

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

**Minutes – Monday, April 12, 2021**

257. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Sault Area Middle School, 684 Marquette Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783.

258. **A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD**

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

Absent: None

259. **B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education move to adopt the agenda as presented.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

260. **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting – March 8, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

Special Meeting – March 11, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

Closed Meeting – March 11, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

Special Meeting – March 18, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

Special Meeting – March 22, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

Special Meeting – March 29, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

Special Meeting – April 6, 2021

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the minutes listed above as presented.

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

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

It was moved by Member Galer, supported by Member DeWitt, that the Board of Education approve the General Fund Bill List in the amount of \$2,405,572.86 for March.

Mrs. Bennin presented the business report and highlighted increased revenue due the collection of winter taxes, the purchase of 72 hot spots from the Mitel Connect grant, and the increase in expenses mainly due to year end budget spend downs.

Mrs. Bennin reported the monthly cash and fund balance remains higher than that over the past four years

Mrs. Bennin anticipated the final budget amendment would be presented at the May meeting.

President Smith stated the business report had been reviewed by the Finance Committee last week.

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

262. **II. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. REPORTS TO THE BOARD**

1. **Recognition**

a. Teacher of the Month (Debra Gardner) – Mr. Carl McCready

Mr. McCready presented Mrs. Gardner and reported on her outstanding qualities. She was given a Helpful Teacher of the Month tee shirt and was given a \$50 Parker Ace Hardware gift certificate sponsored by Doug LaPrade Agency MEEMIC Insurance and Parker Ace Hardware.

President Smith congratulated Mrs. Gardner.

b. Employee of the Month (Jesselyn Bourque) – Dr. Sheri McFarlane

Superintendent Hall reported on Mrs. Bourque being the Employee of the Month. He noted her outstanding qualities she brings to her work. She will be given a Helpful Employee of the Month tee shirt and a \$50 Parker Ace Hardware gift certificate sponsored by Doug LaPrade Agency MEEMIC Insurance and Parker Ace Hardware.

President Smith asked that the Board's congratulations be extended to her.

c. Girls Swim and Dive Team – Mr. Steve Lockwood and Coach Steve Habusta

Athletic Director Steve Lockwood introduced Coach Habusta and congratulated him on the team's success.

Coach Habusta congratulated the girls swim and dive team for earning first place in the U.P. Finals with 347 points over Marquette with 313 points. He reported the team was comprised of Anna Hildebrand, Allie Robertson, Julie Innerbner, Joanne Arbic, Alyssa Claxton, Alyvia Lori, Brianna Jones, Olivia Martin, Alyssa McKinney, Kylie Jones, Cassandra Gallagher, Elizabeth Ohman, Mia Woolever, and Gabrielle Woodard.

Coach Habusta reported Hildebrand, Robertson, Innerebner, and Arbic were the champions of the Girls UP 200 Yard Medley Relay and 200 Yard Freestyle Relay.

Coach Habusta continued to highlight the swimmers for doing a fantastic job in their relays and diving. He stated they all finished in the top of their respective areas at some point in the season.

Coach Habusta thanked Mr. Lockwood, Mr. McCready; and Ms. Hopkins for being strong supporters of aquatic safety. He thanked Assistant Coach Dyke Justin, Collin Innerbner, Becky Arbic and all the parents for helping prepare the athletes for their events. He reported the team had a collective GPA of 3.6 and noted it had been 40 years since the girls swim and dive team took first place in the championship.

Mr. Habusta congratulated the boys swim and dive team of Evan Arbic, Cameron Bauers, Chris Bendickson, Morgan Burd, Connor Habusta, Hayden Jones, Ethan Trapp, and Sabastian Lavey. He highlighted the third place winners of the 200 yard medley relay, 50 yard freestyle backstroke, and dive scores. He stated all of the athletes did a tremendous job.

Mr. Habusta thanked the school board members who reached out to him to show their support for the team.

On behalf of the girls' swim and dive team, Joanne Arbic thanked the board for allowing them to participate in the sport and work toward their goals. She thanked LSSU for allowing them to use their pool and questioned what they could have accomplished if they had a new facility to support their growth.

