

**BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 22, 2024**

The Board of Education of the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, Wayne and Washtenaw Counties, Michigan, met in a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, October 22, 2024, at 7 p.m. at the E. J. McClendon Educational Center, 454 S. Harvey Street, Plymouth, Michigan, 48170.

President Christenson called the Regular Meeting to order at 7 p.m. in the Boardroom.

Present: Members Ahmed, Christenson, McCoin, Picard, and Sidhu

Absent: Members Kehoe and Westra

Administrators Present: Dr. Monica Merritt, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Liz Vartanian-Gibbs, Assistant Superintendent of Student & Family Engagement  
Mr. Kurt Tyszkiewicz, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services  
Ms. Jill Minnick, Chief Finance and Operations Officer  
Ms. Bethany Rayl, Chief Academic and Innovation Officer  
Dr. Denise Lilly, Executive Director of Elementary Education  
Mr. Matthew Lents, Director of Capital Programs and Facilities  
Mr. Kevin Karr, Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Prof. Dev.  
Ms. Rania Hammoud, Curriculum Coordinator, Social Studies, World Language, Climate

Others Present: Ms. Diane Robertson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Board  
Ms. Sae Pawar, SVA Student Co-Chair  
Mr. Josh Patterson, SVA Student Co-Chair  
Mr. Jeff Higgins, Plante Moran Partner-CPA  
Ms. Renee Esper, Plante Moran Audit Manager

President Christenson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**A. Adoption of the Agenda/Approval of the Consent Agenda**

**Action Item #25-10-24:** It was moved by Member Sidhu and seconded by Member Picard to Adopt the Agenda and the Consent Agenda as presented. The Consent Agenda consisted of New Hires, Leaves, Special Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2024, and Final Reading Policies.

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Christenson, McCoin, Picard, and Sidhu

Nays: None

The motion was carried 5-0

**New Hires**

|                 |                                                                     |                    |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Fournier, Diane | MTSS Academic Instructional Support Teacher<br>Starkweather Academy | Effective 10-28-24 |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|

**Leaves of Absence**

|                       |                                                     |                                                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| VanValkenburg, Lauren | Counselor (Non-Instructional)<br>Canton High School | Childcare Leave of Absence<br>Effective 9-19-24 to 12-10-24 |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|

**Approval of Minutes**

The Special Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2024, and Regular Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2024, were approved as presented.

**Final Reading Policies**

- Policy #9150 - School Visitors-Combined

**B. Celebrating Success**

Member Sidhu presented Ms. Jordan Fisher, a media center paraprofessional at Tonda Elementary, with the Mary Beth Carroll Extra Miler Award in recognition of her dedication to nurturing and maintaining the school's garden spaces. Often working after hours, Jordan's creativity and care greatly enhance Tonda's positive and inviting atmosphere for students, staff, and families.

Parent volunteers Steve and Gretchen Harrington were also honored with V.I.P. Awards for their steadfast support of the Tonda school community. Through their organization of student sports leagues, including flag football and baseball, they provide students with opportunities to engage in activities and create lasting memories. Their commitment and many hours of hard work make these valuable programs possible, and their contributions are greatly appreciated.

### **C. Board Committee Reports/Action**

#### **Presidents Report – Lauren Christenson**

President Christenson shared highlights from the recent Wayne RESA General Membership meeting, which she attended along with Members McCoin and Sidhu. The meeting covered key topics, including details on the crucial Wayne County Enhancement Millage renewal. Attendees also received updates from MASB on current legislative initiatives and participated in a workshop focused on discussing legislative priorities to support student success.

