

SAULT STE. MARIE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN 49783
SPECIAL MEETING, BOARD OF EDUCATION
Phone 906/635-6609

Minutes – Tuesday, April 6, 2021

249. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Smith called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. in the Sault Area Middle School, 684 Marquette Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783.

250. **A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD**

Board Members Present: Christine M. Curtis, Lisa A. Young, Raymond J. DeWitt, Daniel L. Smith, Jay D. Wilson, Caitlin L. Galer, Melissa S. Pingatore

Absent: None

251. **B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member DeWitt, that the Board of Education move to adopt the agenda as revised.

Add: *Item I. C. Audience Participation*

Yeas: Curtis, Young, DeWitt, Smith, Wilson, Galer, Pingatore

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

252. **C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

President Smith clarified the Board could not take questions from those viewing via zoom.

There were no questions.

253. **D. SUPERINTENDENT INTERVIEWS**

President Smith indicated he had been involved in Superintendent Interviews in the past and had assigned the Board's questions to individual members who would address them with each candidate.

Member DeWitt inquired on a time when the candidate needed to be true to personal integrity while facing opposition.

Member Curtis inquired on the candidate's budget development process for gaining broad support, and an innovative example used with business partnerships or grants.

Member Wilson inquired on some of the candidate's experience in building and maintaining school (staff/students/parents) morale, and how trust and confidence would be developed and maintained with the Board.

Member Pingatore inquired on who the candidate thought was the most important group of people within the district, how the Superintendent should relate to them, and how to maintain visibility and accessibility for staff, parents and community groups.

Member Young inquired on when the candidate had brought a diverse group of people to a consensus on a difficult issue, what type of leadership was used, and what was the outcome.

Member Young inquired on how to address the achievement gap and what the challenges and progress the candidate had+ made while addressing it in the past.

President Smith inquired on how the candidate would assure a safe school environment as well as accomplishing adequate educational facilities.

Member Galer inquired on how the candidate decides when it's appropriate to involve others in making a decision and if there had ever been a time when more involvement would have been better.

Member Galer inquired on what was the most difficult decision the candidate had to make over the past year and how the decision affected others.

Mr. Powers presented Glenda Oginski.

In response to Member DeWitt's question, Mrs. Oginski reported she typically responds in the active moment. She referenced a former, unsafe parent pickup process and how she handled and upset employee and irate parent situation.

In reference to state-wide student assessment, Mrs. Oginski reported on an increase in student achievement obtained at a former district in Wisconsin by using hard work and integrity in dealing with the school community.

In response to Member Curtis's question, Mrs. Oginski reported she had worked closely on budgets with finance directors and would map out a budget based on 3-years of priorities to allocate a better rate of investment for big ticket items, school spending, research and development, and strategy alignment. She stated she is very frugal with spending district money.

Mrs. Oginski reported it had been a long time since she had written a grant, but the last time involved working with a Tech Director to obtain funds for a new student integration system. She indicated other grants had been for levying collaborative LTS and instructional coaches to support teachers to reach a better volume of students.

In response to Member Wilson, Mrs. Oginski reported there are several ways to boost morale such as being consistent, following through, being transparent, having positive interactions with teachers and staff, and establishing supports to boost teacher and student achievement. She stated actions speak louder than words, and people watch.

Mrs. Oginski stated a Superintendent needs to work closely with the Board on goal setting, and it is crucial for the Board and Superintendent to have consistent talking points and use key words when communicating with the public so they earn trust and support for the district.

In response to Member Pingatore, Mrs. Oginski stated students are the the district's most important group, but Superintendents also need to interact with their teachers, staff, and community. She noted she always tries to learn the names of students so she can have a more personal communication with them.

Mrs. Oginski reported on ways the Superintendent needs to stay organized and accessible in the district and community. She noted it takes a lot of time to turn a bad experience around, but it is the responsibility of leadership to do so.

In response to Member Young, Mrs. Oginski referenced an unsafe parent pickup and a school shooting that brought a conundrum of challenges. She stated the district surveyed parents every year and provided a lot of communication to make sure everyone was staying the course.

Mrs. Oginski reported student achievement needs to be clarified as education goes through trends and new strategies emerge. She indicated a solid MTS system is needed to monitor and question existing systems of supports for student and teacher success.

