

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
**Board of Education**

Virtual Meeting– August 10, 2020

MINUTES

President DuFort called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. She led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Interim Superintendent Dave Chapin indicated the presence of **Board Members**: Denise DuFort, Jarrod Smith, Jon Shiflett, Sara Clark Pierson, Patrick McKennon and Ben Cwayna. **Central Office Administrators**: Dave Chapin, Steve Gabriel, Bill Barnes, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance** Aaliyah Bauer, Aaron Yusten, Abby Jackson, Alice Mills, Allison Wardlaw, Amanda McNew, Amy Heriford, Amy Richburg, Amy Stoakes, Andrew Zielinski, Ann Paquette-Lukens, Anne Chapman, Anne Guyett, Anthony Browning, Beth Leonard-Posey, Brian Flowerday, Carrie Caylor, Catherine Fox, Chelsey Martinez, Christin Sandell, Cindy Zerbe, Crystal Hewitt, D’Anne Golub, Dawne Velianoff, Deb McCrumb, Denise Clarity, Denise Green, Doreen Earle, Doug Powell, Doug Waldrop, Dorinda Carter Andrews, Elizabeth Wilson, Elyse Fox, Eric Daley, Erica Deters, Erica Ledesma, Erica Patrick, Erik Barnhill, Erin Gates, Erin Ries, Erin Snyder, Erinn Barnes, Gina Tobias, Greg Almy, Greg Stevens, Heather Howland, Heidi Ransom, Jackie Post, James Cotter, Jason Higgins, Jennifer Pattison, Jenny Jarrard, Jenny Kish, Jeremy Babcock, Jessica Cornman, Jessica Wright, Jill Chapman, Jim Pratt, Jim Wenson, Jocelyn Thelen, Jody Lyon, Joni Fuller, Juliann Wright, Julie Maher, Julie Schieding, Justin Heany, Karen Batterham, Karen Dichoza, Karen Edlin, Cassandra Davis, Katie Grass, Kay Wyszynski, Kelli Bohnet, Kelly Smith, Ken Wright, Kim Abed, Kim Browning, Kim Leisenring, Kimberly Shoup, Kristy Merignac, Kristy Moore, Lauren Cabrera, Lauren Read, Laurie Rasmussen, Leesha Lee, Leisa Harding, Lesley Simon, Lindsay Weichlein, Lindsey Fender, Liz Bliesener, Liz Jackman, Lucinda Shier, Margo Susnjar, Marisa Rozycki, Marlene Promer, Mary Hankins, Mary Jestila, Megan Weber, Melanie Wright, Melissa Mazzola, Meredith Johnson, Michelle Mead, Mikjell Brown Shaw, Misty Reiber, Dave Logel, Nate Moore, Nayatt Castelein, Nicole Leitch, Nicole Shannon, Owen Waltmire, Rachel Brown, Rachel Kuntzsch, Rachel Onore, Rachel Vandeven, Ranjit Singh, Lisa Singh, Renee Sommerlot, Rich Whitten, Sara Haase, Sara Lerner, Sarah Abfalter, Sarah Dymond, Sarah Kovach, Sean Read, Sean Stevens, Shelby Logel, Stephanie Curtis, Sydney Adams, Tamela Jones, Tash Kelley-Stiles, Teresa Reed, Theresa Abed, Thomas Dunham, Tiffany Floate, Tom Maher, Traci Gentilozzi, Virginia Vermett-Jenkins, Wendy Dill, Whitney Craig and Kim Manning

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Secretary Shiflett provided an overview of the rules for addressing the Board of Education.

Dawne Velianoff expressed concerns for saving jobs and the budget noting there are less expensive online program than the one approved at the last board meeting. She further questioned the salary being received by Dr. Metcalf. She expressed appreciation for Dr. Chapin's recent communication but feels things are still unanswered and she would like more parent involvement.

Margo Sasnjar noted she still has serious concerns about the language of the Confederate Flag ban and asked the board to be mindful of the language proposed to ensure we are not oppressing or marginalizing groups. She expressed her support of online schooling but is concerned with the amount of time it appears students will have a six-hour school day.

Tom Maher questioned the timeline for more information being shared regarding online learning. He asked for transparency in budgeting and how the district will support students with technology needs.

Jackie Post questioned if tutoring would be available if her student needed it and if the school will be providing someone to read tests to her student as established under her IEP.

Erica Ledesma supported the suggestion of a timeline with regard to updates, how things are going to roll and how extra support will be provided to help eliminate worries and concerns of parents and the use of the word divisive in the student handbook. She welcomed Dr. Carter Andrews and noted she looks forward to hearing from her. She shared a quote "accountability is the only avenue to build trust".

