

## Our Mission

*Educating and inspiring each student  
to navigate successfully  
in a global community*

## EAST GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Kent County, Michigan

### REGULAR MEETING of the East Grand Rapids Board of Education

James E. Morse Administration Center at Woodcliff  
2915 Hall Street SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Monday, September 22, 2014

### MINUTES

The **REGULAR MEETING** of the East Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education, Kent County, Michigan, was held on Monday, September 22, 2014, in the Community Board Room of the James E. Morse Administration Center at Woodcliff, 2915 Hall Street SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

#### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Present: Michelle Rabideau, Steve Edison, Beth Milanowski, Elizabeth Welch Lykins, Bob Wolford, Natalie Bernecker

Absent: Susan Levine

Administration: Dr. Sara Magaña Shubel, Jeanne Glowicki, Kevin Philipps, Kathy Wisniewski, Doug Jenkins, Jenny Fee, Lori Johnston, Peter Stuursma, Anthony Morey, Craig Weigel, Caroline Breault-Cannon

#### Meeting Called to Order

President Rabideau called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She reported that the board held a board work session facilitated by Karen Cross, Senior Associate with the Michigan Association of School Boards, immediately prior to this evening's regular meeting which resulted in the board establishing three goals: Communication, Board Orientation/Transition, and Goal Setting/Alignment. Rabideau shared that it is important for the community to know that the board is invested and transparent about their own effectiveness and goals for the board. She appreciates the board's willingness to reflect on their roles and responsibilities and desire to continue moving the district forward.

Acknowledgment of Guests – President Rabideau recognized school board candidates running for election in November: Brian Coles and Mark Hessler. Coles and Hessler commented on their candidacy and look forward to the upcoming campaign.

#### Board Secretary's Report: Communications to and from the Board – Beth Milanowski

The Board received communication from the following persons regarding the incident that occurred on August 15, 2014, at the high school, requesting that the district not file charges against the former students:

Babel, Judi & Bill	Gaegauf, Peggy	Lewis, Robert	Smith, Deecy
Bloom, Betsy	Griffin, Lisa	Lewis, William & Janet	Smith, Michael
Bogdan, Dave	Haun, Kelly & Susan	Longo, Paul	Tindall, John
Buchau, Susanne	Hoff, John B.	McLaughlin, Murray	Zimmerman, Jill
Clark, Lynn	Kohls-Koski, Jane	Risch, Anne	
Dillane, Michael & Brooke	Kremer, Maja		
Gadbois, Mary	Lembo, Mary Frances		

President Rabideau made an official statement regarding a break-in incident at East Grand Rapids High School that occurred on August 15, 2014, which resulted in the school being evacuated and on lockdown for the entire day, involving the EGR Department of Public Safety and State of Michigan bomb squad. The purpose of the statement was to clarify that, while the incident did involve three recent graduates of EGRHS, the district and the board are not involved at this point, and that the matter is a legal issue, and not an issue governed by the EGRPS Board of Education policies.

Public Comments - President Rabideau explained the ground rules and then opened the floor for public comments.

Julie Gotch-2053 Wilshire Drive, commented on the board's role in the charges against her son in the August 15, 2014, incident at the high school. Shawn Gotch-2053 Wilshire Drive, commented on the board's role in the charges against his son in the August 15, 2014, incident at the high school.

#### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

##### Recognition of National Merit Semi-Finalists – Lori Johnston and Jenny Fee

Lori Johnston and Jenny Fee recognized Jacob Frazier, Arnold Johnsen, Sean Lang, Lucas Merritt, and Jack Tiggelman for their accomplishments in becoming National Merit Semi-Finalists. These students were congratulated by the board and presented with a certificate of recognition.

Recognition of Girls Lacrosse 2014 MHSAA Division 2 State Championship – Jenny Fee

The board and administration recognized the Girls Lacrosse Spring 2014 MHSAA Division 2 State Championship team for their accomplishments. Certificates of recognition will be provided to Tim Johnston, Director of Athletics, to send to these athletes who were unable to attend the board meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS - CONSENT AGENDA**

Background: In order to save time during the meeting, we are using a Consent Agenda. Items in the Consent Agenda include those that are routine or have been previously discussed by the Board of Education. Any board member may request to have any item removed for a separate discussion and vote.

