

# Board of Education Meeting

Liberty School Board Room

March 12, 2024, 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

The Board of Education Meeting of March 12, 2024 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 Owsley, Executive Directors Clary and Martin

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### 3. SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOGNITION

- *SHS Ethics Team*

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

**STUDENTS - None**

**OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS - None**

**EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Saline Middle School Points of Pride  
Kimberly Jasper, Principal & Lindsay Guenther, Assistant Principal*

5. **RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMENT**

<b>AGENDA</b>
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6. **REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** made by Treasurer Gerbe, support Vice President Steben **to approve the agenda as printed.**

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

7. **STUDENT SHOWCASE**  
**Saline HS Science Olympiad**

*Presenters: Subani Dalela, Weiran(Alice) Jiang, and Ayush Reddy (Advisor: Monica Sieh)*

Members of the Saline High School Science Olympiad team presented about this club. Currently there are a total of 34 students who participate, divided into 3 teams. During their season, they will participate in a total of 8 tournaments. The tournaments include 23 events in the categories of life, personal & social science, earth and space science, physical science & chemistry, technology and engineering, inquiry and nature of science. To date, the team has placed in every event they have participated in, including a 1st place at Allendale. They recently co-hosted the Hawk & Hornet at Troy Athens HS. It brings in funding as teams pay to participate. Hosting a tournament is very good PR for our school and team. Teams come from many states to participate, 44 teams in total. The 24/25 event will again be co-hosted but held at Saline. They look forward to utilizing the new STEAM center being built at the HS and hope that this will help in gaining new members.

8. **ACTION ITEMS**

A. **MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Treasurer Gerbe **to approve the minutes as revised from the February 27, 2024 closed session for the purpose of Collective Bargaining 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act.**

Ayes (6) - Tim Austin, Susan Estep, Brad Gerbe, Lauren Gold, Michael McVey, Jennifer Steben  
Abstained (1) - Jenny Miller (Absent from 2/27/24 Closed Session Mtg)

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

B. **MOTION** made by Trustee Gold, support Treasurer Gerbe **to approve the 24/25 School of Choice Guidelines as recommended by Superintendent Laatsch.**

Ayes (6) - Susan Estep, Brad Gerbe Lauren Gold, Michael McVey, Jenny Miller, Jennifer Steben  
Nays (1) - Tim Austin

**MOTION CARRIED 6-1**

- C. **MOTION ... to approve the purchase from Dows Equipment Sales & Service for (2) lifts and subsequent removal and reinstallation of existing lifts at the new Operations Center for a total cost of \$57,659.00 as recommended by Rex Clary, Executive Director of Operations.**

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

**9. SCHEDULED REPORTS**

**A. Community Education Department Update**

*Presenters: Community Ed Staff Members*

Director of Community Education, Brian Puffer provided an overview of Saline Community Education. There are over 125 full and part time staff members with an average years of service being 17.4 years. Community Education offers beyond the traditional school day for the purpose of providing academic, recreation, health, social service, and work-preparation programs for people of all ages. The mission is to deliver community education services of the highest quality to the Saline Area School District. 2023 highlights include MACAE 2023 Program of the Year Award, creation of SHS eSports Team, record attendance for the 2023 November Craft Show, COVID Transition - Summer Camp - Hornet Homeroom, 35 new programs implemented, implementation of school wide facility software, updated community garden. Provided points of pride and an overview of each program including Aquatics, Before & After School Care, Cultural Arts, Early Childhood, Facilities, Liberty Club, Rec & Ed and the Community Garden.

