

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625  
Saint Paul, Minnesota**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
360 Colborne Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102, and**

Available Streaming Online at [www.spps.org/boe](http://www.spps.org/boe) and Saint Paul Cable Channel 16

**December 19, 2023  
5:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Jim Vue, Chair.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Board of Education: J. Kopp, Z. Ellis, J. Foster, H. Henderson, U. Ward, J. Vue, C. Allen  
Superintendent Gothard

C. Long, General Counsel; S. Dahlke, Assistant Clerk

**3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA**

**MOTION: Director Vue moved approval of the order of the main agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Henderson.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Yes
Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes

**4. RECOGNITIONS**

**BF 33513** Acknowledgement of Good Work Provided by Outstanding District Employees

1. **Errol Edwards**, St. Anthony Park Elementary school counselor, recently was honored as the 2024 Minnesota School Counselor of the Year at the Minnesota School Counselors' Association conference in Rochester.

This marks the third consecutive year that a Saint Paul Public Schools counselor has been named the Minnesota School Counselor of the Year. Mr. Edwards joins Jeanette Vyhanek and Keela Kuhlens in receiving this honor.

Mr. Edwards was also named the 2022 Minnesota Elementary School Counselor of the Year. He is in his seventh year as an SPPS school counselor. Prior to his role at St. Anthony Park, he was a school counselor at Barack & Michelle Obama Elementary.

Karen Duke, principal of St. Anthony Park Elementary, said : "Mr. Edwards works tirelessly to ensure the success of our students and their families. Whether supporting a family through a mental health crisis, greeting students at buses each morning, teaching classroom lessons about career dreams, modeling courage and honesty in talking about race with colleagues and students, or leading our school's PBIS team, Mr. Edwards embodies the principles of compassion, authenticity, skill, and commitment in working every day toward more just and equitable education for our students."

2. **Josh Leonard**, Education Director of Belwin Outdoor Science, recently received the Science Teaching Award for Elementary at the 2023 Minnesota Science Teachers Association (MnSTA) Conference in Rochester.

The award comes with a \$1,000 stipend to put toward a classroom project. Josh will use the stipend to support the SPPS Tulip Test Garden Project that is currently in its eighth year. The Tulip Test Gardens are part of the Journey North international community science program and are a way for students to connect to climate science in their own schoolyards. This year, nearly 1,000 SPPS students at 20 schools are participating in the project.

3. **Open World Learning, Creative Arts High School and Central High School** were recently named to the AP School Honor Roll. The AP Honor Roll offers schools recognition across four levels of distinction: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. Schools on the AP School Honor Roll may also earn the AP Access Award, honoring schools that demonstrate a clear and effective commitment to equitable access to advanced coursework.

Open World Learning is one of just a handful of schools recognized in Minnesota with the Gold with Access designation, putting OWL in the top 5 percent in Minnesota and top 6 percent nationally. Creative Arts earned a Bronze with Access designation, and Central earned Silver.

#### **BF 33514** Acknowledgement of Good Work Provided by Students

1. **Hanan Ali** and **Asma Sedik**, both juniors at Highland Park Senior High, attended the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) 67th Annual Conference in San Diego, CA, in October. The CGCS meeting is for urban school superintendents, school board members, and senior school district administrators. Superintendent Joe Gothard and Stacey Gray Akyea, Executive Chief of Equity, Strategy & Innovation were in attendance as well.

Asma did a presentation with Superintendent Joe Gothard and Stacey Gray Akyea, Executive Chief of Equity, Strategy & Innovation. Their joint presentation was entitled, "Saint Paul Public Schools: How Are the Children? Learning About School From Students."

Asma is the president of the Muslim Student Association and the junior vice president of the Black Student Union. Asma speaks three languages. She is a member of the National Honor Society, African Student Association, the equity club and Link Crew (Student Leadership) and Student Council, Breakthrough Twin Cities and College Possible. In addition to enrolling in IB courses, she is enrolled at Saint Paul College in the Post-Secondary Education Options program (PSEO).

Hanan participated on a student town hall panel with National Public Radio (NPR) while at the conference. Council Executive Director Ray Hart said "This town hall will provide students -- who are most impacted by the decisions urban school leaders make -- the opportunity to be in front of an audience of the nation's big-city school board members and superintendents, where they will be able to share their unique perspectives."

