

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
**Board of Education**

Regular Meeting – April 25, 2022

MINUTES

President Shiflett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll Call by Superintendent Marcus Davenport indicated the presence of **Board Members:** Jon Shiflett, Nicole Shannon, Jarrod Smith, Sara Clark Pierson, Denise DuFort, Ben Cwayna. Toni Glasscoe joined the meeting at 6:01 p.m. **Central Office Administrators:** Marcus Davenport, Steve Gabriel, Bill Barnes, Julie Waterbury, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance** Ashleigh Lore, Josh Gonzales, Tricia Brentar, Liz Devenbaugh, Jason Devenbaugh, Sally Jo Nelton, Tim Totten, Ashley Oneil, Anthony Beattie, Monica Lara, Liliana Cooper, Landon Myers, Lana Gallagher, Jon Wise, Larry Johnson, Jeff McNeilly, Kyle Dymond, Bree Cleeves, Tara Kopietz, Melissa Mazzola, Roger Dixon Susan Dixon, Ashley Kuykendoll, Marlene Promer, Michele Vance and Kim Manning

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS**

**Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the April 25, 2022 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

**Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the April 25, 2022 Consent Agenda Items, as amended.**

Included on the Consent Agenda was the April 11, 2022 Regular Meeting and Closed Session Minutes.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**MDE NAMES REGION 6 TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

Superintendent Davenport congratulated Delta Center Music Teacher Ashleigh Lore on being named the 2022-2023 Region 6 Teacher of the Year by the Michigan Department of Education. He noted Ms. Lore was selected following a multi-part, competitive application process that began with being nominated for Michigan Teacher of the Year. These nominations come from students, staff and community members. Candidates are chosen for their dedication to the teaching profession and bring the teacher voice to a wide audience, including direct work with MDE that will impact proposed policies and initiatives. He noted Ms. Lore is one of only 10 Michigan educators, out of over 115,000 teachers in the state, names a 2022-2023 Regional Teacher of the Year. These 10 educators are now the finalists for the 2022-2023 Michigan Teacher of the Year. We will find out who the Teacher of the Year in May. In closing he congratulated Ms. Lore and thanked her for her leadership and dedication.

Ms. Lore was presented with a certificate on behalf of the Board and Dr. Davenport.

**REPORTS**

**A. Capitol Connections Report**

Dr. Glasscoe noted the primary focus in Lansing is the crunching of numbers to finalize the 2022-2023 budget. She is hopeful to see an increase in the per pupil foundation allowance and that a budget will be approved prior to June 30, 2022.

**B. Eaton RESA Report**

Mrs. DuFort announced current Relevant Academic Executive Director Jennifer Varney has announced her retirement. Lauren Blakely will be taking her place. She reviewed conference approvals, noted they received a budget overview that will be presented to the member districts at tomorrow night's county-wide board meeting, approval of the 2022-23 Capital Area College Network, shared there is a lot going on with CTE programs, approval of the purchase of a vehicle for the CTE program, received an update on the Strategic Plan and noting that Max Bauer (Charlotte) submitted his resignation from the Eaton RESA Board.

**C. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

Ms. Clark Pierson noted the Committee is working to find a time that will work for all members to meet.

**D. Grand Ledge Education Foundation**

Ms. Shannon shared the Foundation is gearing up for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Josh Spalsbury Memorial 5K Comet Chase that will take place on Saturday, June 18, 2022 in conjunction with Yankee Doodle Day. She noted this is the largest fundraiser for the Foundation and encouraged people to sign up noting there is something for all ages. She shared the Foundation has been unable to hold their Night of Stars event due to the pandemic but they are hopeful they will be able to hold it this year to highlight all the teacher grants that the Foundation has awarded over the last couple of years.

**E. Bond Update**

Dr. Johnson shared the Beagle pool is completed and the district has temporary occupancy. He noted contractors need 7-10 dry, warm days to complete the HS track project. He shared work continues on the High School Fine Arts and Athletic addition and that planning continues for the Delta Center and Wacousta projects sharing that the bond was approved in 2018 and prices have changed over the last four years, which is impacting some of the planning.

