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**BOARD OF  
EDUCATION**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
Organizational Board Meeting  
City Council Chambers  
14400 Dix Toledo, Southgate, MI 48195**

PRESIDENT  
PAUL C. KNOTT

VICE PRESIDENT  
REBECCA REED-HALL

SECRETARY  
DR. DARLENE L. POMPONIO

TREASURER  
W. KIRK HAYHURST

TRUSTEES  
PATRICIA GRAZIANI  
AMANDA KREMER  
SUE MURRAY

**DATE: January 14, 2014 (Rescheduled from Jan 7, 2014)**

**TIME: 7:00 P.M.**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall

**BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Graziani

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:** Grusecki, McLachlan, Pastor

**ADMINISTRATION EXCUSED:**

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**ADMINISTRATION**

President Murray read the District Mission and Vision Statement.

SUPERINTENDENT  
WILLIAM J. GRUSECKI

**REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

2013/14 - 104 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Mr. Knott, that the Board of Education revise the agenda to add action item number two and an item to Closed Session, negotiation updates.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall  
NO:

2013/14 - 105 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Mr. Knott, that the Board of Education approve the revised January 14, 2014 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall  
NO:

BUSINESS AND FINANCE  
DIRECTOR  
THERESA MCLACHLAN, C.P.A.

CURRICULUM/FEDERAL  
PROGRAMS DIRECTOR  
JILL PASTOR

HUMAN RESOURCES  
DIRECTOR  
MARY HILDEBRANDT

#### **ORGANIZATION OF BOARD FOR 2014**

Dr. Pomponio read the results of the election: President: Paul Knott received 6 votes; Vice President: Rebecca Reed-Hall received 6 votes; Secretary: Dr. Darlene Pomponio received 6 votes; Treasurer: W. Kirk Hayhurst received 6 votes.

President Knott announced the appointments for the year: Legislative Relations Network Chairperson - Rebecca Reed-Hall; Liaison Person for MASB Information - left open until Ms. Graziani is spoken to. Wayne County School Board Association Rep - Dr. Darlene Pomponio; Liaison to the City Recreation; City Council Liaison - Amanda Kremer.

#### **ATTENTION TO STUDENT GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Mark Kremer, Asher Representative and Student Council Leader addressed the board, wishing them a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Students are preparing for finals, and advisors are registering approx. 200 students to continue their education and work toward graduation. 40 students are preparing to finish their requirements to graduate in January, but will receive their diplomas in June. In May Asher will celebrate students graduating with honors by inducting them into the National Adult Education Honor Society. Board members will receive invitations to the ceremony in April. It is expected that approx. 1000 students will register for High School Completion, GED preparation and Adult and Basic Education. GED teachers are preparing for the new GED 2014 test. Approximately 225 students were tested in Nov/Dec and over half passed. There is no school the week of Jan. 27 which is the week of Open Registration. Winter 2014 classes begin February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Prom is being planned for Asher.

Mr. Knott commented that there would be discussion with the Policy Committee to allow for the Asher Student Rep to sit at the table with the other Student Reps.

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

##### Board Recognition

Mr. Grusecki presented each board member with items, as a token from MASB, for Board Recognition Month. He thanked the Board Members on behalf of the Administration Staff for their commitment and dedication to the students and Community of Southgate. He also thanked the members who had served as officers on the board this past year as well as those who stepped up to take on those roles for this New Year.

Mr. Knott commented that as in any educational position it is thankless at times, but it is also very rewarding.

#### **CITIZENS COMMENTS ON DISCUSSION OR ACTION ITEMS**

None

## **DISCUSSION**

### FINANCE

Ms. McLachlan stated that with the final Fall Count in to the State and the upcoming Winter Count in February she is working on a Budget Amendment that will be ready for the board by the second meeting in February. Ms. McLachlan informed the board that as of Jan 1, our current auditors, Hungerford & Co., have merged with Yeo & Yeo. This allows them to expand their resources.

