

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
***Board of Education***

Special Meeting – June 5, 2020

**MINUTES**

President DuFort called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. She led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll Call by President DuFort indicated the presence of ***Board Members***: Denise DuFort, Jarrod Smith, Jon Shiflett, Sara Clark Pierson, Kim Mulvenna Patrick McKennon and Ben Cwayna. ***Central Office Administrators***: Bill Barnes, John Ellsworth, Mark Deschaine, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Holding, . ***Others in Attendance***: Abby Powers, Abby Taylor, Abigail Burmeister, Adam Orange, Addie Hayes, Adrienne Burns, Akia Clark, Alanna Lynn, Alexandra Briggs, Alexis Travis, Alice Mills, Alicia Pilmore, Alishia Bueher, Alison McRae, Amanda Hengesbach, Amber Schwennesen, Amber Stairs, Amy Bowers, Amy Heriford, Amy Hoyes, Amy Mills, Andre & Dorthy Ware, Angela Kanazeh, Angela Lutz, Angie Beaty, Ann Anderson, Ann Paquette-Lukens, Anna Rosalin, Annemarie Reik, Anokhi Rajan, Erin Breen, Ashleigh Shepard, Ashlynn Howe, Becki Barber, Becky Krawczyk, Beth Johnston, Beth Leonard-Posey, Beth Schuchaski, Beth Whisman, Bill Albrecht, Bobbie Maguire Tanasse, Brandon Lawler, Brenda Henderson, Brenda Hurless Sensaliver, Breanna Corby, Brett McCartney, Brian Flowerday, Bri Dennis, Brooke Ward, Bruce Barrows, Bruce Dunn, Carl Ickes, Carlie Koets, Carly Waldrop, Caroline deMauriac, Carolyn Bovee, Carrie Platner, Carter Goldstein, Casey Brassington, Cassie Graven-Watts, Catherine Flowerday, Catherine Fox, Celine Smith, Chloe Blanzky, Chloe Brandt, Chong Bedard, Chris Groves, Christie West, Christine Sandell, Christine Morden, Christopher Terranova, Cindy Hoskins, Cindy Smith, Claire Mulls, Cody Butler, Colleen Austin, Colleen Price, Courtney Lutz, Craig Coney, Craig Kahler, Cristina Dowker, Cyndi Finkhouse, D’Anne Golub, Dan Stafford, Daniel Drent, Dave Burwick, David Blanzky, David Schuchaskie, DaVonte Cotton, Dawn McCoy Gibson Dawne Velianoff, Deb McCrumb, Denise Green, Denise Wilkinson, Devon Detmers, Diane Straton, Donald Lovell, Dori Leyko, Edward Saade, Effie Alofoje-Carr, Elle Hanks, Elyse Fox, Emily Justice, Emily Williamson, Eric Trotochaud, Erica Deters, Erica Jenks, Erica Robinson, Erika Rothwell, Erin Graham, Erin Marsh, Erin Ries, Erin Snyder, Frau Firtl, Gina Edick, Ginger Wittmann, Greg Rokisky, Hayley Mund, Heather Rosales, Heather Vanderlaan, Holly Sleight-Engler, Joni Henretty, Jackie Jancek, Jacob Moreno, Jacqueline Freeman, Jaime Barger, Jake Hill, Jamie Losch, Jamie Smith, Jamie Viecelli, Janda Craig, Jason Aten, Jason Devenbaugh, Jay Bennett, Jeanne Wright, Jeff Palacio, Jeff Sewick, Jen Bouck, Jen McCloud, Jenda Cole, Jennifer Byford, Jennifer Haakenson, Jennifer Miller, Jennifer Pizzo, Jennifer Short, Jennifer Soria, Jennifer Stevenson, Jenny Jarrard, Jenny Kish, Jeremy Werner, Jessica Buffenbarger, Jessica Cornman, Jessica Krawczyk, Jessica Leopold, Jessica Schultz, Jill Ford, Jill Rycus, Jim Gee, Jim Manning, Jim Shiflett, Joan Pedraza, Joan Waterman, Jodi Wehling, Jody Schmidtman, John Hawkins, John Szczerowski, Jordan Stevens,

