

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

**Minutes – Monday, March 8, 2021**

205. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Smith called the electronic meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. via Zoom:  
<https://eupschools.zoom.us/j/96461042565> or Dial in: +1 646 876 9923 Meeting  
ID: 964 6104 2565

206. **A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD**

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

Absent: None

207. **B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

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

Remove: **II. A. 4.** Lincoln School – Mrs. Diane Chevillot

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

208. **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting – February 8, 2021

Closed Meeting – February 8, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Young, that the  
Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

209.

**D. BUSINESS REPORT AND APPROVAL OF BILLS –  
Mrs. Michelle Bennin**

Mrs. Bennin presented the February financial statements and stated all of the statements reflect expected amounts for this time of year. She noted the financial statements reflect a larger than normal increase in revenues resulting from the continuation of winter tax collection combined with federal drawdowns.

Mrs. Bennin reported the cash flow was at a healthy amount above that of the past four month balances.

Mrs. Bennin confirmed there were no checks requiring a second signature.

President Smith confirmed there were no questions.

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the February General Fund Bill List in the amount of \$1,726,834.01.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

**II. COMMUNICATIONS**

210.

**A. REPORTS TO THE BOARD**

**1. Recognition**

- a. Teacher of the Month (Jacqueline Line) – Mrs. Diane Chevillot

Dr. Hall reported on Mrs. Line’s outstanding attributes and noted he was pleased Jackie had been a member of the staff for a long time. Mrs. Line will be presented with a Parker Ace Hardware Helpful Teacher tee shirt and a \$50 Parker Ace Hardware gift certificate sponsored by Doug LaPrade Agency MEEMIC Insurance and Parker Ace hardware.

- b. Employee of the Month (Karen Smith) – Mrs. Michelle Bennin

Mrs. Bennin reported on Mrs. Smith’s dependability, attention to detail, and great support she lends her co-workers. Mrs. Smith will be given a Parker Ace Hardware gift certificate sponsored

by Doug LaPrade Agency MEEMIC Insurance and Parker Ace hardware.

c. Mrs. Debra Gardner Award – Mr. Carl McCready

Mr. McCready reported through hard work and love of teaching, Debra Gardner has helped students obtain their goals by taking her Advance Placement Computer Science and Honors Geometry courses. He announced Mrs. Gardner had received the Equity for Women in STEM Award for her efforts to serve and support female students in STEM fields. President Smith congratulated Mrs. Gardner on behalf of the Board.

d. Bonnie Li National Merit Finalist – Mr. Carl McCready

Mr. McCready introduced Bonnie Li Sault High Senior and 2021 National Merit Scholarship Winner. He noted Bonnie was one of 4.5 million high school juniors to take the PSAT and was selected from less than five percent to become a finalist. Mr. McCready reported Bonnie speaks several languages, works with the Quiz Bowl, participates in Student Government, takes several advance placement classes, a couple of advance placement online classes and is an outstanding, humble young lady. He indicated she received a near perfect score on the SAT and a perfect score in math. He stated she is definitely doing her part in representing Sault High.

Upon completion of Mr. McCready's report, he excused Bonnie to for orchestra practice.

Mr. McCready congratulated all of the students who participated in the National Merit Program.

2. Superintendent Survey – Mr. Joe Powers

Mr. Powers of MASB reported on the culmination of 210 online surveys taken by the community to give input on the superintendent search.

Mr. Powers reviewed the following questions and responses.

Question 1: If you are a resident, how long have you lived in the school district?

Responses: 71.29% lived in the district for over 10 years, 12.92% lived in the district less than 5 years, 9.09% lived in the district

between 5-10 years, 5.74% did not live within the district, and .96% indicated they would rather not say. One skipped this question.

Question 2: Do they work for the district?

Responses: 56.94% did not work for the district, 16.75% worked for over 10 years, 15.31% worked for less than 5 years, 7.18% worked between 5-10 years, and 3.83% would rather not say. One skipped this question.

3. What type of Stakeholder are they?

Responses: 69 were parents of a high school student, 57 were parents of a current middle school student, 51 were teachers for the district, 50 were parents of a current elementary student, 35 were residents without children currently in the district, 30 were members of a community organization, and 22 were support staff for the district.