Recommendation: Motion to approve the items in the Consent Agenda, Numbers 7 through 10.

Approval of Minutes of REGULAR Meeting of 08/18/2014 (Enclosure #7)

Approval of Minutes of SPECIAL Meeting of 09/04/2014 (Enclosure #8)

Approval of Minutes of SPECIAL Meeting of 09/05/2014 (Enclosure #9)

Approval of Payment of Bills – June/July/August 2014 (Enclosure #10)

Member Milanowski moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 7-10. Member Edison seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

**OTHER ACTION ITEMS**

Approval of Teacher Contract – Tad VandenBrink – Dr. Shubel

Background: Per Board Policy #5430, the Board is responsible for the formal approval of all teacher and administrative contracts.

Recommendation: Motion to approve the teacher contract for Tad VandenBrink, High School Social Studies.

Member Edison moved to approve the teacher contract for Tad VandenBrink. Member Milanowski seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Appoint Delegate Representatives to MASB Fall Conference Delegate Assembly - President Rabideau

Background: The Michigan Association of School Boards' 2014 Delegate Assembly is meeting for the annual 2014 Fall Conference at Amway Grand Plaza Hotel on November 6, 2014. Three delegates may be appointed to represent the East Grand Rapids Board of Education.

Recommendation: Motion to appoint Delegate Representatives to the MASB Fall Conference Delegate Assembly.

Member Edison moved to appoint Elizabeth Welch Lykins, Natalie Bernecker, and Steve Edison as Delegate Representatives to the MASB Fall Conference Delegate Assembly. Member Wolford seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Approval of Superintendent Goals for 2014-2015 (Enclosure #13)

Background: The Superintendent Goals for 2014-2015 are presented.

Recommendation: Motion to approve the finalized Superintendent's Goals for 2014-2015 per Enclosure #13.

President Rabideau reported that the board received Dr. Shubel's Goals for 2014-2014 in advance of tonight's meeting and had an opportunity to address any questions or concerns. Dr. Shubel shared that the goals are closely aligned with the district's Strategic Plan and does not represent all the work of the administrative team in the district; rather, it is an overview of major items to focus on this year. The Superintendent's Goals are attached to these Minutes.

Member Bernecker moved to approve the Superintendent's Goals for 2014-2015 per Enclosure #13. Member Welch Lykins seconded the motion. A discussion was held among the board. Motion passed 6-0. President Rabideau thanked Dr. Shubel for her work in establishing these goals.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Superintendent

Dr. Shubel shared that the start of school year has gone smoothly and credited the administrators and staff on their organization and efforts. She reported that the East Grand Rapids High School ranked 53<sup>rd</sup> in *Newsweek's* rankings of top high schools in the nation, and ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the state. Dr. Shubel reminded everyone that there are several other rankings, with specific and narrow criteria, and we are careful not to solely recognize district accomplishments based on these rankings. However, when we look at what was accomplished last year, this is certainly a highlight to celebrate. With the ranking of 4<sup>th</sup> in the State of Michigan, it should be noted that the schools ranked 1-3 are all

magnet schools which require testing scores to enroll into their high schools. In EGRPS, *all* students are accepted and this acknowledgment reflects a true Pre-K thru Gr. 12 celebration and the work our staff does to prepare our students with a solid foundation from elementary through high school. This is a major accomplishment and all staff should be recognized for their work in developing and implementing our comprehensive curriculum process and instruction led by Jeanne Glowicki, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction.

Dr. Shubel announced that Homecoming will be held this Friday, September 26. Detailed information will be provided to board members on their participation in the parade.

#### Assistant Superintendent of Business

Kevin Philipps provided an enrollment update, with an increase by five students since the last meeting, which brings our current enrollment to 2,963 students. We have had a number of students move out of the district, mostly to other states, but no obvious trend. Philipps also shared that the Kent County birth rate has dropped since 2007 and never trended upward. If this continues to be the trend, we can expect to see a continued drop in enrollment for future years.

