



REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Electronically Held

**BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

https://youtu.be/ZzoFOFg_W8M

PRESIDENT

TIMOTHY O. ESTHEIMER

DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021 7:00 P.M.

VICE PRESIDENT

ANDREW A. GREEN

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

SECRETARY

DR. DARLENE L. POMPONIO

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

TREASURER

JASON CRAIG

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Irvine, Baker-Herring, Wilson

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. Estheimer read the District Mission and Vision Statements.

TRUSTEES

NEIL J. FREITAS

RICK LAMOS

SHAWN SAGE

REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

2020/21-124 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio supported by Mr. Green, the board approve the February 23, 2021 Regular Board meeting agenda.

ADMINISTRATION

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

NO:

SUPERINTENDENT

SHARON IRVINE

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Ms. Irvine read a citizen comment submitted through the website:

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

DIRECTOR

BARBARA WILSON, CFO

Robert Pawlowski: Good Evening, I hope everyone is doing well and staying safe, But I do have some concerns and questions for you guys tonight. Now since you guys are starting to ease the students back into the habit of going back into the schools for face to face learning, we go back dealing with the issue of bullying again, because of coming back into the schools for learning face to face. Now my question is, What can we do more to put an end to bullying in this district besides the forms that you guys have on your website to fill out and send into the building administrators when there is bullying going on, in a school, inside this district? What can we do more to fix that and put bullying to an end for good in this district though? Now I know talking to a staff member is one of the only and easiest options to let someone know if bullying is going on in a school, But we need more tools besides the two that I just mentioned if we want to put a stop to bullying in this district, and school district all across the country, But just this district I'm only focused on tonight. If anyone who is watching this meeting tonight has seen the movie Wonder it will tell you a lot about students getting bullied in schools for no reason because the person who's doing it has no reason why he is bullying this person, to their mind it's probably an thrill to them, in there mind.

CURRICULUM/FEDERAL

PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

DR. MICHELLE BAKER-

HERRING

Also it also points out prime factors on why we need change when it comes to this type of topic though. I have not been bullied at all in my life, So I can't relate to people that have been bullied in their life, But the only reason I'm bringing up this subject tonight is because, to stick up for the people that have gone through that and letting them know you have a voice and you don't have to be silent because you are not alone and there are people that can support you and can relate to you when it comes to when you have been bullied by someone, Just not me because I've never went through it in my life though. But anyway to rap up this topic in general, The only message I'm going to send out tonight to the board of education is that, "We need a change when it comes to bullying in our schools, in this district", and that's the message I'm going to send out tonight to the board of education, and that's really all I have to say on that topic, But other than that. That's all I have to say tonight, Thank you guys for acknowledging my comment tonight and I will get back to you Ms Irvine via phone call tomorrow since you have called me back recently regarding the comments I made and the last board meeting and it ends up being phone tag afterwards, Maybe it's just not my week, I don't know, but I will reach out to you tomorrow if you are available, Thank you. Also let Mr Kemp and Mr Himick know that I said Hello, It's been a while since I talked to them and I'm just wondering how things have been going for them though. But Other than that, Hope you guys have a wonderful rest of your week and also have a great weekend as well. Hopefully the next Board Meeting in the future I attend and speak at, Is hopefully in the Board Meeting Room at the High school or Middle school hopefully, Then finally you guys get to hear public comments over the microphone in person, including my comments as well after a long year of no social interaction when everything was remote at the time, Hopefully it will be very soon, and I will be looking forward to it when you guys give out the okay to hold these meetings in person again. But anyway, Have a great rest of your day, Thank you guys and take care, Stay safe out there.

PRESENTATIONS

GSRP Preschool-Ms. Irvine gave the board a power point presentation on the proposed GSRP-Great Start Readiness Program-Free Preschool. Our district has the option to have free preschool for up to 72 slots. There would be 4 classrooms housed at Asher during the 2021 school year with the option to have both in-person and virtual. This is a full day program Monday's through Thursdays starting April 7th and going through June 17th. There would be no residency requirements, so no qualifying factors in this case. If we can get this program going for the 2021 school year we will get full funding for every student who is interested in participating during that time frame. We would also have the opportunity to get funding for the full 72 slots whether or not we were able to get all 72 slots filled.

For the 2021/2022 school year we again will have 72 slots available, 18 per classrooms. We will put our preschools into our elementary schools so that every elementary would be Pre-K through 5. That is a pretty substantial change. We do have a childcare program right now that is a tuition based preschool program. This new program would provide us with some options for students that are currently in that program or that would still have an option for tuition based if that is something that our community still needs. We would have GSRP from October 1st through May 27, 2022 on an annual basis. There would be no residency requirements but there would be qualifying factors.