Eight high school students from Baltimore, Dallas, Denver, Fort Lauderdale, Los Angeles, Reno, San Diego, and Saint Paul participated in the 90-minute town hall moderated by Sequoia Carrillo, a reporter for NPR's Education Team.

Hanan has been enrolled in the Mandarin Immersion Program since kindergarten, making Mandarin her third language. She participates in African Student Association, currently holding the position of vice president, and College Possible. She also volunteers at the Mosque on weekends where she assists younger students at Islamic School. She is looking forward to her senior year of high school and exploring college and career and post-secondary international study options.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 1.  | <u><b>Chiashe Moua</b></u>             | Hmong student experience at Harding                   |
| 2.  | <u><b>Chea Lee</b></u>                 | Hmong student experience at Harding                   |
| 3.  | <u><b>Sai Thao</b></u>                 | Experience of Hmong families                          |
| 4.  | <u><b>Sia Xiong</b></u>                | Parent experience at Harding                          |
| 5.  | <u><b>Mee Moua</b></u>                 | HPAC  |
| 6.  | <u><b>Ber Yang</b></u>                 | Misleading information about Txuj Ci Lower            |
| 7.  | <u><b>Yia Thao</b></u>                 | PreK - Txuj Ci  |
| 8.  | <u><b>Shela Her</b></u>                | Txuj Ci   |
| 9.  | <u><b>Mai Choo Yang</b></u>            | Txuj Ci and PreK                                      |
| 10. | <u><b>Jennifer Mulligan Locket</b></u> | Global Arts Plus safety concerns                      |
| 11. | <u><b>Sarah Nelson</b></u>             | Global Arts Plus safety and lack of support for staff |

**6. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION: Director Vue moved approval of the Order of the Consent Agenda with no items pulled for separate consideration. The motion was seconded by Director Kopp.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

- |                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Director Kopp      | Yes |
| Director Ellis     | Yes |
| Director Foster    | Yes |
| Director Henderson | Yes |
| Director Ward      | Yes |
| Director Vue       | Yes |
| Director Allen     | Yes |

## 7. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of November 14, 2023
- B. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of November 14, 2023
- C. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 5, 2023

**MOTION:** Director Vue moved approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of November 14, 2023; Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of November 14, 2023; and Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 5, 2023. The motion was seconded by Director Henderson.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Yes
Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes

## 8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Minutes of the Committee of the Board Meeting of December 5, 2023

At the Committee of the Board Meeting on December 5, 2023, Superintendent Gothard welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a few, brief updates on both the Superintendent's Virtual Meeting, as well as the Right to Read Family Nights.

The first presentation focused on School Year 2022-2023: District Outcomes. Questions and discussion from the Board included further information on the noted negative percentages and calculations, details on the student categories noted in the presentation, resources or strategies related to the changes, as well as benchmarks in college, career and life. The board noted a recommendation for interim targets within SPPS Achieves, and further information on the level-setting of data since the pandemic, and collection of data for support of students.

Following the reconvening of the meeting due to the Pay24 Levy Presentation and Hearing, the Board then learned more about Budget Engagement and Community Values. This presentation sparked questions and discussion from the Board, including clarification on Round 2 of engagement, communications related to the rationale of decisions, timeline for allocations to schools and programs, and online forms for community feedback. Board members also noted that engagement sessions were well-organized and folks felt welcome, as well as questions on engagement opportunities and their inclusion in the budget engagement. Further details were also requested on phone bank data, and concerns that the focus is on overall community values, and not specific input related to the budget. The timeline of the budget to the Board was also noted as a point of concern, as well as the opportunity for the Board to review and make amendments within this budget process model. Board members also noted the importance of understanding the allocations to schools and programs, and the overarching strategies and initiatives that are implemented to continue to increase academic outcomes for students. Highlights of the budget

engagement and values summary were also reviewed, as well as ways in which these values will be utilized within the budget.

