

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

**Minutes – Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

230. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President DeWitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Sault Area Middle School, 684 Marquette Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie and viewable via Zoom: <https://eupschools.zoom.us/j/97706528602> Meeting ID: 977 0652 8602.

Seventh grade Savanna Proulx led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

231. **A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD**

Board Members Present: Lisa A. Young, Jay D. Wilson, Christine M. Curtis, Raymond J. DeWitt, Melissa S. Pingatore, Daniel L. Smith, Caitlin L. Galer

Absent: None

232. **B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Galer, to adopt the agenda as revised.

Add: *II. A. 1. c. Spelling Bee Winners*

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

233. **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting - February 14, 2022

Closed Session - February 14, 2022

It was moved by Member Smith, supported by Member Curtis, that the Board of Education approve the minutes as presented.

Member Young reported she was abstaining from the closed session minutes because she was absent for that meeting.

Member Wilson reported he was abstaining from both meeting minutes because he was absent.

Yeas: Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer

Nays: None

Abstain: Young, Wilson

Absent: Motion Carried.

234. **D. *BUSINESS REPORT AND APPROVAL OF BILLS – Mrs. Michelle Bennin***

Mrs. Bennin sought approval for the February bill lists. She reported on the healthy cash flow, tax collection, and federal drawdowns.

Mrs. Bennin reported the district received approval for its ESSER funds and the district was operating as usual for the month.

President DeWitt congratulated Mrs. Bennin and Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer for receiving approval on the ESSER funds.

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the February General Fund Bill List in the amount of \$2,085,817.69 and the Food Service Bill List in the amount of \$55,925.77.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

**II. *COMMUNICATIONS***

235. **A. *REPORTS TO THE BOARD***

**1. *Recognition***

a. *Teacher of the Month (Jackie Line) – Mrs. Diane Chevillot*

Mrs. Chevillot reported on the selection of Jackie Line as helpful teacher of the month.

b. *Employee of the Month (Amy Wilds) – Ms. Jessica Rondeau*

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on Ms. Rondeau's nomination for Amy Wilds as helpful employee of the month.

President DeWitt confirmed Mrs. Line and Ms. Wilds would receive the Helpful Teacher and Employee of the Month tee shirt by Ace Hardware and \$50 in Chamber Bucks sponsored by Doug LaPrade Meemic Insurance and Ace Hardware.

c. Spelling Bee Winners – Mrs. Diane Chevillot

Mrs. Chevillot introduced Savannah Proulx 7<sup>th</sup> grade alternate winner and Autumn Proulx 5<sup>th</sup> grade 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner of the district spelling bee. She reported the following students placed in the EUP Regional Spelling Bee and would be going on to represent the district at U.P. regionals next week:

Grade 6 – 1<sup>st</sup> place - Alexis Osumili

Grade 7 – 1<sup>st</sup> place – Yuhan Hu and 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Thema Osumili

Grade 8 – 1<sup>st</sup> place Zahraa Mahmud

2. Service Learning Students – Mrs. Tracy Menard

Mrs. Menard reported her focus was to analyze and use MTS for teaching inclusion, diversity, equity, empathy, and poise particularly in her Service Learning class. She introduced students Kiryanna Cordes, Robert LaPine, and Gabrielle Woodard.

Kiryanna, Robert and Gabrielle reported on the following projects.

- Animal Shelter – To help get animals adopted, obtain necessary supplies and to socialize them.
- Mental Health Fair - To help teach teens how to recognize and better cope with anxiety, depression, and stress.
- Collaborative Activities with Avery Square Residents - To help address feelings of isolation within our elder population.
- Kindness Posters and Rocks - To spread kindness and show care for health care workers, patients and their families.
- Native Culture Awareness Outdoors - To bring native culture to life with the outdoors.
- Kindness Classroom Kits – To help foster kindness.

The students reported they were applying for a \$500 grant mostly to be used to buy items for the elder care packages to help them focus on collaboration activities.

Mrs. Menard reported the presenters were graciously speaking on behalf of the class of 22. She indicated the number of service hours provided by the students in the class equates to hundreds of dollars in terms of working dollars.

