

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

Minutes – Tuesday, September 1, 2020

63. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Smith called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Sault Area Middle School, 684 Marquette Avenue, electronically via Zoom at <https://eupschools.zoom.us/j/94640735057> and with Dial-in at +1-646-876-9923, Meeting ID: 946 4073 5057

A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD

Board Members Present: Melissa S. Pingatore, Jay D. Wilson, Daniel L. Smith, Martin R. Wolski, Christine M. Curtis, Lisa A. Young
Board Member Virtually Present: Joseph A. Cochran
Absent: None

64. **B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

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

Yeas: Pingatore, Wilson, Smith, Wolski, Curtis, Young, Cochran
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

65. **A. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

III. ACTION ITEMS

66. **A. PERSONNEL – Superintendent Hall**

Superintendent Hall reported he is aware of the situation surrounding the request for unpaid leave of absence and is seeking approval.

1. Leave of Absence

Heather LaPointe – Special Education Paraprofessional – Sault Area High School

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the unpaid Leave of Absence for Heather LaPointe for the 2020-2021 school year as presented.

Yeas: Pingatore, Wilson, Smith, Wolski, Curtis, Young, Cochran

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

67. **B. *TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF BYLAW 0131.1 – Superintendent Hall***

Superintendent Hall reported the request to wave the two-reading process for the following policies was due to the timeliness of implementing the Title IX policy and others prior to the start of school.

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Wolski, that the Board of Education approve temporarily suspend its rules of order noted in ByLaw 0131.1 for the purpose of adopting policies.

Policy 2266 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in District Programs or Activities

Policy 4362.01 – Threatening Behavior toward Staff Members

Policy 5610 – Emergency Removal, Suspension, and Expulsion of Students

Policy 5611 – Due Process Rights

Policy 7740 – Facility Security

Yeas: Pingatore, Wilson, Smith, Wolski, Curtis, Young, Cochran

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

68. **C. *POLICIES – Superintendent Hall***

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Young, that the Board of Education approve the policies as presented.

Policy 2266 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in District Programs or Activities

Policy 4362.01 – Threatening Behavior toward Staff Members

Policy 5610 – Removal, Suspension, Expulsion, and Permanent Exclusion of Students

Policy 5611 – Due Process Rights
Policy 7440 – Facility Security

Yeas: Pingatore, Wilson, Smith, Wolski, Curtis, Young, Cochran
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

Superintendent Hall reported administration is uncomfortable with how Neola handled its Title IX policy. He stated the policy presented and approved by the Board was from Thrun Law. He noted Thrun has a more streamlined process in handling policies.

Superintendent Hall notified the Board that administration is researching the possibility of moving away from Neola and going to Thrun for its policies. He indicated the initial buy in is estimated to be around \$10,000, and the annual fee about \$3,000. He noted the savings compared to Neola is not significant, but the policies are written by their lawyers and the process is more streamlined.

President Smith sought confirmation from Superintendent Hall that the district would ultimately turn to Thrun for guidance after the policy was already adopted by Neola.

69. **IV. BOARD GOVERNANCE & BOARD POLICY ISSUES**

Per inquiry from President Smith, Superintendent Hall reported he met with the DM Burr Manager about the cleanliness and status of the buildings. He indicated everything will be ready for the start of school, and the district is satisfied with the work DM Burr does.

Superintendent Hall reported Sault High counselors and the social worker have relocated their offices to the second floor for better student accessibility, and the administrative offices have relocated to other areas of the building for better work flow. He noted Chromebook deployment has begun for Virtual Blue students, and virtual open houses are being offered for all schools except the high school.

Superintendent Hall indicated he is happy to see the staff back and is excited for school to start.

Superintendent Hall reported the Maintenance Director is pleased with the new disinfecting sprayers because of the quality and coverage area. He noted teachers will have extra masks for their students, spray bottles and the necessary disinfecting supplies to keep everyone safe, but as he mentioned in his interview with the newspaper, instead of the usual supplies, teachers are asking parents if they want to send in extra supplies, they could include disinfecting wipes and face masks.