Philipps shared that Moody's rating service performed a rating review on our general obligation debt which included a look at our financials, an interview over the phone, and this review resulted in a downgrade from AA3 to A1 stable. The Moody report provides a very good explanation of where we stand and explains the financial circumstances and what needs to be done to fix them. Philipps will request the Moody report to present to the board as a follow-up to tonight's meeting. A discussion was held among the board. If the Moody report is available publicly, Member Edison has volunteered to send the report to the Michigan legislators so they can see the results of their decisions as elected officials. Philipps put together an analysis and indicated that there is no clear reason for the downgrade.

#### Assistant Superintendent of Instruction

Jeanne Glowicki reported that it has been a smooth transition with staff returning to school with lots of exciting changes in place, beginning with implementation teams, and it is obvious that we have continual learners on our staff.

#### Board Member Reports

*Communications Committee* – Member Rabideau reported that the committee has not met yet this school year; however, this was identified in the board work session as an area to revisit. The committee will be meeting soon to move forward with the board's goals.

*Facilities Committee* – Kevin Philipps provided an update on the installation and time line for the new boilers.

*Finance Committee* – None

*Joint Facilities Committee* –None

*Legislative Liaison Committee* – Member Welch Lykins reported that a meeting was held in September and plans have begun for the big fall/winter push. She shared that we need to make sure that we are announcing at PTO meetings about Legislative Committee and get email lists updated and provide an opportunity to sign up and reiterate responses to calls to action.

*Personnel Committee* – None

*Policy Review Committee* – President Rabideau reported that a policy meeting will be scheduled for review and revisions to policies.

#### Liaisons

*EGR Schools Foundation* – Member Bernecker reported that the EGR Schools Foundation Community Service and Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner will be held on November 17 at 6:00 p.m. at the JW Marriott Hotel. Bernecker shared that the EGRNow! and EGRForever! are up and running. A process is being put in place for donors to contribute at any time without having to wait until the spring campaign if they so choose. Orientation for new Foundation board members was held. Member Rabideau shared that the Board of Education is supportive of Foundation events and encouraged board members to attend the November 17 dinner.

*Community Action Council* –None

*PTO Council* – President Rabideau shared that she appreciates the commitment to EGRPS from all the PTOs.

*Parks & Recreation* – Member Edison announced the Breton Downs students submitted an ArtPrize entry in partnership with a school in Haiti, sponsored by the Power of Education Foundation. The entry is on display at the Marriott Courtyard, and he encouraged everyone to view the entry and place your vote.

*Superintendent's Advisory Council (SAC)* – None

*Leadership & Youth Development (LYD)* – Member Milanowski reported that Healthy High was hugely successful with over 330 students attending. She shared that LYD is looking for new board members. She shared that LYD needs to remain a self-sustained group.

*Parent Advocates for Special Education (PASE)* – Member Welch Lykins reported that the first PASE meeting of this school year was held on September 8. Conversations with Kathy Wisniewski, Director of Special Education, will be held tomorrow, presenting on the IEP process. Several similar meetings will be held throughout the school year.

Member Bernecker also reported that the annual *Hearts of Gold* fundraiser partnered with the Billy Bear Hug Foundation this year. The Hearts of Gold game will be held on Friday, October 10. Fundraising activities leading up to the game include a pep rally, selling of hats, t-shirts, and stuffed bears. All proceeds from the fundraiser go to the Billy Bear Hug Foundation. Jerseys will also be sold this year and names may be placed on the back of the jerseys. The purpose behind the Hearts of Gold game is to develop a community-wide fundraiser and event outside of EGR to help others. Some EGRPS administrators have volunteered to wear a bear costume if their school's fundraising goal is met. Member Milanowski shared that the Caledonia community has is also supporting the fundraiser.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, October 27, 2014, at 6:00 p.m.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

President Rabideau adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Milanowski, Secretary  
East Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education

\* Minutes for this meeting will be available in the Superintendent's Office at 2915 Hall St. SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506. The phone number is 235-3535.  
\*\* If you plan to attend and have a special need and require accommodation to attend this meeting, please contact Dr. Sara M. Shubel, Superintendent, at 235-3535.