

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SESSION OF THE MARSHALL BOARD OF EDUCATION HELD ON MONDAY, AUGUST 23, 2021 AT 7:00 PM IN-PERSON IN THE MARSHALL OPPORTUNITY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

PRESENT: LINDSEY, NICHOLSON, MIDDLETON, WILLIAMS, DAVIS, GAMBLE, LANKERD

ABSENT: NONE

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President Lindsey. A moment of silence was observed.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was recited

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by Davis, supported by Gamble, that the agenda be approved as presented. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Sara Jeffery - Here to express her strong support for mask wearing. Oaklawn worker that reports numbers to the CCPHD. COVID stats are growing at a quick rate. Mandate masks to keep kids safe. Listen to the experts.

Ben Young - Supports masking at MPS - masks will protect everyone. Lack of communication from MPS regarding stance on masks - District should've communicated earlier.

Chuck Kazmar - Longtime Marshall resident. Says masks don't work. Lists side effects of wearing masks.

Tracy Peters - Made comments about the placement of a new elementary school if the bond passes.. Make sure you get local input when choosing a location for the new elementary school.

Sonya Brown - COVID is a beast we are unfamiliar with. We are at a time when we need to be cautious. It's important to wear masks.

Stacy Metz - Two high school students. Do a cost benefit analysis on COVID. Without a mask mandate a break out is certainly going to happen. What is the value of the loss of a child? Please implement a mask mandate.

Shane Williamson - Has a son going into Kindergarten this year at Gordon Elementary. Quotes board policy about mitigation and tells the board to follow policy.

Summer Liston-Crandall - Recommends the board implement a universal mask policy. Wearing masks in schools will keep students in the classroom.

Phil Heath - Says masks don't stop the spread of COVID particles. Masks are pointless. Try something new in our protocols.

Lisa McNiff - Oaklawn doesn't have enough ICU beds for the influx of COVID cases that will be coming our way. Opening of schools is tomorrow - how long do you want to be open - COVID will shut us down within weeks. Supports a mandatory mask mandate. Listen to the Doctors who tell us it's important to mask. Do the right thing and protect our children.

Hayley Schwartz - Pediatric health doctor. Concerned about the Delta variant. Universal masking is needed especially for the children who can't get the vaccine yet.

Jack Reed - Thanks the board for listening to the public. Protected kids last year by the virtual option and requiring masks. Questions why we wouldn't require masks to keep our kids safe. All we want to do is keep our kids in school - safe and healthy.

Darla Barnett - Be consistent across the board. People are being hypocrites by not doing what they are speaking of.

Gerald Case Blanchard - Stats can be skewed to fit your own personal narrative. It's not a "me vs you - it's us". Requests that MPS require masks. Children under the age of 12 can't get vaccinated. A mask might not stop the virus - but it can slow it down.

Understand the argument across the board. We need to have a mask mandate until the opportunity arises for children to get vaccinated.

Ryan - Pro choice when it comes to masks and vaccines. Students should have a choice when it comes to issues like this. Feels like his daughter can make her own choices.

Parents make choices all the time. Masks are not a long term solution. It's not good for our children's mental state. Against mandating masks and is against vaccines.

Erica Robinson - Mother of three - one attends high school. Member of COVID council. Enough is enough, it is time to move on. Science took away our kids' right to an education. We've learned to live with COVID. Pulled two kids out of MPS because of COVID regulations.

Sheila Lyons - Parent of two high schoolers - both vaccinated. Realizes we are still in a pandemic. Supports masks. It is the duty of the MPS school board to protect our children to have a safe educational environment. Encourages the school board to require masks. Encourages vaccines to be required. Listen to the experts. Masks will reduce the spread.

David Abbott - Look at the medical evidence and listen to the medical experts. We are certainly better off wearing a mask. Concerned about students under 12. Board members have the ability to protect children and staff. Start schools safely by wearing masks.

Joanna Johnson - Parent of MHS student. Whatever our position is - we need to be respectful. Last meeting masks were optional. We need to get back to educating children first. Masks need to be a personal choice. Needs leadership to stick to the plan of optional masks. Communication needs to be better. I Know it's a difficult decision. Keep with the action that has already been communicated.

Angie DeCola - Deep concern for lack of preparation. Third school year in a row impacted by COVID. Things changed when MDE updated their guidelines. State department strongly recommends mask wearing. We don't want our hospital overrun with COVID cases.

Justin Kazmar - Longtime Marshall resident - born and raised. Take a common sense approach on mask wearing. Look at the numbers. COVID numbers don't justify the panic. If there is a mask mandate his child will not be going to MPS. Anyone who votes for a mask mandate won't get his vote in the future.

Bonnie Kazmar - Some schools are choosing to mask, some aren't. Data shows we don't need to mask. COVID is not our children's fault. Masks mandates don't stop the spread of COVID. Choose to keep masks recommendation only. Don't punish our children.

Brian - Father of three under the age of 9. Kids survive - kids are always sick. Don't be afraid to look at other data that doesn't follow your own opinion. If you force a mask mandate, he will choose another school. Appreciates what the board does. Pro choice when it comes to masks - we are a free country.

Megan - Two sides to the issue. Isolation is not good for mental health. Consider parents when making a decision.