**MOTION:** Director Kopp moved to accept the report on the December 5, 2023 Committee of the Board meeting and approve the recommended motions and minutes of that meeting as published. The motion was seconded by Director Foster.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Yes
Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes

## 9. FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

### A. Board of Education Meetings (5:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted)

- 2024
  - January 9 (Annual Organizational Meeting at 4:30 p.m.)
  - January 23
  - February 20
  - March 19
  - April 23
  - May 21
  - June 11 (Special Meeting – Non-Renewals) | 4:00 p.m. | Conference Room 5A
  - June 18
  - July 16
  - August 20
  - September 17
  - October 22
  - November 19
  - December 17

### B. Committee of the Board Meetings (4:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted)

- 2024
  - January 9
  - February 6
  - March 6 - Wednesday
  - April 3 - Wednesday
  - May 7
  - June 11
  - August 7 – Wednesday
  - September 10
  - October 8
  - November 6 – Wednesday
  - December 3

## 10. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent Gothard provided a brief update on his recent visits to schools, and meeting with staff for their observations. He also noted a follow-up from the community members at Public Comment who spoke about Txuj Ci Lower, and he is sorry for letting our families down in this challenging decision whether to limit enrollment, or expand into other spaces. Further details were also provided on this issue. It is his commitment to meet the needs of our students and families, and we will continue to improve and find ways to be responsive to ensure all students, families, and staff feel supported. There will be challenging times ahead with budget realities, and there will be decisions to be made and are necessary. We will work together on these decisions and be accountable and responsible to our community.

He also noted the recent community event of “The Right to Read”, and thanked the Communications Team, and staff from Office of Teaching and Learning for their support in these great events. These are important events, with the goal of helping our children to read, with more events scheduled for 2024 as well. We know we want the community to be involved, as this is a community movement and effort, and to ensure our SPPS students are reading at or above grade level.

Director Allen thanked Superintendent Gothard for the engagement with buildings. She noted a question if there have been conversations around programs that are working in buildings, or programs we knew before the pandemic that were not working well, in order to gauge how to move forward in the new budget cycle. Superintendent Gothard noted that conversations were more about staffing.

There was also a question about the opportunity for staff to provide feedback anonymously. The response included that there are many surveys in the district for staff to provide feedback anonymously, and Send A Tip is also a way for staff to submit feedback as well. More discussion on Send A Tip was also shared, including ways in which it is used, types of feedback submitted, and the process for concerns by staff.

## **11. AGENDA ITEMS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION**

### **1. Consent Agenda**

**MOTION: Director Vue moved approval of all items within the consent agenda withholding no items for separate consideration. Director Foster seconded the motion.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Yes
Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes

### **1. Gifts**

**BF 33515** SY23.24 Ratification of MSHSL Resolution and Acceptance of Gift from Minnesota State High School League Foundation

Ratify the MSHSL Resolution and Authorize schools to apply for and the Superintendent (or Designee) to accept the gifts from the Minnesota State High School League Foundation.

**BF 33516** SY23.24 Acceptance of Gift from Minnesota State High School League Foundation

Authorize schools to apply for and the Superintendent (or Designee) to accept the gifts from the Minnesota State High School League Foundation.

**BF 33517** Timothy Scott Scholarships

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to accept the \$7,000 from the Timothy Scott and provide a letter of expressing appreciation for the gift.

2. Grants

**BF 33518** Request for Permission to Accept a Grant from Allina Health

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent (designee) to accept funds from Allina Health and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 33519** Request for Permission to Accept Grants from ChangeX

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to accept grants from ChangeX and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 33520** Request for Permission to Accept Grants from the Hiway Credit Union Foundation

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent (designee) to submit multiple grant applications to the Hiway Credit Union Foundation to support innovative classroom projects; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 33521** Request for Permission to Accept a Grant from the Minnesota Department of Education

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to submit a grant to the Minnesota Department of Education's Minnesota Youth Water Safety Grant program; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 33522** Request for Permission to Submit a Grant to the Ecolab Foundation

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent (designee) to submit a grant to the Ecolab Foundation; to accept funds, if awarded; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 33523** Request for Permission to Support a Grant Application to the Environmental Protection Agency

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to support an application to the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus Grant and to work with First Student to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 33524** Request for Permission to Submit a Grant to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to submit a grant to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Farm to School and Early Care Full Tray Grant program; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

### 3. Contracts

**BF 33525** Request to Sign the Amendment to the St. Catherine University and SPPS Contract Pertaining to the Certified Nursing Assistant Course

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the Amendment to Contract #24-4060 between Saint Paul Public Schools and St. Catherine University for FY24..