Jordyn Wilbur, Josephine Oren, Joshua Austin, Julia McLane, Julie Bortua, Julie Brunk, Julie Schieding, Justin Heany, Kali Stevens, Kari Thompson, Kassandra Davis, Kate Fitts, Katherine Staperfenne, Kathleen Mikulec, Kathy Dietzel, Kathy Jennings, Katie Grass, Katie Gregory, Katie Westen, Keene Gerard Beach, Kelci Laugal, Keli Hammon, Kelli Bohnet, Kelliann Rheame, Kelsey Cleveland, Kelsey MacCombs, Kelsey Morinaga, Ken Wright, Kerry Stensen, Kevin Defresne, Kevin Fitton, Kevin Leininger, Kevin Mason, Kim Browning, Kimberly Shoup, Kirk Sheren, Kirsten Thompson, Kristen Kemp, Krsten Wren, Kristy Merignac, Kyle Smith, Laura Roys, Lauren Petrie, Laurie Kucher, Laurie Pollie, Layne Kangas, Lee Martin, Leesha Lee, Lesley Simon, Lesley Templeton Keith, Lindsey Chermacki, Lindsey Fender, Lindsey Grostefon, Lisa Ashbay Singh, Lisa Klingbiel, Lisa Parson, Lisa Powers, Lisa Schluckbier, Lisa Scholten, Liv Conaty, Liz Jackman, Lori Bucholz, Lori Kennedy, Lori Sackman Adams, Lori VanHoesen, Luanda Coleman, Luciana Viramontes, Lucinda Shier, Lynsee Phillips, Maddy Evans, Madison Stoddard, Mandy Leik, Mandy Williams, Marcia Hamstra, Marcie Walker, Mariesa Leyva, Marisa Rozycki, Mark Buckland, Mark Dotson, Mark Fischer, Mark Jones, Marlene Promer, Marv Hardy, Matt & Maylon Sherwood, Matt Carlson, Matt Newburg, Maxwell Schaefer, Megan Case, Meghan Joseph, Meghan Morris, Meghan Richey, Melissa Allegretti, Melissa Downs, Malissa Mazzola, Melissa Hatfield, Melody Parsons, Michael Snyder, Michele Hill, Michelle D'Alessandro, Michelle Diaz, Michelle Falcon, Michelle O'Meara, Michelle Siwek, Mike Hoskins, Mindy Clark, Molly Cool, Morgan Cross, Dave Logel, Nancy Lonberger, Nannette Pearson, Nate Moore, Nicole Austin, Nola Cockroft, Onalee Cohoon, Pat St. George, Pat Gilbert, Rachael Fizzell, Rachel Buffenbarger, Rachel Greco, Rachelle Jagger, Randy McCloud, Ranjit Singh, Raymone Gude, Rebecca Scutt, Rebecca Sorek, Rebecca Zader, Richard Montojo, Rochelle Tallman, Ronda & Casey Jones, Rosemary Possanza, Ryan Latourette, Samuel Konen, Sara Lerner, Sarah Soulon, Sarah Kier, Sarah Kovach, Sandra Hawkins, Scott Pohl, Shannon Guild, Shari Wolke, Shawn Bronson, Shawne Stone, Sheila Bell, Shelby Logel, Sheri Peterson, Shirley Mitchner, Sidney Sparks, Steph Benson, Stephanie Brokstad, Stephanie Taylor, Steve Barger, Sue Horak, Sunaree Marshall, Susan Jackson, Susan Borgman, Susan Burm, Susan Sowle, Sydney Rieske, Tamela Jones, Tammy Shiflett, Tammy Fletcher, Tosha Rios-Thomas, Tavia Zerman, Tayler Pacsai, TD Brown, Terah Venzant Chambers, Teresa Dyer, Teresa Miller, Terrance Augustine, Therese Edgett, Tiffany Organek, Tiffany Webster, Todd Marsh, Tony Pyle, Tonya McGill, Tonya Rice, Tracy Smith, Trista Strohaber, Ursula Averill, Vince Cook, Wendy Bradley, Zachary Berry, Zack Zulewski, Beth Schuchaskie, Robert Terranova, Jeff Anderson, Nancy Coleman, Fonda Brewer, Wendy Dill, Jessica Fuentes, Megan Spedoske, Nichole Shannon, Erica Ledesma, Laura Guild, Tyler Bradley, Marko Susnjar, Alvin Rightson, Stacy Washington, Greg Almy and Kim Manning

President DuFort reviewed the process for participating in the Zoom meeting for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education.

Secretary Shiflett reviewed the rules for public comment in the Zoom meeting for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education.

[Please tap here to read Secretary Shiflett's opening statement.](#)

[Please tap here to read Trustee Cwayna's opening statement.](#)

Board Trustee Clark Pierson advised most of her comments will be after the board hears from the public but noted she has responded to over 450 eMails this week and has put her phone number on every one of them. She expressed her appreciation for all the calls and letters.

