

**St. Johns Public Schools
St. Johns, Michigan
Minutes of Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Held on May 24, 2021**

The St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, May 24, 2021, at the St. Johns High School Auditorium. President Darragh called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Darragh, Dedyne, Drabek, Hallead , Jackson, Nelson, Watson, and Student Representative Kiel

ATTENDANCE

Members Absent: None

Motion by Vice President Drabek, with support by Member Nelson, to approve the agenda. President Darragh added he would like a discussion item for the CCRESA Biennial Election added to item VI, as sub item D. Agenda approved as amended.

**AGENDA
APPROVED**

Motion by Member Hallead, with support by Member Jackson, to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from the meeting held on May 10, 2021. Motion unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

Motion by Treasurer Watson, with support by Secretary Dedyne, to re-confirm the St. Johns Public School District and Board of Education’s Mission and Vision statements, Philosophy and Cores Values. President Darragh read the statements. Mission, Vision, Philosophy and Core Values re-confirmed with a unanimous vote.

**CONFIRMATION OF
MISSION, VISION,
PHILOSOPHY, AND
CORE VALUES**

Cristina Patzelt of Thrun Law Firm, P.C., provided the members of the Board of Education a summary of the latest COVID-19 information. The information is changing quickly and she suggests checking the MDHHS website for their latest orders, as well as MIOSHA for their rules.

**REPORTS AND
INFORMATION
COVID INFORMATION
UPDATE**

Roy Henley of Thrun Law Firm, P.C., provided additional thoughts on the information Cristina provided.

Superintendent Palmer reviewed the plan. Nothing has changed in the plan. He also reviewed the student attendance portion. He added that he is proud of our students for “hanging in there” under difficult situations. President Darragh asked what we will do with the plan once school is out. Superintendent Palmer replied that we do not know if it will be in place for the fall. We upload our plan to a site each month.

**EXTENDED COVID-19
LEARNING PLAN RE-
CERTIFICATION**

Jason Relyea, and his wife Melissa, parents in the district, shared their views on negative effects of wearing masks, as well as negative social, emotional and mental effects the pandemic restrictions have on students.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kellie Nethaway, a parent of students in the Ovid Elsie school district, shared her frustrations with the quarantine rules.

Logan Schulze, freshman at St. Johns High School, shared his frustrations with mask requirement rules while at school.

Kelly Havens, parent of students in the district, shared her concerns on the importance of children being able to see facial expressions and non-verbal cues in order to express themselves, to understand and be understood. She asked the Board to allow parents to make the decision on whether their children wear a mask next school year.

Jeff Simpson, parent of a student in the district, and member of Stand-Up Michigan stated he takes full responsibility for the direction and overall actions at the previous meeting, and while he agrees with what was said, wishes to work with, not against, the Board of Education. He presented the Board of Education with documentation that he requested be recorded in the minutes of this meeting. The articles submitted were as follows: Facemasks in the COVID-19 era: A health hypothesis; Synopsis of the COVID-19 Crimes Against Michiganders Committed by Governor Whitmer Through a Pandemic of Fear and Deception, and the Illegal, Unhealthy Mask Mandates, by Tammy Clark, OSHA Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety Professional; An unnamed article written by Kristen Kelly, Sr. Industrial Hygienist and Tammy Clark, Environmental Health and Safety Compliance Specialist; a preliminary report titled Corona children studies "Co-Ki": First results of a Germany-wide registry on mouth and nose covering (mask) in children, by Silke Schwarz, University of Witten/Herdecke, Ekkehart Jenetzky, University of Witten/Herdecke, Hanno Krafft, University of Witten/Herdecke, Tobias Mauer, University of Witten/Herdecke, and David Martin, University of Witten/Herdecke.

Online Participants:

Andrea Ryan, part of St. Johns Call In Coalition, resident, social work and mental health therapist, shared her thoughts and experiences in working with youth during the pandemic. She asked that SJPS consider implementing inclusivity and diversity work in next year's plans.

Superintendent Palmer provided information about the Board of Education's implementation of the Thrun board policies. He explained the processes the various committees followed when reviewing the policies. He also highlighted some of the positive aspects of the Thrun policies. The anti-bullying policy will be brought to the Board for consideration and adoption at a different meeting. Vice President Drabek appreciates the work the administration did in reviewing the policies and making assessments. President Darragh asked if marijuana continues to be labeled as a controlled substance, and wants to know if that is a legal requirement under state law because marijuana is a controlled substance federally. Superintendent Palmer replied that it is still a controlled substance

**REPORTS AND
INFORMATION
THRUN BOARD POLICY
REVIEW**

since it is a federal law. There is a policy on CBD use, and the factors that need to exist to allow its use.

Superintendent Palmer provided the Board of Education with information on the MHSAA Membership Resolution that must be adopted annually.

