

MOHALL LANSFORD SHERWOOD
BOARD OF EDUCATION PROCEEDINGS
REGULAR MEETING – May 14, 2024
MLS BOARD ROOM/STEM ROOM – 7:00 A.M.

PRESENT: Thurstan Johnson, President; Matt Undlin, Vice President; Roger Hutchinson, Andrew Grondahl, Sheldon Ackerson, Terry Savelkoul & Vance Undlin. ABSENT: None. ADM: Keith Campbell, Janet Asheim, and Heidi Newgard. OTHERS: Trevor Savelkoul, Randy Remynse, Paula Genareo, JoAnn Gehringer, Jodi Guenthner, Tonya Nauman, Caitlyn Abernathey & Kalli Smith.

Meeting called to order at 7:02 a.m. by President Johnson. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion made by Mr. Hutchinson, second by Mr. Terry Savelkoul to approve the April 9th, 2024 regular board meeting minutes. M/C. Mr. Campbell noted that we would like to amend the agenda to add (I) Authorization to Hire Election Officials at the end of new business. Motion was made by Mr. Ackerson, second by Mr. Hutchinson to amend the agenda to include the additional agenda item. M/C. Motion made by Mr. Matt Undlin, second by Mr. Grondahl to approve the April financial reports and payment of the accounts payables as presented. M/C.

ADM. REPORTS:

- A. Mrs. Asheim, Elementary Principal: Received compliments from one of our bus drivers that they learned as much as the kids did on one of the last field trips. Music festival's key takeaway for next year is to schedule a little later. We have the Pre-K program today, Kindergarten program tomorrow, and Elementary music program on Friday, May 17th. Preliminary staff plan has been shared for the upcoming year, along with current enrollment numbers. Math and reading results were shared and MLS is above the state averages and many by 30%.
- B. Mrs. Newgard, High School Principal: According to the website Niche, MLS was ranked the 14th best high school in ND. On that site, MLS is ranked #14 out of almost 200 high schools in the state of North Dakota. Returning students have completed the pre-registration for next year. We are still getting ready for graduation, which is Sunday, May 26th. We had the Drug dog come in yesterday to do a routine random as one of our initiatives to focus on safety here at MLS. These will be occurring at random approximately 4 times per year. Teachers are working hard, but of course it is difficult with spring sports right now. Next week semester tests will be held on Wednesday.
- C. Mr. Savelkoul, Athletic Director: Spring sports has been a little chaotic lately with all the weather. Baseball is starting their district tournament this Saturday which we are hosting in Lansford. The Softball district tournament will be held in Minot this year. Still

looking for ticket takers for this weekend's tournament in Lansford. Both Baseball and Softball teams are going in as the number one seat. In track, we have one athlete that has double qualified for state.