Mrs. Menard reported 14 students had qualified as National Community Service Awardees. She reported last year 6 students

volunteered through the AmeriCorps VISTA program to work at our Summer School Program and 2 have been preapproved for this year.

Member Smith gave accolades to Mrs. Menard for all her efforts.

#### 4. Winter Sports Update – Mr. Steve Lockwood

Mr. Lockwood announced officially winter sports ended last night and spring sports began. He reported the boys' basketball team played to the regional semi-finals, the girls' basketball team took home the district title for the third year in a row, the hockey team played to the regional semi-finals, and the wrestling team was good but needed to build back more wrestlers.

Mr. Lockwood reported the boys swim team finished third in U.P. finals, the girls team finished runner up in U.P. Finals. He noted several students who earned first place in the 400 relay, 200 relay and 100 free style.

Upon inquiry from Member Smith, Mr. Lockwood reported there were 7 or 8 wrestlers last year and one team with 2 wrestlers this year.

Upon inquiry from Member Pingatore, Mr. Lockwood stated he hoped wrestlers from the Sault Youth Wrestling Association would transition into Sault High Wrestling

Upon inquiry from Member Smith, Mr. Lockwood indicated the aquatics team has been consistently strong with swimmers and there are 25-30 girls and 15 boys currently on the team.

## 236. **B. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

### 1. Early Childhood Center

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the background of having the Soo Township School Complex reconfigured as an early childhood type center as well as continue to house the Malcolm High School in one wing. Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the complex currently holds the Great Start Readiness Preschool Program for 2-4 year olds, and two half-day SEEKS special education preschool programs. She introduced Jessica Savoie Early Childhood Director for the EUPISD.

Ms. Savoie reported on the need to help parents with the development and intervention for their children from birth to 5 years of age and those with developmental delays and special needs. She provided a brief overview of what the ISD Early Childhood Department does in the Sault community and the region.

Ms. Savoie reported the ISD has experience in looking at local opportunities and state-wide initiatives. They are able to see what the trends are across the state to compare that with what we are experiencing here.

Ms. Savoie presented why the first 5 years of a child's life is so important in shaping their development and why affordable preschool is necessary to help close the opportunity gap for Kindergarten.

Ms. Savoie reported communities' need a skilled and qualified work force, with quality preschool and daycare to enable young families to work and make businesses thrive.

Ms. Savoie reported COVID has impacted our community with only 70% of childcares returning to open. She stated county data indicates there are approximately 2,100 children ages birth to 5 years with approximately 53% of adequate childcare for roughly 767 children.

Ms. Savoie reported childcare businesses are often unable to provide a formalized wait list as they are not required to maintain one.

Ms. Savoie reported the U.P. Child Care Task Force surveyed employers, parents, and childcares in December and January. She stated 18 of the 24 child care providers who completed the survey were from Chippewa County, and 57 of the 76 employers who completed the survey were from Chippewa County. Overall she reported the survey revealed there is not adequate childcare in the area.

Ms. Savoie reported 60% of our existing childcares have been in business for 20 years or more indicating a need to build a pipeline for new childcare due to the aging population.

Ms. Savoie reported the survey indicated childcares needs to be open for longer hours and operate year around to help families with shift work.

Ms. Savoie explained early childcare salaries are typically lower than those in other areas with the same education and requirements (i.e. BS degrees in K-12 education) but without receiving state aid, having a secure fiscal setting, or the ability for to have substitute coverage for necessary absences and recruitment, it is difficult to maintain.

Mrs. Savoie noted lower preschool classroom ratios are required for health and safety, but increased staff also increase the overall cost.

Ms. Savoie reported the childcare business model is extremely flawed. She referenced the Great Start Readiness Program and Head Start Program

as being available only for children who are income eligible or have certain risk factors.

Ms. Savoie reported there have been some significant investments over the recent months as the number one step in Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan was to expand early childhood learning opportunities by rebuilding the childcare landscape. She noted part of the vision includes quality learning environments, nurturing environments, equitable childcare compensation, to help drive forth our economy.

Ms. Savoie reported Michigan received \$1.4 Billion in federal resources to help strengthen education and move closer to a sustainable childcare vision.

Ms. Savoie reported the Michigan Department of Education started offering grant applications in the fall of 2021 for new childcare providers to help with startup costs.

