

**Board Meeting Minutes  
December 19, 2022**

The Board of Education of Independent School District No. 299, Caledonia, Minnesota, met in a regular school board meeting in the elementary building room #162. The meeting was called to order by Chair Matt Blocker at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. The school board members present were Matt Blocker, Erin Hammell, Leigh King, Melissa Marschall, Daniel Small, Wendy Woyczik, Spencer Yohe and student school representatives Jack Babinski and Emma Stemper. Also present were Craig Ihrke, Gretchen Juan, Nathan Boler, Barb Meyer, Karen Schiltz, Kaitlin Longhauser, Tim Gunn, Mike Peterson, Rachel Stock, Richard Larson, Teresa Larson, Robbie Sobczak, Chuck Schulte, and Jake Dickson. Absent was Susan Link.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Moved by Daniel Small, seconded by Erin Hammell to approve the agenda as amended to include the hiring of Jeff Babinski as the Robotics coach. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

**WARRIOR PRIDE**

The following resolution was moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Daniel Small:

*Resolution Accepting Donations*

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 123B.02, Subd. 6 provides: “The board may receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose and apply the same to the purpose designated. In that behalf, the board may act as trustee of any trust created for the benefit of the district, or for the benefit of pupils thereof, including trusts created to provide pupils of the district with advanced education after completion of high school, in the advancement of education.”; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 465.03 provides: “Any citizen, county, school district or town may accept a grant or devise of real or personal property and maintain such property for the benefit of its citizens in accordance with the terms prescribed by the donor. Nothing herein shall authorize such acceptance or use for religious or sectarian purposes. Every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full.”; and

WHEREAS, every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of Independent School District No. 299, gratefully accepts the following donations as identified below:

| Donor           | Item  | Designated Purpose (if any) |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Caledonia Lions | Volunteering 54 hours of time selling tickets during the sporting season this fall! |                             |
|                 |   |                             |

Motion carried by a unanimous vote. Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted.

**BOARD SHOWCASE**

Mr. Robbie Sobczak shared with the board what his class will be doing this spring which will be going through the process of having Sprague Woods designated as a school forest. The City of Caledonia will continue to have ownership of these woods. He informed the board that there is nothing

they need to do right now but that he is making the board aware of what is happening in regards to the Sprague Woods.

### **STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER REPORT**

Student school board representatives Stemper and Babinski updated the board on various activities that have been happening in the middle/high school building along with co-curricular and curricular activities. Finals are being held this week and students are looking forward to the winter break.

### **TRUTH IN TAXATION HEARING TO DISCUSS THE 2023 BUDGET & LEVY**

A Truth in Taxation Hearing was held, and a presentation was shared during this hearing. Community members were in attendance to ask questions during the hearing.

Moved by Daniel Small, seconded by Melissa Marschall to adopt the final levy certification for 2023 in the amount of \$2,384,488.37. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Daniel Small to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Approval of November 21, 2022, Regular School Board Minutes.
- Approve the electronic transfers and bills due and payable amounting to \$696,898.00 along with electronic transfers from MSDLAF to Merchants Bank in the amount of \$900,000.00.
- Accept the resignation of Mike Konkell as the robotics coach effective immediately with thanks for his four years of service and dedication to this program.
- Accept the resignation of Dean Twite as the facilities technician with his last day of service to our school district on December 13, 2022, with thanks for his dedication to our school district in this position.
- Ratify the hiring of Isaiah Fogel as a part-time casual facilities technician at \$14.37 per hour.
- Ratify the hiring of Josh Diersen as the 9<sup>th</sup> grade girls' basketball coach beginning the 2022-2023 school year at I/14 years at \$2,414.00.
- Ratify the hiring of Jeff Babinski as the Robotics coach beginning the 2022-2023 school year at V/0 at \$2,522.00.
- Approve the 2022-2023 teacher seniority list and the 2022-2023 support staff seniority list as presented.
- Approval of tasking Superintendent Ihrke with applying for another three years of permission to do a Flexible Learning Year Application. If approved, the School District would have the ability to start prior to Labor Day in the next three school calendars.
- Approve the request to have Mr. John Wahlstrom designated as our District Representative for Special Education meetings.
- Approve the recommendation to rescind Transgender Nondiscrimination Policy #545 with the

understanding that our school district will follow all laws currently in place.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Discussion/Action Regarding the Budget for the Robotics Program**

Moved by Erin Hammell, seconded by Daniel Small to approve paying for a coach and paying for all transportation costs as we do for other activities. This would eliminate the \$4,000.00 amount. The school district would also pay for state tournament expenses as we do for other activities and an additional \$1,000.00 in the supply budget. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

#### **Discussion/Action Regarding the Summer Ag Program**

Moved by Daniel Small, seconded by Erin Hammell to have the school district fund the summer ag program and to encourage administration to apply for resources to assist with lessening the costs of this program. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

#### **Set January Organizational Meeting**

Moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Daniel Small to hold an organizational school board meeting on Monday, January 9, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in Room #106 of the elementary building. Motion carried by a unanimous vote

#### **Resolution Establishing Combined Polling Places for Multiple Precincts and Designating Hours During Which the Polling Places Will Remain Open for Voting for School District Elections**

Member Wendy Woyczik introduced the following resolution:

#### **RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING COMBINED POLLING PLACES FOR MULTIPLE PRECINCTS AND DESIGNATING HOURS DURING WHICH THE POLLING PLACES WILL REMAIN OPEN FOR VOTING FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTIONS**

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 299, State of Minnesota, as follows:

1. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.11, the precincts and polling places for school district elections are those precincts or parts of precincts located within the boundaries of the school district which have been established by the cities or towns located in whole or in part within the school district. The board hereby confirms those precincts and polling places so established by those municipalities.

2. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.11, the board may establish a combined polling place for several precincts for school elections not held on the day of a statewide election. The following combined polling places are established to serve the precincts specified for all school district special and general elections not held on the same day as a statewide election:

Combined Polling Place: Caledonia Auditorium

Name and address of combined polling place: 219 East Main Street, Caledonia, MN 55921

This combined polling place serves all territory in Independent School District No. 299 located in Blackhammer Township, Brownsville City, Brownsville Township; Caledonia Precinct City 1,

Caledonia Precinct City 2, Caledonia Township, Crooked Creek Township, Eitzen City, Jefferson Township, Mayville Township, Mound Prairie Township, Sheldon Township, Union Township, Wilmington Township, and Winnebago Township.

3. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.09, the polling places will remain open for voting for school district elections not held on the same day as a statewide election between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 o'clock p.m.

4. The clerk is directed to file a certified copy of this resolution with the county auditors of each of the counties in which the school district is located in whole or in part within 30 days after its adoption.

5. As required by Minnesota Statutes, Section 204B.16, Subdivision 1a, the clerk is hereby authorized and directed to give written notice of new polling place locations to all registered voters in the school district whose school district polling place locations have been changed. The notice must be a non-forwardable notice mailed at least twenty-five (25) days before the date of the first election to which it will apply. A notice that is returned as undeliverable must be forwarded immediately to the appropriate County Auditor, who shall change the registrant's status to "challenged" in the statewide registration system.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Member Melissa Marschall and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Matt Blocker, Erin Hammell, Leigh King, Melissa Marschall, Daniel Small, Wendy Woyczik, and Spencer Yohe. The following voted against the same: None. Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

*Resolution Directing the Administration to Make Recommendations for Reductions in Programs and Positions and Reasons Thereof*

Member Melissa Marschall introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE ADMINISTRATION TO MAKE  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDUCTIONS IN PROGRAMS AND  
POSITIONS AND REASONS THEREFORE

WHEREAS, there has been a reduction in student enrollment, and,

WHEREAS, this decrease in student enrollment must include discontinuance of positions and discontinuance or curtailment of programs, and

WHEREAS, a determination must be made as to which teachers' contracts must be terminated and not renewed and which teachers may be placed on unrequested leave of absence without pay or fringe benefits in effecting discontinuance of positions,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 299 as follows:

That the School Board hereby directs the Superintendent of Schools and administration to consider the discontinuance of programs or positions and as a result of a reduction in enrollment make recommendations to the school board for the discontinuance of programs, curtailment of programs, discontinuance of positions or curtailment of positions.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Member Spencer Yohe and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Matt Blocker, Erin Hammell, Leigh King, Melissa Marschall, Daniel Small, Wendy Woyczik, and Spencer Yohe. The following voted against the same: None. Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

### World's Best Workforce

Superintendent Ihrke shared with the board the summary report on the progress of the World's Best Work Force.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Mrs. Link was absent. In her report she shared with the board that the Elementary Christmas Concert was held on Thursday evening. It brought Christmas cheer with many attending to see and hear the children sing various carols to usher in the season. Thank you Burton Svensden and Heidi Myhre. At our PACE (Parents as Allies in Children's Education) meeting last Monday night, we set dates for our Family Fun Night, discussed a possible Needy Student Account, talked about Parent Involvement plans, and other topics of interest. She is sincerely appreciative of our PACE organization. Kurt Zehnder was invited to speak to our staff to share ALICE updates and other safety measures on December 14th. It's been quite a while since we have reviewed ALICE with our law enforcement. Thank you to Officer Zehnder for vital information to keep our schools safe. Mallets have been delivered to break windows in the event of an emergency evacuation. Every room with windows should now have mallets. After school Academy: We are using ESSER funds to support additional educational opportunities for our students. For auditing purposes, we will be recording attendance and student growth. Leadership groups have started after school with Ms. Howe for our 4th grade students. December had us decorating doors, having dress-up days (Ugly sweater, Christmas accessory/hat day, decorating the halls, and making ornaments and gifts for parents). Lunch Bunches have commenced for some of our student groups who have met with Ms. Howe. New groups have also been formed. Ms. Howe has developed skills in our students to positively interact with one another to increase learning and socialization. The Warrior Way Closet is in need of snow pants, waterproof mittens and gloves. We greatly appreciate all who have or will donate to this cause. Like much of the nation, the elementary school has had excessive numbers of students and staff who have been out ill with influenza and other viruses. Hopefully the new year will bring good health to all. MESPA meeting for Southeast Principals was held on December 7th. Many topics were discussed such as facilitating meaningful teacher and staff feedback, inspiring new teachers, as well as providing support to attract, welcome and develop student teachers. Meetings attended since our last board meeting include but are not limited to Administrative meetings, Q Comp Committee, Virtual law conference, Staff Development Committee, Virtual Educlimber training, Facilities Committee, Technology Committee, Student Support Team, as well as Evaluation results team meetings, and Special Education IEP's. Merry Christmas and enjoy your time with family and friends.

