



Independent School District No. 834 – Stillwater Area Public Schools
Video Conference
October 22, 2020 – 6:00 p.m. Meeting Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6: p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Present: Sarah Stivland, chair; Mike Ptacek, clerk; Tina Riehle, treasurer; Timothy Brewington, director, Bill Gilles, director, Jennifer Pelletier, director; Liz Weisberg, director

III. **Approval of the Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda by Member Ptacek; seconded by: Member Riehle; Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays, Motion Carried Unanimously.

IV. **Superintendent Report**

- Please join the Partnership Plan in our Pony Up for Kids virtual campaign and help reach the goal of raising \$50,000 to continue work in enhancing the education of all students in Stillwater Area Public Schools. Visit www.ponyupforkids.org from October 23-26.
- Unity Day was October 20 with a purpose to demonstrate together against bullying, acceptance and inclusion of all students.
- Many of our teachers and families have been able to connect this week virtually as part of our fall conferences.
- The high school's yearbook earned the state's highest honors at the recent Minnesota State High School Journalism Convention. The yearbook earned the top award for Best of Show and also received All-State Gold honors. Several students also received Gold Medallions for individual excellence.
- The high school's Pony Express newspaper also earned several top awards from the Journalism Education Association and Minnesota High School Press Association.
- Thanks to Community Thread for supporting our schools. Volunteers donated 200 "busy kits". The kits are filled with coloring books, crayons, paper and fidget toys that help entertain students exhibiting signs of illness while they wait for a family member to pick them up from school.
- The District is beginning to develop plans and timelines for a referendum November 2021. We'll be engaging in conversations about our facility needs for a potential bond, expiring levy, considering our need for additional levy funding and a possible technology levy. RFP's for a financial advisor, architect, construction manager and community engagement consultant has been posted. RFPs will close on November 3. Work sessions will be scheduled.

V. **Introductory Items**

A. **Student Report**

Mara provided a report on academics – High school hosted ACT for seniors which were rescheduled from March with the use of masks and social distancing. Students can pick up academic letters this week that were awarded during a virtual ceremony. Finals are coming up. Seniors are applying for colleges and scholarships will open Oct. 30 with over 100 scholarships awarded from the community.

Brynn provided a report on activities/student life – Ongoing efforts to unify the student body during COVID with the promotion of three theme weeks – Post Homecoming, Chill Week, and Unity Week. Many clubs have various ongoing activities with a blood drive in Lake Elmo; Music departments are practicing for upcoming virtual concerts; Drama and Theater is practicing for their play; Business Professionals of America are attending a virtual conference; Political clubs are hanging posters and preparing for a debate. Many students are enjoying the new movie 'Cloud'.

Encouraging messages are being sent to the freshman. Fall athletic updates were provided. Preparation for winter sports has begun.

- B. Recognition – Superintendent Lansfeldt recognized and introduced Paula McDonald, Supervisor for Health Services, Deb Hammergren, COVID Triage Nurse, and Nicole Myers, Licensed School Nurse, as well as the entire Health Services staff for their hard work during the COVID pandemic. Ms. McDonald, Ms. Hammergren and Ms. Myers shared some of the activities and guidance they provide during the pandemic along with all the health care staff.

VI. Open Forum

- 1. James Franklin – 642 Midwest Trail Place North – Board financial accountability
- 2. Pamela Carlson – 1266 Paris Tr N – Concern with the current board
- 3. Alison Sherman – 10954 Ashley Ln – Concern with the time frame for community to have input on the restructure for Finance and Operations.

VII. Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes of the October 8, 2020 Special Meeting
- B. Disbursement Register October 10-23, 2020
- C. Gifts and Donations – August 2020
- D. Human Resources Personnel Report

Motion by Member Weisberg to approve the Consent Agenda items; Seconded by: Member Brewington; Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays, Motion Carried Unanimously.

VIII. Reports

- A. On the Dial Learning Update

Superintendent Lansfeldt reported on the current status of the learning model. Looking at the data Washington County is at 32.65 cases per 10,000 over the past 14 days. This puts us in the Hybrid Learning Model for elementary students and distance learning for secondary students.