## 2. Student Athlete Handbook – Mr. Steve Lockwood

Mr. Lockwood reported on the Athletic Committee's review of the student athletic handbook. He noted the wide range of backgrounds that the committee was comprised of and the multiple athletic polices, including MHSAA's that were reviewed. He reported 63 of the districts follow MHSAA's requirement of passing 66% or 5 out of 7 classes requirements, and 49 districts including ours that have a higher requirement. He indicated the current requirement is a 1.5 GPA for all 7 classes.

Mr. Lockwood reported one of our high school counselors gathered data on student athletes from 2017 through 2023 and found their average GPA was 2.0 except for one semester when 8 freshmen athletes' GPA dipped below for one semester.

Mr. Lockwood reported on the multiple scholar athletes the district has had over the past 4 years.

Mr. Lockwood reported the committee's recommendation would be to continue to require student athletes to pass all of their classes with at least a 1.5 GPA.

Mr. Lockwood reported Sault High athletes' grades are checked weekly (10 times more than required by MHSAA) to ensure they are keeping up with their grades and passing their classes. He reviewed the steps taken when grades begin to drop and the accountability it ensures students to follow to be academically eligible.

Member Curtis indicated her representation on the committee and acknowledged how thorough Mr. Lockwood was in the committee's review.

Member Curtis reported the district has had some amazing athletes and if the policy needed to be changed, it would affect a very minimal number of students. She indicated teachers have indicated they feel the student athletes are working as hard as they can at being the best they can with the current GPA requirement.

President Smith reported it has been impressive to see the number of scholar athletes in the district.

Superintendent Hall reported the plan was to bring a recommendation to the Board at the May meeting.

3. Student Antigen Testing – Mr. Steve Lockwood and Mrs. Mary Michaels

Mr. Lockwood reported on the MDHHS mandatory COVID testing for spring athletes. He indicated 154 tests had been completed with a zero positivity rate.

School Nurse Mary Michaels reported Mr. Lockwood embraced the requirements by starting with research on how best to conduct the process and it is working nicely. She indicated Ms. Hopkins has helped with organizing the students.

Mrs. Michaels indicated they will be testing students at the Middle School on Wednesday. She stated she is very happy with the results so far.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mr. Lockwood reported it took approximately 4 and a half hours to test the students the first day and 2 and a half to 3 hours the second day.

Mrs. Michaels reported there are a couple of students from Pickford who participate in a cooperative sport and are also required to be tested.

Upon further inquiry on maintaining social distancing throughout the testing process, Mr. Lockwood reported the test is conducted in the old counseling office and athletes are spaced throughout the sport in which they participating in.

Upon inquiry from Member Young, Mrs. Michaels reported if an athlete's rapid test was positive, he or she would be pulled immediately and reported to the state. She noted LSSU agreed to conduct a PCR test for the athlete that day or the next morning and the health department would start contact tracing.

Mr. Lockwood reported the district only files the total count of negative tests, but it would have to individually file the positive tests.

Superintendent Hall reported there had been several meetings prior to scheduling the first round of tests and it took a lot of soft dollars to orchestrate the process. He stated the district and athletes did not want to take any chance on messing up an athlete/team's season. Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported work had been done to also protect the athletes' personally identifiable information.

4. Extended Continuity of Learning Plan – Mrs. Amy Scott Kronemeyer

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer stated the April ECOLP was very similar to that of March. She reported how many students had 100 percent participation for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters and indicated enrollment had dropped mainly for the return to face to face instruction. She reported on the overall good attendance numbers and the drop just prior to spring break.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer stated she was seeking affirmation of the plan and noted there was another piece in the COVID grant for remediation services and that would be addressed in the Summer School Program.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the Summer School Program and estimated enrollment to be around 250 students in grades K-11 with 34-35 staff members. She indicated the cost of the program would be \$120,000 plus transportation, general education teachers and special education teachers. She noted pending state approval, each teacher who works the Summer School Program would receive a \$1,000 bonus.

Upon inquiry from Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer, there were no questions.

263.

