

BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – (Approved)

HOLT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DIMONDALE AND HOLT, MICHIGAN

HOLT HIGH SCHOOL – MARGARET LIVENS-PARGER THEATER

5885 WEST HOLT ROAD, HOLT

Monday, November 8, 2021 - 7:00 P.M.

Present: Mark Perry, Amy Dalton, Jessie Jones, Marisa Anderson, Kevin Leonard, Jennifer Robel, David Hornak

Absent: Robert Halgren

Central Office Team Present: Jessica Cotter, Steve Netzel, Erin Quinlan, Matt Morales, Michael Dunckel, Christine Lopez

CALL TO ORDER – QUORUM; Pledge of Allegiance, Mission/Vision Statement – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Hornak introduced the newly appointed Board member to the audience. He then did a ceremonial swearing in and oath of office for Trustee Marisa Anderson.

Dr. Hornak also read an opening statement addressing his desire to work with our students and learning community to continue to address bullying in our schools.

CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

BOND PARTNER PRESENTATION – Andrew Howard, Bond partner from GMB presented an update on the Bond Design Playbook. A copy of the presentation is on file with the official Board materials located in the Superintendent's Office.

Trustee Dalton asked if there will be work done to the old cafeteria/gym to update it for better acoustics. Andrew stated it was not currently on the list, but he will bring it up with the design team meeting for Wilcox.

President Perry asked if the color schemes would be used equally. Andrew stated the color scheme shown will be accent colors against a neutral background. It will provide nice consistency throughout the buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Roger Bogenschutz - He questioned the Board about Critical Race being taught in the schools.

Gary Horstman – He raised concerns about the district policy on bullying. He does not feel the policy is prudent to the school. He had an issue with a situation. He stated there is not a solution other than students working it out. He stated the district is not doing anything to improve it. If someone comes up and assaults you, you should have the right to defend yourself. There should be a zero-tolerance policy. If you cannot behave get out of our district. He asked the Board and Administration to look at that.

*Requires Board action

Sally Hock-Harrison - She also wants to know about Critical Race Theory. She has talked about this before with masks. The Board works for the taxpayers. The difference between equity and equality. She shared a definition. She stated equity is not fair. She listed out many words she felt were important. What actions are being taken against students who are doing the wrong thing. She challenged the Board to read the constitution. She loves Holt Schools and Dr. Hornak.

Priscilla Bordago – She is not a parent and does not have students. She is a Lansing resident who works with CCSJ and EVE. She grew up in a very difficult home. She lived in 17 homes in Lansing. She travels all over the world as a motivational speaker. She works at a church in Holt. She is not here to bash or point out negativity. What she knows is according to statistics she should be in prison or in prostitution. She was the first to graduate in her family and won Woman of the Year last year. She has first-hand experience with trauma. She lived in Texas and worked there with INSPIRE program. There are 7 states who have started the program and are thriving. If your schools are not thriving, she is committed to coming in and helping with the INSPIRE mentoring programs. It is an SEL model and there are events and a curriculum that support students being positive and contributing members to their community. INSPIRE has outstanding results such as better relationship choices, anger management and stress management. Most programs occur during the school day during the week. She has a website with additional information Priscillabordago.com. She wanted to offer her support and services to Holt Public.

Holly Benson - She has three children in the district and is here working with Priscilla to reach out and is willing to work alongside Priscilla. She is well connected in the community, particularly with athletics. She is here to offer support. She thinks to say it is a Holt problem is wrong. It starts at home and some children do not have the same resources. Look not what are they doing wrong, but why. Let's work together and stretch to help these children. Showing others that we care for them could be contagious. She knows many in our community are ready to help. She wanted to thank all our teachers and staff.

Charles Harrison – Has not been up in quite a while. He doesn't like what is going on in the district after listening to the garbage about diversity, equity and inclusion. He plans to file recall papers on all the trustees and will be looking for potential candidates to run for the school board.

Laura Denison – She is a parent of a student in the community. Why can't we use Google classroom and have teachers upload schoolwork like we did during remote learning. Mental health is also a very big concern. She would like to see the district move to a hybrid model at home when they don't feel safe or have COVID exposure. She is feeling there is a lack of diversity, equity and inclusion. We should be teaching our students to be more accepting of others. We need better communication between school and home. Teachers need to reach out when there are bullying issues at school. We cannot help if we are not made aware. Also, when students are falling behind. Teachers should feel safe to reach out to families to get support for the students. She really wants everyone to come together. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak.

Michael Hunter – The ward of seven children in the district. He sees and hears disturbing things from the children when they get home. When the children get home, they feel safe and accomplished. They are glad they made it through another day. He knows that feeling because he is a combat veteran who served in Iraq. He knows what it is like to want to go home at the end of the day. It is the Board and Administration's

job to make sure the children are safe during the day. He took an oath as Trustee Anderson did at the beginning of the meeting. He continues to abide by the oath he took and wants to remind the trustees that their oath and commitment to serve is something they should adhere to no matter what. Having a sense of safety is paramount to these students. All students deserve a safe place to go to school. Students who come from out of district choose to come here for hope and a better education. They do not have a feeling of safety. He wants the district to do better. The community is here to help.