Board Vice President Smith advised he will also defer his comments but appreciates what has been said so far by the other members. He noted he wanted to clarify this is a public body and there are legal requirements the board must abide by. He expressed his appreciation for all the messages and assured the public the board has received them noting while it may seem like you are sending a message to a generic eMail through the district website, the board members are receiving those communications in a timely manner. He reminded everyone being a public body, decisions cannot be made outside an open and transparent public meeting. He apologized if it felt like establishing this meeting took too long but asked for understanding in that all seven members needed to attend this meeting and all seven members have independent schedules that must be worked with to get this meeting scheduled to provide this opportunity to deliberate and so any actions the board does take cannot be called into question.

[Please tap here to read Trustee McKennon's opening statement.](#)

[Please tap here to read President Dufort's opening statement.](#)

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

District Employee and GLEA President Greg Almy read a prepared statement on behalf of the Grand Ledge Education Association condemning Dr. Metcalf's comments and actions noting the Association has a vote of no confidence from 85% of the teachers and asking the board to terminate Dr. Metcalf's employment.

District employee Nancy Coleman expressed her concerns regarding Dr. Metcalf's comments noting she knows him to be a good husband and father, but as a Superintendent, there is no trust. She encouraged Dr. Metcalf to resign and for the Board to create an oversight committee of diverse students, parents, community and board members going forward.

Community member Fonda Brewer advised she was devastated by the comments from Dr. Metcalf noting it is unacceptable in this day and age. While recognizing no one is perfect, no one deserves the kind of judgement Dr. Metcalf conveyed in his words.

Grand Ledge Public Schools Alumni Wendy Dill expressed her concerns with Dr. Metcalf's comments and asked the board to remove Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Jessica Fuentes expressed her concerns over Dr. Metcalf's comments and provided a synopsis of her interactions with Dr. Metcalf during her tenure as a teacher within the Grand Ledge Public Schools. She asked the Board to remove Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Megan Spedoske advised she had an awareness of the racism in Grand Ledge. My social justice profession would serve personally work to dismantle racism in GL. She expressed her views of Dr. Metcalf's comments and asked the board to remove Dr. Metcalf. She requested

the board provide authentic leadership, apologize appropriately, learn your own blind spot, listen and believe the lived experience of families of colors in this community.

Community Member Nicole Shannon noted she is calling on the board to remove Dr. Metcalf. She expressed she is pleased to see the board is leaning on their legal counsel and hopefully are looking for the best way to remove Dr. Metcalf without financial harm to the district. She expressed her views on Dr. Metcalf's comments noting actions have consequences and he failed the test as a leader. Grand Ledge needs to move toward a better future.

Community Member Erica Ledesma expressed her personal opinion on what a leader needs and she believes Dr. Metcalf does not have what is needed. She referenced a petition with over 6,000 signatures asking for Dr. Metcalf's removal. She asked the board to terminate Dr. Metcalf for breach of contract and help us be proud to be comets. She expressed her thanks to the GLEA and their statement made today.

Community Member Laura Guild provided the board with an overview of her interactions with Dr. Metcalf following the tragic passing of her son and noting as a result she was not surprised by his comments. She asked the Board to remove Dr. Metcalf.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Tyler Bradley provided the board with her encounters with racism as a student attending Grand Ledge Public Schools and noted there is no place for a leader with the views Dr. Metcalf expressed in his Facebook comment. She asked the Board to remove Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Margo Susnjar expressed our community and district cannot begin to heal until Dr. Metcalf is no longer employed by Grand Ledge Public Schools and demanded real, lasting policy change.

District Parent Stacy Washington advised the board she has had to defend her decision to send her bi-racial children to Grand Ledge in light of the reputation of this district. She advised there is no class or apology that will remove Dr. Metcalf's true feelings.

Community Member Lisa Ashbay Singh noted as a mother of bi-racial children she does not feel the district handled this situation well. She noted this is not the first instance of racial bias and encouraged each of the members to read these testimonials on line.

Community Member Ranjit Singh commented Dr. Metcalf should have shown better judgment, but at least should have issued a proper apology. In absence of this, the community has come together and is demanding proper action.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni John Hawkins noted he had many good experiences at Grand Ledge High School, but there were bad experiences too. He provided an overview of some of his pleasant and very unpleasant experiences while a Grand Ledge student. He expressed he was saddened by Dr. Metcalf's comments noting he fails to understand the outright racism that continues to wreak havoc in the world today. He asked the Board to take this opportunity to change the district and requested the Board remove Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Matt Newburg noted characteristics he believes a good leader should possess. He noted he has never spoken with Dr. Metcalf so he researched his history and found what he perceives as a pattern, noting even in his apology he stated he looked forward to listening to people's concerns and becoming a better leader but isn't on this call to hear the concerns.

Community Member Kelsey Maccombs expressed her views regarding Dr. Metcalf's comments noting he should be setting the standard and raising the bar. Beyond the removal of Dr. Metcalf, she asked the for ongoing professional development for staff and continue to look for ways to improve our district and community.