In response to President Smith, Mrs. Oginski stated she is very alert when it comes to school safety. She indicated it is good to have an outside

group evaluate the district from time to time to get another perspective on things. She stated students have to feel safe so they can learn.

Mrs. Oginski stated she doesn't rely solely on references, and answers when hiring staff. She indicated she often asks candidates to provide a presentation or lesson plan to show their talents because not everyone does well in an interview, and she wants the best person in the position. She stated it is hard finding the right staff member, but twice as hard to getting rid of an ineffective one.

In response to Member Galer, Mrs. Oginski indicated she prefers a group decision as it brings about a better outcome. She questioned if there may have been a better buy-in to the revised parent pick up if she had included more parents in the planning process.

Mrs. Oginski indicated her current district is going through closing a school as the result of a charter school. She stated the district had allocated grade levels and cut staff while trying to maintain the highest quality teachers. She stated finding good teachers are few and far between as the teaching pool diminishes.

Upon invitation from Mr. Powers, Mrs. Oginski asked the Board to name one goal and skill (other than being fiscally responsible) they would like their Superintendent to possess.

Member Curtis stated she would like someone who values and affirms good employees, has strong community relations, and has a goal to maintain district's facilities.

Member Young indicated she would like someone who could maintain employee morale, is transparent, bounces ideas off the staff, community, and the board, and includes the goal of maintaining facilities.

Member Dewitt reported he would like someone who was good with district moral, improved student achievement and maintains public visibility.

President Smith reported he would like someone with a strong education and business sense, someone who could look outside the box, someone who could look at different and clever ideas for maintaining facilities and grounds and to know how to budget for them.

Member Wilson reported he would like someone who was good with district morale, transparency, accountability, and maintains a fair and equitable standard for students and staff.

Member Galer reported she would like someone who had good community relations, improved student achievement, was knowledgeable on up and communing technology, and could look outside of the box for new ideas.

Member Pingatore reported she would like someone who possessed good communication, good public relations with staff and the community, maintains district morale, actively markets the district, and increases the positives the district has to offer.

Mrs. Oginski stated she heard a lot about morale and that is something you need to maintain.

Member Pingatore reported she doesn't get a lot of staff who communicate low morale to her, but she would like parents to feel confident with the Board's decisions.

Member Galer speculated COVID caused some parents to question their trust as well as lowered employee morale.

Member Wilson reported he felt morale was on the lower end for the community and staff.

President Smith reported morale has been low all over, not just with teachers. He suggested it will change over time, but there are a big array of things that could be done.

Member DeWitt stated morale is never perfect and generally it can always be improved. He indicated he liked Mrs. Oginski's idea of having an administrator provide an extra half hour of prep time for a teacher or allow a good teacher to leave a few minutes early on a Friday after all the students have been safely delivered.

Member Young indicated staff morale would probably have to be building specific, but from a parent's perspective, the district needs to have good communication and be transparent.

Member Curtis indicated the Schools of Choice Program as done well with more students enrolling than withdrawing. She indicated she hadn't heard about poor employee morale, but that is something that could always be improved upon.

Mr. Powers inquired on any follow-up questions.

Upon inquiry from President Smith, Mrs. Oginski reported she had never lived in a big city and her husband and hre prefer a rural area. She stated her current district's enrollment was approximately 2,600 and she has

experience of working in districts with declining enrollment so that doesn't scare her.

In response to Member DeWitt, Mrs. Oginski stated there is always room for student improvement but she would have to be physically in the district to access the systems before recommending a change. She reported she had worked in a district with an 80% poverty rate, but once she found out that it had been the dumping area for ineffective teachers or those with very little support, the achievement rate jumped 24 points within 2 years. She stated she is a firm believer that all children will learn if they are given the proper tools.

Mr. Powers invited Mrs. Oginski to make a closing statement and the Board to present final questions.

Mrs. Oginski stated she was very passionate about student achievement and would like to make the U.P. her forever home, help young people learn, and for our community to be able to retain them for growth.

Mrs. Oginski stated she is true to her word, and likes to interact with parents, is very transparent, is focused on students, and would bring a positive light to the district.

In response to Mr. Powers, Mrs. Oginski stated the water draws her to the U.P. and her husband is an outdoorsman, and a LSSU graduate. She stated she wants to work and live in the same community.