Mr. Boler informed the board that Thanksgiving Break provided a great opportunity for students and staff to "recharge" before the final month of Term 2 and Semester 1. December seems to have flown by and it's hard to believe Christmas Break is quickly approaching. The student council and SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) have put together some activities for students before break. Administration set three goals to begin the school year: 1) Connectedness: As the board knows, we have added some new clubs and are working hard to increase the connectedness of students. Our ultimate goal is for every student to be involved in 2 clubs or activities. 2) Increasing math scores: We have dedicated Thursday WIN time to math at the MS level. We are also using our MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) model to dig deeper into curriculum and instruction. 3) Attendance: Studies have shown attendance at 9th grade is a key indicator of success. As of December 14<sup>th</sup>, our attendance for our

9th grade students is 93%. The end of Term 2 and Semester 1 is December 21st. A reminder that report cards will not go out until late January/early February depending on when all grades are received from students taking PSEO/online courses. December is a busy time as we work to change student schedules based on wants/needs. Credit checks are run for seniors (again) after semester 1 to ensure all students are on track to graduate. Credit checks are also made for students falling behind in grades 9-11. On December 8th, he traveled to Winona for our Principal's Advisory Council meeting. This was a great opportunity to connect with other principals and dig deeper into our MTSS model. Him (and other MTSS members) are now meeting weekly with Tami Bennett (HVED) to look at ways to improve our MTSS program. This work takes time but is very beneficial. Beyond The Bell has returned to the MS/HS. This is an opportunity for students to receive extra homework help along with extension activities. He has joined a Sustaining Innovative Leadership Cohort which includes a number of SE Minnesota Principals along with members from MDE and other organizations. We meet monthly. He is continuing to plan for the 23-24 school year. While he had hoped to have a draft schedule to the board in December, he did not yet have one prepared. He is continuing to work with colleges to see how Caledonia can offer additional "dual credit" courses. I need to work out more details before a schedule can be made. He is continuing to work on evaluations for certified staff. At present, I have observed all non-tenured staff at least one time. Some of the meetings I have attended include but are not limited to: administration meetings, SE MN principal meetings, IEP meetings, Caledonia Monthly Sped meeting, PBIS, staff development, technology committee meetings, and Q-Comp.

Mrs. Juan informed the board that we are still in search of an ECFE teacher to start as soon as possible. We may be offering some family nights a few times this winter that would not be officially EFCE, as we do not have a qualified teacher, but it would be something for parents and their young children to attend once or twice a month and still is working out the logistics for this. SAC has a few more spots opening up, which will be filled up quickly. The winter/spring activity guide will be mailed out the first week of January. The MSHS MCA testing dates are finalized, and the updated calendar is posted on the school website. She is working on accommodations for students and will be registering students for the ACT test when we return from the holiday break. We are still in search of a toddler teacher to start as soon as possible. The flu spread through the daycare and preschool classes last week, and has hit the daycare staff and were short staffed for a few days but everyone was flexible and we made it work.

Superintendent Ihrke informed the board that HVED continues to look for a new building. He is serving on the HVED committee that is working to analyze the workloads of our special educators. He attended the Phase I training with other board members in La Crescent. Facilities technician interviews will be held this week. He thanked Directors Matt Blocker, Erin Hammell and Wendy Woyczik for their dedication to our school district while serving as school board members.

Ms. Barb Meyer informed the board that the 2021-2022 audited UFARS files were submitted to MDE by the deadline of November 30, 2022. The auditors were going to present the financial statements at the December meeting, but they had staff leave and won't be presenting until the January meeting. Verification process is complete and reported. We had our first quarterly health and safety meeting since COVID began. She attended various meetings with departments (maintenance, food service, etc.). Continues to work on other business office duties (invoicing, billing, reconciling, etc.)

### **NEW BUSINESS ITEMS**

The board reviewed School Meals Policy #534.

## **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

Director Marschall informed the board that she attended the Phase I training. Director Yohe updated the board regarding the MSBA Delegate Assembly meeting. Updated the board regarding the MSHSL meeting and the HVED meeting. Director Hammell updated the board regarding the curriculum committee meeting she attended. All the board members thanked Directors Blocker, Hammell and Woyczik for their years of service and dedication they have given our school district during their service as our board members. Directors Blocker, Hammell, and Woyczik thanked the community and staff for their support as they served on our school district board.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Erin Hammell, seconded by Leigh King to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

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Spencer Yohe, Clerk