This program has a state curriculum involved; it's high scope, creative curriculum. There are home visits September through June. There are parent involvement requirements. Wayne RESA will provide materials and furniture for four classrooms.

The per-pupil allocation is \$7,250. For 72 slots the amount would be \$522,000 for the 2020/2021 school year regardless of the number of students enrolled. There would be some additional transportation funding options if we decide to move into bussing for our preschool students.

The expenditures for 2021; it would cost about \$80,000 for four teachers, total would be \$320,000. These would be UTS teachers, they would be certified. There would be four associate teachers at \$30,000 for a total of \$120,000. An early childhood specialist is required, that stipend is to be determined. We do have a principal on staff who has filled this role in the past, Ms. Chilson. There would be curriculum training materials assessment responsibilities that would amount to about \$20,000 per year.

The money that comes through this year could be used for improvements in our facilities that will support our preschool students such as; clear out landscaping mulch that is in the elementary playgrounds and replace it with certified playground mulch. We can use the money toward licensing requirements and can include upgrades or additions to playgrounds to make sure that there are play sites for children four years of age. We can also use this to consider the purchase of busses if we want to offer transportation services to preschool.

Implementation Roll-Out:

- February 13-March 26-Facility Licensing
- February 22,23-Wayne RESA/SCSD Panning Meetings
- February 23-Board Presentation
- February 24-Posting for Teachers and Associate Teachers
- March 1-Curriculum Selection-Program Advertising
- March 9-Board Approval of GSRP Contract with Wayne RESA
- March 10 - June 1 -2020/2021 GSRP Enrollment
- April 7-2020/2021 GSRP Programming Begins
- April 7 - October 1- 2021-2022 GSRP Recruitment/Enrollment with SAA

Kindergarten teachers had an overwhelmingly positive response to this program and feel it is important for our district to have this option. Districts around us have some form of GSRP program. This program is an important step in student achievement and moving forward into kindergarten with some strong skill sets. It is also an early chance for our Southgate residents to attach to us. This is an important step in pulling our community back to full participation in our school system.

Board members discussed the expenditures and revenue, full day/half day slots and the costs down the road with step increases for teaching staff.

SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

Ms. Irvine is excited the high school is back and it is going well. She heard from many staff and students how nice it is to be back after almost a year. Food Service; the EBT cards are being offered to our families again. All of our families in elementary and middle school qualify for free and reduced lunch and will receive approximately \$127 per month for the months that we were remote. High School students' eligibility is based on the free and reduced lunch application that was submitted and approved. This is a huge benefit to our families and community.

FINANCE UPDATE

None

CONSENT

2020/21-125 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio supported by Mr. Lamos, the board approve the Feb. 2, 2021 Winter Retreat Minutes, Feb. 9, 2021 Regular Board Meeting Minutes and the HR Update.

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Lamos, Pomponio, Sage
NO:

ACTION

- 1. Approval of the Purchase of the Replacement Slide for Allen Elementary:** Ms. Irvine explained, according to board policy #5300, all items that exceed \$3,500 must be brought to the Board for approval. This purchase exceeds the required amount. We are requesting the approval of the replacement of the tube slide at Allen Elementary, at a total cost of \$5,034.58. This slide has been broken and blocked off for two years. The costs of this replacement will be attributed to the 2015 Bond Program. Because of safety requirements and warranties associated with installation, both the purchase of the equipment and the installation will be handled by the original vendor, Midstates Recreation. Multiple bids were not collected. Discussion took place about prioritizing a list of needs across the district, the cost of this slide, liabilities and risks regarding broken equipment.

2020/21-126 It was moved by Mr. Craig supported by Mr. Green, the board approve the purchase Of the replacement tube slide for Allen Elementary in the amount of \$5,034.58 from Midstates Recreation.

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Lamos, Pomponio, Sage.
NO:

- 2. Approval of the One-Year Extension for Dean Transportation:** Ms. Irvine explained, the current three-year contract with Dean Transportation for Special Education transportation expires on June 30, 2021. At our request, Dean Transportation offered a one-year contract extension of these services, moving forward the annual 2.7% cost increase embedded in their expiring three-year contract. Dean Transportation has provided excellent service over the past three years. They make every effort to reduce costs to Southgate Community School by combining bus runs. These reductions are evident in the comparisons between projected and actual costs from year to year. We have had few complaints from parents or special education staff. The current contract, and subsequent extension, embeds a discount for school closures of 45%. During the District's closure for remote instruction in 2020, the District saved nearly \$400,000 because of this discount. Over the past three years, the costs of special education transportation have been:

- 2018-2019 \$1,057,729-Projected
\$1,015,167-Actual
- 2019-2020 \$1,086,288-Projected
\$833,360-Actual with 45% discount
- 2020-2021 \$1,115,618-Projected
\$900,000 Projected with 45% discount
- 2021-2022 \$1,145,740-Projected

Discussion took place about the bid process, potential future bussing, and the quality of service being given to us by Dean Transportation.