Community Member Donald Lovell expressed he has been moved by the community action and thanked everyone for stepping up. He expressed this is no black or brown or white, just an entire community as a whole and noting this is the only way we, as a community, will get through this. In closing he did comment that the staff at Wacousta Elementary has always treated his family like family.

Community Member Denise Clarity expressed the district has no good will with the community and called for the removal of Dr. Metcalf and diversity training for the board, all faculty and staff.

District Employee Eddie Saade expressed the board must protect our community, our students and staff and asked for the removal of Dr. Metcalf noting he believes if he stays there will be more collateral damage.

Community Member Todd Marsh noted no leader is perfect but some mistakes require immediate actions. Dr. Metcalf's lack of an immediate apology and the board not acting immediately to reprimand Dr. Metcalf was wrong. He asked the board to remove Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Rachel Kuntzsch read a segment of the Grand Ledge High School Student Handbook regarding harassing and intimidating behavior. She referenced the letters of PRIDE that are displayed in the halls. She remarked if we hold our students to these standards, we must hold our leaders to higher standards. She implored to board to step up and return the PRIDE to Grand Ledge by removing Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Rachelle Jagger noted she is ashamed to be a part of this community right now. She expressed she was appalled by Dr. Metcalf's comments. She asked the board to take action to make a statement.

Community Member Celine Smith read a prepared statement that she also posted on YouTube.

Community Member Terrance Augustine noted he doesn't take calling for someone job lightly he then read a letter from him and other elected leaders calling for the removal of Dr. Metcalf.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Jordan Stevens noted growing up in Grand Ledge was interesting. She referenced the experience of previous speakers and her feelings on their experiences. She believes there should be more education on racism. She expressed it shouldn't have taken this long to remove Dr. Metcalf. She noted she heard about 10 minutes ago that Dr. Metcalf put in his resignation.

Trustee Clark Pierson noted a point of order in that Dr. Metcalf resigned from MASA, not the district. She was under the impression Dr. Metcalf would be in attendance and asked for a recess to contact him noting she believes there has been a misunderstanding.

President DuFort noted she was preparing to recess for 30 minutes for a lunch break and will reach out to Dr. Metcalf noting she fully expected him to join the meeting.

The meeting recessed at 12:02 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 12:32 p.m.

President DuFort advised there was misunderstanding on Dr. Metcalf's part. He was under the understanding that he was not invited to the meeting. But President DuFort had advised he should join the open meeting, but he would not be involved in the Closed Session.

Community Member Dawn Velianoff expressed she feels Dr. Metcalf lacks empathy and understanding that cannot be undone through a diversity class. She asked the Board to remove Dr. Metcalf and asked the board to explain their statement.

Grand Ledge School student Zach Zulewski advised his generation wants change and to embrace diversity. He commented there is no place for racism in the leadership of Grand Ledge Public Schools.

Community Member Jacqueline Freeman noted Dr. Metcalf lacks the moral authority and trust of the community and its teachers and respectfully requested the board do the right thing.

Community Member Ella Hanks explained what her family goes through as a member of this community and stated it needs to change.

Community Members Pat & Fred Williams individually addressed the board noting Dr. Metcalf's responsibility is to lead this district to lead the students and staff of this district and no amount of diversity training will fix this mistrust. They also commented on the Board's initial statement and that is caused damage and hurt reminding the board they are elected to represent the district and the community.

District Staff Chong Bedard explained her concerns joining the teaching staff but the parents helped her alleviate those fears. She commented all of this was shattered on Sunday when the leader of this district fell far short. She commented Grand Ledge has needed improvement in its outlook of diversity for a long time and in for this to happen, Dr. Metcalf must go.

Grand Ledge School Alumni Amanda Cormier noted she is normally proud to be from Grand Ledge and she loves her hometown. She went on to say she was disgusted when she read Dr. Metcalf's comments and noted victim blaming is only there to silence the victim.

District Parent Frenka McCan noted she chose to send her son to Grand Ledge Public Schools in spite of hearing it was a racist place. She commented she is thankful her son has not had any

issues so far. She stated things definitely need to change and Dr. Metcalf must be held accountable asking how we can trust a leader with no empathy.

Community Member Thea Oatman noted the Grand Ledge community has taught her more in a week than Dr. Metcalf has learned in his entire tenure. She noted she feels Dr. Metcalf is unable to do his job after the hurtful remarks and asked what we, as a community, can do in the future and wants to hear more from the board about this.

Community Member Robert Batterham expressed he was dismayed to hear Dr. Metcalf's comments.