**BF 33526** Request to Sign the Financial Accounting PSEO by Contract Agreement with Saint Paul College Pertaining to the Introduction to Business Class at the Districtwide Career Pathways Program

Request to Sign the Financial Accounting PSEO by Contract Agreement with Saint Paul College Pertaining to the Introduction to Business Class at the Districtwide Career Pathways Program

**BF 33527** Design Services for the Cherokee Heights Elementary School Building Systems Replacement (Project # 2070-23-01)

That the Board of Education authorize award of design and construction administration services to Bentz Thompson Rietow, Inc for the not-to-exceed fee of \$1,002,090.

**BF 33528** Construction Manager as Advisor Services for Multi-Site Electrical System Replacement at Harding and Central High School (Project # 0651-23-01)

That the Board of Education authorize award of construction manager as advisor services and pass through general conditions to H+U Construction for the not-to-exceed fee of \$444,424.

**BF 33529** Upstream Arts Contract

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to approve this contract with Upstream Arts.

### 4. Agreements

**BF 33530** Approval of Employment Agreement Between Independent School District No. 625 and Saint Paul Supervisors' Organization Representing Supervisors

That the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 625 approve and adopt the Agreement concerning the terms and conditions of employment for Saint Paul Supervisors Organization in this School District; duration of said Agreement is for the period of January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026.

**BF 33531** Memorandum of Understanding between Genesys Works Twin Cities and Saint Paul Public Schools



That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Genesys Works Twin Cities and Saint Paul Public Schools.

**BF 33532** Request to Sign Student Teaching Agreement with Bemidji State University

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the Student Teaching Agreement between Saint Paul Public Schools and Bemidji State University.

**BF 33533** Request to Sign Student Teaching Agreement with Concordia University, St. Paul

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the Student Teaching Agreement between Saint Paul Public Schools and Concordia University, St. Paul.

**BF 33534** Request to Sign Student Teaching Agreement with St. Catherine University

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the Student Teaching Agreement between Saint Paul Public Schools and St. Catherine University.

**BF 33535** Request to Sign Student Teaching Agreement with University of Minnesota, Duluth

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the Student Teaching Agreement between Saint Paul Public Schools and University of Minnesota, Duluth.

**BF 33536** Request to Sign Student Teaching Agreement with Walden University

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the Student Teaching Agreement between Saint Paul Public Schools and Walden University.

**BF 33537** Agreement between Saint Paul Independent School District #625 and Saint Catherine University Under Which Students Enrolled in St. Catherine's Nursing Program May Gain Clinical Experience

That the Board of Education all St. Catherine University students to gain clinical experience while working with St. Paul Public Schools nurses and staff.

**BF 33538** Request to Sign Student Teaching Agreement with University of St. Thomas

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the Student Teaching Agreement between Saint Paul Public Schools and University of St. Thomas.

#### 5. Administrative Items

**BF 33539** Monthly Operating Authority

That the Board of Education approve and ratify the following checks and electronic transfers for the period October 1, 2023-October 31, 2023

(a) General Account	#765969-767062	\$62,724,461.74
	#0005041-0005065	

#7004962-7004997  
#0009106-0009240

(b) Construction Payments	- 0 -	\$5,045,951.89
(c) Debt Service	- 0 -	<u>0.00</u>
		\$67,770,413.63

Included in the above disbursements are two payrolls in the amount of \$45,272,191.48 and overtime of \$280,382.95 or 0.62% of payroll.

(d) Collateral Changes

Released: None  
Additions: None

That the Board of Education further authorize payment of properly certified cash disbursements including payrolls, overtime schedules, compensation claims, and claims under the Worker's Compensation Law falling within the period ending April 30, 2024.

**BF 33540** Recommendations for Exclusion of Students Non-Compliant with Minnesota Statute 121A.15 Health Standards: Immunizations

That the Board of Education exclude noncompliant student(s) from school(s) effective January 10, 2024, should they not comply with Minnesota State Health Standards for Immunizations on or before this date.

**Human Resources Transactions**

**BF 33541** Transactions for November 1 – November 30, 2023

**BF 33542** Approval of Membership for the Minnesota State High School League - Creative Arts

That the Board of Education approve the attached resolution to approve membership for Creative Arts Secondary School to participate in the Minnesota State High School League.