**B. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – Superintendent Hall**

Superintendent Hall reported a couple sections of the Middle School roof had been repaired over the library and section of the sixth grade wing. He indicated the full project is slated to be complete by the end of the year.

Superintendent Hall reported the new stop-arm cameras had already detected 3 drivers passing buses and officials were notified. He reported he hoped this would change some unsafe driving behaviors.

Superintendent Hall announced a report on a plan for the use of CARES Act ESSER funds would be presented at the May meeting.

Superintendent Hall reported on the need to earmark some funds for necessary maintenance items. He referenced high school windows, siding, and doors. President Smith stated the district had been talking about those items for at least the last 14 years he had been on the board.

Superintendent Hall reported on the need to research air purification systems for the buildings.

Superintendent Hall reported on the advantage of having a one-stop learning management system that would be used for all academic lessons.

Superintendent Hall reported on the need for a safe badge like tracking system that students could use when they get on and off a bus and enter and depart a classroom and building.

Superintendent Hall congratulated Business Manager Michelle Bennin on earning her Chief Financial Officer MSBO certification.

Superintendent Hall provided an update on the number of active COVID cases in the county, at War Memorial, in the schools, and the accumulated state deaths. He reported an increase in the number of positive cases and quarantines in the county from the previous week, and stated the largest age group being hospitalized was between 40 and 49 years old.

Superintendent Hall reported the Pfizer vaccine was being considered for approval for children ages 12 and up. He noted the Sault Tribe has offered to vaccinate children free of charge from age 16 up.

Superintendent Hall reported there were between 51 to 63 students and staff under quarantine in the district.

Superintendent Hall read the letter of opposition on the mandatory antigen testing for spring athletes. He stated it would be mailed to Governor Whitmer, MDHHS Director Hertel, Chief Medical Executive and Chief



Deputy Director for HHS Dr. Khaldun, State Representative Damoose, State Senator Schmidt, and MHSAA Executive Director Uyl upon Board approval.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Superintendent Hall reported the district had not seen a significant number of student absences. He noted the weekly attendance rate was in the upper 80s to 90s.

264. **C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Nick Huyck thanked the Board for composing an excellent letter to the state in opposition of the mandatory COVID testing on spring athletes.

Alan Whalter expressed opposition to the state's mandatory COVID testing of spring athletes based on it being unethical, illegal bullying, and the incorrect mode of which the test is used for based on the product's information sheet.

265. **III. ACTION ITEMS AND BOARD REPORTS**

**A. PERSONNEL – Superintendent Hall**

**New Hires**

Mr. Steve Lockwood presented the following recommendations for spring coaches.

1. Mana Blas-McLean – JV Softball Coach – Sault Area High School

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the recommendation to hire Mana Blas-McLean as JV Softball Coach for Sault Area High School.

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

On behalf of Bill Schomberg, Dr. Hall reported he was happy to recommend the following Middle School coaching positions for approval.

2. Ginny Shadnaw – Boys Track intramural Coach – Sault Area Middle School

It was moved by Member Pingatore, supported by Member Young, that the Board of Education approve the recommendation to hire Ginny Shadnaw as Boys Track Intramural Coach for Sault Area Middle School

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

3. Stephanie Vert – Girls Track Coach – Sault Area Middle School

It was moved by Member Galer, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Stephanie Vert as Girls Track Coach for Sault Area Middle School.

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

4. Noreen Sweet – Girls Track Intramural Coach – Sault Area Middle School

It was moved by Member DeWitt supported by Member Wilson, that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Noreen Sweet as Girls Track Intramural Coach for Sault Area Middle School.

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

266. **B. *EXTENDED CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN – Mrs. Amy Scott-Kronemeyer***

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education affirm the current Extended Continuity of Learning Plan.

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

267.

**C. CURRICULUM MATERIALS – Mrs. Amy Scott-Kronemeyer**

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the materials were extensively reviewed for curricular alignment and the purchases would be made from funds over the next two years.