Community Member Nikki Racine told the board the parents are here and want to help but the board need to hear the concerns expressed today

Community Member Kari Thompson expressed she is second guessing their decision to be a part of this community. She encouraged the board to terminate Dr. Metcalf's employment.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Meaghan Jacobs commented we can do better.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Zachary Berry expressed he was infuriated with Dr. Metcalf's comments. He thanked those who spoke before him telling the board this has been going on for a long time and he is holding the board accountable.

Aaron Sternaman of Paloma asked the board not to ignore the people speaking today. He asked were Dr. Metcalf was noting these people need to see him. He stated Dr. Metcalf's job as an educator is to empower students to form their own opinions, not force his upon them.

Community Member Raymone Gude advised he has held many community positions including being in law enforcement and has served as a coach in the district. He noted he has faced racism issues personally and he prays for Dr. Metcalf and hopes he can understand how his words have impacted this district.

Daniel Drent of Grand Rapids spoke about peaceful protests, riots and use of the Confederate Flag noting this is not just happening in Grand Ledge. It is happening throughout Michigan and across the country. He referenced the board's statement noting this makes them just as guilty as Dr. Metcalf and they need to use this as a learning lesson.

Ashley Bellant of Lansing provided the board with her accounts as an athlete from Eastern High School when they played Grand Ledge. She noted this issue is hurting Grand Ledge business owners and the reputation of the City. She advised the board's decision today is largely symbolic noting there is a lot of work that must go on after today.

Joe Spaulding of California noted Dr. Metcalf's post revealed either he has no filter and says whatever comes to mind, or he does have a filter and this is just the tip of the iceberg. Either one leaves only one outcome and that is the removal of Dr. Metcalf. He commented he would not let the kids of his friends or family attend Grand Ledge Schools under Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Kelli Hammond spoke to the lack of diversity in the Grand Ledge district but noted it is still her responsibility to ensure her students get diversity training.

Community Member Rachel Buffenbarger noted she has two students in the district but removed one due to the administration. She called on Dr. Metcalf to do the right thing and resign noting he has lost the public trust and there is no getting it back.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Stacia King provided an overview of her time at Grand Ledge High School including fights with teachers and student threats against minorities. She commented Dr. Metcalf has a Ph.D. and is supposed to be an expert in education which leaves no excuse.

Community Member Jaime Barger expressed she is very disappointed in the actions and words of Dr. Metcalf and response of the board thus far, but she is hopeful for what is coming.

Community Member Alber Adams noted he serves as a coach at Grand Ledge High School but expressed his disappointment in the school system. He expressed Dr. Metcalf's statements were very offensive to him and only he can make a change, but if the district keeps him, we are taking a step back 20 years. He asked for the board to be a part of the solution and terminate Dr. Metcalf.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Angelo Warner noted as a 2001 graduate she saw racism first hand clear back then noting Grand Ledge has had a toxic history for as long as she can remember. She commented that the fact no one is speaking in defense of Dr. Metcalf speaks volumes. People from all across the country are coming back for you to hear their stories.

Community Member Luciana Viramontes advised she is an attorney and understands the board's legal and financial ramifications of their decisions. She also noted she understands the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment and she believes in the justice system and being innocent until proven guilty. She expressed her dismay of Dr. Metcalf's words and advised the board the students, staff, parents and community are watching.

Community Member Sean Vaughn noted there have been several students who have referenced the same experience and we live in a time where systemic racism is heard but not addressed. He remarked it is time for a new normal where we are not demoralized by the color of our skin.

President DuFort called a recess at 2:06 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:15 p.m.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni George Berry noted he finds Dr. Metcalf's statements disgusting noting Grand Ledge has long had a reputation. Having a leader who speaks in this manner reflects poorly on the entire community. He recommends the board participate in sensitivity training after terminating Dr. Metcalf.

Community member Pamela Berry noted it is disturbing to know she trusted to send her kids to a school where she thought they would learn to integrate with other people but instead experiences



racism from their peers. Children of the next generation need to know we have to view each other as human beings not as black, brown or white.

Daniel Eakin of California noted sensitivity training for Dr. Metcalf does not apply as he is certain he received that training in his many years of schooling. He noted this issue is bigger than Dr. Metcalf and students deserve a world that is more inclusive. He stated the board would be doing the community a disservice to keep Dr. Metcalf in this position of power.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Camille Adams noted she is bi-racial but is light skinned and was provided the privilege of being among her peers. However, she saw the divide of Grand Ledge High School.

Community Member Theresa Abed noted schools are supposed to reflect the heart and soul of a community and Dr. Metcalf's comments do not instill that. She remarked our system is broken, our nation is broken. She urged Dr. Metcalf to resign.

Community Member Laura Guild read her statement from early providing an overview of her interactions with Dr. Metcalf following the tragic passing of her son and noting as a result of this interaction she was not surprised by his comments. She stated Dr. Metcalf needs to resign.