In response to Member DeWitt, Mrs. Oginski reported it was difficult to see her replacement at a former school tear down what she worked hard to build but she wasn't part of the interview. She suggested the Board seek data from candidates on the progress they have made in other districts before hiring them.

Mrs. Oginski thanked the board for their time.

Upon inquiry from Member Pingatore, President Smith confirmed Dr. Hall had texted him earlier that the Board could have as many people in the meeting room as long as they wore a face mask and remained 6 feet apart. Members Pingatore and Wilson indicated they were not aware of the ruling and suggested making it known prior to future meetings.

Upon inquiry from President Smith, Member Pingatore suggested getting confirmation on the exact location of the April 27 meeting.

Upon further inquiry by President Smith, Member Young stated she was under the impression that a new preschool or day care was being built on the end of the Big Bear.

Mr. Powers presented Amy Scott-Kronemeyer.

President Smith welcomed Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer, current Director of Student Achievement, and assured her that she would be offered all the fairness of the other candidates.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer thanked the Board for giving her the opportunity and stated she was very grateful.

In response to Member DeWitt, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer indicated she had served as Superintendent and Principal for the Les Cheneaux Schools prior to coming to the district. She indicated she took over when the district had \$130,000 in debt, no fund equity, and had to reduce staffing from 52 employees to 27. She stated she worked hard, spent a lot of time trying to get people employed in other jobs and at other districts, and within two years the district had a positive fund balance.

In response to Member Curtis, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported you need to look at all of the federal allocation allotment, long range planning, potential teachers/employees retiring, areas where you can make concessions, areas of need, and put it all to paper to look at the big concept. She stated you have to have a unique knack to know how to enhance federal and state funds. She stated you need to know what happens at different times of the year and to be able to communicate and work with union leadership, administrators, principals, support staff, and the public. She referenced the Virtual Blue program as a means of finding a solution and hopefully balancing things out.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she worked on a \$500,000 grant for two consecutive years by partnering with the Michigan Department of Education on Digital Literacy. She stated who would have known how important it has become to help students use digital skills to navigate learning at home during the pandemic.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported some districts feel legislation doesn't provide many options, but Mr. McCready and Mrs. Lussier have given students more opportunities through innovation than at a lot of other districts.

In response to Member Wilson, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported morale building can be accomplished by letting people be heard and communicating with them on what is going on. She referenced the Middle School's soup day as an excellent way to let staff know you appreciate them, and a town hall meeting she garnered with 150 parents to share their ideas on how to solve the issue and give them a chance to be heard.

In response to Member Pingatore, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she would like to first hold a board workshop to develop boundaries and expectations. She indicated when she served as Superintendent and K-12 Principal, she typically focused on being the principal from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. then met with the Board and set boundaries after 4 p.m. She stated if one Board member called or emailed her on an issue, she made sure she shared the discussion with the full board in her weekly/semimonthly update. She stated it is important to make clean boundaries to honor the Board's time.

In response to Member Pingatore, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the students are the most important group in the district. She stated she had worked hard to promote student learning throughout the year and through the summer school program. She indicated she made herself visible and approachable every day during the summer school program to ensure the students were given the best every day.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she would maintain her accessibility as Superintendent and believes in following up with a response to parents within 24 hours. She stated the Superintendent is the ambassador for the district and needs to be visible in the community so people feel comfortable contacting the district if there is an issue.

In response to Member Young, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported approximately 36% of district students are Native American and she directs the Title VII Indian Parent Committee. She indicated the committee represents children from 11 first nations, Canadian and 13 other tribes across the nation. She explained the committee holds monthly meetings to ensure all of the student needs are met and continually discusses ways to improve and support those students' needs. She stated hopefully the acknowledged changes will build a stronger partnership going forward.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district had narrowed the achievement gap because it focused on student growth instead of just the output. She noted the current growth model provides quarterly and semester assessments that show our students' academic and social emotional health. She stated she was happy to have a social worker available for the Middle School to help with taking care of the whole child.

In response to President Smith, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the school environment needs to be safe and orderly, the students need to be taught what is expected of them and why. She stated equally important is for existing and new employees to be trained on safety and our for aging facilities to be taken care of as well as our kids respecting them.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she first looks for a potential employee's disposition and integrity. She indicated you can't always teach kindness and commitment, but employees need to have the love of children.