**BF 33543** Proposed Discharge of Tenured Teacher

That the Board of Education:

1. Accept the filing of the Charges proposing to discharge Tenured Teacher for the grounds alleged in the Charges.
2. Direct the Assistant Clerk of the Board of Education to serve Tenured Teacher with a copy of the Charges filed with the Clerk on December 19, 2023, and give notice to Tenured Teacher of the teacher's rights to a hearing or arbitration under the Teacher Tenure Act.
3. Authorize the District's legal counsel to select a hearing officer or an arbitrator, as applicable, if Tenured Teacher requests a hearing.

**BF 33544** Facilities Department FY24 Purchases over \$175,000

That the Board of Education authorize the purchases listed for the Facilities Department anticipated to be over the \$175,000.

**BF 33545** Phase Gate Approval of Bridge View Roofing Replacement (Project # 0175-21- 01): Gate #5.1 – Project Close-out

That the Board of Education accept the report provided for Bridgeview Roof Replacement project (Project # 0175-21-01) at Phase Gate Check #5.1 – Project Close-out.

**BF 33546** Phase Gate Approval of the FY24 Paving Program at John A. Johnson and Groveland Elementary (Project # 0800-24-01): Gate #3 – Project Budget

That the Board of Education approve the FY24 Paving Program at John A. Johnson and Groveland Elementary project (Project # 0800-24-01) at Phase Gate Check #3 – Project Budget, setting the final project budget at \$1,050,000 and indicating direction to proceed with construction bidding.

**BF 33547** Phase Gate Approval of the Highland Park Senior High Athletic Improvements (Project # 3082-23-01): Gate #3 – Project Budget

That the Board of Education approve the Highland Park Senior High Athletic Improvements project (Project # 3082-23-01) at Phase Gate Check #3 – Project Budget; setting the final project budget at \$4,733,000 and indicating direction to proceed with construction bidding.

**BF 33548** Phase Gate Approval of the Johnson High School Athletic Improvements Project (Project # 1150-24-01): Gate #2 – Project Charter

That the Board of Education approve the Johnson High School Athletic Improvements project (Project # 1150-24-01) at Phase Gate Check #2 – Project Charter

**BF 33549** Phase Gate Approval of the Wellstone Elementary Plumbing, Piping, and HVAC Replacement (Project # 4260-23-01): Gate #3 – Project Budget

That the Board of Education approve the Wellstone Elementary Plumbing, Piping, and HVAC Replacement project (Project # 4260-23-01) at Phase Gate Check #3 – Project Budget; setting the final project budget at \$10,523,000 and indicating direction to proceed with construction bidding.

## 6. Bids

**BF 33550** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 2300 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4206-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Thelen Heating and Roofing, Inc. for a lump sum base bid of \$3,709,700.

**BF 33551** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 0330 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4181-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Northland Concrete and Masonry, LLC for a lump sum base bid plus Alternates #1 of \$1,384,200..

**BF 33552** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 0512 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4184-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Construction Systems, Inc. for a lump sum base bid of \$697,450.

**BF 33553** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 0610 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4185-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Kellington Construction, Inc. for a lump sum base bid plus Alternates #1 of \$2,301,540.

**BF 33554** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 0950 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4194-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Sonus Interiors, Inc. for a lump sum base bid plus Alternates #1 of \$1,166,000.

**BF 33555** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 0965 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4195-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Sonus Interiors, Inc. for a lump sum base bid plus Alternates #1 of \$1,285,300.

**BF 33556** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 2100 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4204-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Nasseff Plumbing and Heating, Inc. for a lump sum base bid of \$608,000.

**BF 33557** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 2200 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4205-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Corval Constructors, Inc. for a lump sum base bid of \$6,095,800.

**BF 33558** Phase Gate Approval of the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation Project WS 2600 (Project #3210-23-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4207-JG for the Barack and Michelle Obama School Addition and Renovation project (Project #3210-23-01) to Bloomington Electric Company for a lump sum base bid plus Alternates #1 of \$4,716,000.

**BF 33559** Phase Gate Approval of the Bruce Vento Elementary - New Construction Project WS 23-B (Project #1020-22-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award – (revised to include alternate pricing)

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-3924-JG for the Bruce Vento Elementary - New Construction Project (Project #1020-22-01) to General Sheet Metal Company for a lump sum base bid plus Alternates 2 & 3 of \$9,222,700.