4. What are some Strengths of the District?

Responses: MASB presented a word cloud of the most commonly used words: Students, Teachers, School, Best, Needs, Taken, Offerings, Strength, Care, Staff, Education, and District.

5. What are some Challenges of the District?

Responses: MASB presented a word cloud of the most commonly used words: Students, Schools, District, teachers, Funding, and Need.

Mr. Powers reported there are 60% fewer teachers than there was 10 years ago and it will be more of a challenge to find and attract highly qualified staff in the future.

6. What is the minimum level of education the Superintendent should have?

Responses: 30.39% indicated a Masters Degree plus administrative certification, 23.04% indicated a Masters Degree, 19.12% indicated a Doctorate degree, and 12.75% indicated a Bachelor degree. Six skipped this question.

Mr. Powers reported if a candidate has a Masters Degree, they could earn their administrative certificate within three years.

7. What prior positions should the Superintendent have worked?

Responses: 136 Teaching, 103 Building Principal, 78 Superintendent in another district, 58 Assistant Superintendent, 45 Leadership Position, 32 Prior School Position, 29 Curriculum Development.

8. What areas of expertise should the Superintendent have?

Responses: 4.27% Budget Development & Management, 4.10% Public Relations, 3.99% Curriculum Development, 3.78% Contract & Labor Negotiations, 3.77% Human Resources, and 3.768% Facilities Management. One skipped this question.

9. What type of Leadership Style should the Superintendent have?

Responses: 113 Collaborative, 84 Democratic, 75 Transformational, 74 Situational, 22, Servant. Two skipped this question. Two skipped this question.

10. What Experiences and Skills should the Superintendent have?

Responses: 4.55% Exceedingly Responsive, 4.48% Recognizes Value and Affirms Staff, 4.33% Demonstrates a Keen Ability to Think Outside the Box, 4.33% Ability to Develop and Direct an Effective Management Team, 4.25% Maintain Visibility & Accessibility to Staff, 4.20% Love of Kids, 4.18% Proven Record for Public Education. Two skipped this question.

11. What Personal Characteristics should the Superintendent possess?

Responses: 4.86% Honest & Ethical, 4.45% Approachable, 4.44% Strong Listener, 4.43% Problem Solver, 4.38% Transparent, 4.35% Strong Communicator, 4.28% Collaborative, 4.27% Resourceful. Three skipped this question.

12. How should the next Superintendent be chosen?

Responses: 52% prefer the education and management philosophy as current Superintendent who can make necessary changes, 32.66% One who is ready to take the district in a significantly different direction, 15.08% One who will stay the course and continue the good work. Eleven skipped this question.

Mr. Powers summarized stakeholder responses.

**Education:** Masters Degree (54%), Doctorate Degree (19%)

**Experience:** Teacher (60%), Teacher and Principal (50%)

**Talents:** #1 Budget/Finance, #2 Public Relations, #3 Curriculum & Evaluations, #4 Human Resources.

**Leadership Style:** #1 Collaborative (55%), #2 Democratic (40%)

**Personal Skills:** #1 Exceedingly Responsive and follows through, #2 Values and Affirms Staff, #3 Develops and Directs Effective Team, #4 Creative Thinker with Solutions, #5 Love of Kids, #6 Visibility and Accessibility.

**Personal Traits:** #1 Honest and Ethical, #2 Approachable, #3 Good Listener, #4 Problem Solver, #5 Transparent, #6 Strong Communicator, #7 Collaborative.

**Future Direction:** #1 Similar to current path and willing to make necessary changes for improvement with an ever-evolving landscape (50%), #2 Move the district in a slightly different direction (30%).

Mr. Powers received confirmation that there were no questions regarding the survey then reviewed the search timeline.

March 29 – 7 p.m. - Selection of Candidates

April 4 – 6 p.m. – First Round Interviews

April 7 – 6 p.m. – First Round Interviews (continued)

April 14 – 6 p.m. – Second Round Interviews

April 19 – Possible Selection

April 26 – Alternate Selection Date

Mr. Powers confirmed there were no questions on the timeline.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mr. Powers reported the Board would review all applications online and make interview selections would come from candidates who qualified to be in Tier I.