#### **Student Performance and Achievement Committee (SPA) - Anupam Chugh Sidhu**

Member Sidhu shared that the SPA Committee has not met since the last Board meeting. The next SPA meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2024, at 5 p.m. in the Boardroom, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

#### **Policy Advisory Committee - Patti McCoin**

Member McCoin shared that the Policy Committee has not met since the last Board meeting. The next Policy meeting is scheduled for November 26, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Collaboration Room at the E.J. McClendon Educational Center, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

#### **Finance and Operations Committee - Patrick Kehoe**

Member Christenson shared that the F&O Committee met on October 17, 2024, and reviewed the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year-End Audit Presentation as well as Farrand Elementary School bond updates. The committee also discussed the purchase of rooftop units for Canton High School and a summer tax levy. The next F&O meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2024, at 5 p.m. in the Boardroom at the E.J. McClendon Educational Center, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

#### **Student Voice in Action Committee (SVA) - Lauren Christenson**

Sae Pawar and Josh Patterson, SVA student co-chairs, shared that the SVA committee met on October 21, 2024, welcomed new members, and tried food samples from the P-CCS Food and Nutrition Services to provide feedback. The meeting also included a presentation on mental health and wellness by Ms. Kathy Grodus, Mental Health Manager and Psychologist, and Ms. Liz Vartanian-Gibbs, Assistant Superintendent of Student and Family Engagement. The next SVA committee meeting will be held on November 18, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. at Discovery MS auditoria, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

### **D. Administrative Reports/Recommendations**

#### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Merritt reminded the community of the Wayne RESA Millage Renewal, appearing on the November ballot. This renewal has been a critical source of funding for Wayne County schools, supporting career technical education, special education, class size reduction, and school safety.

She also encouraged the community to join in celebrating Principal Appreciation Month, recognizing the dedication of P-CCS principals who work tirelessly to support students and staff, often arriving early and staying late to build a positive school culture. She expressed gratitude for the talented leadership within P-CCS.

Additionally, she spoke about the exceptional work of Director of School Safety Josh Meier and his team, who were recently featured by Channel 4 (WDIV) for their proactive approach to student safety. The segment showcased the district's Security Operation Center, emphasizing the importance of increased state funding to further enhance school safety. P-CCS takes pride in its high standards for school safety and remains committed to ongoing improvements in this area.

Finally, Superintendent Merritt shared that the Rock Cafe, run by students in P-CCS's award-winning culinary program, has reopened for the 2024-2025 school year. Guided by chefs Diana Woodward, Polly Brown, and Andy Lehmann, students handle everything from menu design to meal preparation and restaurant management. Open to the public, the Rock Cafe invites the community to enjoy a meal and support this outstanding student-led program.

## **Finance and Operations – Jill Minnick**

### **2023-2024 Annual Audit-Plante Moran (Presentation)**

Representatives from Plante Moran, Mr. Jeff Higgins, Partner, and Ms. Renee Esper, Audit Manager, provided a comprehensive overview of the district's 2023-2024 Annual Financial Audit Reports, which is required by state auditing standards. Their findings included a clean, unmodified audit opinion, which is the highest level of assurance. The presentation covered the audit process and provided detailed insights into the district's revenue, expenditures, foundation allowance, enrollment numbers, and a historical overview of the district's fund balance. Ms. Jill Minnick, Chief Finance and Operations Officer, thanked Ms. Jody Malbon, Director of Finance and Accounting, and the entire finance team for their dedication and assistance throughout the audit process. Superintendent Merritt also expressed appreciation to Ms. Minnick for her oversight and strong leadership.

Board members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

### **First Reading Resolutions**

- Consider Approval of a Resolution for the Purchase of Two Rooftop Units (RTUs) for Canton High School. Ms. Jill Minnick, Chief Finance and Operations Officer, provided an overview of this recommendation, which is necessary to replace units that are beyond their useful life and no longer functional. Trane, U.S., Inc. is the recommended vendor at a cost of \$89,893.32, including installation. This project will be funded with 2020 and 2023 bond funds. (First Reading)

Board members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

### **Final Reading Resolutions**

- Action Item #25-10-25:** It was moved by Member McCoin and seconded by Member Ahmed to Approve a Resolution for Annual Financial Audit Reports for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (First and Final Reading)

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Christenson, McCoin, Picard, and Sidhu

Nays: None

The motion was carried 5-0

- Action Item #25-10-26:** It was moved by Member Ahmed and seconded by Member Picard to Approve a Resolution for the Purchase of a Chiller Unit for Plymouth High School. This recommendation is being brought forward to replace a chiller damaged beyond repair during a storm in June 2024. Trane U.S. Inc. is the recommended vendor at a cost of \$178,582.04. The cost of this purchase will be funded with insurance claim proceeds from SetSeg, the district's liability insurance carrier. (Final Reading)