Chelsey Martinez of Dimondale addressed the board noting she is a Schools of Choice parent advising she has experienced diversity and inclusivity in her student's classroom. She noted Dr. Metcalf's words were unacceptable and asked why he is waiting to resign. She noted change is coming and all the board's words and actions will be remembered.

Community Member Caroline deMauriac noted she is new to the district and does not have children in the district, but she was profoundly outraged by Dr. Metcalf's comments.

Community Member Paula Cunningham asked if the board was just patiently waiting for this meeting to be over so they can return to normal and advised the board to make sure their actions are not complicit.

President DuFort advised the board will be going into Closed Session with district legal counsel at the end of this meeting and advising Dr. Metcalf will not be joining that Closed Session.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Haley Brunton noted she is not here to berate Dr. Metcalf but to tell the board of her experience while at Grand Ledge High School specifically as it regards reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She advised the teacher told the class they did not have to say the "N" word, but several of her classmates were excited to say it.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Kara Graci provided her background for her unique perspective noting she is saddened to learn what is going on but she is not surprised. Urge you to address the actions of Dr. Metcalf and look at your policies as you move forward. This is just the start of your crisis.

Grand Ledge Schools Student Sara Downs remarked she doesn't want her classmates to feel unsafe and that she wants to represent her school, but not like this.

Former Community Member Tamela Jones remarked there is not much she can say that hasn't already been said noting every encounter she had with Dr. Metcalf she felt her concerns fell on deaf ears. She thanked Mr. Almy and the teachers of Grand Ledge and remarked Dr. Metcalf should be removed immediately.

Community Member Alexis Travis noted she has had a positive experience within the district and was surprised when she saw Dr. Metcalf's comments showing his lack of understanding of systemic racism and can no longer lead this district as he has lost the community's trust. She advised the Board needs to terminate Dr. Metcalf immediately and look at instilling more diverse hiring practices, implement training for the board and staff and partner with the community, parents, students and staff noting she stands ready to assist.

Community Member Jennifer Pizzo noted she can't say a whole lot that that the people before her haven't already said, or say it any better. She advised everyone will be watching and doesn't believe allowing Dr. Metcalf to resign is what the community needs. She also encouraged an increase in racial diversity training for the board and staff and within our educational platform.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Tiffany Webster stated George Floyd is dead through no fault of his own. She expressed she is ashamed of Dr. Metcalf and the board regarding this situation. She noted it was not until after she moved away that she realized how deeply racism is so widely accepted and integrated into the Grand Ledge Community. She provided an overview of her experience while at Grand Ledge Schools. Ask that Dr. Metcalf be removed and if the board statement is truly the position of this board, they all need to be removed.

Community Member Katie Pontifex noted she is well aware of the district's reputation and systemic racism is a public health crisis. She expressed she understand the board has a big decision, but reminded them they are representing this community. She noted she agrees with freedom of speech, but noted our words have consequences. She stated we tell our children to think before you speak, and Dr. Metcalf did not do this so when now was the time to rise for change instead we have watched him fall.

District Employee Lucinda Shier advised she was very disappointed in Dr. Metcalf's words and the board's response and wants our community to know she stand with them along with our students and asks for Metcalf's resignation or the board to terminate.

Caleb Shin of Okemos remarked he is disappointed and asked the board to remove Dr. Metcalf.

Community Member Derrick Worthey noted he was appalled by Dr. Metcalf's words and feels they come from a mindset that is comfortable with his racism and white supremacy. He noted only small changes have been made since Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated, and we should not be having these conversations in 2020.

Community Member Ellie Darnell remarked she wants to use her white privilege to support the black community and encouraged the board to set an example that Grand Ledge is going to make significant changes.

Community Member Jordan Stevens expressed he is glad the board is listening now but actions have consequences. Everyone is watching. He noted he is shocked and thrilled to see everyone come together.

Grand Ledge Schools Student Jaden Austin remarked Dr. Metcalf's comments should not have been said, but we can't go back. This should not have happened. He asked Dr. Metcalf to put himself in an African American's shoes, especially one of our students.

Community Member Amy Hall noted she has four black children, three went to Grand Ledge and two left before graduating because of issues in the school. She commended Wacousta Elementary but expressed concerns for her student moving to middle school. She recommended ongoing diversity training throughout the school district.

Grand Ledge Schools Student Devan Wilson advised he joined this call to hear and listen to everyone's stories. He noted he has seen all the board members on this video but has not seen Dr. Metcalf's video but for a few seconds here and there since he joined the meeting.

