

## SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, FEBRUARY 21, 2022

The Spring Lake Board of Education held a Regular Meeting on Monday, February 21, 2022, in person at the Spring Lake IS/MS Media Center. Jennifer Nicles called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Board members present: Jennifer Nicles, Curt Theune, Kathy Breen, Bruce Callen, Katie Pigott, Paul Aldridge and Christopher (Chris) Beck. Absent: None

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Curt Theune moved, supported by Chris Beck, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 17, 2022, Special Meeting of February 10, 2022 and Closed Session of February 10, 2022, as presented.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

### **ITEMS RECEIVED TOO LATE FOR PRINTED AGENDA**

None

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Bill Cooper, 333 Pine Street, Fruitport – expressed appreciation for the Board’s handling of the grade altering. He inquired as to the effect the grade altering will have on student admission into college. He also stated that he realizes the names of those students whose grades were changed cannot be released, but asked how a student will know if their acceptance to a college/university was affected.

Mr. Furton provided the number of grades affected was very small compared to the total number of grades over the eight year period investigated. Universities look at test scores, MME results, SAT results, and at how SLPS graduates perform at the university level. Mr. Furton advised that those wishing to know if their grades have been changed can contact his office and he would be happy to inform.

Bethanne Gennette, 16072 Surrey Way, Spring Lake – stated her concern regarding the district’s diversity in hiring practices. She commented that there is a clear connection between diversity in the workforce and culturally competent instruction and quality instruction. She encouraged the district to recruit minorities in hiring. She is hopeful new hires tonight will be minorities.

Jeff Deater, 331 S. Lake Avenue, Spring Lake – commented on school culture. He stated that his son recently created a petition for students to sign regarding mask wearing. There were over 100 student signatures supporting the elimination of mandatory mask wearing. He provided that some students were afraid to sign the petition for fear of repercussions. He stated that he didn’t believe there would be repercussions, however, he feels students should be encouraged to explore the process of making a difference without the fear of repercussion.

## SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, FEBRUARY 21, 2022 (cont.)

Becki Deater, 331 S. Lake Avenue, Spring Lake – stated regarding the petition mentioned by the previous speaker: we can see how many kids wanted to sign the petition by observing the number of kids not wearing a mask at the high school. She also suggested edits to the email from Mr. Furton to the community concerning mask wearing. She stated that while the email said the decision to make mask wearing optional was due to case numbers being low, case numbers were not as low as was recommended at the beginning of the school year. She believes the email divided parents into two groups regarding mask wearing. She agreed with the email's commendation of the district staff in maintaining excellent standards. She believes that students will have delayed learning and social cues and also mental and emotional damages due to unnecessary mask wearing. She shared quotes from numerous students of all grade levels expressing their positive experiences since masks were made optional. She hopes future communications will be less divisive to the community.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Curt Theune moved, supported by Kathy Breen, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

- Accounts Payable – Food Service, SLCFAC, General Fund, Student Activity, etc. – totaling \$692,420.
- Payroll – totaling \$1,886,224.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Curt Theune moved, supported by Chris Beck, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

- New Hires –  
Jacqueline Filber ..... Food Service Asst ..... IS/MS  
June DeNova ..... Community Child Care Aide ..... CCC  
Corbin Reyes ..... Bus Driver ..... Transportation  
Felicia Nietering ..... Coordinator ..... Maintenance/Transportation  
David DeNova..... SE Parapro ..... Middle School

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

#### **APPROVAL OF INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LOCKER BID**

Curt Theune moved, supported by Chris Beck, to approve the Intermediate School locker removal, replacement and restoration painting bid to Nugent Builders for a cost not to exceed \$120,600, as presented.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

## SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, FEBRUARY 21, 2022 (cont.)

Liz Boeve presented bids for Intermediate School lockers – The district received two bids which varied in price by approximately two thousand dollars. Ms. Boeve recommended Nugent Builders based on previous experience with the company.

### APPROVAL OF HIGH SCHOOL SERVERY BID

Curt Theune moved, supported by Chris Beck, to approve the High School Servery food service equipment bid to Stafford-Smith, Inc. for a cost not to exceed \$244,594.50 and the general trades bid to Nugent Builders for a cost not to exceed \$425,000, as presented.

