

SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET HEARING, JUNE 16, 2025

The Spring Lake Board of Education held a Budget Hearing on Monday, June 16, 2025, in the SLIS/MS Media Center. Jennifer Nicles called the hearing to order at 5:45 p.m. Board members present: Jennifer Nicles, Kelly VanderHoek, Christopher (Chris) Beck, Paul Aldridge, and Dustin Brown. Absent: Curt Theune. Courtney Holmes joined the meeting in progress at 5:53 p.m.

Jennifer Nicles appointed Paul Aldridge as acting Secretary for the meeting due to the absence of Curt Theune.

2025-26 SLPS GENERAL FUND BUDGET & TRUTH-IN-TAXATION HEARING

Brad VanDe Vusse, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, advised that a public budget and truth-in-taxation hearing was required before the Board can adopt next year's budget or tax levy. He indicated that the budget must be adopted by July 1 per state requirement. No action is taken at this hearing.

Mr. VanDe Vusse presented the following:

2024-25 Budget

- Budgeted use of fund balance is reduced from first amendment primarily a result of increases in interest investment earnings, increases in state aid and Medicaid funding and reductions in employee total compensation costs
- While the fund balance remains strong, the expiration of federal and state funding related to COVID, combined with no increase in the per pupil funding and reduction in enrollment, the district intends to utilize the fund balance (reserves) in the amount of \$756,900, leaving the fund balance at 18.88%, still very strong

2025-2026 Budget

The notable revenue assumptions are:

- Blended enrollment of 2,300 FTE (same as 24-25)
- Foundation allowance increase of \$400 per pupil
- Reallocation of other state categorical funding
- Expansion of GSRP programming providing additional funding
- Enhancement millage funding estimated at \$760,000 – year 7 of 10
- Indirect cost subsidy from Food Service fund of \$75,000

The notable expenditures are:

- Negotiated wages with employees, union and non-union
- Employer retirement contributions rate of 29.91% as of October 2025
- Health insurance state hard cap increase of 3.0%
- Impact of staff retirements/resignations and replacements
- New programming to meet student needs
- Added operating costs for new fieldhouse and HS office additions
- Inflationary increases to contracted services and supplies/materials

The proposed budget for 2025-26 provides for \$37,238,800 in revenues with assumed expenditures of \$37,543,500. The ending fund balance is projected to be \$6,735,039, leaving the fund balance at 17.87%, which is historically strong.

2025-2026 Proposed Operating Tax Levy

Based on the May 2025 election, the district will be levying the full 18 mills for operations in 2025-26 on all non-homestead properties. The voter authorization for levying the operating mills runs through December of 2026.

2025-2026 Proposed Debt Tax Levy

When bonds are approved, voters agree to tax themselves enough to repay the debt over a prescribed number of years. Based on the annually-required calculation, the district will levy 7.00 mills for the upcoming year, the same rate that was levied for the current tax year.

Mr. VanDe Vusse accepted questions from the Board, there were none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joanne Koratich, 16789 Bridlepath, SL – inquired if retired Chromebooks could ever be offered to graduating seniors, for free or to purchase for a nominal fee, in the future.

Tina Koratich, 16789 Bridlepath, SL – read from a prepared statement on behalf of a SLPS student who couldn't be present about the benefits of music instruction and the improvements on test scores of students that participate in music during their school-aged years and also on the benefits of music on mental health.

SLPS Student – spoke in favor of continuing with full year music programs, that it would be a disservice to students to take that away and the effects of music on brain development and cognitive learning. The student commented that music impacts all students and spoke about her personal and positive experience with music.

Rebecca Kaufman, 15317 Hofma Dr., Grand Haven – spoke on behalf of herself, Robin Kieft, Mike Truskowski and Mark Grevengoed and advocated for the continued support of year-long elementary music instruction emphasizing how music builds brains, strengthens memory, coordination and language skills, and stating it is inclusive by nature. She encouraged the Board to protect and prioritize music education at the elementary level.

