

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE MARSHALL BOARD OF EDUCATION  
HELD ON TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2020 AT 6:00 PM, @  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo\\_Dw2K8ptX5eFKauouPJZQ/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo_Dw2K8ptX5eFKauouPJZQ/)

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

ABSENT: GAMBLE (joined at 6:50 pm)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President DeSmet.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee Lankerd.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by Lindsey, supported by Middleton, that the agenda be approved as presented.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

President DeSmet called for any members of the audience to address the Board on agenda items only.

Elisa Hooper concerned with busing of students between Albion and Marshall due to the number of students on the bus and social distancing concerns.

### **BOARD TOPIC**

#### **RETURN TO LEARNING PLAN – REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Superintendent Davis – there is lots of information to cover and there will probably be a need for another special session. Questions from tonight will be answered via You Tube and on the MPS: Return to Learn Webpage.

- The Board is not meeting in person per advice from our legal counsel.
- The revised CDC guidelines are available and a link has been posted on the MPS Return to Learn webpage of especial interest is the impact on children with social emotional learning and in person learning and connections.
- The letter from the State Superintendent was shared with the Board – he is an advocate for in person learning and also mentioned that there was still ongoing legislation
- There is a link on the Return to Learn webpage for the Calhoun County Health Department Toolkit. MPS as well as all Calhoun County Superintendents have signed an agreement that they will abide by Calhoun County Health Department recommendations.
- Brad Shedd, Facilities Director, has completed the assessment of the buildings and how many students we can accommodate with social distancing. There are concerns with not enough room at the high school to accommodate all who want in person learning. Dialog is still on going with Principals, Teachers and MTA.
- There are lots of different return to learning plans amongst all the school districts in Michigan.
- There is still a lot of work to do before everyone is comfortable with the Return to Learning Plan and the Board votes on August 10.

- There have been teachers training all summer on Remote Learning and the opportunities it presents. There will also be training for parents to assist them with Google classroom and computer usage.
- MPS was considering a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor for Virtual Only, as not all teachers felt prepared to teach both in person and virtual. There were also parent concerns about not sending their students back to in person learning. The Virtual Only option has now evolved to considering MPS teachers for Virtual Only.

#### SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

- Beth Brownell – Grading Committee – They are working on assessments and grading at all levels. They feel that if we are doing any type of virtual learning that their needs to be a daily check in with students.
- Chad Holt – Curriculum Committee – discussion about who should be providing virtual education, and how to provide consistency across the district. Importance of connecting to all students no matter their learning platform.
- Kelly Fitzpatrick – Communications Committee – The MTA did send out an email to all teachers to serve on the advisory team. Information was shared on what a 3<sup>rd</sup> party Virtual Only option would look like if we chose use them. There is a parent survey regarding their comfort level with technology.
- Mike Walbeck – Transportation Committee – State Roadmap mandates face masks for everyone, everyone applies hand sanitizer upon entry and clean buses between routes. The general consensus among transportation departments across the district is to load buses. We currently do not have information on how many students will need busing. We will load buses back to front and unload front to back, this will allow us to know who is sitting where. Trustee Nicholson – We need to be very clear with parents and drivers about the bus expectations.
- Rhonda Marcum – Professional Development Committee – they have identified five categories for training teachers: social emotional learning. COVID updates, cultural diversity and equity, technology and policy.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS ON RETURN TO LEARNING PLAN

- Trustee Lindsey – Feels MPS teachers are best for Virtual Only and is concerned about the timeline of parents requesting virtual. Would like information on who the members of the subcommittees are and how the information is collected and shared with others outside the committee. He would like to listen into Advisory Team meeting if that is allowed. Are we required to go back to school on the date we have established and can teachers come back earlier for training.
- Trustee Lankerd – Feels MPS teachers are the best for Virtual. Feels the Board needs to have a framework to guide the Return to Learning Planning. Concerned about lack of air conditioning and ventilation in all buildings. Concerns with ability to properly social distance at high school level. Concerned that there may not be enough communication between Advisory Team and teachers. She would appreciate an in person meeting.
- Trustee Gamble – How many families responded to surveys. Curriculum Director, Chad Holt responded that we had 900 responses representing 1500 students, about 55% of students. Approximately 72% in person and 28% virtual. Feels there needs to have

someone reach out to all students to survey them so we have accurate data from all. She would like information on current class sizes.

- Trustee Nicholson – The current conditions are changing and we could change phases at any time. She verified that virtual is a commitment for the semester. Who has access to the Advisory Committee Spreadsheet – currently it is just the advisory committee.
- Trustee Middleton – Invited other board members to listen in to the Advisory Team Meeting. Teachers are working very hard to provide the education that students need. Is there a scheduled meeting with MTA. Yes , the meeting is scheduled for this Thursday.
- President DeSmet – Asked Dr. Davis to check with attorney regarding Board members listening in on the Advisory Team meeting so the Open Meeting Act is not violated. Is everyone available for a Special Board Meeting, Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at 6:00 pm. There have already been considerable changes based on the feedback that has been provided, please reach out to him with any questions or data requests the Board may have. Thank you to teachers, administration, board and community members for time and energy that has been spent to get ready for the upcoming school year.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

President DeSmet opened the meeting for the public comment. Notes will be taken and responded to at a later time on the MPS: Return to Learning Website.

- Nick Dent – Speaking on behalf of the MTA. The stance of MTA and MEA is that a contract with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor is illegal. Can only use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor if it is a course not provided by MPS.
- Superintendent Davis indicated the District’s legal counsel stated under 15(3)(H) use of a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor is a prohibited subject of bargaining. The District has no intention of supplanting current teaching positions.
- Elinor Marsh – Conversations have been on going regarding masks and there use all day long, she encourages everyone to try a mask for a day.

#### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS FOR WHICH NO ACTION MAY BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING**

- Trustee Nicholson – does wear a mask all day, there are various types of masks available and agrees there are different levels of tolerances.
- Trustee Lankerd – wants to thank everyone for their time and energy, and encourages everyone to ask questions and communicate
- Trustee Middleton – requests everyone to be patient so the Board can make the best decision for the district. She encourages more communication.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

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LISA MIDDLETON, SECRETARY

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LESLIE PARSHALL, RECORDING SECRETARY