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Ad Hoc Update**

Member Clark Pierson noted that she, along with Member Shiflett and Member Cwayna make up the committee with Dr. Chapin. She provided background on the development of this board committee and the charge of the committee. She went on to update the committee is excited to have found Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews and thanked Dr. Chapin for bringing her to them. She explained this committee represents a big endeavor, involves a lot of work and will have a long reach. Additionally, she advised the Committee has drafted a Charter dealing with equity within Grand Ledge Public Schools to ensure every student has support and access to make them successful and to identify and eliminate any barriers. She then reviewed Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews Vitae and advised the contract with her will provide for 60 hours of her time for a total of about \$12,000. She expressed the committee is very excited to have someone of her caliber on board to work with the district.

Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews introduced herself and expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to work with the district. She stressed this will be a multi-year endeavor calling for a broad aspect of community involvement and noted examining issues of power, privilege and effort do not happen overnight. Dr. Carter Andrews assured the committee had been very clear there will be an intentional focus on the community's voice and involve

all stakeholders and she will be relying on the community members to help her come to the best conclusion for the district. She noted Grand Ledge is really taking the lead on tackling this issue and will be front and center. In closing she advised she will meet with the Committee to nail down this year's timeline and our next steps.

Member Cwayna thanked Dr. Carter for her willingness to work with the district. He noted he did a great deal of work on developing the preliminary charter, taking from different aspects already developed. He noted he would like to have Dr. Carter review the document before it is brought forward. In closing he expressed his appreciation to Dr. Carter for her willingness to help the district through this.

Member Shiflett recommended the approval of Dr. Carter's contract and encouraged the community to read through her resume or watch her Ted Talks.

Superintendent Chapin noted he has worked with Dr. Carter since early 2008 on various projects noting she has a strong resume and really a grassroots driven leader. He expressed she is the real deal, has a terrific personality with terrific resources and someone he has learned from. He expressed his appreciation of Dr. Carter as a colleague and noted he is thankful she will be working with the district.

**B. Student Handbook Language** – Specific to Prohibiting Divisive Messages, Images, Symbols (e.g. swastika, Confederate Flag, etc.)

Dr. Chapin explained he was presenting this to the board as the initial language proposed met with some concerns regarding the word divisive. He advised he consulting with district legal counsel following that board and community input and the language has been changed to represent racially intimidating versus divisive. He read the specific language and advised legal counsel does believe this language should be placed in the Dress & Grooming section of the Student Handbooks. He further read the language specific to vehicle displays when on school property. He advised Dr. Barnes is working on the 2020-2021 Student Handbooks to bring them to the board for final approval at the August 24, 2020 meeting.

Discussion among the members questioned the district's ability to control the display of intimidating symbols during sporting events noting the district is looking at modifying signage that currently advises we a smoke free facility to incorporate this language but noting the district must have a plan of action for when this happens. The use of restorative justice was discussed and supported among the members noting this is a strong message when you have to sit and listen to how your actions hurt someone. Additionally, it was reiterated this language is not just to deal with racial perspective of intimidation but all forms of intimidation noting we want our students to know they are all here to get a great education and not to impede that for any of their classmates.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Approval of Teacher Hirings**

**Motion by Ms. Clark Pierson seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Teacher Hirings as presented.**

Hirings included Tara Barnhill, Christina Haggerty and Jessica Westfall for elementary teaching positions, and Ryleigh Scott and Jason Westra-Hall to teach English at Grand Ledge High School.

Dr. Gabriel advised all candidates were interviewed by building teams which then made the recommendation to him to bring the candidates forward for hiring. He noted the process is rigorous and these candidates rose to the top. In closing he advised the district has been very fortunate in that we have a need to hire, have been able to hire highly qualified candidates early considering we are getting about a quarter of the applicants we used to get, and noting this is a just a sign of the shortage of teachers in Michigan.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<u><b>ABSENT</b></u>
<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>President DuFort</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

President DuFort welcomed the new hires.

**B. Approval of the Payment of Sinking Fund Invoices**

**Motion by Mr. Shiflett seconded by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Sinking Fund Invoices in the amount of \$2,978.95, as presented.**

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<u><b>ABSTAIN</b></u>	<b>President DuFort</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<u><b>ABSENT</b></u>		

**The motion carried unanimously with member Sara Clark Pierson abstaining from the vote in accordance with MCL 380.4203.**

**C. Approval of the Payment of Proposal 1 Bond Invoices**

Discussion noted Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Operations Dr. Gabriel, and Chief Financial Officer Nancy Rasinske are keeping the board apprised of the progress of the bond projects, noting bond money cannot be spent on anything other than what it was designated for in the bond proposal and bringing Bond Liaison Dr. Mike Johnson in to talk to the board on a regular basis to keep the board and community informed as we move through this construction process.

Motion by Mr. Smith seconded by Mr. McKennon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 1 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$3,289,360.59, as presented.

**Roll Call Vote**

Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>
Mr. McKennon	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>ABSENT</u>	Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
President DuFort	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously with member Sara Clark Pierson abstaining from the vote in accordance with MCL 380.4203.

**D. Approval of Consultant Contract with Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews**

Motion by Mr. McKennon seconded by Ms. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Consultant Contract with Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews, as presented.

