

Board of Education Meeting

Liberty School Board Room

August 22, 2023 at 6:30 PM



MINUTES

Mission

We, the Saline Area Schools, will equip all students with the knowledge, technological proficiency, and personal skills necessary to succeed in an increasingly complex society. We expect that our students, staff, and the Saline Community will share in these responsibilities.

OPENING

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:30 pm

The Board of Education Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by President Michael McVey.

Board Members Present

Tim Austin, Susan Estep, Brad Gerbe, Lauren Gold, Michael McVey, Jennifer Miller and Jennifer Steben

Central Administration Present

Superintendent Laatsch, Assistant Superintendent Ellis, Assistant Superintendent Owsley, Executive Director Clary and Executive Director Martin.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

STUDENTS - None

OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS - None

4. **RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMENT**

AGENDA

5. **REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION made by Trustee Austin, support Treasurer Gerbe **to approve the agenda as printed.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

6. ACTION ITEMS

- A. MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Secretary Miller **to approve the WEOC (Washtenaw Educational Options Consortium) Restated Agreement Resolution as submitted by Superintendent Laatsch.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

- B. MOTION** made by Secretary Miller, support Treasurer Gerbe **to appoint Susan Estep as the voting delegate and Michael McVey as the alternate representing the Saline Board of Education at the 2023 MASB Delegate Assembly being held on Thursday, November 9, 2023.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

- C. MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Trustee Austin **to approve the minutes from the August 8, 2023 closed session for the purpose of the school board to review attorney-client privileged communication pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

- D. MOTION** made by Trustee Gold, support Trustee Estep **to approve the resolution that MISEC (Michigan Schools Energy Cooperative) as agent of the District, enter into a 15 year Power Purchase Agreement for 100% of the annual electricity usage with NorthStar Clean Energy at a fixed rate not to exceed \$0.075/kWh for the generation and delivery of solar electricity, with commercial operation expected to begin in June, 2025 as submitted by Assistant Superintendent of Finance Miranda Owsley.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

- E. MOTION** made by Treasurer Gerbe, support Vice President Steben **to approve the recommendation of A.R. Brouwer to award contracts to the below listed contractors in the total amount of \$1,865,726 for Bid Pack #1 Site Work for the new Operations Center as submitted by Director of Operations, Rex Clary.**

Arbor Land Consultants- \$20,190.00
ILE Excavating Inc- \$795,000.00

Nagle Paving Company- \$619,790.00
Spring Valley Landscaping- \$299,265.00
Nagle Paving Company -\$41,490.00
Superior Landscape Companies LLC- \$89,991.00

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

7. SCHEDULED REPORTS

1. Superintendent's Listening Session Recap

Presenter: Steve Laatsch, Superintendent

This was an overview of the listening sessions that were held last spring with various infinity groups to allow participants to talk about how they feel we are doing in the district with regards to equity and supporting their students. We do this by providing a safe space for SAS families to share their stories and experiences. The Superintendent is the only administrator in attendance, Dr. Washington was present as the note taker. Families were invited based on how they identify in PS as well as special education families and families strongly led by their religious values. Feedback was gathered in 4 areas: Positive Experiences, Communication & Connection, Persistent Challenges and How Children Cope. Some **Positive Experiences** include: families not having had any racial harassment in the last year, racial incidents that did occur have been handled quickly and satisfactorily by bldg administration, students having great experiences in athletics, band, STEAM teams as well as safe space of the EL or Spanish room, teachers responsive to student/parent requests for inclusivity. **Communication & Connection** - communication when there are racial incidents is necessary so that parents can have conversations with their children, trust has been broken but can be repaired, facilitate more socialization between students with special needs and their general ed peers, intentionally connecting students who are new to SAS, host social events to celebrate cultures and traditions. **Persistent Challenges** include transitioning from elementary to MS and MS to HS, students hearing the N-word, immigrant students feeling as if they don't belong, students with disabilities being socially ostracized and bullied, lack of trauma informed training for some staff. **How Children Cope** - children feeling like they are not being heard, being desensitized believing "this is how Saline is" with regards to racism, not wanting to stand out to celebrate their cultures, try to find safe spaces to be alone. SAS will work on improving communication, reviewing the Hate Speech (Acts) guidance for effectiveness, utilizing the Bridge to Civility, improving community engagement around DEI, curriculum and testing data review with an equity and inclusion lens, and onboarding new teachers with PD on culturally responsive instruction.

2. SAS Operations Update

Presenter: Rex Clary, Director of Operations

Thank you to all the Operations staff who worked hard over the summer to make the coming year successful. There are a lot of behind the scene things that happen throughout the summer

with the majority of buildings remaining open for activities, camps and district level year-round staff. Also provided updates on the Maple Road closure and the impact it will have on MS pick up and drop off. This is slated to be completed by early December but in the meantime, it will be a challenge. Transportation updates: (1) 22 routes, 13 drivers and 2 LT substitutes. Currently in conversation with “Drivergent Staffing Solutions”. They are a transportation service provider. We hope to be training some of their staff in the next few weeks to pick up routes. If cancellations are necessary, this will be communicated the week prior to the occurrence. The 1st week of school, 2 routes will be canceled (#62 & #79). Currently no athletic team transportation will be available before 5 pm.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Policy 2240 Controversial Issues (Instructional Materials: Opt Out)
First Reading
Facilitator, Jenny Miller, Chair

1st reading of this policy draft. This policy has been on Policy Committee agendas off and on for quite some time. It has received lots of public comments from the community as well. At Policy Committee meetings over the last several months, much work has been done by the committee, legal counsel consulted, and public comments received. During the August 9th meeting, it was agreed that it was ready to bring forward to tonight’s Board meeting for the first official reading.