SLPS Student – provided his thoughts on and involvement with the SLPS music programs. He stressed the importance of music in child development and the core values that are rooted in the arts. He implored the Board to care for the music programs and the values they instill in children and to protect music education keeping it in the forefront of student minds.

Michelle Prince, 15165 Wildfield Dr., SL – spoke about her child's valuable experience in music at SLPS in place of sports. Her child was able to participate in band and choir at the same time. Her daughter was able to achieve her dream of becoming an all-state choir performer. She further praised the learning experience her daughter received from SLPS music educators and stated many benefits of participation in music and advocated for continuing the strong music programs at the elementary level.

Arin Prince, 15165 Wildfield Dr., SL – commented that she is a graduate of SLPS and how her experience with music has affected her life and continues with her current college studies. She further advocated for keeping music at the elementary level and the importance of giving future students the same opportunities that she had at SLPS.

Nancy Ireland, 1830 Pine Court, Grand Haven – spoke on behalf of the music department and students served to address the role of music in learning a new language. She briefly explained the curriculum called Quaver Ed that she utilizes in DK-5 music lessons and that the music can be taught in any language using this curriculum tool. She stated that both cultural and historical connections are part of the learning and that it is an engaging way to connect young learners. She advocated for filling the music teacher vacancy rather than downsizing it by 33%.

Dylan Sawyer, 16340 Bloem Dr., SL – spoke about what the SLPS music program has meant to him and that he was in choir from 3rd grade through graduation and has plans to continue with singing in college. He commented that his love of music is a big part of who he is, that the seed was planted in elementary school and how wonderful the music educators were. He said he loved the program so dearly and that it got him through some tough times, truly a community where he felt he belonged.

ADJOURNMENT

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelley VanderHoek, to adjourn the Budget Hearing.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

Jennifer Nicles adjourned the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Date Board Secretary

SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, JUNE 16, 2025

The Spring Lake Board of Education held a Regular Meeting on Monday, June 16, 2025 in person at the SLIS/MS Media Center. Jennifer Nicles called the meeting to order at 6:23p.m., immediately following the Budget Hearing. Board members present: Jennifer Nicles, Kelly VanderHoek, Christopher (Chris) Beck, Paul Aldridge, Courtney Holmes and Dustin Brown. Absent: Curt Theune

Paul Aldridge was appointed acting Secretary due to Curt Theune’s absence from this meeting.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the Minutes of the Regular and Special Meetings of May 19, 2025 as presented.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

ITEMS RECEIVED TOO LATE FOR PRINTED AGENDA

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Karen Obits, 740 Winter St, SL – provided the Board with information on the Michigan Safe Homes, Safe Schools project regarding safe firearm storage and the future requirement of Michigan school districts to provide parents with information on safe firearm storage annually. She hopes that the district will comply with the requirements of the new legislation.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

CONSENT AGENDA

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

- Accounts Payable – Food Service, SLCFAC, General Fund, Student Activity, etc. – totaling \$2,863,313.
- Payroll – totaling \$2,878,915.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

2024-2025 BUDGET AMENDMENT

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the 2024-2025 General Appropriation Resolution Amendment as presented.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

ACTION ITEMS

NEW HIRES

Kelly VanderHoek moved, supported by Paul Aldridge, to approve the following new hires as presented:

Ema Strauss.....	GSRP Lead Teacher	Holmes Elementary
Kristin Berlin.....	GSRP Lead Teacher	Jeffers Elementary
Katharine Thompson.....	GSRP Lead Paraprofessional.....	Jeffers Elementary

Mr. Furton provided details on the new hires.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve, with regrets, the resignations of Kevin Teays, 4th Grade teacher at Holmes, Bill Core, Middle School PE teacher and Mary VandenBosch, Reading Specialist, as presented.

Mr. Furton commented on the resignations. All will be missed!

