

On Line With the Board

The following actions, comments, or discussions took place at the October 9, 2013 regular meeting of the board of education. The meeting was held in the Board Room at the districts Central Office at 100 Big Red Dr.

1. Vice President Vershum called the Regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. The 2012/2013 Boy's Track Team and their coaches were recognized for all of their season's accomplishments.
3. Cafeteria employees Nelda Pulver, Cathi Casper and Judy Burgio were present at the meeting to accept recognition for their staff as part of the National School Lunch Week celebration going on the week of October 14 – 18, 2013.
4. Symons Principal Will Wright and Reading Specialist Tonya Saragoza presented information on the NWEA test results and the growth for our 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students as compared to the National data. School Improvement Plan objectives included a 2% increase in students achieving reading benchmarks, a 4% increase in writing and a 5% increase in Math.
5. During the first Public Comments section of the meeting the following people addressed the board:
 - Austin Blaine – Milan MI - commented on the mascot selections
 - Phil Heath – Milan, MI – commented on the mascot selection and asked about the academic presentation from Mr. Wright. He also commented on the salary increases that were given to two individuals.
 - Thomas Lindeman, Milan, MI – commented on the Mascot selection process.
 - Cheryl Mayher – Britton, MI – expressed disapproval comments regarding the individuals that received pay increases.
 - Chris Jones – commented on the mascot selection. He is not in favor of the Hawk selection. He said he was confused and unable to see the difference between a Hawk and a Spear.
 - Belinda Zimmerman – reporter for the Milan Eagle also shared her dislike for the Hawk selection.
 - Matt Fertney, Debbie Galanti, Dillon Jones and Bob Blaine, Milan, MI shared similar comments against the mascot selection process and the change of mascot.
 - Justin Blaine, Cassie Stamper and Debra German, Milan, MI spoke against the salary increases for some employees and the cuts to other employees.
 - Martin Ritchie – Milan, MI commented on the school lunch program. He also made mention to the board that their positions were voted on by the public.
6. Approval for the minutes to the September meetings and approval for bills/reimbursement of expenses was given.
7. The board approved the 2012/2013 Annual Audit as presented.
8. Approval to transfer any funds remaining in the 2003 Debt Fund and any funds yet to be collected in the 2003 Debt Fund to the next active debt fund (2002 Debt Fund) was given.
9. Approval of the Common Core Curriculum Resolution as provided was given.
10. The board approved Christine Schmidt to the Elementary Spanish teaching position at a BA-1 level.
11. Approval for the over-night FFA trip was given.

12. Superintendent Girbach reported on the following:

- Student Issues
 - 268 students were able to access reading books throughout the summer.
- Staff Issues
 - Symons Elementary teacher John Fleming's father passed away recently.
 - Symons 3rd grade teacher Sarah Farmer's 2 year old son Mason Farmer has been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer and is at Mott's hospital. Mr. Girbach asked everyone to keep the Farmer family in their prayers.
 - High School teacher Steve Porter was named Girl's Cross Country Coach of the Year for 2012.
 - The set design for the MMS Play Charlotte's Web took 3rd place in a National competition.
 - MHS was recognized as a Rewards School in the State of Michigan. The school is in the top 5 schools in the State for academic growth.
- Other Issues
 - The district has received a refund check in the amount of \$22,840 from our Property Casualty Insurance Co.
 - The preliminary public count is approximately 2265 students. The district budgeted for 2231. The increase in students will mean a return of wage money to employees that took a pay decrease in their negotiated contract wages.
- Assistant Superintendent Kudlak reported on the following:
 - MEAP testing has begun
 - Summer reading loss in students is being addressed. Paddock provided a bookmobile this summer. 826 books were checked out. 234 of those books were checked out by identified struggling readers.
 - Board Member Vershum asked about the Lattice method used in Everyday Math. The method allows the student to choose the method that works best for them to learn math.

13. Board Member Billau asked if the district could develop a comprehensive marketing campaign that would run year round.

14. Board Member Vershum spoke about two middle school students who are working on a breast cancer program. Mrs. Vershum also encouraged members of the audience to write and speak to their legislators and voice their displeasure with what's going on in education.

15. Second Public Comments Section:

- Kelly Schults, Austin Blaine, Matt Fertney, Belinda Zimmerman, Hayley Ritchie, Andrew Blaine – all from Milan, MI continued to make comments regarding not changing the mascot.
- Debbie Galanti, Justin Blaine, Kelly Dyc, - all from Milan, MI made additional comments regarding the unfair wage increases to certain employees in the district and the pay cuts that the majority received.
- Jay Bleifeld – Petersburg, MI (custodian) suggested that a letter be drafted by the district and signed by employees regarding the inequity of school funding. He also asked about the finance and technology directors raises and stated that every employee is replaceable. He commented on the bus drivers and the important role they play in the district and the decrease they and everyone else took in an effort to support the district.
- Marilyn Burkeen, Milan, MI (bus driver) commented about calling the state legislators regarding school funding.

16. Motion by Peacock supported by Billau to enter into closed session as allowed by the Open Meetings Act for a student reinstatement hearing. Roll call votes all ayes. Carried 6-0.
17. Time entered closed session – 9:21 p.m.
18. Motion by Leacher supported by Billau to return to open session. Roll call votes all ayes. Carried 6-0.
19. Time returned to open session – 10:20 p.m.
20. Student 2013-2014-1 was conditionally reinstated.
21. President Bushart adjourned the meeting at 10:21 p.m.