Liz Boeve presented information on High School Servery bids - Only one general contractor bid for the general trades, however, there were three bids for the food service equipment bid. Nugent Builders, based out of Rockford, is the recommendation for the general trades portion. The food service equipment bid recommendation is Stafford-Smith, Inc. Multiple area schools food service servery areas were toured to aid in the new design. Kathy Breen inquired why the change was occurring now. The food account has been keeping funds in reserve, anticipating the need for this remodel. The remodel is scheduled to begin June 3, 2022 with a deadline of August 1, 2022.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

### DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

#### 98B GOAL PROGRESS

Scott Ely presented the following – Under public act 48 for school legislature, the district is required to report progress goals for compliance. New this year is the requirement to establish mid-year and end of year goals. Mr. Ely is pleased with all student progress. This new requirement is a one-time requirement as of today.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sherry Zuidema, 15801 Pruin St, Spring Lake – stated she is a long time resident of Spring Lake. She provided that she is saddened by what has happened over the last 2 years. She believes there is a division in the community. She also feels the Board and administration have eliminated parent input. She stated the reason people move here is because of this district and its reputation. She asked that the next time a crisis occurs to please not eliminate the people who know students the best. She stated her grandchildren attend a private school because of the mask mandate. She commented that students achieve well because of a solid foundation at school and at home.

Carla Segaar, 18690 N. Shore Dr., Spring Lake – thanked the Board for eliminating masks, giving students the choice to wear a mask. She stated she had one concern regarding the email sent to parents concerning the mask mandate. She commented that she sent an email to Mr. Furton with a document that advises it is against the law to force students to wear masks, to require PCR tests, and to require vaccinations. She provided her reason for presenting this information was to make the board aware.

## SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, FEBRUARY 21, 2022 (cont.)

Nichole Wrona – 16524 Spring Tree Dr., Spring Lake – stated she is concerned the grade change situation will taint the district's and high school's image. She inquired as to how the district plans to mitigate the tarnished reputation. She also asked how the district discovered there may have been grade changes. She asked if a third party investigation had been considered by the district. She stated that the situation was portrayed as miniscule and finds the situation reprehensible.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Furton reported on the following:

- Legislative update –
  - The Governor's proposed budget increases per-pupil funding by \$435 per pupil. Expect the House and Senate to release their budgets in late March or early April. While the proposed per-pupil funding amount could change we should still expect a significant increase.
  - House Bill 5722 would require each district to make curriculum publicly available by the first day of each school year.
- Payroll – The district has had three issues in one year. An action plan has been proposed and the district recently began discussion with the OAISD regarding a possible penalty to the ISD should payroll not stay on schedule in the future.
- HS Administration – Ben Armev will take over duties as interim principal. The district is looking to bring in more staff members to assist with the duties assigned to the Assistant Principal position. Retired SLHS teacher Roni Marron will take over testing responsibilities.
- Grade Changes – The district plans to have all grades that were changed to be adjusted back to the grade originally assigned by the teacher. Mr. Furton requested guidance from the Board with regards to the best way to notify those graduated students whose grades were changed. Continuing students and their parent/guardian will receive a letter from the district regarding an opportunity to discuss the grade change with the teacher of record.
- FAQ Regarding Grade Changes – Mr. Furton will post a FAQ document of the commonly asked questions about the misconduct, investigation, etc. to the district website as soon as next week. It will remain on the website for one month.
- Grade Changes Investigation – In response to one of the public comments, Mr. Furton addressed the topic of grade changes and indicated that he did not say the issue was miniscule, but that the number of grades changed was miniscule. The district quickly began an investigation of the grade changes and publicly presented and posted a report on the district website.

### **UPCOMING MEETING**

- Regular Board Meeting – March 21, 2022, 7:00 p.m., IS/MS Media Center

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Curt Theune moved, supported by Chris Beck, to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, FEBRUARY 21, 2022 (cont.)

Jennifer Nicles adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Board Secretary