

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

**Minutes – Monday, July 10, 2023**

1. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Curtis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Sault Area Middle School, 684 Marquette Avenue and via Zoom.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Land Acknowledgement was recited by Member Odbert

2. **A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD**

Board Members Present: Michelle M. Ribant, Melissa S. Pingatore, Kenneth D. Dunton, Caitlin L. Galer, Christine M. Curtis, William E. Odbert

Absent: None

3. **B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Member Pingatore, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education adopt the agenda.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

It was moved by Member Pingatore, with unanimous consent, that Item 5. Policies be removed from the consent agenda as it is listed as a separate action item.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

4. **C. ESTABLISHMENT OF BOARD MEETING DATES**

It was moved by Member Dunton, supported by Member Ribant, that the Board of Education adopt the schedule of meetings for 2023-2024.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

5. **D. DESIGNATION OF PERSON FOR POSTING NOTICES OF BOARD MEETINGS.**

It was moved by Member Galer, supported by Member Odbert, to designate Judy Sirk for posting notices of board meetings.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

6. **E. APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION CLERK**

It was moved by Member Dunton and with unanimous support, that the Board Secretary appoint Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer as Election Clerk and administer the Oath of Office.

Board Secretary Pingatore administered the Oath of Office for appointment of Election Clerk to Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer.

7. **F. APPROVAL OF FORMAT FOR REGULAR MEETING AGENDAS 2023-2024**

It was moved by Member Galer, supported by Member Dunton, that the Board approve the meeting agenda format for regular meetings.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**A. Roll Call**

**B. Adoption of Agenda – removal of any item from consent agenda**

**II. COMMUNICATOINS**

**A. Reports to the Board**  
Business Report  
School Reports

**B. Superintendent Report**

C. Audience Participation

**III. ACTION ITEMS AND BOARD REPORTS**

A. Consent Resolution

Includes minutes, payment of bills, routine items, personnel

B. Action Items

**IV. BOARD GOVERNANCE AND BOARD POLICY ISSUES**

**V. FUTURE PLANNING**

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

8. **II. CONTINUE IN REGULAR MEETING SESSION**

9. **III. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. REPORTS TO THE BOARD**

1. Business Report – Mrs. Michelle Bennin

Mrs. Bennin sought approval for the June General Fund and Food Service Bill Lists.

Mrs. Bennin reported the Board would continue to receive reduced financial statements while the district was working on tying out year-end financial statements. She indicated the auditors from Rehmann were scheduled to begin the week of September 18.

Mrs. Bennin reported June was a three-month pay, there were year-end expenses, income tax payouts, and revenues were received from the special education millage, ISD receipts, and from the sale of the front end loader.

Mrs. Bennin reported the district was not in need of borrowing for the 2023-24 fiscal year because of the healthy cash fund.

Upon inquiry from Mrs. Bennin, there were no questions.

10. **B. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer presented a revised organizational chart and indicated the comprehensive and important layout demonstrated the blended inclusion of contracted employees in Special Education, Food Service, Custodial Services, Early Childcare, and School Safety (SRO).

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer explained in collaboration with the Portrait of a Graduate vision to hire, train, and retain quality staff, Dr. Barb Light applied and the district was awarded a grant just shy of \$500,000 for the Grow Your Own program.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district had Thrun draft the legal and binding Agreement and Memo of Understanding to ensure it had a vested interest to engage in and select candidates under contract for the Grow Your Own program.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated the Grow Your Own program was for staff who wanted to become teachers in high needs areas and may not have yet obtained a college degree, were college graduates but had not yet received a teaching certificate, or were existing teachers and wanted to add another endorsement in a district approved area.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district was looking to hire several paraprofessionals as many have expressed interest in growing through the Grow Your Own program.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported employees who are wanting to grow may be eligible for college expense reimbursement through other programs or need to be evaluated based on the perceived needs of the district.

