

**VASSAR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Regular Meeting of the Board of Education**

**Date: August 12, 2013**

**Time: 6:30 P.M.**

**Place: High School Media Center**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

1. The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Mike Kennard at 6:30 P.M.

**B. ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Kennard , Roger Bacon, Kirk Van Wormer, Russ Hubbard, Ben Guile,  
Jeff Fackler, Jill Baase

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Palmer, Deb Dewey. Bill Haines, Phil Marcy, Paul Wojno

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: ADDITION OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:**

1. MOTION by Russ Hubbard, support by Jeff Fackler to approve agenda with deletion of N #3.  
MOTION CARRIED (unanimous)

**E. BOARD RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCES:**

**F. SPOTLIGHT OF MONTH:**

**G. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND CORRECTIONS:**

1. MOTION by Roger Bacon, support by Ben Guile to approve the minutes from the July 8, 2013 Regular Meeting as presented.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimous)

**H. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS AND/OR COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. General Ledger Summary Comparison Reports-General Fund and Food Service: No comments.
2. Internal Fund Balance Sheet- Mr. Van Wormer: the minus sign is good. Mr. Fackler: no groups overspent. Thank you.
3. RECOMMENDATION by Kirk Van Wormer, support by Jeff Fackler to approve the payroll in the amount of \$315,873.65.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimous)

RECOMMENDATION by Kirk Van Wormer, support by Russ Hubbard to approve the General Fund expenses in the amount of \$904,980.67.

MOTION CARRIED (unanimous)

4. Committee Reports – NA

**I. FINANCIAL ISSUES:**

1. Mr. Palmer discussed the Budget Cuts for 2013-2014 school year hand out. The goal is \$600,000 however; the cuts totaled \$495,421.77 which is approximately \$100,000 short of the goal. The handout was informational only. The current concern is the student count when school starts. If the count is down, we will have to relook at the cuts. The audit report may be available in September which will let us know our financial starting point for the year. The enrollment the second week of school will be crucial. What will it look like? It appears the district may have a smaller kindergarten class than last year. 5 families so far have notified the district of their intent to move. We don't know exactly how many have families have left as they don't all let us know. As such we don't currently have an idea of the number of families moving into the district. Pioneer Work & Learn is down 20 students, pushing them down to the 120 mark. This could drastically change at start of school, count day, and throughout the year. Fortunately, we can

claim FTE for students who arrive after count day, but then again that also works in reverse. Districts can bill us for students who have left our district after count day. How do you plan a budget based on these unknown things? It is a guessing game. Mrs. Baase: With the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher moving to Title I, how will this effect classroom size? Mr. Palmer: The extra teacher in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade will be moving to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade position vacated by Mrs. Kischnick. Mr. Bacon: Do we know who that teacher will be? Mr. Palmer: We have to hire a new teacher but will start with a substitute teacher for the first 2 weeks. We may be able to hire or move staff around. Mrs. Baase: Why are we eliminating 4<sup>th</sup> section of Kindergarten? Mr. Palmer: The kindergarten teacher will be moved to the GSRP (preschool) program. The GSRP grant this year allows the district to operate all day not just ½ day. This provides us with 18 students each in 2 am and 2 pm sessions (72-½ day slots or 36 all day). Mr. Fackler: What is a restructured position? Mr. Palmer: A person who is retired, rehired. Mr. Hoard will be paid \$20,000 for August-December 2013, the \$20,000 for January –June 2014. After that we will look into a shared service. Bob Nowotny will be rehired as the new Athletic Director. He will receive \$20,000 for the school year. Extra athletic director duties will be picked up by the Superintendent, High School Principal and the Middle School Assistant Principal. Mrs. Baase: Is the position full time? Mr. Palmer: No. Mr. Bacon: Is this through a contract with PCMI? Mr. Palmer: No, he will be run through payroll. It varies on the individual. This is a creative way to save money. Mr. Kennard and Mr. Palmer will be meeting with the Millington Community Schools Finance Committee to talk about future shared services. Mrs. Baase: Is Mrs. Dewey ok with that? Mr. Palmer: When we discussed it, it was ok. Mr. Guile: Will this require a dual board meeting? Mr. Palmer: Yes, but informational only. Mr. Guile: If the superintendent position is shared, who decides? Mr. Palmer: Both the superintendent and the board. Mrs. Baase: Did we get the early childhood grant? Mr. Palmer: No, we did not.

