

Minutes
MUSCATINE SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR SESSION
January 13, 2020

The Board of Education of the Muscatine Community School District, in the County of Muscatine, State of Iowa, met in regular session on Monday, January 13, 2020, at 7 p.m. at City Hall. President Tammi Drawbaugh called the meeting to order. Directors Karen Cooney, John Dabeet, Aaron Finn, Toby McCarter, Mike Morgan, and Denny Schuur were present. Also present were Superintendent Jerry Riibe, Assistant Superintendent Mike McGrory, and Director of Finance Tom Anderson.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Drawbaugh welcomed visitors and media representatives.

MHS Student Council Representative Veyda Matos provided information on recent and upcoming student council activities.

The following employees were recognized as January's Outstanding Employees for going above and beyond on a continual basis: Michelle Haller, paraeducator at the Muskie Early Learning Center, Donnie Horton, bus mechanic, Brian Mathis, ELA teacher at West Middle School, Karen Meyer, music teacher at McKinley Elementary, and Luke Turelli, physics teacher at Muscatine High School.

The following individual spoke during Citizens Speak:

Jill Holler, 1314 Oakland Drive, talked about the usage of Central Middle School once closed and asked that the board look at waiting to merge Central and West Middle Schools until West can accommodate the larger enrollment. She asked the district to be more transparent in its answers regarding the reasons for the merger in order to build trust between parents and administration. She asked that the board be open to this discussion and have it as an agenda item at the next board meeting.

As part of the board targets/goals report, presentations were given regarding the Pathways program, special education, and the Muskie Early Learning Center's new mural.

Gretchen Price, MHS Assistant Principal, Karey Hawkins, MHS guidance counselor, and Dr. Naomi DeWinter and Dr. Jeremy Pickard of Muscatine Community College presented information on a proposed Pathways program for Muscatine Community School District students. The purpose of the Pathways program is to provide programs of study and experiences that will develop graduates with sufficient employment skills to enter the workforce beyond a minimum wage position and provide a pathway to furthering their education. The Pathways program will be a partnership between the Muscatine Schools and Muscatine Community College.

Becky Wichers, Director of Teaching and Learning, shared with the board the difficulty in hiring strat II special education teachers. She explained that the district currently has six positions available but no applicants. She noted that these unfilled vacancies have been unfilled for three years. She shared that district administration is considering offering an incentive to those teachers hired for these high-need strat II positions of \$5,000 per year. She noted that this incentive has been vetted by all teacher groups. Should the board approve the use of an incentive, administrators will monitor to see how the incentive pay directly impacts hiring. Administrators will also monitor the financial cost as this incentive will impact the special education budget.

Jessi Freers, Muskie Early Learning Center principal, Mary Wildermuth, past board member and Muscatine Rotarian, and artist Chris Anderson, showcased a new painted mural at the Muskie Early Learning Center sponsored by and honoring Rotary's 100th birthday. The mural focuses on Rotary's guiding principles of: Is it true? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build good will and friendships? and Will it be beneficial to all concerned? These principles were converted to preschool terms in order to foster friendship and promote anti-bullying. The mural is something that preschool teachers can use to teach students as they walk to and from recess.

A motion was made by Director Finn and seconded by Director Schuur to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- The minutes of December 9, 2019, regular meeting and December 16, 2019, special session.
- Employment Recommendations:
 - Resignations - Administrative Staff: Mark Groteluschen, Assistant High School Principal.
 - New Hires - Certified Staff: Emerson Taylor, Strat II, Mulberry and McKinley.
 - New Hires - Schedule C: Jose Espinoza, head girls soccer, MHS; and Trisha Klein, middle school swimming.
 - Resignations - Schedule C: Katie Brown, Yearbook Advisor, MHS effective at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year; Laura Bartelt, MS Swimming; Matthew Rivera, MS Girls Basketball; Alison Failor, Pom Pon, MHS; Connie Czerwiec, Tennis, MHS effective at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year
- Bills and Claims Against the District Dated January 13, 2020.
- Special Education Contracts with West Liberty Community School District (student i.d. # *1193), Louisa-Muscatine Community School District (student i.d. # *1734), Iowa City Community School District (student i.d. # *2386), and UnityPoint at Home (student i.d. # *2710).

All ayes; motion carried.

Director of Operations Ryan Castle presented the list of summer projects for Susan Clark Jr. High in the amount of \$403,000 and remodeling costs for the business office at the administration center of \$15,000. He noted that should the projects come in under budget, two alternatives will be considered: a new phone system for Susan Clark Junior High and bathroom doors at the Muskie Early Learning Center.

A motion was made by Director Schuur and seconded by Director Finn to approve the summer construction projects as presented. All ayes; motion carried.

A motion was made by Director Finn and seconded by Director McCarter to approve the request to the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) for Modified Supplemental Amount and Supplemental Aid for the 2020-2021 At-Risk/Dropout Prevention Program in the amount of \$809,869 for expenditures necessary to implement the 2020-2021 at-risk and dropout prevention program plans as approved by the Muscatine Community School District. All ayes; motion carried.

Mr. Castle presented information on the proposal to purchase four propane buses from School Bus Sales noting that the new buses will replace four older buses as part of the transportation department's fleet. The district will also apply for a VW grant in the amount of \$105,000 that will be used to offset the cost of the four new propane buses.

A motion was made by Director Dabeet and seconded by Director Cooney to approve the purchase of four buses from School Bus Sales in the amount of \$421,568. All ayes; motion carried.

A motion was made by Director McCarter and seconded by Director Dabeet to approve the Lease Agreement between Flickinger Learning Center and Muscatine Community Schools for the Restoring Hope Program for Second Semester 2019-20 in the amount of \$500 per month. All ayes; motion carried.

Superintendent Riibe noted that the early retirement incentive is used to help right-size district staff during periods of declining enrollment without having to utilize a reduction in force. This year, six certified staff and six non-certified staff have chosen to take the early retirement incentive package.

A motion was made by Director Schuur and seconded by Director Morgan to approve the early retirees for FY 20. The retirees include Alan Hilton, Pamela Hafner, Diane Calzaretta, Nancy Schuler, Donna Godden-Alloway, Debra Maida, Susanna Rivera, Dawn Lane, Stephanie Brand, Connie Czerwicz, Kelly Meyer, and Patricia Freese. President Drawbaugh thanked these employees for their years of service to MCSD students. All ayes; motion carried.

Director of Finance Tom Anderson reviewed the November 2019 financials.

President Drawbaugh announced the following upcoming meetings and events:

January 14, 2020: Riverbend Mobile Food Bank; 4:30-6pm; MCSD Administration Center

January 15, 2020: Stadium Fundraising Kickoff; 7:30am; Van Hecke Center

January 20, 2020: No School: Teacher Inservice Day

January 21 and 22, 2020: Superintendent Finalist Interviews

February 10, 2020: Regular Board Meeting; 7pm; City Hall

A motion was made by Director Dabeet and seconded by Director Cooney to adjourn the meeting. All ayes; motion carried. Time: 8:49 p.m.

Tammi Drawbaugh, President

Lisa Mosier Bunn, Secretary