Jeremiah Joseph - Helps coach Jr. football - zero positive test this past week. Calhoun County has not made any mandates. States stats of hospitals and the state of Michigan. Keep mask wearing optional.

Angela - It is important to listen to each other. We all want our children to do well and we do all want it to end. Wouldn't want to see any child of any age in a hospital bed or sick at home. I Know we can't please everyone. Gladly will wear a mask to keep a child safe.

Betsy Joseph - Should be pro choice when it comes to mask wearing. Creates a slippery slope when deciding to mask or not.

Caryn Drenth - Asks to put a mask mandate into place until a vaccine is available for all students. Please listen to the experts when it comes to COVID. We should all follow protocols so we don't get shut down. MPS needs to step up to require mask wearing.

Mark Malchaka - Family physician. Two children in the MPS system. We don't have solid answers on what masks do - Not one single study out there to show the effectiveness of masks.. Facial expressions are important. A spike will happen when we go indoors. Stated stats on RSV. Quarantine rules are not reasonable. Selective masking is an option.

Laura Bartlett - CDC is only making a recommendation. Her children were virtual last year. When you mask up you remove social interaction. Do not change the current mask position.

Marsha Strange - Marshall resident - two boys at Hughes Elementary. Teachers did a great job keeping kids safe last year. We have to protect our kids who can't get vaccinated. Go with the flow when it comes to COVID. Use the tools we have available to us.

Erin - The COVID we see today isn't the one of the past. As a parent we understand the frustration of wearing masks. Consider a mandate for mask wearing. Kids under 12 haven't had the ability to get a vaccination yet. Desperate to keep kids in school. Don't know the long term effects of COVID yet.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA MINUTES, AND PERSONNEL**

Items included on the consent agenda were minutes of the July 26, 2021 Work/Business Session and August 9, 2021 Work Session; employments of Marshall Allinson, Cheryl Blansit, Hannah Canute, Erin Culp, Mary Davis, Patience Deroo, Sean Galvin, Annie Gaston, Amy Hanson, Nicole Kelly, Melyssa Lenon, Julie Mead, Barbara Mackaluso, Sheila Miklusicak, Rebecca Osterwalder, Arshawn Parker, Melinda Pegg, Elizabeth Steele, Jamie Whittaker, Austin Wordell.

Moved by Davis, supported Gamble, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda - Minutes, and Personnel as presented. A roll-call vote carried the motion unanimously.

#### **REPORT OF THE INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT**

*SPECIAL RECOGNITION:* Interim Superintendent Jones recognized the hiring of the District new hires. The list was extensive so background wasn't given on each hire.

*Harrington Air Quality:* Interim Superintendent Jones touched on the air quality tests that were done at Harrington Elementary in Albion. Deferred more discussion on the matter until Brad Shedd, Director of Facilities, was able to make it to present to the Board..He was unable to attend this evening due to a water issue at Gordon Elementary.

*COVID-19 Policies:* Interim Superintendent Jones mentioned the August 18, 2021 update letter from the Calhoun County Public Health Department. In this update the

CCPHD states there would be no mask mandates at this time. Schools were given written detailed advice about a layered approach for in person learning to help stop the spread of COVID-19. That layered approach consists of “promoting vaccination, requiring masks in schools, social distancing, ventilation, hand hygiene and isolation and quarantining when necessary”. The district has a policy (policy 8450) - Control of casual - contact communicable diseases. The board policy states the following:

*The Board of Education recognizes that control of the spread of communicable disease spread through casual-contact is essential to the well-being of the school community and to the efficient District operation.*

*For purposes of this policy, "casual-contact communicable disease" shall include diphtheria, scarlet fever and other strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and others designated by the Michigan Department of Community/Public Health. In order to protect the health and safety of the students, District personnel, and the community at large, the Board shall follow all State statutes and Health Department regulations which pertain to immunization and other means for controlling casual-contact communicable disease spread through normal interaction in the school setting.*

*If a student exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease, the principal will isolate the student in the building and contact the parents/guardians. Protocols established by the County Health Department shall be followed.*

*The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines for the control of communicable disease which shall include:*

- A. instruction of professional staff members in the detection of these common diseases and measures for their prevention and control;*
- B. removal of students from District property to the care of a responsible adult;*
- C. preparation of standards for the readmission of students who have recovered from casual-contact communicable diseases;*
- D. filing of reports as required by statute and the State Department of Health.*

The District has never not followed a protocol that the health department has asked us to put into place - In our board policy we have always followed anything the CCPHD has put in front of us as a protocol to follow for the safety and well being of our students.

Motion made by Lankerd - supported by Williams

Follow our current policy 8450 and by way of that policy to follow the recommendation of the Calhoun County Public Health Department as stated in the August 18, 2021 memo to require indoor masking K-12 with the exception of the

MHSAA to dictate what happens on athletic masking and require our Superintendent to review that policy on a weekly basis.

Roll call vote:

Lindsey - No, Nicholson - Yes, Middleton - No, Williams - Yes, Davis - No,  
Gamble - Yes, Lankerd - Yes

Motion passes 4-3

Trustee Davis made a motion to table the rest of the meeting due to the late hour supported by Middleton.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:11 p.m.

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LISA MIDDLETON, SECRETARY

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IAN GILYARD-SCHNAITMAN, RECORDING SECRETARY