Upon inquiry from the Board, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer confirmed seasoned teachers are needed to mentor new teachers.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the new hires.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer thanked U.P. Engineers for donating their time to provide survey work on the elementary building and for the Middle School kitchen.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported painting had been done in the Sault High Career Center shop classes, gym, and cafeteria; Windows had been installed above the lockers were currently being installed in certain areas upstairs; Hallway and building labeling was complete for the Safety and Emergency Plan.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported she had not receive any questions on the proposed polices from last month's meeting and they were now ready for action.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the Middle School no cell phone practice at the start of the school year. She noted there was not a lot of comment from parents despite multiple requests, and those who had commented were predominantly in favor of it.

Upon inquiry from Member Galer, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported Ms. Rondeau was working with her staff on developing the procedures for managing the tech devices, and there would no doubt be some growing pains procedurally.

Upon inquiry from Member Ribant, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated students would not be allowed to have any personal electronic devices on them.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the 2023-2024 per pupil allowance of \$458, the State Aid allocation of \$281,178 for At-risk, the allocation of \$415,409 for 31a Safety & Mental Health, \$160,245 for 35j Early Literacy Instruction, \$275,785 for 51e Special Education, \$88,213 for 27f Educator Compensation, \$314,950 for 29 Stabilization, and \$52,266 for 147f MPSERS UAAL.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district had not budgeted for an approximate increase of \$1.2 million in restricted categoricals and \$2,404,461 in unrestricted general funds in its original budget.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the anticipated state supported free breakfast and lunch meals for all students who attend public schools for the 2023-24 school year.

Upon inquiry from Member Ribant, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer confirmed additional funding would be included in the proposed budget amendment slated for the December board meeting.

Member Ribant inquired on using unrestricted funds to help pay for necessary teaching positions and paraprofessionals.

Member Dunton indicated the majority of money for negotiated salaries had been marked to come out of the fund balance.

Upon inquiry from President Curtis, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated she had not been notified yet if the Sault Schools would be eligible for state transportation funding.

Superintendent Scott-Kronmeyer indicated she hoped the outstanding bargaining groups that had transferred to the MEA would contact her to settle their contracts by the end of the month.

Superintendent Scott-Kronmeyer reported the SEA contract had been posted to the transparency section on the district website.

11. **C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

President Curtis acknowledged the importance of taking public comment and invited the audience to speak. There was no comment.

**IV. ACTION ITEMS**

12. **A. CONSENT RESOLUTION – Superintendent Scott-Kronmeyer**

1. Regular and Closed Minutes of June 12, 2023, and June 21, 2023
2. June general fund bill list in the amount of \$3,294,332.46 and food service bill list in the amount of \$83,444.39
3. New Hires
  1. Erika Laitinen-Odbert – Life Skills Teacher – Sault Area Public Schools
  2. Jennifer Anderson – STEM Teacher – Sault Area Middle School
  3. Jody Kapuscinski – Special Education Resource Teacher – Sault Area Middle School and Lincoln Elementary School
  4. Kaleb Kotsko – construction Technology Teacher – Sault Area High School and Sault Area Career Center
  5. John Lackey – Science Teacher – Sault Area Middle School
  6. Angeline Whaley – Special Education Resource Teacher – Malcolm High School
4. Gifts and Donations
  1. U.P. Engineers & Architects Inc. donated survey work for the proposed Elementary School and new Middle School kitchen freezer.

Upon inquiry from Member Dunton, President Curtis confirmed the Board had received the first reading and Superintendent’s report on the policies listed under IV. C. so Item A. 5. (Policies) could be removed from the consent resolution.

Upon inquiry from Member Dunton, Superintendent Scott-Kronmeyer reported Member Odbert had previously acknowledged he would abstain from Item IV. A. 3(1.) because of a familio relationship. She confirmed the notice would be indicated in the minutes.

Member Dunton reported he would be okay with the notation as long as it was legal.