**BF 33560** Phase Gate Approval of the Randolph Heights Elementary Boiler Replacement (Project # 3150-22-02): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of Bid No. A24-4166-JG for the Randolph Heights Boiler Replacement project (Project # 3150-22-02) to Climate Makers, Inc. for a lump sum base bid of \$406,028.

7. Change Orders

**ITEMS PULLED FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION - None**

**FURTHER AGENDA ITEMS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION**

1. Certification of the 2024-25 School Year Tax Levy

Superintendent Gothard and Tom Sager, Executive Chief of Financial Services, noted this is the final part of the a three-step process where SPPS will receive and certify the property tax levy for the following year of 2024-2025, and the recommendation from Administration was to approve the below certification.

**BF 33561** Certification of the 2024-25 School Year Tax Levy

**MOTION:** Director Vue moved to approve move to approve the certification of a tax levy in the amount of \$204,632,456.79 as included for the 2024-2025 school year. This amount represents a 1.79 percent increase from the 2023-2024 school district property tax levy. Director Henderson seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Yes
Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes

**10. INFORMATIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

A. American Indian Parent Advisory Committee - 2024 Resolution of Non-Concurrence

Superintendent Gothard then introduced members of the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee to present this report. They shared the history of this report, and the state statutes that guide this work, as well as the process and timeline. The members shared that they have enjoyed the process with the school board and district leaders, for more attention to be paid to our American Indian students and their unique academic needs and have seen the process in the right direction, and they are pleased with the accomplishments so far. They noted that this is a presentation of the resolution, and there will be further

discussion at an upcoming Committee of the Board meeting. The resolution and report was then read aloud, and can also be found in the BoardBook.

#### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Kopp noted that while this is a resolution of non-concurrence, the focus on student outcomes and how students are doing, what they know, and are able to do is a step in the right direction in looking at progress and movement. She thanked the parents and families for pushing the Board and Administration in this work, and to do it better with suggestions on how we might do that moving forward.
- Mr. GoodBuffalo noted the successes, including the bike prize at AIMS, and seeing great outcomes with the two positions at AIMS from ARP funds. While those funds expire soon, he encouraged the district and the Board to continue these positions, which are a vital role to the community, and there are great outcomes in the community for folks and community events, and other examples in curriculum as well.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked the committee for their work, and the presentation of the resolution, and acknowledgment of the work with Administration and staff to advocate for their children and in community. On behalf of Administration, the vote of non-concurrence tells us we have work to do, with the commitment from himself and his team, and guidance from the Board of Education.

#### **B. Language Courses' Journey**

Superintendent Gothard then welcomed members of the Multi-Lingual Learning and Office of Teaching and Learning teams to present, including Sarah Schmitt de Carranza, Megan Budke, and Hsakushee Zan.

The objectives of the presentation were reviewed, including:

- to provide updates on use of Bilingual Seal data to diversify our language offerings
- process of developing Karen Language Courses
- implementation of Karen Language Courses
- process of developing Somali Language Courses

The research behind the program was also reviewed:

- Continued development in academic language and content in a students' first language has a positive impact on language acquisition and content learning in additional languages. (Collier & Thomas, 2002).
- Students feel more connected to school when their culture and language is visible and honored. (Hammond, 2015). Increased connection has positive outcomes for students.
- SPPS currently offers programming in 5 dual language immersion programs and 11 indigenous and world languages.

The mission of the Bilingual Seals Program was shared – “to honor the language assets of all SPPS students.” The different seals were also presented, including World Language Certificate, Bilingual Gold Seal, and Bilingual Platinum Seal. The process for students to earn college credit was also reviewed.

Data of student achievements for 2015-2023 was presented, with 2,600 total achievements, and \$11,411,239.00 value of Seal awards. Further data for the achievements of students in 2022, and 2023 showing the languages of students tested, the number of students signed up for the test in 2023. Further data for the achievement of students was also shown.

The team then presented the history of Karen courses in grades 9-12, as well as the future of courses. The process for Karen Language Course Development was also shared, as well as the Karen Language Task Group members. Collaboration between SPPS Karen staff, Karen Baptist Churches in USA and Burma, and Karen Education Culture Department in Thailand was also presented. Current information on the 2023-2024 Karen Language Courses were reviewed, including 341 students enrolled in grades 9-12, in-person classes at four different high schools and online courses offered to all remaining 9-12 students, and 4 Karen teachers. Key learnings of the program were also reviewed, as well as next steps, including the development of courses for the Somali language.