**J. CURRICULUM ISSUES:**

1. Mr. Haines: We are beginning the first year of our bullying program. You have been given the data from your bully survey to review. The overall data is positive. The district does not have a “raging” problem. The survey was taken on students in Grades 5-12 including teachers; the first set of results had a problem with the data. We are waiting on reimbursement of \$600 from the state for their error. The data provided is the newer version. What does the system address? Bullies and bystanders. We need to work on getting students to come forward. We need to help reach out to parents and help families. This is not about punishment. It is about being fair, consistent and effective. We need to create a rubric for discipline responding to and confronting situations. Mr. Fackler: Some see things/actions as bullying; others may not see it that way. We don’t want people to be afraid. Mr. Haines: The goal is not to increase punishment, just awareness. Bullying professional development will be all day Wednesday, August 28, 2013.

**K. BY-LAWS AND POLICY ISSUES:**

**L. PERSONNEL ISSUES:**

1. MOTION by Ben Guile, support by Kirk Van Wormer to accept the retirement of Kirk Joseph, Network Administrator as submitted.  
MOTION CARRIED (unanimous)
2. MOTION by Russ Hubbard, support by Jeff Fackler to hire Al Hoard as Supervisor of Transportation & Custodial Departments for the period of August 5 – December 31, 2013 and to pay him \$20,000.  
MOTION CARRIED (unanimous)
3. MOTION by Ben Guile, support by Roger Bacon to hire Bob Nowotny as the Athletic Director for the time period and pay stipulated in the contract.  
MOTION CARRIED (unanimous)

**M. STUDENT ISSUES:**

**N. OPERATIONAL ISSUES:**

1. Mr. Palmer: Last school year due to budget constraints the board chose not to renew the license for the electronic parent notification which cost \$3,600. The biggest group affected was the bus students with double runs. A double run happens when we are short a bus driver due to illness or an event. The call system notifies parents by bus number and shape that their student(s) will be home late due to a double run. The administration recommends a less expensive system which costs \$1,500, give or take depending on the enrollment. Mrs. Wegrzyn: The system is beneficial. The \$1,500 cost is worth the peace of mind. Mrs. Baase: It is a good system and the parents want it. I feel we can cut welcome back breakfast and lunches for staff and better use the funds. Mr. Atkins: What causes a double run? Mr. Palmer: When a driver calls in due to sickness or drives bus to a school event.

MOTION by Roger Bacon, support by Ben Guile to purchase the electronic parent notification system.

Roll Call:

Hubbard – yes

Fackler – no

Kennard – yes

Van Wormer – yes

Bacon – yes

Baase – yes

Guile – yes

MOTION CARRIED (6 yes, 1 no)