**MHSAA MEMBERSHIP
RESOLUTION**

St. Johns Middle School Principal Adel DiOrio provided the Board of Education with a plan to restructure the daily schedule at the middle school. Members of the Board of Education asked questions that included how parents will be notified of the changes, and the various curriculum changes. Member Hallead thanked Mrs. DiOrio and the staff for the time spent, and for their investment in the plan. President Darragh also thanked Mrs. DiOrio and her staff for their work.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL
RESTRUCTURING PLAN**

Superintendent Palmer provided the Board of Education with information on the CCRESA Biennial Election. This board needs to designate a representative for the electoral body. Treasurer Watson is interested in fulfilling this role on the Board's behalf.

**CCRESA BIENNIAL
ELECTION**

Motion by Member Nelson, with support by Member Jackson, that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education approve the consent grouping Number VIII, A1, B1, B2, C1, C2, D1, E1 and E2. Motion approved unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF
CONSENT
GROUPING
ITEMS**

Approved expenditures for the payment of bills for April 2021:

PAYMENT OF BILLS

General Fund	\$1,824,110.39
Food Service Fund	\$50,008.78
Activity Fund	\$16,477.22
1998 Debt Fund	\$1,941,270.00
2020 Refunding	\$285,821.25
2013 Refunding	\$852,485.00
2014 Refunding	\$13,058,625.00
2010 (QSCB) Series A Debt Fund	\$1,234,319.36
2010 (BAB) Series B Debt Fund	\$2520.00
Energy Bonds 2020	\$407,040.50
Energy bond Construction	\$370,467.58
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$20,043,145.08

Approved the hiring of the following St. Johns Public Schools employees:
Nanette Huga – Eureka Elementary School Principal, Ashley Ames – Network Specialist

NEW HIRE APPROVAL

Approved the resignation of the following St. Johns Public Schools employees:
Janet Thelen – Administrative Assistant, Megan McNamara – Technology Secretary

**RESIGNATION
APPROVAL**

Patrick Pieters – Sub Bus Driver to Bus Driver

**POSITION TRANSFER
APPROVAL**

Brittini Belbeck – St. Johns Middle School Teacher, and Olivia Bouck – Gateway North Elementary Teacher

**NON-RENEWAL OF
CONTRACT**

Motion by Treasurer Watson, with support by Member Hallead that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education re-certify the district's Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS
EXTENDED COVID-19
LEARNING PLAN RE-
CERTIFICATION

Motion by Member Jackson, with support by Member Nelson, that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education designates Robert Watson as its representative to the 2021 electoral body responsible for electing members to the CCRESA Board of Education. Furthermore, the St. Johns Board of Education supports candidate Ken Krapohl for the position on the CCRESA Board of Education for a term of six years and directs its representative to vote for that candidate at least on the first ballot taken at the June 7, 2021 election meeting. Motion unanimously approved.

CCRESA BIENNIAL
ELECTION

Superintendent Palmer reviewed his written report. He provided additional information on the refunding bonds, stating it will be saving the St. Johns tax payers almost 1.4 million dollars. He reviewed the STRIVE Academy and St. Johns High School commencements activities, dates and times. He also provided information about the Read By Grade law, and that it goes into effect this year. He also reported the latest, and last, athlete COVID testing had no positive cases.

BOARD
COMMUNICATIONS
SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT

Superintendent Palmer recognized Student Representative Evan Kiel and his service to the community and Board of Education. President Darragh stated he believes Evan is mature beyond his years. He recognized his ability to positively contribute to the Board's discussion on many issues, and his perspective has enlightened the Board. He encouraged Evan to come back and give the Board his input on what St. Johns did really well, or what they could've done better to prepare him. Superintendent Palmer presented Evan an Award of Merit certificate.

STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVE
RECOGNITION

Student Representative Kiel provided an update to the Board of Education on the musical performances. Middle School students presented four socially distanced sold out shows of High School Musical. High School students also presented Footloose to four socially distanced sold out audiences. He also reported that Prom was this past Friday, and successes of several high school sports teams including the girls tennis team, boys and girls track teams, boys baseball and girls soccer. This is the seniors last week and there are many activities planned.

STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVE'S
REPORT

Haylee Anthony, student at Oakview South Elementary, informed the Board of the problems she has experienced while wearing a mask at school.

PUBLIC AND BOARD
COMMENTS

Josh Heethuis, St. Johns Middle School teacher, acknowledged the students that spoke at tonight's meeting. He also echoes the sentiments of Superintendent Palmer about Even Kiel. He is a great roll model to his peers.

Lastly, he provided comments and support of the middle school restructuring plan.

Several members of the Board of Education thanked Evan for his service to the Board, and also would like him to return at some point with his perspective of how SJPS prepared him. Many welcomed the new hires, and congratulated the sports teams on their successes. They also thanked Adel Diorio for her presentation.

President Darragh thanked everyone that addressed the Board tonight. Public input is essential for a well-functioning district. And as explained there are limitations to the Board's flexibility this school year, and is hopeful that by August the world looks like a more normal place.

President Darragh adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Dedyne, Secretary
St. Johns Board of Education
Minutes submitted by: Michelle Gorby, Recording Secretary