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Christenson, McCoin, Picard, and Sidhu

Nays: None

The motion was carried 5-0

## **Teaching and Learning - Beth Rayl**

### **P-CCS Elementary Program Highlights (Presentation) (Strategic Goal A)**

Dr. Denise Lilly, Executive Director of Elementary Education, presented a detailed overview of P-CCS Elementary School Programs. Her presentation highlighted various aspects of academic instruction, student engagement, and the supportive culture and climate thriving in our district's elementary schools. Multiple slides were reviewed showing how these initiatives foster a well-rounded educational experience for our youngest learners and align with the district's Dynamic Plan. Dr. Lilly also reviewed key supports that were implemented to support students and spoke about the positive impact provided through instructional coaching, co-teaching, and collaboration. She also addressed recent questions about instructional guidelines and class schedules. In closing, she expressed appreciation to P-CCS teachers and administrators for their tireless work to support our students.

Board members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

### **First Reading Resolutions**

- Consider Approval of a Resolution for a New Course (Sports Officiating). The P-CEP physical educational team proposes adding Sports Officiating as a new one-semester elective course for 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students. This course gives students the knowledge and skills to become sports referees, umpires, and judges. The proposed cost for materials for the course (\$1,250) and course development (\$780) with a total of \$2,015. This course will be implemented during the 2025-2026 school year and beyond. (First Reading)

- Consider Approval of a Resolution for a Course Name Change and Credit Attainment Proposal. P-CCS social studies department members are bringing a recommendation forward to integrate the personal finance content expectations into two existing courses. This proposal is for the renaming of Political and Economic Systems (PES)-Economics to Political and Economic Systems (PES)-Economics and Personal Finance and also renaming Advanced Placement (AP) Macroeconomics to Advanced Placement (AP) Macroeconomics and Personal Finance. Additionally, this proposal would approve increasing the credit earned in each course from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1.0 while allowing them to remain as one-semester courses. (First Reading)
- Consider Approval of a Resolution for a New Course (Peer-to-Peer Connections). Members of the P-CEP team propose adding this new one-semester elective course for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students. Peer-to-Peer Connections is a general education course designed to foster positive peer relationships between neurotypical and neurodiverse students. Students in general education will learn about special needs populations, leadership, and advocacy, while students who receive special education services will develop increased independence and social skills. This course will be implemented during the second semester of the 2024-2025 school year and beyond. (First Reading)
- Consider Approval of a Resolution to Rename Existing Course (HSE Arts to Peer-to-Peer Connections: Arts) Members of the P-CEP Team propose changing the name of the HSE course to align all similar programming to a standard name structure. There would be no cost for this proposed course name change. This change would be implemented during the 2025-2026 school year and beyond. (First Reading)
- Consider Approval of a Resolution to Rename Existing Course (HSE Foods to Peer-to-Peer Connections: Foods). Members of the P-CEP team propose changing the name of the HSE course to align all similar programming to a standard name structure. There would be no cost for this proposed course name change. This change would be implemented during the 2025-2026 school year and beyond. (First Reading)

#### **E. Citizens' Comments**

- Natalie Sharpe spoke on raising awareness of the benefits of riding bikes to school
- Darrin Silvester, Sara Tebben, Shanel Talbert, Toni Conell, Ginny Yurich, and Katie Bennett spoke about elementary recess time.

#### **F. Follow-up Board Questions**

- A board member asked for clarity on the bid threshold for purchase services and Board approval.
- A board member asked the Plante Moran representative how does the amount of debt service P-CCS carries in the General Fund compare to other districts our size.
- A board member inquired about the number of P-CCS physical education teachers currently certified as sports officials.
- A board member requested information on research regarding on the optimal length of recess time.

**Discussion** - Member Sidhu shared information about a resolution she would like the Board to consider, which supports senate bills being drafted that will implement stricter penalties for establishments that sell tobacco and vaping products to minors. She will share this resolution with President Christenson for consideration at the next Board meeting.

#### **G. Adjournment**

President Christenson adjourned the Regular Meeting at 9:29 p.m.

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Judy Westra  
Secretary, Board of Education