District Employee Annemarie Reik noted she is appalled at Dr. Metcalf's original comments and his apology. I go to work and teach there are consequences for your actions, but Dr. Metcalf believes he has done nothing wrong. She noted Dr. Metcalf has lost the confidence of the staff, students and community. She expressed the trauma of our students and staff as a result of Dr. Metcalf's comments will go on if the board does not take action today.

Community Member Shannon Young noted she grew up in Bay City in a predominately white community. She shared the issues her sons have experienced while attending Grand Ledge Schools. She expressed training for Dr. Metcalf is not enough and he must go.

Community Member Kim Shoup advised she does not think Dr. Metcalf is an evil person, but believes he has lost the respect of the teachers and community and encouraged him to work with the board to come to an agreement advising we need to heal as a community.

Former Employee Denise Green provided an overview of her first encounter with Dr. Metcalf back in 2011 and interactions with him through her tenure as a teacher and a representative of the teacher's union.

Grand Ledge Student Jeremiah Smith remarked it is not enough to just not be racist, you have to be anti-racist.

Incoming Teacher Brandon Lawler noted he made assumptions coming to Grand Ledge High School but he made a commitment. After contacting his mentor teacher, he felt relief. Then he saw Dr. Metcalf's comments. He applauded the board for being here, for listening, for facing the community. He remarked Dr. Metcalf's place in education is done. He was glad to hear GLEA's statement and noted he stands with them.

Community Member Tonya McGill commented all adults should model respect in difficult situations. Students are watching. She noted she is angry we are having this conversation in 2020

but if we ignore what was said, we are saying it's okay. She noted she prays our board does the right thing.

Grand Ledge Schools Student Subhi Sundaram noted that since 1<sup>st</sup> grade there have been lots of times she was the only person of color in his classroom. She noted there is no reason for racism, its 2020. She advised she expects leadership – expects a statement of closure. She noted Dr. Metcalf has the right to freedom of speech, but his words have a lot of impact and he should have known that. She noted the Board needs to do what is right.

President DuFort called a recess at 3:52 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 4:00 p.m.

Community Member Andrea Beachnau noted she has known Dr. Metcalf for years but agrees the culture in Grand Ledge is difficult. She further noted the district talks about valuing diversity but it is not just race. She has to fight hard for her daughter with down syndrome to fit where she should be. She encouraged the board to make the right decision.

Kathy Reed spoke of everything wrong within the Grand Ledge community being piled on Dr. Metcalf. Candace Owen has said similar things but everyone is twisting the narrative. She noted Dr. Metcalf never said anything about a black person, he said citizenship. The racists were the police officers. She encouraged the board not to hold Dr. Metcalf responsible for the entire community.

Community Member Amanda Garza thanked everyone for the ignorance that has opened the door that this community needed. She asked the board to take this unique opportunity and learn what is needed moving forward.

Community Member Teresa Ruckle noted she appreciates the position the board is in but encouraged them to hear everyone who has spoken advising they have a choice now. She understands it is a tough decision that impacts someone they have respected but noting that someone in Grand Ledge has to stand up for black people.

Community Member Ella Hanks noted she realizes our community has a small minority of black people, but we need to stand together, to have better relationships, better communication. She expressed she wants to see better things.

Community Member Kyle Dymond expressed his anger for Dr. Metcalf's comments, thanked the board for giving him and all the other the opportunity to speak and hopes they heard the calls for diversity, committees and creating a community that is connected.

Community Member Steve Klingbiel noted this feels like the time. Dr. Metcalf should resign. We have all listened everyone's comments. There must be precedent set that victim blaming is not okay. Dr. Metcalf's comments are totally inexcusable.

District Employee Tasha Rios-Thomas noted she feels the personal experiences shared must lead us to take action. She agrees Dr. Metcalf should resign. She noted she wants to be a part of the change. She can do more, she can do better

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Kate Fitts advised Dr. Metcalf's comments were absolutely racist. You don't victim blame – when they are victim of a modern-day lynching. She implored the school board to bring in anti-racist schooling noting the community is not going to tolerate any more. She encouraged the board to take the advice of the people of color that have spoken today.

Community Member Jessica Buffenbarger expressed she does not feel Dr. Metcalf has the morale capacity to be a leader in Grand Ledge and she hopes he gets the message that he needs to step down.

District Employee Melissa Mazzola noted Mr. Almy has expressed our teacher union position but she wanted to let the students who spoke today know how proud all the teachers are of them and that they hear them and stand with them.

Melissa Allegretti of Illinois not a community member but has family members who are and relatives who are students. She noted her mother was an educator who took her roll seriously for inclusion. She asked the board to stand with their students and community.

Grand Ledge Schools Student Sam Kuntzsch commented he looked up to the board and administration but has come to realization if the community puts people like this in power, then we should be able to take the people out.