Bilingual Seal Data for Somali was shared, including the number of students qualified for an aware in 2022 and 2023. The history of Somali courses in grades 9-12 were also shared, as well as the Somali Language task group members and looking forward for the process of course development.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Foster thanked the team, and for this inclusive environment for our students and cultural communities. This is a true reflection of our work in reflecting the voices of our community, and to be embedded in our school culture with the values of our community to be appreciated for the diversity in our system. This work is promising, and while there is still work to do, she is proud to see it grow. We are building on what we currently have, for a greater culture for all. She also thanked the families for their investment in this work.
- Director Henderson also thanked the team and work groups for this work, and also thanked the community for staying with us on this journey and for the commitment to this work. It is a reflection of how we value our communities and value each other and value education. We recognize that our languages are not only an express of culture, but also of our communication with families and their history. These programs will help to address those language gaps within the school system for those not historically validated or appreciated. We are building these programs, and it is a crucial aspect that is a direct reflection we heard from our community. She thanked those still at the meeting for this presentation, and the importance of this continued work. She also encouraged the team and community to think about what is next.
- Director Vue noted that the task groups are telling is the future is now – we are taking control of what the community needs and that they will be led to a better place, and we know the place, and know the places our families need, and where they want to go. He shared his experience at the Hmong New Year at Txuj Ci, and the history of the HDL program. He encouraged the continuation of this work, and offered help as a resource for any work moving forward as well.

## **13. BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **A. Information Requests/Responses and Items for Future Agendas**

- Director Vue requested information on reading goals, five-year goals, and interim reading goals.
- He also noted that a safety update would be helpful.
- He also requested an Ethnic Studies update, as we are in the second year of implementing Ethnic Studies, and the progress of where we are and where we are going.
- Director Henderson requested additional information on the Early Childhood hubs and how they are doing, expectations, how they may be growing, and communication with families, as well as next steps for our hubs.

## B. Board of Education Reports/Communications

- With the departure of Director Kopp, Director Ellis, and Director Foster, engraved gavels were presented to each of them, and they also provided the below reflections
  - Director Ellis shared her recent reflections on the past eight years, and visiting schools, including RiverEast. She also shared more about visiting every school in Saint Paul, and how important it was for her to learn more about each site, and the students, staff, and families that comprise each school and connecting with them, and asking questions to learn more. She thanked Laurie Olson for their conversation on Security and Emergency Management, as well as others who have taught her about the district, as that is the way she was elected by her community to lead this district. She noted her love for this district, as a district in which she was raised, and she will carry those she has met along the way with her. Her son is also a student in this district, and it will still be accountable to her and the thousands of other students in SPPS. She appreciates meeting everyone and connecting with them, and the opportunity to serve with some of the best people – including former Board Chair, Marny Xiong, as well as Darren Ginther. It has been a life-changing opportunity to serve SPPS, and she also noted other life-altering opportunities, including meeting Nancy Pelosi, Maxine Waters, and to walk on the lawn of the White House. She wishes the next Board well, because it matters to our young people that they do well. She has served with integrity, honor, and a love for the city and our young people. She is not saying goodbye, as she will see folks again, and many are continuing with her.
  - Director Kopp shared that before she was elected as a board member, she was a parent who attended board meetings, and serving with her colleagues has been a dream come true. She recounted in running for school board as an introvert, she had a little card that stated “Remember why you started” and that reminded her of the drive in this work. She shared her experience as a school-based advocate and the relationships she has gained in this work. She noted her belief that things can and must continue to get better, and there is still room to grow, and some of the best things in SPPS show our desire to push further, go harder, and do better. The past four years have been a true honor to serve this district and its awesome responsibility. She noted her gratitude for our families, students, staff, district administration staff, Superintendent Gothard, and her board colleagues for their conversations and interactions, and thanked them for their support and stories to guide her in this work. For the future, she is proud to hear about how student outcomes focus has become a way of thinking in SPPS, even though the framework was not implemented by the Board. She looks forward to watching the next Board grow in their governance roles and in supporting the good work to come. She thanked Chair Vue for his work in board leadership, and it has been a real joy in getting to know both him and his family. She thanked everyone and is grateful for this experience.
  - Director Foster noted it has been an honor and privilege to serve SPPS and to serve this community, and thanks for the trust given to her, as well as the pushbacks. It has been a journey, and she thanked many staff for their work, including Sarah Dahlke, Kaying Thao, our scholars, our buildings and schools, our teachers and educators, our SSLs, the leadership teams, Executive Chief Sager, General Counsel Long, Pablo Matamoros and Sara Reyes in Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships, Dr. Yue Vang, Tom Parent and his staff, Sarah Schmitt de Carranza, teachers such as Mr. Horton, Mr. Warren, Ms. Sparkman, and Ms. Roach and others for welcoming her to their classrooms, Dan Wells, Executive Chief Pratt-Cook, Craig Anderson and OTL, Kathy Kimani, Executive Chief Collins, Tony Walker, Assistant Superintendent Kunz, our principals, Dr. Darcel Hill, Principal Vibar, Principal Reilly, John Bobolink and Dominic GoodBuffalo, Principal Wolff,