Requests for proposals for non-instructional services have been sent out. This is by necessity as well as being one of the Best Practice Requirements for the District. This includes our auditors. With the current deficit we are looking at everything and it has been awhile since the auditing services have been put out for bid. Four RFP's were sent out with timelines, and that information should be ready to present to the board for a decision at the second meeting in February.

Our Custodial & Maintenance Services contract will be up in June so we will start the process for requests for proposals as well.

Mr. Knott asked if there was anything the board needed to do regarding the merger of Hungerford-Yeo & Yeo. Mr. Grusecki explained there was nothing the board had to do, things remain the same. Ms. McLachlan commented that Yeo & Yeo was one of the firms that an RFP was sent to. Mr. Grusecki said once the bids are open, the board would be presented with a recommendation for approval.

Mr. Hayhurst inquired if there were any significant expenditure's due to the extraordinary issues with our schools and the weather. Ms. McLachlan informed the board that the burst pipe at Fordline was covered by our insurance.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Grusecki commented on the Asher Adult Ed Honor Society event that will take place in April, saying it was one of the best events he had ever attended. The students put forth a tremendous amount of effort, time and commitment to get to that level and it means so much to those students. He encouraged the board, when they get their Honor Society and Graduation invitations, to make every effort to attend. These are two great events for these students.

Mr. Grusecki mentioned that the reporter from the News Herald contacted him to inquire why Ms. Cavins did not reply to her request to be interviewed regarding her retirement. He asked the reporter to send him the request for info and he would do his best to answer her questions. The article was in the Jan. 8, 2014 edition.

As the New Year begins he welcomed everyone back and mentioned that Christmas break was extended due to the harsh conditions. The district had one issue at Fordline, a burst pipe created a flood in the building on January 8<sup>th</sup>. It was not due to a frozen pipe, as much as the cold weather forcing the system to operate under maximum capacity, pushing a lot of water through a tremendous amount of pipes. Our infrastructure is original in most buildings including the plumbing. If there is any weakness it will cause those pipes to give. Mr. Grusecki commended the maintenance staff, Nate Lay and the GCA crew for being on top of that issue right away. Our insurance carrier was contacted immediately and Belfour Restoration was in the building taking care of the water, within hours it was gone. With

dehumidifiers, fans, vacuuming and carpet cleaning the building was able to re-open on Monday January 13. Air quality was also monitored and everything was good.

It is still being determined what material or items may have been damaged by the water. With this situation the key thing to remember is; old infrastructure and as time goes on we will be seeing more of these problems pop up with our plumbing and other systems.

Mr. Grusecki thanked everyone for their commitment to working with the district through very difficult times. He hopes for a better 2014, but there is still work to do. Staff reductions will occur mid-year. Everything this district spends money on is being examined for cost savings. He is confident that we are going in the right direction. One thing to remember is we want to continue to offer our high quality programs to kids and their parents. In challenging financial times it makes it more difficult.

Some potentially good news out of Lansing is that through the revenue conference last week the first numbers came out indicating that there is a \$1.2 billion surplus. That number came down to \$970 million. It is his hope that with everything that has been done to K-12 education, that money comes back to school districts. With our cut of \$465 per student a few years ago, if we got that money back it would mean between \$1.8 and \$2 million. It won't fix all of our problems, but it would soften the blow a bit for them to return the money they took away.

Mr. Grusecki commented that the Administration and Unions are lobbying hard but it is the parents that need to say enough is enough and let Lansing know they want money put back into education. If we continue to lose kids, this district and others are going to be in a dire situation. The parents are who the Legislature in Lansing listens to. They are their constituents. Change has to occur and parents can effect that change.

Mr. Grusecki wanted to let the community know that when it comes to school closures, there is a process he follows. The local superintendents communicate with each other to keep consistency among the districts. Temperature and wind chill factors are looked at. When the combined factors are -15 or below that, school will be closed. He tries to make that decision as early as possible so that parents can be notified and are able to make arrangements for their kids. If the local media is reporting that we are closed that is official. Mr. Grusecki is the only individual with authority to close our district.