Ty Schalter – He wanted to thank the Board for the opportunity to speak. He is a parent and lifelong member of Holt Public. He is also a member of the Holt Equity and Access Team (HEAT). He believes in public education and strongly believes equity and access are the cornerstone to equal access to safe and effective learning for every child. Some in the district, including the Board and Administration, believe that learning, equity and access should be the first things thrown out in times of crisis. The security events that happened recently showed that decisions made don't square with what parents have told the problems were. When hundreds of kids are texting home that there are cops all over the building and they had no idea what was going on and they are not telling us anything. Children being afraid of police in their schools are not wrong for being frustrated. Parents are not wrong for being frustrated and worried if their children are safe when over a series of hours there is no communication. He felt virtual school would have been a seamless option for many. He believes the Board and Administration is working in what they believe are the best interest of the students. But students and their feelings and needs and perspectives should be put first. They should be consulted. He urged the Board and Administration to continue to seek the counsel of students, staff and faculty on how to put the learning environment first.

Sharon Parks – She is a resident. She raised two kids in the district. She came this evening because she looks at the Holt COVID dashboard every day. Today she sees our COVID cases are 49 in our district. She is also disturbed by the events of the last week. She is a grandparent of a child in the district. The level of violence in the district over the past week, is very disturbing. The lack of communication is extremely upsetting as well. She stated the first thing on the agenda was a bond update. She did not vote for the bond. She felt it was an overreach. For the first half hour we looked at floor plans. Are these our priorities. She is concerned about her granddaughter and other children who are exposed to COVID or gun violence. She is upset and came to hear certain things. There was no communication about what transpired. COVID also really needs to be addressed.

Joy Williams – She is a student. She organized the walk-out last week. She is hoping to get a few questions answered. She wanted to know if the Board and Administration have seen restorative justice work in the district. She also would like to know if the district took into consideration the financial status of many students regarding the updated backpack requirement. It has made it difficult for many students who cannot afford to get a new backpack. She also wanted to address the backlash to teacher and student voices. She stated there was backlash from certain staff. She thanked everyone for listening.

Elizabeth Collins – She was not planning to speak. Hearing some of the comments she felt compelled to speak. She is an alum of the district. When she heard someone speak about equality and equity. Equality is everyone gets the same. Equity is everyone gets what they need. All students have different needs, and they all deserve to be provided with what they need to be successful. There are many in support of the DDEI and CRT. No longer should people ignore those who have been systemically underrepresented. She is proud of our district for working on these issues. She also would like to see hybrid and online learning as

well. Bullying is a huge problem, and this would help address that. She has gender non-conforming family members in the district who was told to kill themselves. It was written on a bathroom wall and the school did act promptly but the family did not find restorative justice practices met what they thought would have been a learning opportunity. The LGBTQIA+ community are protected under Title IX, and this should be considered in the RJ process. She appreciated the opportunity to speak and wanted the Board and Administration to know there are people in the community who strongly believe in and support the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policies.

Jennifer Coulson – student and staff member. She wanted to let people know the dedication the staff of HPS has for their students. She is personally doing everything she can to make sure her students have everything they need. We are doing everything we can to make sure our students are safe. Please give us a minute to communicate with you but give us some grace. As much as you are hurting, we are hurting as employees. We need the right kind of help. We cannot just allow people to come into the schools. We love your children just as much as you do.

President Perry asked Dr. Hornak to address the Critical Race Theory and the hybrid learning issues raised during public comment. Dr. Hornak stated Holt Public does not teach Critical Race Theory, but we do teach racism, slavery, and history in our curriculum. The reality with virtual learning vs. brick-and-mortar learning is prior to the pandemic districts were funded by students being present in the schools as part of the Count Day process. During the pandemic the State realized that districts needed to move to a virtual model to continue to educate our students during the health crisis. They created a provision to allow districts to count students virtually. The District conducted a parent survey at the end of the 2020-2021 school year to see if there was interest in having a virtual option for our students. We only had 32 people in the district express interest and as we looked for commitments that number reduced to single digits. Therefore, it was decided that Holt Public would not pursue opening a virtual learning wing. There are secondary options via Michigan Virtual and credit recovery courses. The State of Michigan recognizes districts as either a brick and mortar or virtual.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVALS* *Note: All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are routine in nature and will be approved by one blanket motion.*

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of October 4, 2021*

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 4, 2021*

Approval of Bills Paid*

IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Jones and supported by Trustee Robel to approve the consent agenda items. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

REPORTS

Student Representative Report – Paige Thompson she can say the past week or so has been disturbing. She has felt terrified of what could happen when coming to school. In speaking with her peers, she has heard the same. She also felt there was a lack of communication as well. She came back to the building and was not aware of what was going on and it was very frightening. She knows the student who organized the walkout and felt it was a great first step. She wants to be sure all students can be heard. There is so much that we can do to make this place great, it comes from staff and students too. She has taken steps to make changes. She met with Mr. Morales about students leading a PD session for staff. Try

to have as many voices from the student body as possible. Getting student voices heard is so important. The last week or so is not a reflection of our district. She says it is a wonderful place filled with wonderful people. We are all ready for some change. It will take everyone coming together to make that happen. She hopes everyone believes that too.