Ms. Savoie indicated childcare is a community issue and it is important to build partnerships with the community and engage businesses to be able to maximize funding opportunities and develop career pathways.

Ms. Savoie suggested career pathways could be started with high school students who are interested in early child care.

Ms. Savoie reported children from teenage parents are twice as much likely to need special education services, 30% unlikely to go to college, and 70% more likely to be involved in a violent crime and/or drop out of school. She reported Child Find services works with parents in this area and can make a big difference.

Upon inquiry from Member Smith, Ms. Savoie reported anyone can refer or request Child Find services. She noted often times parents just need someone to go into their home and teach them how to train their kids. She indicated the programs are voluntary and there are a lot of opportunities for young families if they reach out.

Ms. Savoie reported there are wonderful opportunities and scholarships for people who are interested in early childcare education. She indicated she has had the opportunity to work with Dr. Barb Light of LSSU and refer people that have a CDA to LSSU or Bay Mills for further education.

Superintendent Scott-Kronmeyer thanked Ms. Savoie and stated she would be excited to partner with the ISD to expanded early on opportunities for children and apply for programs and training with the Board's approval.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer introduced Dr. Barb Light Dean of the College of Education at LSSU. Dr. Light reported she is all about qualifying teachers, has a great partnership with the ISD and Sault Schools, and would be a happy to help in any way possible.

Upon inquiry from Member DeWitt, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district would only be providing the safe environment and the ISD would be running their program.

Upon inquiry from Member Smith, Mrs. Sawyer reported Malcolm students often open the door and volunteer to work with little ones when there is a substitute and/or shortage at the existing programs.

## 2. Safe and Healthy Schools

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the K-8 Wellness Team that is seeking a framework to determine what activities are needed to help with employee and student wellness. She noted Mrs. Chevillot was writing a grant to help her staff be healthy and would be reporting on that in the future.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported she was happy the mask mandate had lifted for busing and there was no executive order to notify parents of COVID close contacts. She stated the district would continue to report communicable disease cases to the health department but is happy to finally be moving forward.

## 3. Project Updates

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district secured the federal funding for the High School siding, doors, windows and flooring.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported the estimate for the track repairs would be available sometime in mid-April.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the Michigan State Police grant the district was hoping to secure was to help support a centralized door lock system that was omitted from the Safe-Secure-Connected mileage.

Upon inquiry from Member Smith, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported someone would follow-up on Nomad Construction's lead time in ordering the outside materials for the high school. She indicated she would also reach out to Jeremy Gagnon for an update.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, Mrs. Bennin confirmed Nomad had already received one payment toward their work at the high school.

237. C. **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**III. ACTION ITEMS AND BOARD REPORTS**

238. A. **PERSONNEL**

**New Hires**

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer presented the following.

1. Ladonna Day - English Second Language (ESL) Teacher - Sault Area Public Schools

It was moved by Member Curtis, supported by Member Smith, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Ladonna Day as roving ESL Teacher for Sault Area Public Schools.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

2. John Wilson – Bus Driver – Sault Area Public Schools

It was moved by Member Smith, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of John Wilson as part-time Bus Driver for Sault Area Public Schools.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

Mr. Steve Lockwood presented the following.

3. Andrew Brzuchalski – Girls Varsity Soccer Coach – Sault Area High School

It was moved by Member Smith, supported by Member Wilson, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Andrew Brzuchalski as Girls Varsity Soccer Coach for Sault Area High School.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer

Nays: None



Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

4. Ryan Maurer – Boys JV Baseball Coach – Sault Area High School

It was moved by Member Galer, supported by Member Smith, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Ryan Maurer as Boys JV Baseball Coach Sault Area High School.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer presented the following.

5. Kathalina Fewchuk – Reading Intervention Teacher – Washington School

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Young, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Kathalina Fewchuk as Reading Intervention Teacher for Washington School.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

239. **B. *EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER – Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer***

Member Galer indicated the ISD does a good job with the programs they offer and she is excited to see what they can do with a preschool.

Member Young stated she was really excited to be able to expand the district's mission.

Member Smith indicated he was happy to offer more for future students.

