

Board Meeting Minutes December 20, 2021

The Board of Education of Independent School District No. 299, Caledonia, Minnesota, met in a regular school board meeting in the middle/high school auditorium and via interactive technology. 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 board representative Emma Ideker. Also present were Superintendent Craig Ihrke, Nathan Boler, Barb Meyer, Karen Schiltz, Jordan Gerard, and various members from the community. Absent were Susan Link, Gretchen Juan, and student school board representative Emma Stemper.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Leigh King to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

BOARD SHOWCASE

Clifton, Larson, Allen, LLP Audit Report Presentation

Moved by Melissa Marschall, seconded by Wendy Woyczik to accept the school audit report as presented by Clifton, Larson, Allen, LLP. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Washington DC Trip

Mr. Boler informed the board of the early stages of exploring a trip to Washington D.C. which would take place in the spring/summer of 2023. A representative from World Classrooms provided a short presentation and answered any questions that were presented.

STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER REPORT

The student school board representative informed the board that the MSHS choir concert was held on December 13th. The MSHS students celebrated the last full week of first semester by dressing up and decorating the hallways and doors. Students will also be attending rotary lights.

TRUTH IN TAXATION HEARING TO DISCUSS THE 2022 BUDGET AND LEVY AND ADOPTION OF THE FINAL LEVY CERTIFICATION

A Truth in Taxation Hearing was held, and a presentation was shared during this hearing. No community members were in attendance to ask questions.

Moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Wendy Woyczik to adopt the final levy certification for 2022 in the amount of \$2,421,943.66. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Various community members addressed the board their concerns with regard to having students wearing masks during the school day, to not make this mandatory for them to wear these masks during the school day, and to do away with contact tracing within the school district.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Melissa Marschall, seconded by Erin Hammell to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Approval of November 15, 2021, regular school board minutes.
- Approve the electronic transfers and bills due and payable amounting to \$934,708.40

along with electronic transfers from MSDLAF to Merchants Bank in the amount of \$300,000.00.

- Approve the 2021-2022 teacher seniority list and the 2021-2022 support staff seniority list as presented.
- Accept the resignation of Cynthia Frideres as a part-time special education paraprofessional effective December 8, 2021.
- Accept the resignation of Randal Hallmark as a full-time facilities technician effective December 13, 2021.
- Ratify the hiring of Richard Johnson as a full-time facilities specialist at III/13 years at \$17.12 per hour beginning December 6, 2021.
- Ratify the hiring of Monica Larsen as a part-time PCA paraprofessional at II/6 at \$14.63 per hour.
- Ratify the hiring of Austin Bauer as the assistant boys' basketball coach beginning the 2021-2022 school year at II/2 years at \$2,724.00.
- Ratify the hiring of Jimmy Westland as the 9th grade boys' basketball coach beginning the 2021-2022 school year at I/3 years at \$2,168.00.
- Ratify the contract for Brittany Vils as a part-time science teacher for the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year at 0.5803 FTE at BA/1 years.
- Ratify the contract for Rachel Handrick as an interim full time MSHS music teacher for the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year at 1.00 FTE at BA/1 years.
- Ratify the following employee contracts: Non-bargaining Administrative Agreement for the Business Manager for the 2021-2023 school years as presented.
- Approve the additional language in the Vacation Day area for the Non-bargaining Administrative Agreement for Human Resources Coordinator/Office Manager and the Facilities Director/Safety Director to include that the employee will be eligible for reimbursement at their daily rate of pay for up to ten (10) unused vacations days within each contract year or upon termination of employment.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the Following Non-Coaching Category Positions in the Caledonia Chapter of the River Valley Education Association Master Agreement

Moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Leigh King to approve the following Non-Coaching Category positions in the Caledonia Chapter of the River Valley Education Association Master Agreement: School Musical Assistant position in Level II and Business Professional of America (BPA) in Level VI. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Set January Organizational Board Meeting

Moved by Melissa Marschall, seconded by Erin Hammell to hold an organizational school board meeting on Monday, January 10, 2022, 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 Melissa Marschall 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 Wendy Woyczik 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 Wendy Woyczik 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 in Support of the Congressional IDEA Full Funding Act

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

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL IDEA FULL FUNDING ACT

WHEREAS, Independent School District No. 299 recognizes the need for a strong investment in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and

WHEREAS, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act was first enacted in 1975 to help

ensure that all students with disabilities will have access to a free appropriate public education and IDEA's enactment more than 45 years ago, the current federal investment in IDEA is less than 14 percent; and

WHEREAS, with the enactment of IDEA, the United States Congress committed to fund up to 40 percent of the additional cost of special education, thereby promising to provide up to 40 percent of the national average per pupil expenditure, which is currently estimated at \$13,828 by the U.S. Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, our nation's school districts face an increased demand for greater resources to fulfill the needs of students under IDEA, including those for students affected by multiple disabilities whose individual education plans require more resources; and

WHEREAS, with each increase in the IDEA child count, the Independent School District No. 299 Board of Education and others throughout the country continue to adjust their budgets to accommodate this increased need and ensure that each child educated through IDEA receives the appropriate supports, with some school districts dedicating forty percent or more of their general education budgets to special education services; and,

WHEREAS, Independent School District No. 299 has a \$622,106 cross-subsidy for FY 2020, (<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/Search/index.htm?query=special+education+cross-subsidy+report+fy+2020&searchbutton=Search&v%3Asources=mn-mde-live&qp=mn-mde-live>) which is a one part of the statewide cross-subsidy that was more than \$673 million in FY 20, and is expected to grow to \$806 million in FY 25.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Independent School District No. 299 supports the IDEA Full Funding Act that will help strengthen the federal investment in special education by authorizing a ten-year plan to fully fund the federal share of IDEA; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Independent School District No. 299 urges Congress' strong bipartisan support for and passage of the IDEA Full Funding Act; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Independent School District No. 299 remains committed to providing students with disabilities and their families the supports they need.