In response to Member Galer, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported one of her greatest strengths was to collaborate in groups to gather information and then sort through it slowly to make a plan to move fast. She stated the Virtual Blue program had to be pulled together as quickly as possible with little time for feedback. She stated even though Dr. Hall sent out updates on the Board's decisions to the parents, some of the information missed a group of teachers who were affected by the decision and they were disappointed to learn about it from the outside first.

Mr. Powers invited Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer to make a closing statement and for the Board to present final questions.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer explained her question stemmed from focusing on a SOAR Analysis of the district. She asked each member to reflect on what they thought the district's greatest strength was.

Member Curtis reported the Management Team is always trying to make things better and strives for excellence in the community. She noted the high school offers college classes and the team does a great job.

Member Young stated in general, the staff is hard working.

Member DeWitt stated he agrees the staff is hard working.

President Smith stated he feels the vast majority of honor students and the quality of graduates who have earned certificates through the Career Center are not being seen by the public. He stated the students who are most recognized are those on athletic teams, but the district's greatest strength is the number of achieving students.

Member Wilson stated the district's greatest strength is the number of options it has to offer.

Member Galer stated the district has a lot of things going for it that a lot of other rural schools don't. She stated the Career Center is a big plus for the district.

Member Pingatore stated classroom teachers are the district's greatest asset as she has observed staff rallying around students and giving them positive reinforcement.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer asked the Board to list one thing they would like to see improved upon.

Member Curtis reported she would like to see the aging facilities maintained. She stated it was a challenge to focus on updating curriculum while also trying to ensure facilities will be viable in the future. She stated she would like to see the budget balanced out so everyone could get what they need.

Member Young indicated she would like to see more collaboration among parents and staff to get everyone involved.

Member DeWitt indicated he would like to see improved student achievement.

President Smith stated he would like improved public perception and less federal and state control.

Member Wilson stated he would like increased district morale, more two-way communication with parents, staff, and students to improve the public perception.

Member Galer stated she would like to see more transparency in communicating with the community, parents, and staff. She indicated communication can make people feel everyone is working together.

Member Pingatore stated communication was already covered, so she would love for more positive news to be shared with the public such as what the STEM Team is doing, Service Teams, Robotics Team. She stated there is a whole other set of students who are not athletes that also need to be recognized.

Upon inquiry from Mr. Powers, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she would like to continue the blue calendar but use it to be more engaging and to teach about things. She stated she would like to see more parent involvement with the PTO groups to help parents be in the know. She stated she would like to utilize Facebook, the Tribal and local paper to inform parents about enrollment and various summer plans. She suggested bringing back a quarterly Spotlight to highlight various achievements.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she knows the district inside and out, the operating systems, union leaders, and the collaborative leadership to get people involved in the district.

Mr. Powers asked for final questions.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported her weekly/semimonthly communication to the Board was used to ensure the

full Board understand what was going on and perhaps why one issue may not have percolated to the top.

Upon inquiry from Member Young, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district had been forecasting and reducing by attrition over her last 8 years of employment with the district. She stated she did not see any major cuts on the horizon because of it. She noted there were 46 teachers who had 0-5 years with the district and there were 11 teachers with over 35 years. She stated the districts needs to continue to provide professional development in order to attract and retain good staff.

President Smith indicated the public needs to know that staff are busy with professional development and just not sitting around when the students are not in school. He inquired on what Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer's plans were with her existing job if she were given the Superintendent position.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer indicated she would have to look more closely at how the district would best fill the duties of the Superintendent and Director of Achievement before making a recommendation. She noted Mrs. Love is taking on key ingredients, but her current position had increased nearly 2 ½ times over the past 8 years.

Upon inquiry from Mr. Powers, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she knows the district and community intimately and is passionate about the staff and community. She stated she is vested and has all of the tactical knowledge. She stated it just comes down to if she is the person the Board wants to work with. She stated she is confident the Board will make the right decision for the community.

President Smith called a short recess at 6:59 p.m.

The Board resumed the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Mr. Powers introduced Brandon Bruce.

President Smith welcomed Mr. Bruce and explained the Board would be asking roughly the same 13 questions they had to the previous candidates.