Policy committee members shared their thoughts about the process and thoughts on the advise they have received from legal, most recently regarding the statement “should be considered with respect to individual circumstances”. This policy is meant to set vision. The administrative guidelines will provide the heavy lifting for how this policy is implemented. The community has asked for this policy. The intent is to create a policy that would allow families, parents, students, and educators to take personal circumstances into consideration for opting out. Our goal is to ensure that we are providing the best education possible. The focus should be on the individual educational experiences of our students and what families and students together decide is best. The district does not support opt out based on any one agenda but does support listening and working with families. Opting out is only a right under certain categories. This policy would afford consistency and it opens up conversation to understand everyone’s different perspectives.

Board members were in agreement with the draft as presented and it will now go on to the 2nd reading at the September 12, 2023 Board of Education meeting.

9. ADMINISTRATION / BOARD UPDATES

Superintendent Laatsch: Acknowledgement to the Human Resources Department for all their hard work over the summer in onboarding over 50 new staff members. We look forward to introducing the new staff at the September 12th Board of Education Meeting. Excited for tomorrow, August 23rd

which is opening day for all staff. This will be held at the MS Auditorium. Also the Elementary open houses are all on the 23rd as well. Some other updates include: (1) there will be occasional needs for bus route cancellations until fully staffed (2) free breakfast & lunch for all students this year (3) cashless athletic ticketed events and concessions are also in place for this year (4) changes to visitor access at all school buildings, new kiosks are now in all the building vestibules even before they enter into the main part of the bldg.

Trustee Estep: Attended the SEAB board meeting, also with Dr. Gold. Student representatives were also present and contributing. There was a presentation from the Washtenaw Area Council for Children on body safety training programs for all age groups. The advisory board would like to move forward with this program and public hearings will be forthcoming to learn more about it. Through the end of September, applications are still being accepted for the Wellness Committee and DEI Advisory Council.

Vice President Steben: Thank you acknowledgement to Operations, HR and to the Athletics Department and coaches as fall sports have returned.

President McVey: Attended the MASB Summer Institute and also the Back to School Legal Workshop.

Secretary Miller: Wishing all staff a wonderful 1st day tomorrow. Thank you to all teachers for your dedication and also a shout out to Building & Grounds for taking such great care of our properties and buildings and to HR for their hard work and Superintendent Laatsch for his leadership.

Treasurer Gerbe: Excited for cashless concessions and for a great start to this new school year. Thank you to everyone who makes this possible.

Trustee Austin: Best wishes to everyone for a great year and for all the hard work everyone puts in over the summer months to prepare.

Mateo Iadipaolo & Caroline Clark, Student Representatives: Recently participated in the virtual 2023 Student Board Member National Training. Thankful for gaining this new knowledge and excited for what they learned and to contribute in a meaningful way to board meetings this school year.

10. **CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION made by Treasurer Gerbe, support Trustee Estep **to authorize the Consent Agenda as printed:**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

- A. **Approval** of the Board of Education Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2023
- B. **Approval** of the Board Finance Committee Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2023
- C. **Approval** of the Board Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of August 9, 2023

- D. **Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of August 22, 2023, in the amount of \$866,104.84
- E. **Approval of Payment** of 2021 Bond Fund Series III Accounts Payable of August 22, 2023, in the amount of \$14,072.25
- F. **Approval of Payment** of 2023 Bond Fund Series I Accounts Payable of August 22, 2023, in the amount of \$2,084,178.59
- G. **Receive and File** Human Resources Report

CLOSING

11. **ITEMS SCHEDULED ON NEXT AGENDA**

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

STUDENTS - None

OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS

Changming Fan, Community Member - spoke about city / school district partnership

Ann Jeffers Parent - spoke regarding opt out policy, Superintendent's Listening Sessions, traffic patterns

Meghan Gunnerson, Parent - spoke regarding opt out policy

Libby Williams, Parent - spoke regarding opt out policy

13. **NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Education Meeting will be held on September 12, 2023, at 6:30 PM.

14. **CLOSED SESSION**

MOTION made by Trustee Austin, support Vice President Steben **to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 9:05 PM, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at 9:10 PM, for the purpose of Collective Bargaining 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act. Under Section 8(c) a simple majority vote is sufficient to enter into closed session.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

RECOMMENDED MOTION to re-enter Open Session of the Regular Board of Education Meeting at _____ PM.

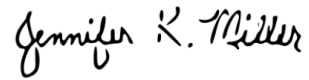
16. **ADJOURNMENT**

*Board of Education Meeting Minutes
August 22, 2023*

MOTION made by Trustee Estep, support Trustee Austin **to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of August 22, 2023, at 9:16 PM.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer K. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "M".

Jennifer Miller
Board Secretary

Recorded by: Betty Jahnke