The COVID dashboard for our district was shared which is updated weekly on Friday. The dashboard will provide a weekly overview of active COVID cases and exposure/quarantine rates within the district. The dashboard will be updated every Friday and posted online. For the time period of October 9-15 the current status shows:

Active COVID-19 Cases – students: 7; staff: 0

Total Exposed/Quarantined – students: 153; staff: 32 – number of individuals identified as having COVID related symptoms; exposed to someone who has tested positive; or have tested positive for COVID.

Cumulative COVID Cases – students: 23; staff: 14 – This is the total number of positive cases since the start of the school year.

Attending weekly meetings with the metro area superintendents and our regional support team as well as working with MDE and MDH to stick to our plan and the data. We continue to look at staffing coverage which has been difficult to find substitutes. Discussion was held on the possibility of moving secondary students into distance learning for second quarter. This will be reviewed and brought back for possible board action at the November 5 board meeting.

We are supporting the students by focusing on building connections with the students personally. Teachers both in hybrid and 100% online have more one-on-one and small group time with kids, get to know them better and can respond quickly. In the middle school bubble, the advisory teachers worked with students on how to stay healthy and organize their work and built community and engaged kids with their peers. The high school advisory is making time available each afternoon for students to meet in small groups or with individual teachers, counselors, and other staff for additional support.

We are supporting families by offering free meals for 2020-21, providing a COVID triage nurse and online family tech support.

An online survey will be sent out next week to families to provide stakeholder feedback. The goal is to better understand the experience of our families, students and staff in this new learning environment by identifying challenges to address at school, how the district can best support stakeholders during the pandemic and strategies to connect with families. Will also ask families to participate in a focus group on what is working and to ensure families and students are getting support

B. Reimagine Stillwater Schools

Dr. Cherry shared how equity and integration are built into the World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Strategic Plan. We are specifically looking at how the goals are laid out and how we are monitoring WBWF and the work we are doing across the district to ensure we are meeting these goals. Dr. Cherry reviewed the five goals that were approved at a May School Board meeting and where we are with these. The WBWF advisory committee had 35 parents, students and community members express an interest. A steering committee of volunteers will then be developed after the first WBWF meeting. Meetings will be scheduled on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

C. Contract Reviews

Mr. Sundell shared the school board requested a change to contract and expenditure procedures to enhance clarity and consistency at the October 8, 2020 business board meeting. A new procedure for contracts within the administration's authority less than \$50,000 will be brought to the Board after execution.

Contracts from October 9, 2020 to October 15, 2020 are as follows:

- Intermediate District 287 Setting IV Special Ed Program - \$ 17.30 per membership hour
- Anoka County Community Action Program ECSE Head Start Program – no cost
- KidCreate Studio – Art/Craft classes for age 5-12 years – Price varies from \$13.00 to \$49.00 per child
- Red Cape CPR Training – A Virtual Pet CPR/1st Aid Certification Course – no cost

D. Firewall Replacement

Mr. Perry reported the current district firewall license costs increased this year due to VPN costs required to support remote learning. Licensing costs are moving from \$30K/year to \$50K/year. The district can achieve more favorable pricing by replacing our equipment and bundling 3-year licensing. This will also support our future upgrade both to 10GB Internet services if/when needed. After year three we go back to an annual payment. This was discussed at the Finance Work Group meeting today. A purchase order for approval will be brought to the next board meeting.

IX. Action Items

A. Chromebook Purchases

Mr. John Perry is requesting the purchase of 2,200 Chromebooks to replace and replenish aging Chromebooks district-wide, as needed to maintain state testing guidelines and to meet the needs of our students. The cost of the Chromebooks will come out of the CARES Act funds.

Motion by: Member Weisberg to approve the proposed CDW-G quote in the amount of \$672,100; Seconded by: Member Ptacek; Vote: 7 ayes, 0 nays, Motion Carried Unanimously.

B. Board Meeting Decision-Making Model

Chair Stivland indicated that due to questions from the community and Board members we would like to discuss if we should have board meetings in person or virtually. We have been given guidance that we are in a pandemic and we should practice physical distancing. A discussion was held and options explored on whether or not it is safe and adventitious to have the board meetings in person. The various board meeting location options were shared with the advantages and disadvantages and the questions around the locations.