Mr. Bruce thanked the Board for the opportunity to interview and moved on to explain the multiple jobs he has worked in over his 26 years in education. He indicated those opportunities helped preparing him for the position of Superintendent.

Mr. Bruce reported he has worked in the U.P., his kids attended universities in the U.P., he has family in the central U.P., and he would like to live in the community.

In response to Member DeWitt, Mr. Bruce explained he had to be true to his personal integrity when the school he served at was faced with laying off one of two new teachers. He stated the Superintendent was leaning toward one individual but he really felt the other would develop and become a more successful employee for the district. He indicated negotiating was tough but it all worked out, and they were happy with the decision in the end.

In response to Member Curtis, Mr. Bruce explained he had not worked as a business manager for a district but understood the importance of having good communication and working closely with the business manager. He stated it is very important to obtain accurate numbers for budgeting, forecasting, and sharing with the Board for decision making. He stated a Superintendent really needs to have faith and trust in the business manager and to maintain good communication for collaboration.

Mr. Bruce reported he had worked on a Thompson Foundation Grant to provide technology and to learn a new management system. He indicated the tool they started with was Google and one third of the school went virtual at the start of the year so it was very important for the team to develop and learn how to manage the system for all grade levels.

In response to Member Wilson, Mr. Bruce reported he had worked on developing staff morale when he planned, developed and implemented a school improvement team and leadership team at a former district. He stated it was a big climate and cultural change for the district to listen to ideas from employees and work together to build the district.

Mr. Bruce explained it was very important for the Superintendent to have trust and confidence in the board so they can work together and develop the right district for the community. He stated he would do whatever the board asked regardless if he did not initially support the idea.

In response to Member Pingatore, Mr. Bruce reported there are so many important facets in a district because of the multiple departments the Superintendent has to oversee (staff, board, and parents), but the kids are the most of all.

In response to Member Pingatore, Mr. Bruce stated it is vital for the Superintendent to be accessible and to start the day off in a positive way. He stated everyone needs to know they are important outside of the average day. He explained how he remains visible and engages in conversation in his current position as well as in the community. He stated the community needs to be kept informed and engaged in what is going on in the district.

Mr. Bruce indicated it would be nice to work, live and collaborate in an area that also has a university. He stated the Superintendent really needs to be out and make the community connections.

In response to Member Young, Mr. Bruce stated there is always the potential for challenges when working with a diverse group of people. He referenced a student discipline issue at a previous school where he had to work with the Board in providing an alternative educational solution so the student could maintain credit and graduate.

Mr. Bruce expressed concern for the student educational gap especially at the elementary and middle school level due to the pandemic. He stated districts need to split out certain courses that are not conducive to online learning broaden the students' base of understanding before moving on. He noted how fortunate our district was to have a Director of Student Achievement who monitors and responds to data to help students become successful.

In response to President Smith, Mr. Bruce stated it was extremely important to have and maintain a safe school environment and to ensure students and staff are comfortable. He reported you need to review plans with students, staff, and outside individuals to ensure you have the right environment and are following the safest plans.

Mr. Bruce indicated he looks for employees who have the passion and sense to work with kids and parents. He stated school employees have to know how to relate to the students and possess the developmental pieces needed for the level they are applying for.

Mr. Bruce reported leadership requires adequate communication for discussions to take place. He noted collaboration is very important to give input and receive feedback in order to move forward.

Mr. Bruce reported in general, all decisions can be difficult, but most recently he has had to make some tough calls due to COVID and state playoffs.

Mr. Powers invited Mr. Bruce to make a closing statement and for the Board to ask any questions.

Mr. Bruce reported stakeholders of any district play a huge role in its success. He asked the Board to share any area in which they would like the next Superintendent to focus on.

President Smith indicted he would like the Superintendent to focus on student achievement and staying ahead of the aging facilities.

Member Curtis stated the district needs someone who values students and staff, has a community presence, and can manage the aging buildings on a small budget.

Member Galer indicated she would like the Superintendent to be well rounded, have some experience, be innovative with new ideas, and maintain a community relationship.

Upon inquiry from Member Galer, Mr. Bruce indicated he was from Union City Schools which had just under 1,200 students.