**Roll Call Vote**

Mr. McKennon	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>ABSENT</u>	Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>
President DuFort	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously.

President DuFort welcomed Dr. Carter Andrews noting the board is grateful for her willingness to help the district navigate this very important work.

**E. Approval of District Preparedness Plan**

Motion by Mr. Shiflett seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the District Preparedness Plan in Accordance with Executive Order 2020-142, as presented.

Dr. Barnes advised this 11-page document spells out the district's preparedness for the start of school noting Executive Order 2020-142 requires the district to have a Preparedness Guide for Phases 1 – 5 for the Return to School Plan. He clarified this is an evolving document and will continue to be updated as we navigate through each the phases, but what is being presented is based on the information we have today. He advised this does not provide any new information and is a requirement of the Governor's Executive Order. He shared the document will be posted on the district's website.

A discussion among the members noted this document is a very structured document outlining what the district will do to meet the State Requirements under each phase of the Return to School Roadmap issued by the Governor but it does not outline what a day in the life of our students will look like as we open the school year on September 8. It was

further noted, the Administrative Team began working immediately following the August 3 Special Meeting of the Board and information will be shared as it becomes available with the Team knowing details are very important.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<b><u>ABSENT</u></b>	<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>President DuFort</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**F. Approval of Technology Purchase**

**Motion by Mr. Smith seconded by Ms. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Technology Purchase using Proposal 1 Bond Funds, not to exceed \$686,307, as presented.**

Executive Director of Technology Mark Deschaine noted this purchase is using technology bond dollars that were set inside the parameters of the bond application approved by the State of Michigan and the voters of the district. This purchase will provide the district with the opportunity to provide devices to any student who needs a device to support this online start. He further noted by providing each student with a device, we eliminate the sharing of devices and help in stopping the spread of COVID-19. In closing he advised it is the district's intention to launch a request form for parents to complete for their student to obtain a device.

Further discussion among the members questioned the turnaround time for repairs or if devices would be replaced and Mr. Deschaine advised the district will maintain a small stock of extra devices.

Dr. Chapin thanked Mr. Deschaine for his expertise during this process noting he is an asset to the district.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>President DuFort</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<b><u>ABSENT</u></b>
<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**G. Approval of Custodial Pay Scale**

**Motion by Mr. McKennon seconded by Ms. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Proposal Custodial Pay Scale, as presented.**

Dr. Gabriel noted the value of a strong custodial group not only to ensure the cleanliness of our building, but they contribute to the culture of the buildings they are assigned. He advised the current pay scale has created roadblocks for the district in attracting and retaining good staff. He noted the proposed pay scale makes Grand Ledge Public Schools competitive, gives our current staff an immediate raise showing them we value the work they are doing, and provides the district the ability to attract and retain good people.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<u><b>ABSENT</b></u>
<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>President DuFort</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD**

Dr. Gabriel thanked the board for taking action at the August 3 meeting noting he appreciates the extra time to ensure students and staff can hit the ground running.

Dr. Barnes thanked the board for their leadership and bringing Dr. Carter Andrews in to work with the district to help shape the future of the district noting this is a big deal for not only the district but our community.

Dr. Chapin thanked Dr. Barnes and Dr. Gabriel. He noted questions had been raised in Public Comment about IT support and advised this is a topic of conversation and how we might revisit duties of some of our staff. Additionally, he noted the question about how the district will address a student's IEP are being reviewed by Executive Director for Special Services Mrs. Holding noting she is very in tune with the needs of our students and is talking with our faculty about how to best work through this. In closing, he noted he wants our parents to know the Administrative Team is working diligently to anticipate issues and address them before they become something bigger.

Mr. McKennon asked for clarification on moving the language forward in the Student Handbooks and Dr. Chapin advised the full 2020-2021 Student Handbooks will be brought to the board for final review and, hopefully, approval at the August 24 meeting.

Mr. Shiflett noted there is a person in attendance tonight who is running for a place on the Board and he expressed his appreciation for their continued attendance and involvement. He remarked by being actively engaged now, they are preparing themselves to be ready on day one.

Ms. Clark Pierson noted questions about Dr. Metcalf's salary and provided an overview which is available on the District's Transparency Page.

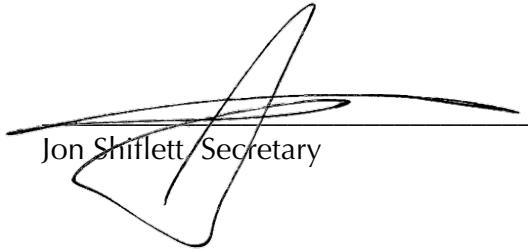
President DuFort thanked the district staff, administrators and everyone who is working to get the school year started. She thanked the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee members noting we are moving forward in a positive way with several difficult issues and she looks forward to continuing the work and she is happy to be a part of this.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:



Jon Shiflett, Secretary



Denise DuFort, President