John Robinson, Laurie Olson and her team, among many others. She will miss many folks here in SPPS, and it has been an honor to work with them, and the greatest joy is to see kids and their work. She thanked Superintendent Gothard for being the leader we needed in the time we needed it. She also thanked Executive Chief Turner for her great work. She also shared about her time as Chair. She is proud that SPPS is leading in many ways and decisions that are best for our students. This work is about relationships and honesty. She will continue to be in community and solidarity with everyone and encouraged contacting her as a resource, and thanked everyone for all they do.

- Fellow board members then shared their thoughts. Director Allen noted the relationships with community and board members, and that while there may be a difference of opinions, everyone cares for the kids in the district. She thanked Director Kopp, Director Ellis, and Director Foster for their work and their time served in SPPS and in serving the Board to think in different ways. She thanked Director Ellis for leading the way for Black women to serve on the Board, and for her inspiration. Director Henderson also thanked the three departing board members for leading the way for others to follow, and building the grounds and carry the legacy they started. She thanked them for their work and being here. She has learned so much from them. Director Ward noted it has been amazing getting to know Director Kopp, Director Foster, and Director Ellis, and appreciates the conversations, sharing of experience and wisdom to approach challenges in the district and the continual reminders to center students in all we do. He thanked them for their service, and hopes they will continue to be available as a resource to this work. Superintendent Gothard shared his perspectives, including their leadership in difficult times, and thanked them for their service and support of SPPS. He recounted in meeting Director Foster and Director Ellis for the first time, and recognized their accomplishments. We will miss these three board members, and congratulated each of them on their terms. Director Vue also shared his reflections, including in the past fourteen years in advocating for his children, and the peak level of leadership witnessed by these three board members. He noted Director Ellis is known for sharing of her work in the community, and his personal experience in sharing grief with her. He shared about the Envision SPPS process with Director Foster and how she continued to be with community through discomfort at a board meeting. Director Kopp is the “board member we need, not the one we deserve.” She delivers the qualities of humility, and deliberate goals to bring student focused outcomes to the forefront and strengthen our governance model, and a leader that completes tireless work, and to know what the school board needs from community, and what the school board can do for the community it serves. He has much respect and admiration for all three departing board members, and it was an honor to serve alongside them.
- Director Allen noted a moment of remembrance for Tou Ger Xiong, and his role in bringing laughter, and joy and music to our district, and his performances and ways in which he brought joy to our community.
- Director Ellis shared her experiences of attending The Little Mermaid play at Central, she thanked the scholars at Capital Hill for an event, her attendance at the School Choice Fair, and noted her farewell to the Saint Paul Teachers Retirement Fund, as well as the Dayton’s Bluff Cozy Up To Read event, and sporting events.
- She also thanked the Superintendent for his great work and in all he has experienced. As she begins her grad school journey at Metro State, she also noted the charge to create a land acknowledgments for SPPS, in coordination with John Bobolink and our American Indian Parent Committee, as Metro State also acknowledges the land on which we stand and its history. The acknowledgment means a lot to those in the space, and encouraged SPPS to support this initiative.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

**Director Vue moved to adjourn the meeting; Director Ellis seconded the motion.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes
Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Yes
Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

For clarity and to facilitate research, these minutes reflect the order of the original Agenda and not necessarily the time during the meeting the items were discussed.

Prepared and submitted by:

Sarah Dahlke

Assistant Clerk, St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education