Upon inquiry from Member DeWitt, Mr. Bruce stated when he interviews potential teachers, he observes them for 30 minutes in a classroom at the grade level they are applying for to help him learn how they would teach and engage with the students, and if that is not a viable option, he has them present a lesson plan.

Upon inquiry from Mr. Powers, Mr. Bruce reported he really enjoys working on student achievement and providing a Career Day for students and the community. He stated he is confident in his abilities and possess the strength and community involvement to work hard for the district.

While the board was waiting for Mr. Starr, President Smith received comment from board members who felt the interviews were going well.

Mr. Powers presented Mr. Terry Starr.

President Smith welcomed Mr. Starr and asked him for a brief introduction.

Mr. Starr stated it was wonderful to see so many people involved in the search process.

Mr. Starr reported on his hometown and other districts he had served in. He noted his wife of 33 years and the age range of his 6 children.

In response to Member DeWitt, Mr. Starr reported he likes to choose to better not bitter when faced with a difficult decision. He acknowledged he likes to remember you cannot always control what you are faced with, but you can with how you respond.

In response to Member Curtis, Mr. Starr reported the budget development process has to entail a collaborative approach. He stated it is paramount to make sure the district is solid. He acknowledged a typical budget allocates between 75 to 80% for staffing, and you have to collaborate around those pieces to keep the district out of deficit.

Mr. Starr indicated he had experience in writing a grant for windows when he worked in Kalkaska.

In response to Member Wilson, Mr. Starr reported on how he likes to build school morale. He noted school spirit works well for the students, staff, and community. He stated he is a relationship building and if chosen, he would invite MASB to a board retreat to help guide the board and he on beginning to form a relation that best suites everyone needs.

In response to Member Pingatore, Mr. Starr reported he felt students/children were the “golden eggs” of any district. He stated you need to take care of them. He acknowledged how lucky the district was to have a Career Tech Center for the older students. He stated you need to figure out what you have to do to build trust and faith in the district in order for people to feel comfortable and have high morale.

In response to Member Pingatore, Mr. Starr reported the Superintendent needs to be at all of the school events and maintain visibility in order to show people you really care. He confirmed tax payers need to be part of the fabric especially if they are needed to pass a bond millage.

In response to Member Young, Mr. Starr referenced a Middle School International Baccalaureate that had some difficult opposition and how he worked with some parents to help with their fears and misgivings. He noted the final outcome brought about some AP classes at the high school level.

In response to Member Young, Mr. Starr reported teachers need to be supported and programs built through a teacher evaluation process so they can be their best in any situation.

In response to President Smith, Mr. Starr reported school safety is the pillar to ensure buildings are safe for the kids. He stated the district needs to be constantly looking for improvements. He stated maintaining relationships can also be very important.

In response to Human Resources, Mr. Starr reported materials and resources are necessary, but staff need to have the emotional sense and a true love of kids because sometimes kids who come to school are lacking in certain areas.

In response to Member Galer, Mr. Starr reported COVID had presented many unchartered areas, and he had wished he had more time to contact a Grand Traverse Principal who sent some of his kids to his district prior to a closure.

In response to Member Galer, Mr. Starr reported on a difficult decision to move an elementary principal over to a Middle School principal position that was met with opposition. He stated it proved to work out over time.

Mr. Powers invited Mr. Starr to address the Board with any questions.

Mr. Staff asked the Board for any key areas they were looking for in the next superintendent.

President Smith responded he was looking for someone who had great leadership, would possibly move the district into another direction with new ideas, and to maintain the current level of fund equity.

Member Pingatore stated she was looking for a key communicator so parents felt heard.

Member Curtis stated she was looking for someone who had strong public communication skills, could manage the facilities, and affirm staff morale.

Member DeWitt indicated his key area was in student achievement.

Member Young stated she was looking for a strong leader who uses collaboration and involvement from parents, staffs, and students. She stated she would like someone with good community relations, and supports staff morale.

Member Wilson reported he wanted a strong leader with two-way communication combined with improving morale.

Upon inquiry from Mr. Powers, Mr. Starr indicated fund equity was at 23% in his current district. He stated his district received COVID relief funds but felt districts needed to stay above that.

Mr. Starr inquired on what the district's greatest challenges might be during the first 6 months of the job.

Member Curtis stated the greatest challenges would be student enrollment communication, affirming staff, and community relations.