He thanked the board again for the opportunity to work with them. There are still challenging times ahead, but he is confident we will get there.

Dr. Pomponio asked Mr. Grusecki if there is monitoring of the buildings on snow days. Mr. Grusecki said maintenance does work on those days plowing and salting.

## CONSENT

### DISBURSEMENTS FOR DECEMBER 2013

2013-2014 - 106 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Ms. Reed-Hall, that the Board of Education approve the disbursements for December 2013 for \$3,868,413.94 as presented.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall

NO:

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 17, 2013

2013-2014 - 107 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Ms. Reed-Hall, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Dec. 17, 2013 Regular Board Meeting.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall

NO:

MINUTES OF THE CLOSED SESSION MEETING DECEMBER 17, 2013

2013-2014 - 108 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Ms. Reed-Hall, that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Dec. 17, 2013 Closed Session Meeting.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall

NO:

**ACTION**

SPECIAL ED PARAPROFESSIONAL CONTRACT

2013-2014 - 109 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Ms. Reed-Hall, that the Board of Education approve the Special Ed Paraprofessional contract.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall

NO:

AUTHORIZATION TO SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION

2013-2014 - 110 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Ms. Reed-Hall, that the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent and Administration to make the staff Reductions necessary in accordance with the Deficit Elimination Plan Submitted to and approved by the Michigan Department of Education on November 14, 2013.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall

NO:

**EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES**

None

## **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

## **INFORMATION**

Mr. Hayhurst stated- "According to a recent article in the Detroit Free Press, after a deep and decade-long recession, Michigan finds itself with just under a Billion Dollars in additional tax revenues well above what officials estimated in the middle of last year. Lansing now has a real conundrum - 'What do you do with an extra \$1 Billion dollars?'"

"If you ask anyone who receives a large sum of money that was not expected, like- Lottery winnings, inheritance, a bonus from work, lawsuit settlement, for example; the first thing a sensible person says is - "I'm going to pay off my debts."

"Here is a suggestion Lansing, since you have been taking money from our Public Education Students for more than 10 years, why not pay off that debt? We need to contact our representatives in Lansing including Gov. Snyder and tell them to use this windfall to pay back what they owe our children before they do anything else with these funds."

Mrs. Pastor informed the board that Kindergarten Registration is going to be March 3 thru March 31<sup>st</sup>. Packets will be available at any of the 4 elementary buildings, or Central Office. Orientation will be held in April. Flyers are in the buildings and it will be on cable and the website soon.

Mr. Knott mentioned that we have many ways of communicating within the district. Letters home with students, cable and [www.southgateschools.com](http://www.southgateschools.com) .

Mr. Grusecki added to Mr. Hayhurst's comments about paying back debt, people may think that if the state gives districts money back it would just be thrown away frivolously. But if you spoke to anyone in the district they would let you know that our needs are many and while we have been creative in making do with very little, the money from the state would be put towards the greatest needs that would have a direct impact on the instruction of our kids. People may believe the money would just go in to benefits and salaries. This district has learned its lesson and learning more about that kind of spending. He has seen firsthand in our buildings what people are working without and the infrastructure needs and to him it is totally unacceptable.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Reed-Hall wanted to remind everyone of the half days for Jan 15, 16, and 17<sup>th</sup> and that there is no school on Monday for students for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Mr. Knott let Ms. Grzechowski know that if she needed any clarification on any item, she could request that of the board during a meeting.

## **WORK SESSION**

The work session began at 8:00 P.M. and concluded at 9:00 P.M.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The closed session began at 9:00 P.M. and concluded at 9:55 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

2013-2014 - 111 It was moved by Dr. Pomponio, supported by Ms. Reed-Hall that Board of Education adjourn the meeting at 9:55 P.M.

YES: Hayhurst, Knott, Kremer, Murray, Pomponio, Reed-Hall

NO:

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Dr. Darlene Pomponio, Secretary  
Board of Education