- D. Mr. Campbell, Superintendent: Our summer school application has been approved by ND DPI. This past month a group of teachers and Mr. Campbell visited Fargo Davies to observe and gain a better understanding on standards based grading. They have been very accommodating and it has been a very good partnership this past year. It has been eye opening to some of our teachers. Mr. Campbell also drove and supervised students to attend the National Honor Society convention in Bismarck. Statewide we have students from MLS participating and representing our community at a number of extra curriculuar programs other than just sports. We even have had some elected as state officers, which is wonderful to see. Wanted to address the number of openings that we have at MLS currently, that it isn't specific to just MLS. Openings continue to be an issue with many surrounding school districts. Have been visiting with 25% of the staff in the past 3 weeks in seeking feedback and their thoughts on how might we improve as a school district. As the year winds down, I hope to hear from more, and then be able compile key take aways that can then be shared with leadership and the board.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. FINANCE COMMITTEE – The committee was formed and is comprised of Thurstan, Matt, & Vance. We met on Wednesday, April 24th at 8:00 a.m. Discussed mill levy amounts and the general agreement was reached supporting levy of 6 mills in the Misc. funds. Also address the property tax bill and what happens to the degree of local authority if that passes. Several superintendents in the area that Mr. Campbell spoke with were suggesting that they max out their levies. NDSBA does not recommend maxing them out. The committee suggests a 6 mill levy in the Misc. Fund. The board will decide later how much to levy during budget recommendations (July and August).
- b. ACTIVITY COMMITTEE - Updates on the Gym Floor. Met with Jaywood and received two different estimates. Both estimates came in higher than anticipated. Jaywood has done more of the area school floors. Was asked if there was a preference? The activities committee is planning on meeting again to decide which route to go, floating floor vs. an anchored floor. Both companies have stated that our current gym floor is beyond repair. Next we will need a commitment to move forward.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. PAYMENT OF NON-CERTIFIED STAFF – CHANGE TO HOURLY VS. SALARY: Claudia Dean shared two legal memos with opinions from Amy DeKok, Attorney with NDSBA, and KrisAnn Norby-Jahner, Attorney at Law with Vogel Law Firm. Claudia brought up the Fair Labor Standards Act and that it has been in existence since 1938, it established the minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting employees in the private sector and in Federal, State, and local governments. In accordance with FLSA, employees can be either Exempt or non-exempt. Exempt is with regards to the payment of overtime. Typically to be considered Exempt or “salaried”, you must meet a salary and duties requirement test. Exempt employees would include your teachers and administrators. Salary rates alone currently are required to be \$684 / week or \$17.10 per hour, equivalent to \$35,568 annually. As of July 1st, 2024 the salary threshold is increasing to \$844 / week or \$21.10 per hour, equivalent to \$43,888 annual salary. Then it is scheduled to increase again on July 1, 2025 to \$1,128 / week or \$28.80 per hour, equivalent to \$58,656 annually. That is only one of three tests that would need to be satisfied to be classified as exempt. An employee's position would also need to pass a duties test, which according to the legal memos provided many of the current non-exempt employees would not meet. We have consulted with instructors for the Business Manager Certification Program who teach the HR portion and they have advised that we pay all our non-certified staff based on the actual hours worked. An email inquiry was sent out to the Business Manager Listserve, as well as area Superintendents across the state of North Dakota and within an hour we received back approximately 20 responses that they are all following the recommended best practice that is advised by NDSBA and legal. At this time, we are the anomaly and in doing so, we need to do our due diligence in notifying the board of the increased risk put on the board for potential FLSA violations. Discussion was raised and how we are doing things and if it is legal to continue to keep doing so. Mr. Ackerson noted that this was poor timing. Mr. Vance Undlin commented that just because something is suggested doesn't mean we need to make that change. Claudia mentioned that she questioned the process of how we have been paying employees since starting, but didn't want to make any big changes during the middle of the year. Currently we only have two non-exempt employees that are paid based on actual hours worked. After going to a number of NDSBA trainings and conferences and networking with other business managers, it was reiterated the importance by many different people and legal teams advising about the need for this recommended change. All that it takes is one Department of Labor audit, or Wage and Hour claim to be opened up and investigated and the school district could be liable for penalties, interest, and in cases of willful violations - prosecution. Claudia also shared an example of how employees would still receive the same pay, just in varying amounts spread out over 9 months rather than 10-

12 equal payments all paid out over 9 months. President Johnson opened the meeting up for questions and comments from the audience. Jodi Guenthner noted that the equal payments was one of the most attractive benefits about coming to work at the school. Discussion was further had regarding the potential outcome of this proposed change. Motion was made by Mr. Vance Undlin to continue paying non-exempt employees on a salary basis, as we are currently, with the requirement that they must clock in and out, second by Mr. Hutchinson. Roll call vote: Vance Undlin – yes; Terry Savelkoul – yes; Sheldon Ackerson – yes; Andy Grondahl – yes; Matt Undlin – yes; Thurstan Johnson – yes. M/C.

B. RESIGNATIONS:

- a. Chaleigh Clark, Counselor - Motion was made by Mr. Vance Undlin, second by Mr. Matt Undlin to accept Ms. Clark's resignation as presented. M/C.
- b. Jennifer Wenstad – Elementary Teacher – Motion was made by Mr. Terry Savelkoul, second by Mr. Grondahl to approve the resignation of Mrs. Wenstad. M/C.