2. Mrs. Greenwood discussed the summer daycare program. They are operating at a profit. There are 51 students enrolled. To keep the costs down they cut wages and increased the fees. This week 8 students were added. A mom who lives in Fairgrove but works in Vassar will be enrolling her child in kindergarten because we have day care. The district needs this. 15 parents have called inquiring about the preschool. The program did not touch the startup money. Mr. Van Wormer: Are the young people all Vassar residents? Mrs. Greenwood said no. A family from Frankenmuth opted out of their program to come here. The longer we are here the more interest in the program. Parents depend on the daycare to be there. Mr. Van Wormer: What are the hours? Mrs. Greenwood: 6:00am – 6:00pm. The parents pay timely. Mr. Guile: What is the count? Mrs. Greenwood: The average daily count is 21. Mr. Palmer: The question is does the board want to run a day care program? We are asking for a 2 year commitment. It will not be profitable through the school year. It will cost but the cost can be offset with At Risk funds. This year there was an estimated \$13,000 in carryover At Risk funds. The district can try to spend the funds in other ways. This is not general funds, just At Risk funds. At Risk funds may be used for preschool (early childhood programs). We need to maintain the program for 2 years. We can add to our enrollment as data shows students who attend preschool programs tend to stay and enroll in Kindergarten and stay. There will be deficit spending. Mr. Bacon: It was determine by the board earlier that our priorities lie with grades K-12. This puts us between a rock and a hard place. It is a good program but this is not the right time. Mr. Greenwood: When the program started it seemed doubtful that it would continue but it was proven that it worked. The staff cut costs and increased fees. We need more positive word out to the community and a 2 year commitment. It will grow. It takes time. It needs commitment. Mrs. Baase: It is a great program but who else is getting cut because we are running in a negative? Mr. Van Wormer: He agreed with the board questioning the cost but what is the cost not to run it? If we don't have it, the families will go elsewhere. This is not General Funds but At Risk which is federal funds that won't affect the operating expenses of the school. It is a gamble. He feels it is positive advertising for these people. He sees a steady stream of cars headed to Townsend each morning. It is beautiful to see. It will hurt the community and school system not to give it a try. In 2 years if it didn't work, come back and tell us "we told you so". Mrs. Heinlein: We need more parapros to help in the classroom. Mrs. Dewey: Parapros are an allowable use of funds however they may only assist qualified At Risk students. Mrs. Wegrzyn: The 4<sup>th</sup> grade needs help. There are students with autism in the classroom. Mr. Bacon: Parents and staff are asking for help. How can we not help by using At Risk funds? Mr. Fackler: If spending the funds is so specific, then we need to find out the number of students to put with parapros. We need to understand how truly the funds can be used. Mrs. Dewey: At the office she has charts and

protocols but she did not have them with her. Mrs. Baase felt the funds could be spent in a better place.

MOTION by Kirk Van Wormer, support by Russ Hubbard to continue the Vassar Vulcan Preschool/Daycare/Latchkey program for 2 years to be funded using At Risk funds only.

ROLL CALL:

Guile – No      Baase – No      Bacon – No      Van Wormer – Yes      Fackler – No  
Hubbard – Yes      Kennard – Yes

MOTION DECLINED (3 Yes; 4 No)

Mrs. Greenwood: What about the latchkey program? The board members were silent. Mr. Palmer took that as a no. The program will terminate at the end of the week before school starts.