Mr. Starr indicated he was working on a bond for a child care center in hopes that it would help fill some gaps.

Mr. Starr stated he understood the four pillars of the superintendent - student achievement, safety, being a visible cheerleader, and being financially solvent.

In response to Member DeWitt's question on how to teach with efficacy, Mr. Starr reported there are certain teachers who have the innate qualities, but teachers need a roadmap to know how to deliver lessons and keep kids engaged for learning. He noted a good teacher evaluation tool should be used as an instructional model to ensure they are teaching their lessons as best as possible.

Upon inquiry from President Smith, Mr. Starr indicated he felt a pull to move up to Sault Ste. Marie and to be near his daughter, but he has another interview in Sheppard, near his mother who is dealing with his aging step-dad. He stated he needs to figure out where he needs to be with that.

Mr. Starr acknowledged Board work is very though and can seem thankless at times. He told the Board to keep up the faith and keep practicing making the right decisions for the students and community.

President Smith recessed the meeting at 8:53 p.m.

The Board return from recess at 8:56 p.m.

In an effort to ensure the Board proceeds legally, President Smith suggested the Board wait until Mr. Powers before deliberating.

Mr. Powers reported he felt the Board interviewed four solid candidates and they could begin deliberating in open session. He stated the Board had the authority to select a candidate or invite candidates back for a second interview which had been tentatively scheduled for April 14.

Upon request by the Board, Mr. Powers assigned numbers to the candidates for ease of discussion.

Glenda Oginski #12
Amy Scott-Kronemeyer #48
Brandon Bruce #32
Terry Starr # 70

President Smith indicated 12 was very strong academically however the district already had someone doing the job she had experience with in the district. He indicated she didn't show him a strong business sense superintendent wise and seemed very independent in making a qualified decision in other areas.

President Smith stated 48 knows the district inside and out and she did show signs for a possible change. He stated 32 was strong but wasn't sure if he was ready for a Superintendent position in a district our size. He stated 70 was his absolute first pick however, if he's interviewing for

another position within 20-30 miles of his home town, chances are he is going to be offered and accept that position. He noted 70 was strong, has a great personality, gave great responses, but doesn't think he would be available.

Member Pingatore stated 70 was by far her first choice until he was honest about having another interview. She stated she shifted over to 48. Member Pingatore indicated she had originally wanted new blood, but perhaps 48 will have new ideas and ways for doing things when she takes a leadership role.

President Smith indicated Dr. Hall amazed him when he was interviewed.

Member Galer indicated 32 and 12 seemed to be lacking experience in a few areas. She stated her top picks were 48 then 70.

Member Wilson stated 70 was great and he could completely understand why he might not accept an offer. He suggested scheduling another interview for April 14 to bide some time. Member Wilson stated he really liked 32 and he stood out in showing how much he cared for the district and bringing everyone to the table. He stated that would be a huge improvement for the area. Member Wilson reported our district already has a lot set up that could help a new candidate tie it all together. He acknowledged 32 lacks experience but everyone needs to get a start. He noted 12 had a strong leadership style but his preferences were 70, 32, and 12.

President Smith indicated 70 was almost everyone's first pick, 48 a close second, and then 12. He stated a Superintendent is like the CEO of a business and it's an accumulation of overseeing the right people doing the right jobs.

Member DeWitt reported he really liked 70, but was hesitant because he didn't think he would stay. He noted 32 was his second choice and would build a strong relationship. He stated he liked 12 because she was in the same type of district and would communicate well with the district. Member DeWitt indicated he had originally wanted someone new in the district and questioned why 12 was not able to produce the blue calendar she spoke about. President Smith stated COVID had stopped the district from producing the blue calendar this year. Member DeWitt stated his preference in order was 32 and 12.

Member Young stated 70 had a lot of good, positive qualities and was her top pick, but was concerned about longevity. She reported 12 had a strong resume, special education experience, and experience with PBS, and interviewed well. She noted 32 maybe not be at the superintendent level based on the depth of some of his answers. She stated 48 had an excellent

interview, does a good job now, and wondered if it would be harder to replace her if she took the position. She stated 48 was very data driven. She asked that a second interview be offered to 70, 48, and 12.

