



Tri County Area Schools
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TRI COUNTY AREA SCHOOLS

Regular Meeting Minutes

June 12, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: President Fennessy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with members all members present. President Fennessy welcomed all those in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Princer, second by Bice to approve the agenda as presented. Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

GOOD THINGS:

Superintendent Cumings started the meeting with “Good Things”, sharing that the end of the school year was a great one. Students celebrating with field days, color run, and topped off with a beautiful graduation ceremony for the Class of 2023. Sand Lake Elementary also said goodbye to the Village of Sand Lake in an event planned for community by the Village council.

Mr. Cumings also shared spring athletic updates, sharing that the girls’ soccer team had a good year, experiencing a tough loss in the district finals. The boy’s track team had an amazing year, with multiple records broken, and conference champs. He also shared that Stuart Gould had qualified to compete at Nationals in the 400-meter dash, along with the 4x400 meter relay of Behrenwald, Gould, Rykse, and Boden. An exciting year for sure!

Mr. Cumings then celebrated our 2023 Retirees, including John Bagin, Sara VanZyll, Randy Cook, Rick Stoll, Lori Reidt, Susan Johnson, and Lisa Lambert, and their commitment and contributions to Tri County Area Schools. Lisa Lambert was in the audience and recognized for her work as a paraprofessional and Preschool Para/Teacher Assistant. A big thank you to all was shared!

PRESENTATIONS

98b Goal Reporting: Superintendent Cumings reviewed end of year data with the board, sharing that Reading growth was up across the grade levels, with a drop in Math from last year in grades 3, 4, and 5. He shared that we are implementing a new Math program in the upcoming year as part of the improvement plan for Math K-5. Mr. Cumings stated that 1st grade had a net growth percentile of 81%, while 2nd grade had a net growth percentile of 53%. This with having to read the test themselves this year for the first time.

Mr. Cumings also shared that the Administrative team had met to receive data dialogue training, concentrating on dialogue on identifying areas to focus on. The team had challenging conversations and had a good day with the ultimate goal to improve growth. They also want to be able to look at proficiency.

Newaygo County Career-Tech Center (NCCTC) Credit Program: Superintendent Cumings shared information about a flexible credit program offered by Newaygo County Career-Tech Center, which provides opportunity for students to earn credits for graduation while attending the career center. Students who attend the career center often times miss the opportunity to take a class necessary for graduation. Through this program, students can earn these credits as part of their training through the career center. The criteria to earn credits this way is approved by the State, and students can only earn those credits that have been approved. Mr. Cumings stated that he would recommend the board consider approving this credit program for our students.

Bond Projects – High School Parking Lot & New Weight Room Equipment: Tom Phinney, Operations Director, offered information regarding the proposed parking lot project at the high school, sharing that the parking lots were not originally included in the bond work due to the cost. These projects are now feasible

due to monies allocated for a road around the back of the new elementary school which now is not needed. These monies have been reallocated for the parking lot project at the high school. Mr. Phinney shared that it is very important to do this project now with our new cafetorium project, as costs will only continue to increase. Cost of the project for the cafetorium lot and the student parking lot is \$212,103.00. This work, if approved, will be done this summer.

Superintendent Cumings then shared an estimate for equipment for the new weight room. He indicated that he had worked with Phil Butler on the weight room design, which will include 8 lifting stations (weights, bars, pulleys, etc.), dumbbells, a turf area, etc. Cost of the equipment is \$75,531.00, which will come out of monies allocated out of the furniture line of the bond. If approved, the equipment will be ordered immediately.

5th Grade Health Curriculum: Superintendent Cumings shared that administration had requested the use of our current health curriculum, “Healthy Me, Healthy Relationships” be used at the 5th grade level. Mr. Cumings shared that for 5th grade, only the puberty curriculum would be used. Administrators have realized that students at this age need this as their bodies change and boys and girls would be separated. Parents will also have the choice to opt out.

K-2 Curriculum – Classroom Libraries: Superintendent Cumings provided information regarding a book order necessary to complete the new K-2 ELA curriculum, purchased earlier this spring. Classroom sets and grade level book sets are included in the order. Estimated cost for this original purchase is \$67,000. We do expect a small cost each year to replenish necessary items.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Member Campbell reported that the committee met just prior to the board meeting, where they reviewed end of fiscal year budgets. They also reviewed the proposed state budgets for 2023-2024, with increases to the foundation allowance of between \$366.00-\$400.00. Projected budget for 2023-2024 using enrollment of 1685 and a flat foundation could use as much as \$800,000 of fund balance or as little as \$77,000, based on what the State approves for the final budget. The committee also reviewed information on a new district purchasing card, which offers cash back on purchases. Information was also received on proposed athletic fee increases, and bond project proposals for the cafetorium parking lot and weight room equipment. The next meeting is scheduled for August 14th.

