WILSON, CFO

Our K-5 educational buildings qualify as Title 1 schools, and the at-risk population keeps growing each year. One of the programs that our current Superintendent has created is the use of Student Stories to best serve our at-risk population; this means that teams of educators come together to make notation of aspects that could have an influence on how learning impacts individual students...the type of information that goes beyond curriculum. These stories are a fluid document that travels with the student each year to best inform educators on aspects of the student's demographic and background, and the power they have is invaluable. They help educators teach to the whole child, to scaffold for both academics as well as social emotional wellbeing. If we are going to continue to focus on making an impact on students during the most precious foundational years to better reach them throughout their educational career, we need a leader who can fill this role seamlessly. Who better to continue this program than a loyal, dedicated member of the Titan community that undoubtedly has experience with hundreds of families over the last 25 years?

CURRICULUM/FEDERAL

PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

DR. MICHELLE BAKER-
HERRING

We need someone that has positive, established relationships with our district families, community departments, Business Department, Curriculum Department, Special Education Department, Technology Department, our current bargaining units, our Latchkey, Pre School, and Adult Education programs, Athletics, Building and Maintenance, our Board of Education...the list could go on and on. Mr. Martin has proven to be successful in his past and present roles in bringing unity in each of these areas and possesses constructive working relationships that will continue to be built upon.

Mr. Martin himself has told you that he is not an expert in all these facets; some sections may not look as polished on a resume as others. What is understood though is these can be easily expanded upon based on the working partnerships Mr. Martin already has proven. The fields that are not so easy to learn, the relationships with stakeholders, the backgrounds needed to drive important decisions, Mr. Martin has got those locked down better than most leaders in his position.

On an unrelated, but just as important note, I would like to end by stating that it is my understanding that the next scheduled meeting for the Return to Learn plan review is November 24th. I am asking you all, to wholeheartedly reconsider this date to review the plan as soon as possible as the daily Covid-19 data and metrics demand this revision. Please keep our students and staff safe at home, learning remotely, and keeping it status quo for consistency in learning. Thank you.

Mr. Eric Reiss addressed the board; I would like to thank the entire School Board for their hard work and dedication as it pertains to the health and well-being of students at our schools. As a lifelong Southgate resident, I realize and appreciate the hard decisions that you have had to make and hope you continue to keep our community safety in mind as your number one priority. I have two children and a spouse on staff in Southgate Schools. I am currently the Treasurer for Fordline Elementary's PTO. I am here today to ask again to consider Jason Martin to fill our Superintendent position for Southgate Schools. Mr. Martin has spent his entire career as an educator in the Southgate School system. He has passion in what he does and he believe that each student has the potential for greatness, a TITAN in every sense of the word, he is a workhorse. I have seen countless nights where Mr. Martin was still at the School at 7:00 - 8:00 at night making sure to resolve any issue that needed to be taken care of. I respect his work ethic, his passion for current and former students and his desire and dedication to our School district. These things cannot be taught or be seen on a resume. I firmly believe he is the right person to help continue to move our district in the right direction. Thank you for your time.

Mr. C.J. Pokorny read the following statement: My name is C.J. Pokorny, and I have 2 kids that currently attend Davidson Middle School, and Fordline Elementary before that. I want to start off by commending the Board, Administration, Teachers, and supporting staff for the efforts that have been spent to get our children back to learning. I understand that you can't make everyone happy all the time, but you all have done your best to try to do just that, all the while keeping the safety of our students a top priority.

My wife and I have chosen to keep our kids on the remote learning option, mostly due to the Covid rates increasing to greater levels now than when the State first shutdown, but we also looked at how their learning would be impacted. I watch the news every night, and repeatedly see schools trying to go back face to face, then they get one or more positive cases, which causes more students to have to stay home in quarantine, or they choose to send the kids back to remote learning. With the remote option given to us, we can help our kids avoid the yo-yo of back to school-back to remote learning.

I would like to voice a concern to the board regarding the implementation date of when the hybrid/remote option becomes effective. The student are approximately 2 months into the first semester.

It is my understanding that a result of implementing the hybrid/remote option at Davidson will cause a large number of students' schedules to change, whether it is a mix up of class order, or classes no longer being offered remotely due to limited number of teachers. How will grades be handled for kids that have attended a class for 2 months, then get dropped into a different class. How will a student that gets dropped into a new class catch up on the past 2 months of lessons to avoid falling behind.

I believe it makes more sense that the implementation date for the remote/hybrid option be pushed until the completion of this first semester. This would keep students home safe through the holidays, allow for time for quarantining as some may be exposed to large groups during the holidays, and it would allow for an appropriate breakpoint to start new schedules.