2020/21-127 It was moved by Mr. Lamos supported by Mr. Craig, the board extend the contract with Dean Transportation for one year, 2021-2022, as presented.

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Lamos, Pomponio, Sage
NO:

- 3. Approval of the Suspension of State Assessment Requirements for High School Graduation:**
Ms. Irvine explained, Board Policy 2002, Learning and Achievement, states the following for graduation requirements:

In order to graduate and receive a high school diploma from the School District, a student must successfully complete all coursework required by law, all credits, coursework, and assessments required by the School District and all other requirements that may be established and published from time to time by the Board.

Because of the shut-down last spring that prevented juniors from taking the SAT, the SAT will not be required by Michigan for 2021 graduating seniors. The state has further petitioned the federal government to waive assessment requirements such as M-STEP. Because we require state testing for the purposes of graduation, and the Board has supported our requirements through board policy, this motion suspends graduation requirements that are associated with state-waived testing. Although we will still have an option for the SAT in the spring, we will not require our seniors to take it to graduate.

2020/21-128 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio supported by Mr. Green, the board suspend state assessment requirements for high school graduation to the extent that they have been waived by the State of Michigan for 2021.

Mr. Green wanted to make it clear for the viewing public that this is pending the waiver from the state. If the State of Michigan says we have to do this and someone tries to revert back to this board meeting because they are confused and say well you said that my son/daughter didn't have to take this test. We are recommending to suspend it as long as the state suspends it or gives us some variable or adjust it, modify it to some degree.

YES: Craig, Estheimer, Freitas, Green, Lamos, Pomponio, Sage
NO:

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES

None

INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Irvine mentioned she will be sending out an invite to the policy subcommittee to meet.

Dr. Pomponio commented that she and the board, for years, have had zero tolerance for bullying in this district. The Anti-Bullying forms, bullying complaint forms, are available in the offices throughout the district. There is also an app "OK to Say", it goes directly to the State Police and is found on our website. It is always o.k. to go to an administrator. She asked that the superintendent share any bullying reports with the board, now that kids are back in school so the board can monitor that.

Mr. Lamos commented how excited he is that we're back to school and really happy we were able to offer the parents the choice to do as they felt best for their kids. He is most appreciative of all of our staff for making it operationally sound; not an insignificant task. He is sure everyone is excited to be back.

Mr. Green commended the community for bearing with the board whether they agreed or not when the difficult decision was made to return. We stuck with our plan without modifying it, we stayed within the parameters for the most part through the ever-changing and fluidity of the laws; without much help from the state government. He thanked the community and his fellow board members, welcomed the teachers and athletes back. He also commented on the fact that some board members over the last several months have faced tragedy and are going through some tough times. Through it all they have put on a solid face, come to the board meetings, work behind the scenes and did everything they could with family loss and tragedy. He wanted the community to know that and how lucky they are to have the people sitting on this board that are living their lives and still doing what they need to do in this community.

Mr. Estheimer welcomed everyone back and thanked staff and students and commented that we are excited to have everyone back.

Mr. Estheimer shared a communication he received from Wayne RESA congratulating us and all schools in Wayne County on the successful passage of the regional enhancement millage renewal. This was from the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Trustees of Wayne County RESA.

ADJOURNMENT

2020/21-129 It was moved by Mr. Green supported by Mr. Craig the board adjourn the Regular meeting at 7:49 p.m.

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

NO:

WORK SESSION 7:50 p.m.

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

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Irvine, Baker-Herring, Wilson

DISCUSSION

Continuity of Learning Plan: Ms. Irvine spoke about the next opportunity parents will have to choose the in-person option for the next semester. The current elementary space was reviewed. The target number is 20 per class. There are approximately 234 seats available across grades, across the schools.

Board members discussed the class sizes, options for parents and potential legislation offering \$250 per student incentive to get all students to return to 5 full days and how that might look. Further discussion took place regarding the number of teachers/staff that have been vaccinated.

Parents are beginning to ask what options are going to be available for next year. Discussion took place about in-person, remote, virtual and what future modes of education will look like. It was questioned where the touch screen notebooks are and what is happening with the order.

Elementary families will be asked to tell us if they want to come back and we are doing that in the first week of March. The board will still be approving the three modes of instruction at the first meeting in March.

ADJOURNMENT

2020/21-130 It was moved by Mr. Lamos supported by Dr. Pomponio, the board adjourn the work session at 8:18 p.m.

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

NO:

Respectfully submitted by: Theresa Grzechowski

Dr. Darlene Pomponio-Secretary
Board of Education

For detailed conversation, Board meetings may be viewed in their entirety on our website: www.southgateschools.com