It was moved by Member Galer, supported by Member Ribant, that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda items with the removal of item 5. (Policies) and with Member Odbert abstaining from item 3. 1. (New Hires-Erika Laitinen-Odbert), because of a familiar relationship.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

13. **B. *GROW YOUR OWN PROGRAM – Superintendent Scott-Kronmeyer***

It was moved by Member Ribant, supported by Member Odbert, that the Board of Education approve the Grow Your Own Program and authorize the Superintendent to sign each individual Memorandum of Understanding with each selected candidate.

President Curtis confirmed the Board had received a copy of the contract.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

14. **C. *POLICIES – Superintendent Scott-Kronmeyer***

President Curtis confirmed there were no questions.

1615 – Use of Tobacco by Administration

2623 – Student Assessment

3215 – Use of Tobacco by Professional Staff

4215 – Use of Tobacco by Support Staff

5512 – Use of Tobacco by Students

6325 – Procurement Federal Grants Funds

7334 – Use of Tobacco on School Premises

7540.02 – Web Accessibility, Content, Apps, and Services

7540.03 – Student Technology Acceptable Use and Safety

7504.04 – Staff Technology Acceptable Use and Safety

8300 – Continuity of Organizational Operations Plan

8305 – Information security

8315 – Information Management

8400 – Revised School Safety Information

9160 – Public Attendance and School Events  
9700.01 – Advertising and Commercial Activities

It was moved by Member Dunton, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the above policies as presented.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

15. **D. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART – Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer**

It was moved by Member Pingatore, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the revised organizational chart as presented.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

16. **V. BOARD GOVERNANCE AND BOARD POLICY ISSUES**

Upon inquiry from Member Dunton, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the School Resource Officer and Technical Operations Manager were working on implementing the door locks for the secure education consultant report and Tom Nelson would provide an update on the Middle School fence in the near future.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer stated the district would be celebrating 150 years since its establishment in May 2024. She indicated she had some historical information through the late 1990s and was looking for additional information to be included with the Hall of Fame wall at Sault High.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer received unanimous consent from the Board to pursue additional information and establish criteria for each area of interest in the Hall of Fame.

Member Dunton indicated he preferred community driven subcommittees in establishing the criteria for a Hall of Fame. He suggested having the Superintendent inquire on volunteers possibly at a Rotary meeting for someone who may give the time and interest to help.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported Michelle Bennin and she had met with the City Manager and team about the A.J. VanCitters parking lot. She indicated



part of the lot was in the right of way. She noted there was discussion on possibly partnering with the city on the land at Washington and Lincoln Schools.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported she expected to receive confirmation no sooner than July 17 on the district having the authority and legal paperwork to call for the special election, and the Board needs to officially call a date for the election prior to notifying the community.

Upon inquiry from Member Dunton, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated the earliest availability for the Board to hold a meeting to call for the election was Wednesday, July 26, due to prior commitments. She indicated the news about the bond could be released after the calling of the election.

President Curtis sought confirmation for a special meeting on July 26 at 5:30 p.m. to call for the special election.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer confirmed the Board could conduct interviews for a new board member to fill the recently vacated seat of Amelia Lindsay and to take action on calling the election.

Discussion ensued on ways to reach out to interested community members to apply for the open board position. Member Dunton suggested inviting previous candidates to apply.

Upon inquiry from Member Dunton, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer raised for discussion multiple ways the district could inform the public about the election.

17. **VI. *FUTURE PLANNING***

July 26 - Special Board Meeting - 5:30 p.m. - Sault Area Middle School

August 14 - Regular Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - Sault Area Middle School

18. **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at 7:58 p.m., it was moved by Member Dunton, supported by Member Galer, that the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Ribant, Pingatore, Dunton, Galer, Curtis, Odbert

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

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Christine M. Curtis, Board President

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Melissa S. Pingatore, Board Secretary

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Judy L. Sirk, Recording Secretary