I would also like to express our opinion that the Board should choose Jason Martin as the next Southgate Superintendent. I met Mr. Martin a few years ago when he became the principal at Fordline. Mr. Martin came in with an enthusiasm and energy that was infectious, and his concern for the well-being and success for the kids was astounding. I was a volunteer basketball coach for the YMCA that year and one of my practice nights was at Fordline. There were numerous times that we came into the building around 7:00 or 8:00 PM and Mr. Martin was still there preparing for the next day. There is no question that Mr. Martin will dedicate the time and effort required to be successful leader.

Southgate Schools has been through a number of Superintendents in the last seven years, and I think Mr. Martin would provide long term stability within the district. His entire career has been here in Southgate, he is invested in our District, and he is a product of our District. The Southgate Schools Mission statement is "Learning for Life". What message will it send if someone who has spent their entire professional life here and is fully qualified, is skipped over to an outsider-that you're good enough to work for us, but not to lead us? Please vote for Mr. Martin as the new Superintendent. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ms. Beth Hinzmann read a statement on behalf of the Southgate Principals and Supervisors Association: The Southgate Principals and Supervisors Association endorses Jason Martin as the next Superintendent of the Southgate Community School District.

In this turbulent time, relationships are more important than ever. Jason is a leader who understands the wants, needs, and dynamics of the community. He has established a positive rapport with the families. The commitment that he has shown our schools throughout the last 25 years has earned him a reputation as a dedicated, hardworking trailblazer.

Through Jason's extensive experience and knowledge of the Downriver Career and Technical Consortium, he has managed to create and expand multiple learning and experiential opportunities for our students, spring boarding them into higher education and lucrative careers. Jason has been leading for many years in our district as a department head, school improvement team chairperson, middle school assistant principal, high school assistant principal, and elementary school principal.

Our recent history with our out of district superintendents has not been stellar. One took us deeply into debt while continuing to interview for superintendent positions in other districts, and the other stayed for less than two years not competing his contract. Although our past two superintendents did not have previous Superintendent experience, they did, like Jason, have an understanding of the Southgate Community and a strong Titan Spirit. Leslie Hainrihar-Chretien was able to work with the unions to get us out of debt and lead the way to pass a bond proposal through her established Southgate relationships. Jill Pastor has kept us out of debt and also led the way to pass a bond proposal through her established Southgate relationships. Multiple bond proposals from the previous superintendents all failed.

Jason's decades long investment in Southgate will help us continue the Southgate Community School District's momentum through its teaching and learning initiatives while focusing on long term goals. Jason will not shy away from tough decisions or situations and will be able to appropriately navigate the district through difficult times.

Jason is the best choice as superintendent for the Southgate Community School District. We endorse Jason Martin entirely and without reservation. We thank you for your time and consideration regarding this very important decision.

Ms. Theresa Grzechowski addressed the board; I have lived in Southgate for 31 years and have been involved in the district for 24 years with 20 of those years working for the district. I have been the secretary to the superintendent since December 2013 and have worked with three superintendents in that time. I have seen first-hand three styles of leadership and three superintendents that did not know everything when they began their superintendent career, but each of them had access to and utilized, an extensive collaborative network to assist them in the many aspects of a superintendent's job.

I am appealing to each of you to support Mr. Jason Martin as our next superintendent. He has dedicated himself to Southgate Schools for his entire education career. As an intelligent education professional, he will know how to reach out for the guidance he may need. He also has the support from many staff members that will want to see him succeed in his role as superintendent and will assist him for the sake of this district, we all love. We will not want to see him fail and will do what we can to make sure he does not. Thank you for the hard work you do every day, I appreciate all of you.

Ms. Beth Altizer addressed the board; I would like to speak to the board in support of Jason Martin as our next superintendent of Southgate Schools. I have been fortunate enough to know Mr. Martin as a community member working on committees; as a parent with students at Davidson and Anderson when he was an administrator there; and also as a supervisor when I was at Fordline as a PBIS Interventionist and later a Computer Teacher.

Mr. Martin has shown his commitment, dedication and dependability through his many years of service in SCSD. His knowledge base is strong regarding our history in Southgate, in the struggles we have faced and the challenges we have overcome. Mr. Martin offers a great deal of stability for our district in these uncertain times and would offer a seamless transition. I truly feel Mr. Martin would be our best choice. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

2020/21-52 It was moved by Mr. Craig supported by Dr. Pomponio, the board adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

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

NO:

Respectfully submitted by: Theresa Grzechowski

Dr. Darlene Pomponio-Secretary
Board of Education