**B. DEI Advisory Committee Update**

*Presenters: Tiffanie Alexander, Alice Kazee, Amy Tesolin and Laura Washington*

The DEI AC presented an update to the Board which included an update on the work they are doing, recommendations from the committee and what is next. Co-chair Laura Washington presented on the organizational framework and the makeup of the DEI organization within the district. She also reviewed the Committee charge as outlined in the Board Policy which states that the DEI advisory committee in partnership with the Superintendent and the Board shall: Assess the current district environment related to diversity, equity, and inclusion; review and make recommendations to applicable district policies and procedures related to diversity, equity, and inclusion; assess district efforts and progress in achieving diversity, equity and inclusion objectives; make recommendations to the Board regarding DEI initiatives that the Committee believes will aid in the implementation of the purposes of the policy; present at least quarterly to the Board of Education regarding committee activities.

Activities of the committee included welcoming 8 new members to the group. They finalized the 3 year plan for 2024-2027 which included input from Sensei change data gathering from multiple listening sessions, staff input, administrative input and input from DEIAC members. Also subcommittees have been formed to begin working in March to make recommendations. These include hate speech guidelines, SAS gender neutral forms, building and protecting our SAS Community, and hiring and retention. Guidelines are written only from what is outlined in the policy.

Tiffanie Alexander and Amy Tesolin presented on what is next for the DEIAC. They have worked to draft recommended administrative guidelines for the Transgender and Nonbinary Student Policy. These recommended guidelines have come as a result of listening sessions that included families, students, and staff, input from GLSEN, HRC, research papers, families, students and staff, federal & state laws and SAS policies including Anti-harassment & Bullying.

The group will continue to advocate for our students in our school community.

## 10. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### A. Policy Committee Updates

*Facilitator: Jenny Miller, Chair*

Policy 5113 School of Choice Program (Requested Wording Change)

Add to next agenda as 1st reading (Under Discussion)

Policy 8300 Continuity of Organizational Operations Plan (New)

Policy 0141.1 Student-Body Representative (Requested Change)

Policy 6152 Student Fees, Fines and Supplies (New)

Policy 5511 Dress and Grooming (New)

Updates from the Policy Committee regarding policy updates. Several will be added to the upcoming April 9th BOE agenda as discussion items (1st Reading). They include 5113 School of Choice - this includes a slight wording change to remain compliant and in alignment with state law, 8300 Continuity of Organizational Operations - to designate district liaison, 0141.1 Student-Body Representative - addition of language to support one or two student representatives, and 6152 Student Fees, Fines and Supplies - support district practice of accepting electronic / online payments. Policy 5511 Dress and Grooming will go back to the Policy Committee to make sure the recommended changes include both the Neola updates to the policy and additions that were made by the Policy Committee after feedback was received from the DEI Advisory Committee.

### B. Finance Committee Updates

*Brad Gerbe, Chair*

Met prior to the Board meeting at 5 pm. Did a deeper dive into the budget amendment that was recently approved at the February 27th Board meeting. Talked about the discrepancies between the original budget and the amendment. Also talked about the right sizing timeline of

the district and the work of the District Strategic Council. This will continue to be talked about at upcoming finance committee meetings. Also talked about pre-K and 4 year old programming and the Governor's push to expand free preschool to all 4 year olds. This does come with challenges which would have to be considered.

**11. ADMINISTRATION / BOARD UPDATES**

**Superintendent Laatsch:** Thank you to Astraea Lilley for her work on organizing a great fundraising event to support the foundation. Over \$75,000 was raised. Also thank you to Ben Goodman for the great video he produced for the event and also for all the work he does to support our district as Digital Production Coordinator. Congratulations to the Girls Washtenaw United Hockey Team for their state championship win. I will be meeting with the coach regarding awarding letters to the Saline girls.

**Student Representative Caroline Clark:** Congratulations to the Washtenaw United Hockey Team. The Student Council is working on a town hall. Questions will be compiled from HS students for the administration to answer. This will happen on April 19th.

**Trustee Austin:** March 2 & 3 Saline Robotics had their first competition and placed 15th out of 40. Came within 2 points of being #1 Alliance. Shout out to David Raft on his retirement. March 18th is Band-O-Rama at the HS.