1. High School – English Language Arts

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of materials and license for the High School English Language Arts Curriculum from Perfection Learning for a not to exceed cost of \$85,000 as presented.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

2. Elementary – Second Grade Language Arts and Intervention

Upon inquiry from Member Young, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported professional development, student supports, and grade level progression is considered in review of the materials.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported curriculum rotation has moved to a 7 year cycle.

Upon inquiry from the Board, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported a total estimated cost of curriculum materials is around \$300,000, and the majority of payment comes from state aid funding.

Superintendent Hall gave kudos to Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer for finding resources beyond the budget to support the purchase of materials over the years. Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district is doing the best job it can with the resources it has.

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of materials and license for the Second Grade Language Arts Intervention Curriculum from Savvas Learning for a not to exceed cost of \$40,000 as presented.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

268. **D. *OPPOSITION OF LEGISLATION FOR COVID TESTING OF ATHLETES – Superintendent Hall***

It was moved by Member Young, supported by Member Wilson, that the Board of Education approve the letter of opposition for mandatory COVID-19 testing of spring athletes and authorize the superintendent to submit the letter as presented.

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

269. **E. *SWIM TEAM COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT – Mr. Steve Lockwood***

Mr. Steve Lockwood reported the high school had been participating in athletic cooperative agreements with Pickford and Rudyard Schools for close to 20 years. He clarified the agreement affords students of those schools to participate in specific school sponsored events our school offers.

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the Michigan High School Athletic Association Cooperative Swim Team Renewal Agreement effective September 1, 2021, through August 31, 2022.

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

270. **F. *FOOD SERVICE CONTRACT EXTENSION – Mrs. Michelle Bennin***

Mrs. Bennin reported the state requires a one-year contract renewal for the first and second years of a food service management contract. She noted this was the second year renewal for Chartwell's and it contains a 1% increase for administration fees.

It was moved by Member Young, supported by Member Galer, that the Board of Education approve the one-year food service management contract renewal extension with Chartwell's as presented.

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

271. **G. CTE LAW ENFORCEMENT LEARNING LAB – Mrs. Michelle Bennin**

Mrs. Bennin reported the district contracted with U.P. Engineers & Architects to prepare a Request for Proposal on an insulated structure and after post bid discussions, they are recommending a bid approval for a 24' x 32' structure to Fairview Construction at a total project cost of \$50,688. She noted 85% of the cost would be paid from CTE millage funds and the remaining 15%, from the general fund.

It was moved by Member Galer, supported by Member DeWitt, that the Board of Education award the CTE Law Enforcement Learning Lab bid to Fairview Construction for a total cost of \$50,688 as presented.

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

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

Upon inquiry from President Smith, Mr. McCready explained Sault High graduation would be held on May 30 but the means in which it will be held depends on the current situation. Dr. Hall reported Malcolm plans to hold its graduation in the Strahl Theater and limit the audience to ticket holders.

273. **V. FUTURE PLANNING**

President Smith reviewed the following events and asked Dr. Hall to confirm the location of the April 27 meeting.

April 14 - Special Board Meeting - Middle School - 6:00 p.m.  
April 27 - Annual Board Meeting - Sault Tribe Cultural Center - 7:00 p.m.  
May 10 - Regular Board Meeting - Middle School - 7:00 p.m.  
May 13 - EUPSBA Meeting - 5:30 p.m.  
May 27 - Malcolm Graduation - 7:00 p.m.  
May 30 - Sault High Graduation - 2:00 p.m.  
June 14 - Regular Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

President Smith reported there would not be any additional items after closed session except for adjournment.

274. **VI. CLOSED SESSION M.O.M.A. 15.268 §8(d)**

**A. MOTION TO GO IN CLOSED SESSION**

It was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Curtis, that the Board of Education moved into closed session after a short break starting at 8:17 p.m. in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act §15.268, 8(d), to consider the acquisition of property.

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

The Board went into closed session at 8:20 p.m.  
The Board resumed open session at 8:48 p.m.

275. **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at 8:48 p.m. it was moved by Member DeWitt, supported by Member Galer, that the meeting be adjourned.

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

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Daniel L. Smith, President

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Lisa A. Young, Board Secretary

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Judy L. Sirk, Recording Secretary