Trustee Jessie Jones – Board Policy Update – Trustee Jones stated the Policy Committee recently sat down with NEOLA consultant, Dr. Dick Halik. She gave an overview of the policy changes and stated there would be a first reading at the December Board meeting.

Trustee Amy Dalton – Monthly Celebrations – Trustee Dalton shared the diverse and celebratory dates in November. Native American Heritage Month, National Child Safety Month, Epilepsy Awareness Month, Diabetes Awareness Month, National Adoption Month, Diwali, International Day of Tolerance, Veteran's Day, World Kindness Day, Transgendered Day of Remembrance, Hanukkah.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Hornak presented his Superintendent's Report. A copy of the report is on file with the official Board meeting materials located in the Superintendent's Office.

Dr. Hornak is pulling together a student advisory board and would like it to be led by Paige and our other soon to be named student representative.

President's Report – President Perry gave his President's Report. He highlighted the open positions and the need to continue to fill those positions. Much work was done to fill positions to get students ready in a post-COVID environment as they returned to school. Unfortunately, it was not enough. Part of it was staffing positions left unfilled. The last week this district along with Dr. Hornak, students and staff did one remarkable thing. They sat down together and talked about the problems. President Perry accompanied Dr. Hornak and they went around the district and sat down with students and staff to share feedback and ideas about recent events. The one thing they heard over and over from both sides was about the lack of respect to the adults. He witnessed it firsthand while on the visits. His concern is with the lack of respect to the amazing teachers and staff is how long will they stay. There are great solutions out there and the district is moving towards them. But please give us grace and empathy as we work to get to the finish line.

There were change to the Board Committees with Trustee Bureau's resignation. Trustee Leonard has been added to the Buildings and Grounds Committee. Trustee Jones will become the Chairperson of the Policy Committee and Chairperson of the Personnel and Salary Committee. Trustee Anderson has been added to the Policy and Personnel and Salary Committees.

Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) Update – President Perry stated the CIC met last week and went over the Design Playbook the entire Board saw this evening. They also discussed the budget concerns. The hope is to get the budget within a 2% variance. There are also contingency funds figured into the budget as well.

DISTRICT DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Curriculum Office Updates – Jessica Cotter and Steve Netzel gave the Curriculum Office presentation. A copy of the presentation is on file with the official Board meeting materials located in the Superintendent's Office.

Human Resources Update – Erin Quinlan gave the monthly HR Report. She also highlighted the proposals she is asking the Board to approve. She also stated they continue to find creative ways to recruit staff for our open positions.

Proposed Wage and Benefit Adjustment for GSRP* - IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Dalton and supported by Trustee Jones to approve the proposed Holt Public Schools GSRP Wage and Benefit increases and adjustments as presented. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

Paraeducator LOA* - IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Jones and supported by Trustee Leonard to ratify the Wage and Benefit Letter of Agreement between Holt Public Schools and the Holt Paraeducator Association.

Roll Call:

Anderson – Yes

Dalton – Yes

Halgren - Absent

Jones – Yes

Leonard – Yes

Perry – Yes

Robel – Yes

Motion carried.

Restorative Practices Coordinator Position* - IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Jones and supported by Trustee Dalton to approve the proposed grant funded Restorative Practices Coordinator position as presented.

Roll Call:

Anderson – Yes

Dalton – Yes

Halgren - Absent

Jones – Yes

Leonard – Yes

Perry – Yes

Robel – Yes

Motion carried.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Update – Matt Morales gave the Board the update on the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

SRO REPORT – Deputy Jordan provided her monthly SRO report for the Board in the Committee of the Whole meeting earlier since there was time to do so. A copy of the report is on file with the official Board meeting materials located in the Superintendent's Office.

FINANCIAL MATTERS – Kim Cosgrove is on a planned vacation and Mike Dunkel was on hand to present the monthly financial matters update. A copy of the presentation is on file with the official Board meeting materials located in the Superintendent's Office.

OLD BUSINESS – Trustee Dalton wanted to share the National Suicide Hotline since there were multiple people during public comment who mentioned death by suicide.

NEW BUSINESS – Class of 2022 Cap and Gown discussion. IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Leonard and supported by Trustee Robel to accept the cap and gown option 1 presented by Grace Sampson. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

ADJOURNMENT* - IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Robel and supported by Trustee Leonard to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by unanimous consent. The meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessie Jones, Secretary