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.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mrs. Link was absent from the board meeting. In her report she informed the board that Karen Wendlandt from American Reading Company met on December 16th with us to give guidance on what books to order in each grade level to create a comprehensive collection of IRLA materials. Teachers have been doing Fastbridge and IReady diagnostic testing. Report cards will go home with our students when they return to school from winter break. She thanked our special education teachers who have worked diligently to complete the excessive paperwork that is associated with IEP's. We are on target for our COVID recovery meetings. We have four elementary students who will continue to attend on-line learning through Edgenuity second semester due to COVID concerns. They have been registered

and accepted. We have sixty-five students enrolled in our “Afterschool Academy.” We have a teacher for every grade level. They meet from 3-4 PM on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Our ESSER funds are being used to give our students the opportunity to excel in their learning. Our student council marched in the winter parade with our PACE group. Thank you to our PACE parents, and a special thank you to Josh Erickson who created the float. The elementary choir concert brought a festive holiday cheer to all who attended it. Mrs. Myhre and our students put much enthusiasm and spirit into it. Also, behind the scenes, our teachers and paras supervised the students in the classrooms and coordinated the times as they waited for their entrances and exits. Great team work! Our teachers and staff continue to fill in for one another whenever possible. We seem to manage, but it is getting increasingly more difficult. We are pulling our intervention teachers when we cannot get substitutes. This of course affects our intervention services. I would like to thank our staff, students and parents for their collaborative cooperation when we have had to be flexible during COVID. This understanding is greatly appreciated. At our staff meeting, our teachers shared that they want to stay with our current school plan of students and staff wearing masks if there is a positive COVID case in their grade level. I tried to attend the two-day training on December 13th and 14th by Dr. Bessel van der Kolk. The seminar was on childhood trauma and its effect on behavior. I was only able to attend about two hours of the training, but over break, I hope to see if I can get the recording to capture what I missed. Our school counselor, Sue Howe, was able to attend the full training, so she is quite knowledgeable on this topic. Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and rejuvenating holiday break. We all need to take time for our families and take care of ourselves, so we may continue to lead and give support to our school community.

Mr. Boler wished everyone Happy Holidays and hopes everyone is able to enjoy some time with family and friends. December has been a busy time for hiring. We have hired a new personal care assistant, high school science teacher and interim MSHS choir teacher for second semester. We currently have an opening for a special education paraprofessional. We have secured long-term subs for all three maternity leaves scheduled to take place during second semester. The first “draft” of the master schedule has been created. There are a number of moving parts that still need to be worked out so the schedule will be changing. Online School Provider: We continue to work on a cooperative agreement with Spring Grove and Mable-Canton. We are hoping to schedule a meeting soon. Homework Help has been on Tuesday and Thursday from 3-4:30 p.m. We have been averaging about 8-10 students per day. “Virtual” help sessions on Mondays from 4-5:30 pm have not been well attended. We will continue to offer virtual help sessions through holiday break and reevaluate. The MSHS will hold an ALICE drill this week as a reminder to all students and staff if an emergency would occur. Officer Zehnder will be coming in to speak with the school on January 6th. December 17th will be the PBIS reward day for middle school students. This is a great opportunity to focus/reinforce the positives without our school. A special thank you to the high school student council for their hard work decorating and planning fun holiday events for the school. In my September report, he mentioned holding a meeting for all IEP students prior to December 1st. ALL CLP meetings (Contingency Learning Plan) should be completed before break. He recognized all the hard work our special education teachers have put in. In November, a meeting for a MS/HS parent advisory group was held. He is planning to have another meeting in January. He continues to work on teacher evaluations. Meetings/trainings attended over the past month, including but not limited to: HVED Principals Meeting, Curriculum Meeting, BCC Meeting, Technology Committee, Q-Comp, Staff Development, Crisis Committee, and Student Support Team.

Superintendent Ihrke updated the board regarding the social media national school threat that was on the TikTok app. There was never a threat within our school district but the school district did take precautions due to this national threat. Our school district will be having a cooperative meeting with parochial schools and local law enforcement to deal with this going forward. He discussed with the board the idea of having a weight room supervisor/strength coach at our school district. He is gathering

information from other school districts that have this type of position. He updated that board regarding the strategic planning meeting that was held and informed them that the Safe Return to School Plan will need to be reviewed during the January or February regular school board meeting. He updated the board regarding the facilities committee meeting. He congratulated Russell Peterson and Ross Martin on their retirement from our school district and thanked them for their years of dedication to our school district.

Ms. Barb Meyer informed the board that the audit is now complete. The food service review will be on May 4, 2022. The verification process is now complete. Continues to work on more COVID applications and budgets to update in SERVS. She participated in the facility specialist interviews. She attended the crisis meeting and the Region V meeting. Kudos to the students and staff that participated in the mock interviews as they did a great job and she enjoyed being part of this. She continues to work on nonpublic reporting and other office duties.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Director Yohe updated the board regarding the MSBA Delegation seminar he participated in and informed the board that HVED will have a meeting this week Wednesday.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Wendy Woyczik, seconded by Erin Hammell to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m.
Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Spencer Yohe, Clerk