**O. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: 33 attendees.**

- David Atkins, 5702 Waterman Rd., Vassar, MI: He wanted to know if there were any ongoing negotiations. Mr. Palmer informed him that they are in negotiations with the parapro union. Mr. Atkins asked if the Superintendent's contract was renewed. It was for 3 years expiring in 2016. Mr. Atkins just finished his certifying as a PCMI employee. Mr. Atkins has heard that the Superintendent allegedly does not have the proper credentials for the job. Why? Mr. Van Wormer informed that in order for the board of education to begin interview process all prospects must have proper credentials. Mr. Palmer has the proper credentials to be Superintendent.
- Onna Clinesmith, 6630 Washburn Rd., Vassar, MI: She was reviewing the Public Disclosure and Recording bylaw and could not find the pie charts that are to be there as mandated by the state transparency requirements. She asked Mr. Kennard who she should talk to about this. Mr. Kennard said referred her to Mr. Palmer. She stated Mr. Haines did an excellent job on the bullying information. She discussed the issue of employee entitlement. On the check register she saw expenditures for retiree gifts as well as Shay water. She broke the expenses down into a consideration of how many boxes of macaroni and cheese a district could send home in backpacks to help feed students versus using the money for retiree gifts and water. Note: The district will no longer be providing gifts to staff upon retirement. Also, The Shay Water Company is coming on August 26, 2013 to pick up the water dispenser and bottles. The district has done business with the Shay Water Company since 1999 and we thank them for their many years of service to our district.
- Carson (Dan) Atkins, 133 N Cass Ave., Vassar, MI: In the past did Mr. Palmer get paid to work at a poker room? We just eliminated a kids' program. Does the board feel that is a good way to spend money? Mr. Palmer responded that he has worked the poker rooms even a 3 day stint that included a weekend. His contract means he is Superintendent 24-7 and every day could be a work day. Mr. Atkins will FOIA the district as he would like to know what 3 days Mr. Palmer worked at the poker room. Note: As a result of Mr. Atkins FOIA, the documents show that Mr. Palmer worked the poker rooms on Feb 28, Mar 1 & 2, 2013 (Thursday, Saturday and Sunday). The start time for the poker hall was 6:00pm on each day.
- Michael Clinesmith, 6630 Washburn Rd., Vassar, MI: The board had a hard decision. The district needs leadership on managing the funds. The district is relying on other funds instead of the General Fund. You are operating an educational system. You don't want to operate paycheck to paycheck. The taxpayers need to see that you can manage these programs and the General Fund. Federal funds come from federal taxpayers not just state taxpayers. We need to keep focus on the budget and how we spend it.
- Linda Inglis, 6100 Hess Rd., Vassar, MI: The parent notification system is needed. Parents would like to see it back and they feel safer with it. On the agenda it mentioned the phone system contract. The board skipped it. Note: The phone system contract was Item #N3 and was deleted from the agenda at the start of the meeting. It is hoped that it will be added to the September meeting agenda.

**P. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS:**

1. Summer is over and we are gearing up for the start of the school year. In Lansing, Superintendent Flanagan is promoting county-wide schools. Wednesday, is the meeting with Senator Kildee regarding the needs of school districts on a federal level. Mr. Kennard and Mr. Palmer will meet with the Millington Board of Education Finance Committee to discuss further shared services between the districts. Mrs. Atkins: Will Vassar be receiving any Buena Vista students? Mr. Palmer: No, we were not reapportioned any students. The Saginaw ISD divided how they wanted it. Vassar is open to school of choice for them if they choose.

**Q. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:**

- o **Mr. Wojno: Not much happened over the summer. We are looking at paraprofessionals. We plan on using an online notification of grades/attendance for parents. This will save the district postage. Mr. Fackler: Any allowances being made for those parents not online? Mr. Wojno stated yes. If the building runs into problems, then we will revisit it.**
- o **Mr. Haines: N/A**
- o **Mrs. Dewey: 4 families registered for Kindergarten. That makes the current count 71.**

**R. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

- o Mrs. Baase: Last school year it was brought up that the time the busses dropped students off in the morning at the Middle/High School was preventing the students from receiving their free breakfast. It left the students with insufficient time to eat, get to their lockers and then to class. Mrs. Hauger pointed that the students are dropped off at 8:05am and breakfast closes at 8:15am. Mr. Palmer added the subject to the agenda for the administration meeting. Note: During the administration meeting a new student drop off route was discussed and will be tried on opening day. The matter will be revisited pending on the success of the new route.

**S. CLOSED SESSION:**

**T. DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- August 12 – Administrators and Secretaries return.
- August 26 – Teachers first day – full day
- August 29 – Teachers half day
- August 30 – Teachers are not in school
- September 2 – Labor Day
- September 3 – Students first day – half day; Teacher professional development in the pm.

**U. NEXT REGULAR OR SPECIAL MEETING:**

- September 9 – Regular Meeting in the High School Media Center @ 6:30pm

**V. ADJOURNMENT:**

1. MOTION by Russ Hubbard, support by Kirk Van Wormer to adjourn the meeting at 8:50pm.  
MOTION CARRIED

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

(Secretary)