Member Pingatore stated the ISD has been wonderful and it will be nice to partner with them.

It was moved by Member Smith, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent to continue with the expansion of the Early Childhood Center at the Soo Township School Complex.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer

Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

240. **C. *OVERNIGHT TRAVEL REQUEST – Mrs. Jo Anne Lussier***

Mrs. Lussier presented the following request and indicated she would communicate with the Superintendent if the group was unable to attend due to some last minute changes due to the number of SKILLS USA competitors in the welding competition.

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Smith, that the Board of Education approve the overnight travel for students to participate in the SKILLS USA competition and conference in Grand Rapids as presented.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

241. **D. *GIFTS AND DONATIONS – Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer***

1. Piper Chapman’s family donated 30 pairs of mittens to Washington School.
2. On behalf of the Chippewa County Courthouse, Trevor Yake donated three fleece blankets to the Washington School Kidz Klozet.
3. Mackenna Bumstead’s family donated several pairs of mittens to Washington School.
4. Matty Lockhart donated various clothing items to Washington School.
5. Don and Chris McLean donate biweekly for Washington School students in need of food over the weekend.

It was moved by Member Smith, supported by Member Wilson, that the Board of Education accept the above donations with thanks and appreciation.

Upon inquiry from Member Smith, Mr. McCready confirmed Sault High has a Kidz Klozet located in the library and it is coordinated by Jennifer Blair.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

242. **IV. CLOSED SESSION – M.O.M.A. §15.268 8(a)**

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Curtis, that the Board of Education move into closed session after a short break at 8:20 p.m. in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act §15.268, Sec. 8(a), for periodic personnel evaluation.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

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

**A. Board Compensation Second Read**

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated this item was brought back at the request of the Board.

Upon inquiry from Member Galer, Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated she had provided the bylaw in a previous communication prior to the February board meeting.

It was moved by Member Pingatore, supported by Member Curtis to rescind the motion at the previous meeting regarding board compensation.

Member Wilson indicated he would have to abstain because he was absent from that meeting.

Yeas: Young, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer  
Nays: None  
Abstain: Wilson  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

Discussion ensued on how the Board should proceed with a second motion.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated Bylaws did not require a first read.

It was moved by Member Smith, supported by Member Pingatore, to eliminate the \$30 per meeting board compensation and to include the elimination of item E.

Yeas: Smith, Pingatore, Curtis  
Nays: Young, Wilson, DeWitt, Galer  
Absent: None  
Motion Failed.

Discussion ensued on the procedures for amending bylaws and policies, the timing of the motion, and the potential of mileage reimbursement for other events.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer reported after discussion with the Business Manager, if the Board chooses to uphold the compensation, it would be easier if all board members received their compensation as opposed to some taking it and some not.

Discussion continued on reasons for and against compensation.

Member Smith stated the Board's options were to uphold, eliminate, or revise the Bylaw.

It was moved by Member Young, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of uphold the compensation policy but eliminate item E.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, DeWitt, Galer

Nays: Smith, Pingatore, Curtis

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

Superintendent Scott-Kronemeyer indicated information on board member W2s would be sent out.

Member Smith stated he would let everyone know who was in favor of the motion.

244. **VI. FUTURE PLANNING**

April 11 - Regular Board Meeting - Middle School - 7:00 p.m.

April 26 - Annual Board Meeting - Big Bear Hospitality Room - 7:00 p.m.

May 10 - EUPSBA - Sault Area High School

May 3 - Evening with the Arts - Sault Area High School

May 4 - Board Budget Workshop - Sault Middle School - 5:30 p.m.

May 5 - Budget Presentations - Sault Middle School - Staff 4:30 p.m.

Public 5:30 p.m.

May 9 - Regular Board Meeting - Sault Middle School - 7:00 p.m.

June 13 - Regular Board Meeting - Sault Middle School - 7:00 p.m.

245. **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at 9:56 p.m., it was moved by Member Curtis, supported by Member Wilson, that the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Young, Wilson, Curtis, DeWitt, Pingatore, Smith, Galer  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion Carried.

---

Raymond J. DeWitt, Board President

---

Christine M. Curtis, Board Secretary

---

Judy L. Sirk, Recording Secretary