MILAN AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, March 11, 2026
MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Milan Area Schools Board of Education was called to order in the District Office Boardroom located at 100 Big Red Drive, Milan MI, 48160, by President Faro at 7:00 p.m. on March 11, 2026.

Board Members Present: Faro, Gutierrez, Heikka, Cislo, Burdette and Prior

Board Members Absent: Meray

Staff Present: Ryan McMahon, Jennifer Bookout, Aaron Shinn, Margaret Durkee, Andrea Bennink Jennifer Barker, Jim Brousseau and Sara Beckman

Guests Present: Sarah Norton, George Elder and Heather Finch

Student Board Member Comments: None

Public Comments:

- George Elder - he expressed concerns about bullying in the schools and about acceptable forms of free speech.

- Margaret Durkee - shared that she was able to attend the preview of the high school play with her students. She thanked the drama club for the performance.

The Board heard the WISD PAC update by Andrea Bennink.

The Board watched a presentation by Jessi Kishiyama, Executive Director of Paddock Early Childhood Center (PECC), who provided an overview of their program.

Motion by Cislo supported by Heikka to adopt Board policies as described in Attachment A. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Burdette supported by Gutierrez to approve the Milan Area Schools Directors' Salary Schedule as provided in Attachment B. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Prior supported by Heikka to approve Kelly Gobrogge as the Director of Paddock Early Childhood Assistant Director. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Burdette supported by Cislo to approve the Master Agreement with the Milan Area Schools Support Staff (MASSS) as detailed in Attachment C. 5 Ayes, Zero Against, 1 Abstain. Carried 5-0-1.

Motion by Gutierrez supported by Prior to approve the Master Agreement with the Milan Education Association (MEA) as detailed in Attachment D. All Ayes. 4 Ayes, Zero Against, 2 Abstain. Carried 4-0-2.

Public Comments:

- Andrea Bennink - commented that investment in special education also provides a large return that is similar to the investment in early childhood education.

Assistant Superintendent Comments:

- Assistant Superintendent Bookout shared a few updates from around the district.

- Spring conferences are underway across our schools. Milan High School is hosting conferences tonight, Milan Middle School will hold theirs tomorrow, and our elementary schools have conferences scheduled throughout the week. These meetings provide a great opportunity for families and teachers to connect and discuss student progress. Both Paddock and Symons also sent home report cards today, so parents may want to check backpacks or folders if they haven't seen those yet this evening. Grades are available online for MMS and MHS.

- March is also Reading Month, with Paddock celebrating "Be a Reading Champion" and Symons encouraging students to "Dig Into a Story." Both buildings have a variety of fun activities planned throughout the month to get students excited about reading.

- At Milan Middle School, students are observing Disabilities Awareness Month by promoting Inclusion Month, led by our National Junior Honor Society. Students are invited to take a pledge encouraging small but meaningful acts of inclusion — welcoming others, showing kindness, and helping ensure everyone feels they belong.

- Finally, this Monday we will hold a district professional development day. Staff will focus on strengthening Tier 1 instruction through MTSS, reviewing student interventions, preparing for state assessments, and continuing training with our new CKLA ELA curriculum. At PECC, staff will also participate in training on Preschool Literacy Essentials. With the Governor's current emphasis on early literacy, it's encouraging to see that we are already prioritizing this work by strengthening literacy practices in our early childhood classrooms.

Superintendent Comments:

- Thank Jessi/PECC - Welcome Dr. Gogrogge

- Superintendent McMahon reminded district stakeholders that there is a half-day of school this Friday (3/13) and no school on Monday (3/16) for a Staff Professional Development Day. We also will have our one-week recess for Spring Break on March 30th through April 6th.

- Superintendent McMahon shared that the Michigan State Police completed their inspection of our School Buses and we are beyond pleased to report that the inspection proved flawless once again. Our mechanics and drivers take extremely good care of the buses and we are grateful for their continued efforts.

- Superintendent McMahon shared that our Young-5's and Kindergarten Round-Up will be conducted on March 25th, at 5pm and Paddock.

Board Member Comments:

- Burdette - apologized for being late as he was attending the football signing in the rotunda. He congratulated the bowling team on their state championship and the powerlifting team on their state qualifiers. Said he was able to attend the drama club's karaoke night which was very entertaining. Reminded the public that the performance of Cinderella is this weekend. Also that the choir will be participating in the choral festival.

- Prior - stated she was also able to attend the drama club's karaoke night and it was good to see so much support. Notified the public that the GMACF's skilled trade scholarship is open for applicants through April 30. Thanked the community for their attendance and financial support at the GMACF gala.

- Heikka - congratulated the bowling and powerlifting teams on their state championship and qualifiers. Wished the boys swim team Good luck at states this weekend. Also gave accolades to the boys and girls basketball teams who put in so much effort. She wished all the spring athletes good luck at tryouts. Commented that she was able to attend the unified basketball game and it was an exercise in joy. She congratulated them on their teamwork. Also congratulated the bus garage on a long history of outstanding reviews.

- Gutierrez - she reiterated all the congratulations already said. She thanked the community and Mrs. Prior for their support of the GMACF. She reminded everyone that the high school theater performance is this weekend. Commented that the housing being built in the district is good news. She also thanked Miss Kishyama for her presentation.

- Faro - he reminded board members to review the policies for the next meeting and congratulated the bowling and powerlifting teams.

Motion by Gutierrez supported by Heikka to enter into closed session pursuant to Section 8(1)(b) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, and upon the student's parent/guardians, for the purpose of conducting a hearing to consider the discipline of a student whose identity is known to the board as student 2025-2026-4. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Time entered closed session 8:04 p.m.

Time returned to open session 8:58 p.m.

Motion by Heikka supported by Burdette to expel student 2025-2026-4 in accordance with the attached resolution as read by President Faro. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Time of Adjournment 9:01 p.m.

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Cassie Prior, Acting Secretary