Superintendent Hall reported a former high school friend's son who works at Coppercraft Distillery in Holland, Michigan, is donating 40 cases of hand sanitizer to the district.

Superintendent Hall reported the school nurse is measuring staff who are responsible for checking students in the isolation room for N-95 masks. He stated the EUPISD had donated a few, and the district will order the rest.

Superintendent Hall stated wearing a mask is an issue for some people and when the Return to School Roadmap was developed, it was misunderstood that the governor's requirement for wearing masks in public spaces included public schools. Superintendent Hall stated it does not require Board action, but with Board agreement, the district will not require students in grades Kindergarten through 5 who remain in their cohort group to wear a mask, but their teachers will. He further clarified that all students will need to wear a mask when they leave their cohort group, move about outside their classroom, ride the bus, etc.

Superintendent Hall reported students in grades 6 through 12 move around frequently so they are required to wear a mask.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, Superintendent Hall confirmed the requirement for all students to wear masks was listed in the Return to School Plan, and he had received SEA leadership support for the minor modification.

Superintendent Hall reported he would have the principals communicate the modification to their school families.

President Smith clarified the Return to School Plan is not a policy and amendments can be made when appropriate.

Upon inquiry from Member Wolski, Superintendent Hall confirmed parents may request that their child wear a mask while in their cohort group and that would be supported.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Superintendent Hall reported students in grade 5 will not transfer to other classrooms throughout the day unless they are leaving for electives or WIN time. He noted departmentalized teaching will have students taught in one subject area for a whole day as opposed to transferring to another classroom throughout each day. Superintendent Hall noted he wants to make sure staff feel safe as well.

Superintendent Hall sought Board confirmation with a nod that students in grades Kindergarten through 5 are not required to wear a mask while they are in their cohort group.

Upon inquiry from Member Cochran on if the high school athletic team was able to stay in alignment with the athletic origination they moved into or if a board policy changed was needed.

Member Cochran inquired on if there was a policy where staff members could be released by their supervisor to be tested COVID-19, and due to the fact that an individual may not immediately test positive, there would be a 3 day wait before returning to work

Superintendent Hall reported the staff COVID-19 policy was developed by the school nurse, the local health department, and the CDC, and it is on a case by case basis because of the particular scenario when an employee can return work. Superintendent Hall stated the school nurse reported on the staff COVID policy at the July 27 board meeting.

Upon further inquiry from Superintendent Hall about staying in alignment with the athletic organization, Member Cochran indicated there was a football suspension incident where a parent disagreed with the disciplinary results and was confused about what the athletic committee required. Member Cochran asked if the situation had been resolved and if our policy coincided with MHSAA policy.

Superintendent Hall stated the incident took place a long time ago and he hadn't had a chance to address it with all the changes going on since March. He further stated he would review his notes on the situation with the Athletic Director and see what the district needs to do.

Upon inquiry from Member Cochran, Superintendent Hall reported he had not heard any complaints about the virtual open house for Kindergarten students, but there are a lot of creative teachers who rose to the challenge.

70. V. ***FUTURE PLANNING***

President Smith reviewed the following and indicated he would like to see future meetings held in person.

September 8 - First Day of School

September 14 - Board of Education Meeting - 7:00 p.m. – Location TBD

Superintendent Hall reported the location of future board meetings would depend on the Governor's restrictions at the time.

Superintendent Hall reported the Board will need to approve academic goals per the Return to School Plan. He indicated the goals are basically the same as the school improvement goals with numbers assigned for curricular contact.

Superintendent Hall indicated the annual academic assessment report would not be presented at the September 14 meeting because students had not been in school since March 13, 2020, and test data would not be available.

Superintendent Hall reported the Continuity of Learning Plan will be presented to the Board at the September 14 meeting as the goals are due to the EUPISD on the 15th.

71. VI. *ADJOURNMENT*

There being no further business to come before the Board at 5:56 p.m., it was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Wolski, that the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Pingatore, Wilson, Smith, Wolski, Curtis, Young, Cochran
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

Daniel L. Smith, President

Melissa S. Pingatore, Board Secretary

Judy L. Sirk, Recording Secretary