Considerations and concerns will be reviewed and brought back at a future board meeting on how to best hold in-person Board meetings.

Motion by: Member Pelletier to move to in person Board meeting at Oak Park on November 5; Seconded by: Member Gillis.

Motion by: Member Pelletier to amend the original motion to move to in person Board meetings at Oak Park to November 19; Seconded by: Member Gillis; Vote: 4 ayes (Brewington, Gillis, Pelletier, Riehle); 3 nays (Ptacek, Weisberg, Stivland)

Motion by: Member Stivland to table this topic to gather more information; Seconded by Member Weisberg; Vote: 5 ayes (Brewington, Ptacek, Riehle, Weisberg, Stivland); 2 nays (Gillis, Pelletier).

C. Finance and Operations Department Restructure

Superintendent Lansfeldt reported the District is seeking approval for the addition of a Director of Operations position, in conjunction with a restructure of the Finance and Operations department as follows:

1. Elimination of the Executive Director of Finance and Operations and replacement of the position with a Director of Finance (estimated reduction in cost of \$21,000 annually). This position will report directly to the Superintendent and will be responsible for Finance and Enrollment.
2. Addition of a Director of Operations position (estimated increased cost of \$190,000 annually). This position will report directly to the Superintendent and will be responsible for Facilities and Site Operations and Nutrition Services. The Director of Operations will also be the District contact/oversight for Transportation Management Services.
3. Outsourcing of Transportation Management Services (estimated to be cost neutral or a slight reduction in cost, depending on the outcome of negotiation of contract for services). As a part of this service, the District would be provided a Director of Transportation, a Coordinator of Transportation and an Assistant Router position. This service has been provided by CESO since July 2020. The District has had initial conversations with CESO regarding the possibility of continuing to provide this service on a longer term basis, i.e. two to three years. With approval of the plan, the District would intend to bring a negotiated contract for services for Board approval at the November 5, 2020 Board meeting.

The estimated overall increased (ongoing) cost to the General Fund as a result of this restructure is \$169,000 which is the overall difference in cost of the addition of a director position (+\$190,000), minus the cost savings of changing an Executive Director position to a Director position (-\$21,000).

Motion by: Member Weisberg for approval of the proposed restructure, including the addition of a Director of Operations and the outsourcing of Transportation Management Services, pending Board approval of a Contract at an upcoming Board meeting; Seconded by: Member Riehle; Vote: 6 ayes, 1 nays (Pelletier), Motion Carried.

X. Board Reports

- A. Board Chair Report – Pony up for Kids for the Partnership Plan is going on Oct 23-26. Community Thread in the midst of Holiday Hope as this helps families during the holidays. COVID is on the rise in 39 states.
- B. Working Group Reports
 1. Community Engagement – No meeting
 2. Finance and Operations – Met this morning. Annette presented the Community Ed. Budget which will have an over expenditure. The challenges for Community Ed were shared. John Perry presented his items presented at the board meeting.
 3. Legislative – Legislative Committee met once. Working on a legislative platform. Next meeting is November 6, 11-12:30.
 4. Policy – Next meeting on Oct 26 2-3:30.
- C. Member Reports:

Director Ptacek urged his colleagues to consider becoming versed on the 80 20 10 Educational Finance Reform Proposal. This School Finance proposal has been in the works for two years by a working committee appointed by Governor Walz. Highly regarded and extremely knowledgeable Tom Melcher, formerly of MDE has made several

group presentations to education groups including AMSD, MSBA, and SEE. Those presentations are available to board members on their respective websites. Attended the first Community Education Advisory Council.
Director Gilles – Thank Chair Stivland and Superintendent Lansfeldt for being forthright and having the information available and visible at the board meetings and your leadership in sorting out the bus garage issue.
Director Riehle – Attended the SEE Fall meeting on Oct 20.
Director Pelletier – Legal fees are very high and ask that the procedure form also include legal counsel calls and content of the discussion. NAMI organization has an opportunity for a virtual “Super Saturday” for people struggling with mental health free of charge.

XI. Adjournment

- A. The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Mike Ptacek, Clerk