**F. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Davenport reminded everyone this is Autism Awareness month and sharing there are several activities taking place throughout the district to bring light to this important topic. One of those activities, being led by High School Teacher Crystal Quintanilla-Howard, is a sensory-friendly prom on Sunday, May 1, 2022. He recognized our staff for their work throughout the past weeks of the standardized state testing noting this is the first-time testing has been conducted since the beginning of the pandemic. He shared the Grand Ledge Area District Library is current hosting an art show highlighting student art from across the district. He gave a shout-outs to Willow Ridge Kindergarten teacher Colleen Price, Beagle Teacher Khatie Brazee and Taviz Zerman.

Dr. Davenport then introduced Tricia Brentar from the Neff Early Childhood Center to provide an overview of the great programs at that building.

Mrs. Brentar thanked the board for their time. She noted Neff teacher Josh Gonzalez would be making the presentation tonight and that Little Comets Preschool Director Bree Cleeves was here to answer any questions regarding that program.

Mr. Gonzalez provided the board with a detailed overview of the programs available at Neff Early Childhood Center in conjunction with the Little Comets Preschool. He shared information about Neff Facility Dog Lucy, the Little Comets Preschool Program noting it is a tuition-based preschool for the district that offers play-based kindergarten readiness curriculum with themed, hands-on learning experiences. He shared the Little Comets has two locations, Delta Mills and Neff Early Childhood Center. He shared information on the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) at Neff noting it is a program managed by Eaton RESA, is a state funded preschool program serving children age 4 by September 1 that runs Monday – Thursday and is offered free of charge or at a low cost for families. He shared information about the Head Start program at Neff that is a federally funded school readiness program for preschool students, families must meet specific qualifications, application are submitted through the website [eatonpreschool.org](http://eatonpreschool.org) and the programs runs full days Monday – Thursday. Mr. Gonzalez went on to provide information on the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program at Neff noting it is a half-day program that runs Monday – Thursday and is for 3-5-year-old students who have an IEP. He shared this program is supported by a special education team that includes speech & language therapists, occupational therapist, social worker and physical therapist in conjunction with the teacher and offers creative curriculum with a focus on communication, social emotional skills and general school readiness. In closing he highlighted the importance of early intervention noting that preschool programs result in increased school readiness, particularly for students at an elevated risk for lack of school readiness, sharing that student who attend a high quality preschool program show improved performance in reading and math, as well as reduced special education placement and grade retention, have stronger in math, reading and attention skills that are tied to high academic performance in later grades and noting that early intervention for students with special education needs show benefit throughout their academic journey.

### **2022-2023 Budget Update**

Chief Financial Officer Julie Waterbury provided the board with an update on the budget noting things change daily. She shared the enrollment calculation that makes up the per pupil foundation noting that our Spring Enrollment has been submitted and it was more than what was projected by a small amount. She shared there was no movement in the teacher attrition projection and that two more teacher assistants have submitted their resignations. Mrs. Waterbury provided updates on the expenditures side noting that the City of Grand Ledge has requested the district split the cost for the resource officer which would add approximately \$65,000 to the budget, effective July 1. She shared that in the Senate Budget proposal, presented last week, there is more in the foundation allowance than we are anticipating, but this is still just a proposal and has not been approved. She noted she will continue to provide the board with monthly updates on the budget as we continue through this process hearing up to the Board's approval of the district 2022-2023 budget in June.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Smith read the rules for addressing the board.

Anthony Beattie addressed the board regarding school safety, encouraging the board to look at the whole child when making policy and expressing his opposition to Night Locks.

Tim Totten addressed the board regarding the “transgender issue”.

Kyle Dymond addressed the board regarding transgender students, calling attention to two concepts: the unknowing individual and the cognitive dissonance and encouraging the board not to be dissuaded and to continue moving forward to create safe and inclusive schools for all students.

Ashley Oneil commended the work at Neff and noting Ms. Bree is phenomenal. She reiterated topics from past board meetings including recommendations from the EDI committee noting there has not been a report in months, the creation of affinity spaces and asking if this is something Grand Ledge will be creating, getting back to teaching the basics.

Ashley Kuykendoll congratulated Ms. Lore, commended the board and administration for progress she’s seen including multiple surveys, communicating through multiple platforms and the intentional effort to increase the engagement of the broader community at large. Additionally, she has seen multiple presentations over the past several meetings providing data with clear and concise detail. She commended the district for the sensory-friendly prom and offering space for students observing Ramadan. In closing she noted there is still work to do and highlight areas that need consideration.