**Treasurer Gerbe:** Shout out to the Washtenaw United Hockey Team. Great opportunity for girls interested in hockey. Bravo to the Ethics Team. Really appreciate Saline Middle School. There is something for every student there.

**Secretary Miller:** Congratulations to Caroline and the gymnastics team at the recent State Gymnastics meet. Recognition for Women's History Month. Shout out to Saline as raising the most money in the state through the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics. The Unified Basketball games were great events for inclusion week. Also congratulations to the Ethics Team. March 21st is Rock your Socks for World Down's Syndrome Day. Thank you also to our Athletic Directors for their presence at sporting events. Congratulations to the Swim and Dive team and thank you for the sportsmanship instilled in our student athletes. Congratulations to Coach Brunty for SEC Swim and Dive Coach of the year.

**President McVey:** Attended Literacy Night at Heritage. Although not elected to the MASB Board of Directors, will be the Legislative Relations Network Rep for Washtenaw Association of School Boards. Reminded trustees about the upcoming Learning Activity at High Point School on Thursday March 14, Attended Saline Singularity Open House. Impressed with SMS students who participated in the recent SEMLAA Quiz Bowl last Saturday. Looking forward to attending Beauty and the Beast. Remember that tickets must be purchased online.

**Vice President Steben:** Congratulations to the Men's Varsity Hockey Team for their SEC winning season. Also to coaches Cathy Mutter (Cheer) and Michael Marek (Basketball) for their Coach of the Year recognitions as well. Attended a fun FSAS event raising over \$75,000. Participated in Sarah Stucky's class "Shark Tank" event. Will be attending UM Medical Center the "One Day Closer" event

inspiring the next generation of scientists, focusing on cancer research. Appointed to the Saline Historic Commission.

**Trustee Estep:** Recognition of Women’s History Month. Although not able to be in person for the FSAS event, participated in the FSAS online auction. At the recent SEAB meeting, it was unanimously decided to begin reviewing options for updated curriculum for grades 4th through 8th.

**Trustee Gold:** Enjoyed the FSAS event. It was very successful and enjoyable. The Board has entered the Craft Show basket event which supports SASS. Enjoyed hearing from both the Ethics Team and Science Olympiad this evening. Took a tour of our special education facilities and met with staff. Thank you to Director Musson and Superintendent Laatsch for arranging this. The tour included ECSE all the way through to Liberty Club. Very inspirational.

12. **CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Treasurer Gerbe **to authorize the Consent Agenda as printed.**

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

- A. **Approval** of the Board of Education Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2024
- B. **Approval** of the Board Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2024
- C. **Approval** of the Board Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2024
- D. **Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of March 12, 2024, in the amount of \$2,532,156.11
- E. **Approval of Payment** of 2023 Bond Fund Series I Accounts Payable of March 12, 2024 in the amount of \$848,700.42
- F. **Receive and File** Finance and Human Resources Reports
- G. **Receive and File** the 24/25 Saline Area Schools District Calendar
- H. **Approval** of Neola Policy Updates:
  - Policy 5512 Use of Tobacco by Students
  - Policy 8400 School Safety Information
  - Policy 7217 Weapons

<b>CLOSING</b>
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13. **ITEMS SCHEDULED ON NEXT AGENDA**

Threat assessment overview

14. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**STUDENTS - None**

**OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS - None**

**15. NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Education Meeting will be held on April 9, 2024, at 6:30 PM.

**16. CLOSED SESSION**

**MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Secretary Miller **to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 9:30 PM, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at 9:50 PM, for the purpose of Superintendent Evaluation Section 8(a). Under Section 8(a) a simple majority vote is sufficient to enter into a closed session.**

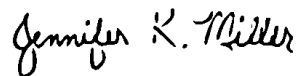
**Note:** No action will be taken upon return to open session

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

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Trustee Gold **to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of March 12, 2024, at 9:55 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer K. Miller  
Board Secretary

*Recorded by: Betty Jahnke*