Community Member Matthew Nixon noted racism is a real thing. He noted Dr. Metcalf had the ultimate influence over students and people are here expressing their hurt over words invalidating their experiences. He noted Dr. Metcalf's actions have to have consequences.

Community Member Liam Shaffer noted he has very little connection to the school district and noted he was home schooled. He provided his parent's decision to homeschool him. He expressed he has very little confidence in the US education system. He addressed Dr. Metcalf's statement and defense of those statements noting it angered him.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Lindsay Kemp noted Dr. Metcalf's comments made her ashamed to be a comet. She noted Dr. Metcalf's level of education would have already provided him diversity / sensitivity training so the point is moot. She implored the board to review the Superintendent's contract which clearly states they can terminate him based on his act of moral turpitude and to keep that in mind what they are hearing from the community.

Community Member Chuck Pantera spoke in support of Dr. Metcalf expressing he knows him to be a good man, not a racist and believes he was simply stating people shouldn't put themselves in a bad situation. He expressed he believes Dr. Metcalf has done good things for our school district and our community.

Morgan Quinney-Naval of Lansing noted that Dr. Metcalf's comments were insensitive and whether or not George Floyd used a counterfeit bill or not, he still had rights and was still innocent

until proven guilty. She also noted some people don't have the option of not being subject to interaction with the police simply due to the color of their skin.

Helen Hart noting speaking from the point of listening to the families who have attended your district, if this situation is not rectified she does not want her organization associated with the Grand Ledge district. We have to be better.

Former Community Member Shannon Norris noted she left Grand Ledge due to damage done to her family within the school system. She choice to teach in the Lansing District following her student teaching being done at Grand Ledge. She stated she felt Dr. Metcalf charged Mr. Floyd for his crimes without due process.

Community Member Jessie Fitzhenry expressed she did not feel Dr. Metcalf's apology was sincere and it was only made in an attempt to keep his job noting she believes his real opinion is what he posted on Facebook.

Community Member Ariel Rogers expressed her disappointment with the Grand Ledge Community noting she has been threatened and it breaks her heart to see this in action.

Community Member Layne Ingram noted she was not shocked when she saw Dr. Metcalf's comments and subsequent apology, neither of which were good. She noted the community needs the board and their voice to see real change and hopes they have heard what has been said here today.

Community Member Lisa Powers expressed she is saddened that Dr. Metcalf has not put an end to this noting this has been very disheartening.

Community Member Casey Brassington expressed she doesn't have a lot to say that hasn't already been said, but any place can make a change if wanted. She noted she has had a positive experience in Grand Ledge Schools but her children are white and she is a white woman. She wants better for all kids.

Community Member Kris Straud shared when she was first considering the district a college referenced it as a racist school. She has had a positive experience to date and the district has been supportive of her LGBTQ child. However, she believes Dr. Metcalf should be terminated.

Grand Ledge Schools Alumni Ben Kuntzsch expressed the comments of Dr. Metcalf were insensitive, racist and arrogant and noted we, as a society, cannot condone this behavior and the board must remove Dr. Metcalf.

Genevive Graham of Eaton Rapids addressed what she perceives as meanness in Dr. Metcalf's hearts and noted everyone has to care about people.

President DuFort recessed the meeting at 5:13 p.m. due to inappropriate content appearing on the screen.

The meeting reconvened at 5:37 p.m.

President DuFort apologized to the community for the abrupt end to the initial meeting. However, the meeting was “Zoom Bombed”. She noted the board recognizes there were still three (3) people who wanted to address the board and encouraged them to return after the board reconvenes from Closed Session. She also reminded there is another meeting on Monday, June 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. and noted people are welcome to attend that meeting as well to address the board.

**CLOSED SESSION – Attorney/Client Privilege**

**Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. McKennon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into closed session to consider the contents of a confidential and privileged attorney client communication, per Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.**

**Roll Call Vote**

Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>	President DuFort	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>
Mr. McKennon	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously at 5:43 p.m.

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 6:50 p.m.

**Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Mr. McKennon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to authorize and direct the board’s legal counsel, Thrun Law Firm, to draft charges seeking immediate termination of the Superintendent’s employment pursuant to paragraph 7 of the Superintendent’s Employment Contract dated January 1, 2020 and give notice of the charges to Dr. Metcalf. Dr. Brian Metcalf is to be placed on paid Administrative Leave effective immediately. The board will appoint an Acting Superintendent at our next regularly scheduled meeting, Monday, June 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**

**Roll Call Vote**

Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>	Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>	Mr. McKennon	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>	President DuFort	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>YES</u>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

Ms. Clark Pierson noted she has no comments other than tonight would have been the Grand Ledge High School Class of 2020 Commencement Ceremony.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:



Jon Shiflett, Secretary



Denise DuFort, President