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

ADMINISTRATOR CONTRACT

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve a two-year administrator contract for Kate Drake, Curriculum Director, as presented. Ms. Drake was inadvertently left off contract approvals list at the May, 2025 meeting.

Yes – Unanimous

2025-2026 BUDGET RESOLUTION

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the General Appropriations Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 as presented.

Chris Beck provided there was good discussion at the finance committee meeting prior to the budget hearing.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

2025-2026 TAX LEVY

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the 2025-2026 Tax Levy as presented.

Mr. Furton provided that this approval is an annual requirement in order to collect the tax levy.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

WMHIP RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PUBLIC ENTITY MEMBERSHIP

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the Resolution Authorizing Public Entity Membership in the West Michigan Health Insurance Pool (WMHIP) for a minimum three-year period as presented.

Mr. Furton advised that there are two health insurance plans that the district has for medical coverage of staff. The WMHIP plan requires the Board give the district permission to contract with the them for group benefits of certain staff every three years.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

MHSAA MEMBERSHIP RESOLUTION

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the 2025-2026 MHSAA Membership Resolution as presented.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

CONSENT ELECTION RESOLUTION

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the Consent Election resolution as presented.

Mr. Furton provided the background for this resolution. He was informed by a representative of the Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC) that the MEA had filed a petition on behalf of the paraprofessionals of SLPS to join the support staff union, which includes maintenance, transportation and food service staff. 30% or more of parapros showed an interest in being represented by the MEA for this purpose. Mr. Furton explained the voting process and that if 50% or more vote yes, the MEA will represent the group for bargaining. Board approval for Mr. Furton to sign the consent agreement, which dictates the terms of the union election, is required in order to proceed.

Questions from the Board were answered by Mr. Furton.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous; Paul Aldridge Abstained

SL RECREATION COMMISSION 2025 BUDGET

Chris Beck moved, supported by Paul Aldridge, to approve the SL Recreation Commission district contribution of \$6,545 for 2025 as presented.

Mr. Furton noted that the district contribution amount has not changed since 2007, and that it benefits participating families by keeping the costs down.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

BUS LIFT PURCHASE

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to approve the purchase of a Challenger Mobile Column Vehicle Lift and jack stands from NAPA Tools & Equipment for a total cost not to exceed \$45,970.03 as presented

Liz Boeve provided the background on the reason a new lift is needed and answered questions from the Board. Bradyn Juhas, Transportation Director, was present as well and answered questions from the Board.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

CURRICULUM APPROVAL – 7th & 8th GRADE SCIENCE

Kelly VanderHoek moved, supported by Chris Beck, to approve the adoption of Mi-Star Science curriculum for the 7th and 8th grades beginning in the Fall of 2025 as presented.

Kate Drake provided the background on the request and that the program was piloted in the late spring. Staff and students who piloted the program were enthusiastic about the curriculum. Ms. Drake noted that the next subject for curriculum review in 2025-26 would be 7th and 8th grade social studies. Questions from the Board were answered.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

DISTRICT OFFICE SUMMER HOURS

- June 23 through August 1, Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to Noon
- Regular hours resume August 4

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Karen Obits, 740 Winter St, SL – provided that she feels strongly about life-long immersion in music and the impact it had on her love of language. She believes because she has played music her whole life that she is very comfortable speaking in front of others.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent Furton reported on the following:

- Legislative Update – provided to the Board and the highlights were reviewed.
- Personnel – Elementary PE is posted and expected to be filled later this month.
- Calendar/Events:
 - July 8-10: WMHIP Summer Work Session

UPCOMING MEETING

- Regular Board Meeting – July 21, 2025, 6:00 p.m., IS/MS Media Center

CLOSED SESSION – SUPERINTENDENT’S MID-YEAR EVALUATION

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to move to closed session at 7:04 p.m.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to return to open session at 8:10 p.m.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

ADJOURNMENT

Chris Beck moved, supported by Kelly VanderHoek, to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

Jennifer Nicles adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Date
Board Secretary