Member Curtis reported 32 lacked enough experience for what the district needs. She didn't find that she answered the questions nor had the experience the district was looking for. She indicated her concern for 70 not being able to commit to the district, so her top pick was 48. She stated the Board shouldn't hold 48 back just because she is doing a good job. She stated 48 had Superintendent experience and great grant writing. She indicated her concern would be about finding a replacement.

Member Curtis indicated her preference was 48, 70, and 12.

President Smith stated 70 answered his questions truthfully but the district wouldn't stand a chance going against his home district. Mr. Powers stated 70 was not the type to move around just to climb the ladder and his biggest concern would be if Sheppard offered him the position.

Mr. Powers reported the Sheppard School District interview was April 11 and they tentatively scheduled April 15 for second interviews.

President Smith stated the Board's consensus appears to be they would like to offer 70 the position but it may be a mode point because he is in pursuit of Sheppard.

Mr. Powers acknowledged April 11 and 15 were close to the district's dates.

Mr. Powers reported he tried to reveal all of the qualities the candidates have to offer. He acknowledge with 12 coming from another state, she did pass the background check.

Mr. Powers acknowledged 32 was not as diverse as the others and it would be up to the district if they felt he was up for the position.

President Smith questioned if 32 had enough experience for the district.

Member Wilson stated 32 would be the most at risk because he didn't have the experience.

President Smith proposed maintaining the April 14 meeting to offer second interviews to 70 and 48.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, Mr. Powers confirmed the public could attend meetings as long as they wore masks and remained 6 feet

apart. He acknowledged that every member on the Board was elected by the community and could act on their behalf in asking questions.

Mr. Powers shared some ideas used by other districts in selecting candidates such as conducting site visits and the breaking of bread. He stated he does not suggest site visits, and noted others have found that when you share dinner with someone, you sometimes see a different side of someone.

Member Pingatore indicated she was in agreement with holding the April 14 meeting for second round interviews.

Mr. Powers suggested having second round candidates start their interview with a 30 minute presentation on what they would do if they were the Superintendent and the next 30 minutes be reserved for the board to ask specific questions of the candidate. He stated it is important to be concise in the time limit and customize questions for the specific candidate.

Upon discussion on having more outside input, Mr. Powers stated it ends up being a popularity position rather than a filter for seeking the right candidate.

Mr. Powers suggested each Board member seek input questions from the public, filter them down to 6 or 8, and then pass them on to him to eliminate duplication and for clarity.

Mr. Powers indicated a notice could be placed out on the district website stating the Board is seeking questions and to submit them to the board member of their choice.

President Smith suggested the Board submit only those questions they feel are important for the candidates to answer. He reminded the Board that they were elected to represent the community, it's their responsibility to hire the Superintendent, and it's their heads if it's a successful or non-successful Superintendent.

Mr. Powers asked the Board to submit their questions to him via email by Friday at 5 p.m. He stated he would return a list to them on Saturday for feedback on the consolidated list.

President Smith clarified a motion was needed so an offer for a second interview could be offered to the candidates.

254.

It was moved by Member Curtis, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education offer a second interview for the position of Superintendent to Terry Starr and Amy Scott-Kronemeyer.

Yeas: Curtis, Young, DeWitt, Smith, Wilson, Galer, Pingatore
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

Mr. Powers encouraged audience participation to be held at the beginning of the interviews.

Discussion ensued on the location of the April 14 meeting.

President Smith confirmed the second round of interviews would be scheduled for 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 14, in the Middle School. He suggested scheduling 48 at 6:00 due to the uncertainty of 70.

President Smith confirmed Mr. Powers would notify all of the candidates and pass on the Board's sincere thanks.

255. **II. FUTURE PLANNING**

April 12 - Regular Board Meeting – Middle School - 7:00 p.m.
April 14 - Second Interviews – Middle School - 6:00 p.m.
April 27 - Annual Board Meeting – Sault Tribe Cultural Center - 7:00 p.m.
May 10 - Regular Board Meeting – Middle School - 7:00 p.m.
May 13 - EUPSBA Meeting – Sault High - 5:30 p.m.

256. **III. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at 9:55 p.m., it was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Curtis, that the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Curtis, Young, DeWitt, Smith, Wilson, Galer, Pingatore
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

Daniel L. Smith, President

Lisa A. Young, Board Secretary

Judy L. Sirk, Recording Secretary