Mr. Powers reported MASB typically assigns a number to each applicant for discussion purposes until specific candidates have accepted an interview. He stated he would be the facilitator for those meetings, and the Board typically narrows interviews down to 4 or 6 candidates.

Upon inquiry, Mr. Powers stated first round interviews would be in person unless the Board wanted otherwise.

Upon inquiry from Member Dewitt, Mr. Powers confirmed interviews would be in opens session and the public could provide feedback if the Board chooses.

Mr. Powers confirmed there were no additional questions and invited the board to contact him directly if they had any.

3. Washington School – Dr. Sheri McFarlane

Dr. McFarlane reported on the Zones of Regulation Washington School has implemented to help students learn how to manage their emotions, be safe, responsible, and ready to learn. She reported Jesslyn Bourque and 31 N Social Worker Shelly Smith have been teaching lessons in the classrooms and using interactive posters to help students know what particular zone they are in and what they can do to feel better. Dr. McFarlane stated she has heard the students are also using the zones at home.

4. Extended Continuity of Learning Plan – Mrs. Amy Scott-Kronemeyer

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported there were 250 students participating in Virtual Blue with 100% participation. She presented the percent of attendance and gave a reminder that the plan and subsequent updates are maintained on the district transparency site.

211. **B. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – Superintendent Hall**

Superintendent Hall reported the district was working to install Stop Arm Cameras on the buses to help avoid traffic incidents and to assist law enforcement when necessary. He noted the purchase price was between \$14,000 and \$15,000 and did not require Board approval.

Superintendent Hall reported on Kindergarten Roundup. He noted 78 students had enrolled but 115 are expected by the first day of school.

Superintendent Hall reported the first round of the COVID-19 vaccine had been distributed to 218 Sault Schools, JKL Bahweting, and EUPISD staff on Monday, February 1, and 268 on March 5. Dr. Hall thanked War Memorial Hospital, Chippewa County Health Department staff Karen, Lana, Tonya, and Charity, Mary Michaels, and 5 students who are in the Health Sciences class who assisted with distribution.

Upon inquiry from Member DeWitt, Superintendent Hall reported he was unable to report what percent of Sault Schools staff had received the vaccine because some staff received their vaccine at other venues.

212. **C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Upon inquiry from President Smith, there was no public comment.

**III. ACTION ITEMS AND BOARD REPORTS**

213. **A. PERSONNEL**

## **New Hires**

Mrs. Rondeau-McCarthy virtually introduced Ms. LaRocque and reported on her teaching degree and experience.

### **1. Megan LaRocque – English Language Arts Teacher – Sault Middle School**

It was moved by Member Pingatore, supported by Member Curtis, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Megan LaRocque as English Language Arts Teacher for Sault Middle School.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

Mrs. Kronemeyer introduced Angela Love and reported on her extensive experience with shared data bases coupled with being a former elementary teacher.

### **2. Angela Love – Student Achievement Administrative Assistant - Sault Area Public Schools**

It was moved by Member Curtis, supported by Member Young, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Angela Love as Student Achievement Administrative Assistant for Sault Area Public Schools.

Yeas: Curtis, Pingatore, Smith, Young, Galer

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain DeWitt, Wilson

Motion Carried.

Superintendent Hall virtually introduced Margaret “Maggie” Davis and reported on her previous employment with the district and her extensive experience in office labor industries.

### **3. Margaret Davis – Personnel Administrative Assistant - Sault Area Public Schools**

It was moved by Member Pingatore, supported by Member Wilson, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Margaret Davis as Administrative Assistant for Sault Area Public Schools.

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

Nays: None



Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

214. **B. *EXTENDED CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN –  
Mrs. Amy Scott-Kronemeyer***

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member DeWitt, that the Board of Education affirm the current Extended Continuity of Learning Plan.

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

215. **C. *WASHINGTON SCHOOL DRAINAGE PROJECT BID –  
Mrs. Michelle Bennin***

Mrs. Bennin reported the district contracted with U.P. Engineers & Architects (UPEA) to help with the Washington School Heat Trace and Drainage Improvements Project. She noted after post-bid discussions, Jeremy Gagnon of UPEA and Tom Nelson recommended awarding the low bid to Roy Electric for a total project amount of \$79,965 with a completion date of September 1, 2021. She confirmed the payment would be made out of the capital project fund.