MAISD Executive Committee Report: Member Bice shared that the executive committee met virtually, where positive feedback was given regarding the self-assessment topic from the March general membership meeting. The committee also had a spirited discussion on topics for the upcoming general membership meeting in September. The meeting will be hosted by Tri County on September 25, with the topic being “Do’s and Don’ts of a School Board Member”.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: Superintendent Cumings shared that the district is diligently working to wrap-up the 2022-23 fiscal year, prepping for audit, and getting ready for next year. The district has finalized the PD plan for next year, and Mr. Cumings and Accounting Manager, Taylor Merchant, recently attended a consolidated application workshop in preparation for 2023-24. Mr. Cumings shared that the district is also working on plans to bring Preschool teaching staff and Maintenance/Grounds personnel in-house. Two important meetings are scheduled for tomorrow with IBB and legal regarding requirements necessary to accomplish this. Legislatively, Mr. Cumings reported that funding for transportation is currently still in the proposed state budget. He asked that we contact our legislators to support keeping this important need in the budget. Mr. Cumings ended by sharing that the ribbon cutting for the new elementary has been scheduled for August 16th. More details to follow when completed.

FOLLOW UP TO PRIOR PUBLIC COMMENT: No follow-up needed.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Agenda items Only: No one spoke to this.

ACTION ITEMS

Action Item #1 - Consent Agenda. Motion by Bice, second by Stewart to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, which included the Minutes from the May 8, 2023 Regular Meeting, Minutes from the May 22, 2023 and May 25, 2023 Special Meetings, Retirements of: Randy Cook-HS Science, Lisa Lambert-Preschool Paraprofessional, Susan Taylor-Paraprofessional, New Hires: Kattie Westgate-4th Grade, Tabitha McNeilly-Food Service, Cheri Proctor-Food Service, and Accounts Payable of \$2,821,802.55.
Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Action Item #2 – Newaygo County Career-Tech Center (CCTC) Credit Program. Motion by Princer, second by Arnold to accept the Newaygo County Career-Tech Center Flexible Credit Program as presented.
.Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Action Item #3 – Bond Project – HS Parking Lot. Motion by Campbell, second by Stewart to approve the High School Parking Lot project as presented and recommended, at a cost of \$212,103.00.
Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Action Item #4 –Bond Project – Weight Room Equipment. Motion by Arnold, second by Bice to approve the Weight Room Equipment Purchase at a cost of \$75,531.00, as presented and recommended. Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Action Item #5 – 5th Grade Health Curriculum. Motion by Campbell, second by Bice to approve the use of our current Health Curriculum for 5th grade students as presented and recommended. M
Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Action Item #6 - K-2 Classroom Libraries. Motion by Arnold, second by Stewart to approve the purchase for K-2 Classroom Library materials that correlate with new K-2 Curriculum, at an approximate cost of \$67,000.00. Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Action Item #7 – 2023-24 MHSAA Membership Resolution. Motion by Bice, second by Princer to adopt the 2023-24 MHSAA Membership Resolution as read. Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Action Item #8 – Food Service Management Contract Renewal. Motion by Princer, second by Stewart to approve the Food Service Management Contract Renewal with Chartwell effective July 2023.
Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

PUBLIC COMMENT – General Comments

A member of the audience addressed the Board, offering information regarding a program called “Spellers”, describing it as a new way to teach nonverbal or other autistic children using a series of letter and numbered stencil boards in a series of training. They also shared that a movie called “Spellers” is available for viewing. The move is about 8 different non-speakers who have gone through the program and who have now found their voice.

BOARD COMMENTS: Member Arnold shared her feelings while attending different graduation open houses, realizing as a former music teacher how we do make an impact on our students.

Member Campbell shared that the end of the Varsity Girls Soccer season was a heartbreaker, losing to Big Rapids in the District finals, a team they had beaten twice before. The team ended their season 15-4-1. He commented that they had more talent than they could put on the field. Member Campbell also offered information regarding their upcoming Youth Soccer Camp, June 19-22 from 5:30-7:30pm.

Other Board comments included how impressed members were how Tom Phinney and Superintendent Cumings have worked to find the monies within the bond budget to do projects right on a shoestring, and an inquiry if board members are interested in continuing the “Meet & Greets” at community events and home football games.

ADJOURMENT: Motion by Powell, second by Campbell to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.
Motion CARRIED (7-0-0)

Approved by:

Jill Fennessy, President

MaDonna Princer, Secretary

Two handwritten signatures are shown, each written over a horizontal line. The top signature is cursive and appears to read 'Jill Fennessy'. The bottom signature is also cursive and appears to read 'MaDonna Princer'.