C. HIRING:

- a. Francill Hall, Head Baseball – Motion made by Mr. Ackerson, second by Mr. Terry Savelkoul to approve hiring Francis Hall as Head Baseball Coach. M/C.
- b. Mickey Depute, Baseball Assistant Coach - Motion made by Mr. Hutchinson, second by Mr. Grondahl to hire Mickey Depute as Assistant Baseball Coach. M/C.
- c. Kharra Fyllesvold, 3/7 time JH Teacher & HS Art – Motion was made by Mr. Hutchinson, second by Mr. Matt Undlin to approve the hiring of Kharra Fyllesvold at 3/7th time for the 2024-2025 school year as presented. M/C.
- d. Braeden Volk, Technology Coordinator – It was recommended to hire Braeden Volk to start effective Tuesday, May 14th, 2024 on a full-time hourly basis at \$25.00 per hour and begin training with Randy prior to the beginning of the new school and fiscal year work agreement. Motion was made by Mr. Vance Undlin, second by Mr. Hutchinson to hire Braeden Volk as recommended by Mr. Campbell. M/C.
- e. Boyd Southam, Summer Weights & Summer Drivers Ed – Motion was made by Mr. Grondahl, second by Mr. Hutchinson to hire Mr. Southam for both summer positions as presented. M/C.
- f. Jen Becker, 5/6th GBB – Motion was made by Mr. Ackerson, second by Mr. Grondahl to hire Jen Becker to coach 5/6th grade GBB for next year. M/C.
- g. Kaitlin Brunner, Elementary Teacher – Motion was made by Mr. Hutchinson, second by Mr. Matt Undlin to hire Mrs. Brunner as an elementary teacher for the 2024-2025 school year. M/C.

- h. Katie Cargo, Elementary Teacher – Motion was made by Mr. Vance Undlin, second by Mr. Terry Savelkoul to hire Ms. Cargo as an elementary teacher for the 2024-2025 school year. M/C.
 - i. Gianna Genareo, Elementary Paraprofessional – Motion was made by Mr. Hutchinson, second by Mr. Ackerson to hire Ms. Genareo as an elementary paraprofessional for the 2024-2025 school year. M/C.
- D. SET FEE's for CTE COURSES (LAB FEE's): Discussion was held on the possibility of charging a course fee for VO AG projects in which the students make and and get take home. Ms. Dukart is requesting proposed fees of \$25/student to help cover the cost of lumber and materials next year. We are one of few schools are not charging a CTE/VO AG course fee. Fee's could vary based on the class and the number of projects they are required to make during the semester/year. For example this year alone, had we charged fee's for grades 7-10 we would have re-couped half of her materials expense which would help with exepenses necessary for shop maintenance and purchasing new tools. Example of fees: 7th grade - \$ 25 / year; 10th grade - \$50 / year. There could be Free & Reduced clauses established as well. This was not something the board wanted to consider so no motion was made to move forward with this request at this time.
- E. JUNE 11th POLLING PLACES / AUTHORITY TO HIRE ELECTION OFFICIALS: Reminder that polling locations were approved at the previous meeting. Voting may occur on June 11th from 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Renville County Courthouse in Mohall, or the Lansford Mall Community Room in Lansford. The Superintendent and Business Manager were seeking authorization to hire necessary election officals to helps with those two polling locations. Motion made by Mr. Vance Undlin, second by Mr. Matt Undlin to authorize the hiring of necessary election officials as presented for the June 11th, 2024 School Board Election. M/C.
- F. TUITION AGREEMENTS 2024-2025:
 - a. Mohall students attending Minot Public (SM & RH). Motion made by Mr. Terry Savelkoul, second by Mr. Ackerson to approve the tuition agreements as presented for 2024-2025 school year. M/C.
- G. PEACE GARDEN MULTIDISTRICT BOARD ELECTION: Motion was made by Mr. Vance Undlin, second by Mr. Grondahl to name Mr. Keith Campbell as the representative for MLS for the 2024-2025 school year. M/C.
- H. MLS BANK ACCOUNT AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS: Clarifications were made to include the listing of the new investment CD's and to add Keith Campbell to all CD's so as to have two school representatives and two school board members as signatories. Motion was made by Mr. Vance Undlin, second by Mr. Hutchinson to approve the updated MLS Bank Account Authorized Individuals list as presented. M/C.

Future Meeting Dates

- a. Regular Board Meeting – Normally would be Tuesday, June 11th but that is the day of the election. So this year, the next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held Monday, June 10th, 2024 at 7:00 a.m.
- b. Canvas Meeting – June 24th, 2024 at 7:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Matt Undlin, second by Mr. Grondahl to adjourn the meeting. M/C.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Thurstan Johnson, President
MLS School Board
MLS School District 001

Claudia Dean, Business Manager
MLS School Board
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