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Wilson, that the Board of Education award the Washington School Washington School Drainage Project Bid to Roy Electric for a total project amount of \$79,965.

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

216. **D. *GIFTS AND DONATIONS***

Superintendent Hall reported on the following donations.

1. Kristina Amend donated socks, gloves, masks, and Lysol wipes for students at Washington School.
2. Employees of Soo Co-op Credit Union raised \$400 through staff jean days to gift to the Kidz Klozit.
3. Timothy Beaulieu donated \$1,000 to the Food Pantry in Memory of Bill McLeod. Police officer and friend
4. Judy Jacobson made a donation to the Homeless Program.

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education accept the above donations with thanks and appreciation.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

217. ***E. SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION – Ms. Melissa Pingatore***

Member Pingatore reported Dr. Hall’s overall rating was effective and he had a strong hand over the district’s finances. On behalf of the Board, she wished him well in his retirement and indicated he would be missed as well as his experience and leadership.

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Young, that the Board of Education accept the superintendent evaluation.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

218. ***IV. BOARD GOVERNANCE AND BOARD POLICY ISSUES***

Member DeWitt thanked everyone for their patience with his questions as he transitions in on the Board.

In reference to the Pool Project from Member Wilson, President Smith stated it could be discussed in a more informal manner with everyone in the not too distant future unless everyone wanted to address it now.

Upon inquiry from Member DeWitt, President Smith acknowledged the Board has countless meetings coming up, several year-end activities, and he would prefer to hold off on a committee presentation until after the new Superintendent is in. President Smith reported a few years ago the district had to shut down its pool because of issues and recently a community group sent a letter to the Board about fundraising for a new pool and seeking input. He stated he would be more comfortable addressing the issue after all of the year-end activities are over.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, President Smith stated he didn’t think addressing the pool issue was time sensitive and would prefer appointing a committee along with the new superintendent to further look into it.

Member Curtis reported she was glad to hear Dr. McFarlane's report that we are starting to teach students how to recognize their feelings and the positive ways to address them. She stated the emotional needs of our students is growing and it is a huge step in starting it with the young students. She acknowledged that she hoped it could filter out to all of our students.

Member Pingatore reported she first heard about the zones when a family member was going through occupational therapy. She indicated it can be useful in a variety of area and she was excited when Member Young mention it at a previous meeting. Member Pingatore stated she was glad Dr. McFarlane had the man power to get it off the ground.

Member Young acknowledged her children use the zones at home and it is cool how they reason to get back to green. She stated she appreciates all that Dr. McFarlane is doing with this.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported she is not aware of the third grade reading law being waived. Superintendent Hall stated it would be more beneficial for teachers to use a bench mark test to assess a student's reading level. He stated he had hoped common sense would prevail and schools wouldn't have to administer the third grade reading test.

Member Wilson reported on his concern for the 25 to 26 students who were on the borderline of passing the third grade reading test last year. Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported some students took MAP tests virtually/at home and based on the winter data, the students were recovering nicely.

President Smith suggested the Board plan to attend as many year-end activities as possible. He noted there are a lot of meetings scheduled in April and he wouldn't want to have to reschedule them.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, Superintendent Hall indicated Board members would not be able to vote in any zoom meetings unless they were out for a medical emergency or on active military duty.

Member Pingatore reported she would not be in attendance for the April 19 meeting.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, President Smith indicated he hoped the 25 room attendance limit would be lifted soon to give the public more of an option for input at the meetings.

219. V. ***FUTURE PLANNING***

President Smith reviewed the following events

April 6 - Special Board Meeting – TBD  
April 7 - Special Board Meeting - TBD  
April 12 - Regular Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.  
April 19 - Special Board Meeting - TBD  
April 26 - Annual Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.  
May 10 - Regular Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.  
May 13 - EUPSBA Meeting - Sault High – 5:30/6:00 p.m.  
June 14 - Regular Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

220. **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at 8:24 p.m. it was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member DeWitt, that the Board of Education adjourn the meeting.

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

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Daniel L. Smith, President

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Lisa A Young, Board Secretary

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Judy L. Sirk, Recording Secretary