Stacy Erwin Oakes addressed the board thanking them for agreeing to not collect biometrics from children but sharing she was displeased when her student was selected to participate in a question-and-answer session for the Strategic Planning initiative that was conducted by the MASB. She noted her son was one of 26 students who were invited to participate in this session but she did not approve her child participating. She expressed concerns that parents were not contact for permission.

Jason Devenbaugh addressed the board regarding the hiring of an EDI Director when the district is trying to find places to cut because of a deficit. He noted nothing has been heard from the EDI committee in months noting DEI does not belong in public schools. He asked if the district was looking to implement affinity spaces stating this is racism at its core. He shared a new family recently moved back to Grand Ledge and he shared his interpretation about what “really” goes on in Grand Ledge and now this family doesn’t want to send their students to the district.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. APPROVAL OF VEHICLE PURCHASE**

**Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Ms. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the purchase of 2022 GMC Acadia from Tod Wenzel Buick GMC of Westland in the amount of \$33,704.95, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD**

John Ellsworth shared that in addition to Dr. Davenport’s highlights of the Crystal Howard and the sensory-friendly prom, she recently received a classroom grant for the Links program, and had the Polar Plunge with Principal Wright and she has brought a lot of energy to the district. And, she is a Grand Ledge graduate.

Ms. Clark Pierson noted she was happy that Mr. Devenbaugh wasn’t able to come up with anything to actual dissuade from the face that we have a great district. We have a Regional Teacher of the Year, our preschool classrooms are full, to bring up a district that isn’t Grand Ledge and a person who isn’t our director to talk about affinity spaces that we don’t do. Grand Ledge is doing great things.

Dr. Glasscoe highlighted upcoming events that will highlight the accomplishments of some of our students including the Early High School Diploma program and the Eaton RESA Awards night that will provide LCC scholarships and special recognition from the CTE program.

Mrs. DuFort shared her experience attending the Eaton RESA Fab Lab that was brought to Willow Ridge recently, reiterating she is looking for the Eaton RESA Awards night mention by Dr. Glasscoe, and noting the great student art work that is on display at the Grand Ledge Library and encouraging everyone to take a moment to stop by. She noted there are many positive things happening in our community.

Ms. Clark Pierson shared she attending the Jason Plite Memorial Dinner noting Jason Plite, a Grand Ledge graduate, was a paramedic who died in the line of duty in March 2003. She commented he is a bonafide hero in this area. She commended the hard work of his mother to continue his legacy through a Jason Plite Scholarship which has awarded more than \$165,000 to Grand Ledge students. She noted fairly soon the district will look to naming the new pool and new track facility noting Jason was a star swimmer for the district.

Dr. Davenport noted that he has taken notes from the public comments and that he will look into things to assure he is providing accurate information and direction.

**CLOSED SESSION – Student Discipline Appeal**

**Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session for the purpose of conducting a Student Discipline Appeal Hearing, as per Section 8(1)(b) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>	Dr. Glasscoe	<u>YES</u>
Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>	President Shiflett	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. DuFort	<u>YES</u>	Ms. Shannon	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>		

**The motion carried unanimously at 7:21 p.m.**

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 8:57 p.m.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE DETERMINATION**

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to uphold the student 180-day expulsion as determined by Superintendent Dr. Marcus Davenport at the Student Due Process Hearing conducted on April 5, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

**CLOSED SESSION – ATTORNEY / CLIENT PRIVILEGE**

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded Ms. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session for the purpose of receiving confidential Attorney / Client Update on the Metcalf Arbitration and Metcalf versus Grand Ledge Public Schools, Circuit Court, as per Section 8(1)(e) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>	President Shiflett	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. DuFort	<u>YES</u>	Ms. Shannon	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>
Dr. Glasscoe	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously at 8:59 p.m.

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 10:04 p.m.

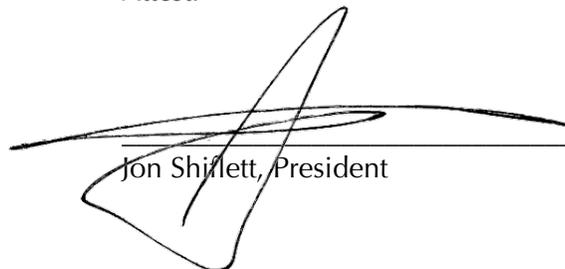
**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at. 10:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
Jarrod Smith, Secretary

Attest:

  
Jon Shiflett, President