

# GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## *Board of Education*

Committee of the Whole / Work Session  
June 14 & 21, 2021

### MINUTES

President Sara Clark Pierson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. She led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Interim Superintendent Dave Chapin indicated the presence of **Board Members**: Sara Clark Pierson, Jarrod Smith Nicole Shannon, Jon Shiflett, Patrick McKennon, Ben Cwayna. **Central Office Administrators**: Dave Chapin, Bill Barnes, Steve Gabriel, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance** Marcus Davenport, Lena Schaffer, Melissa Mazzola, Kelly Lanqin, Jason Leitch, Jeff McNeilly, Rachel Marcero, John Clore, Beth Crofut, Greg Almy, Laura O'Connor, Nicole Leitch, Marlene Promer, Jon Wise, Tara Kopietz, Jennifer Broadbent, Howard Pizzo, Nell Pizzo, Erica Ledesma, Tony Olds, Scott Kissane, Erin Jones, Shari Kissane, Ben Kopitz, Amber Redman, Nick Redman, Douglas Brooks, Taylor Brush, Robert Jones, Ashley Core, Ann Paquette Lukens, Dairus Reynnet, Stacy Dohm, Emily Williamson, Lori VanHoosen, Katy Hebert, Patrick Hebert, Jeff Waybright, Jenny Waybright, Anthony Seaver, Raquel Dieteich, Denise Clarity, Chris Boyd, Doreen Earl, Roy Atherton, Deborrah Ousley-Cole, Tiff Valo, Carol Wilson-Duffy, Kim Mulvenna, Gena Swanson, Erica McDiarmid, Mary Moore, Bill Albrecht, Nick Kuhl, , Taylor Brush, Gail Shafer, Margo Susnjar, Amanda Garza, Angel Landis, Julie Douglas, Dave Logel, Beth Schuchaskie, Joan Pedraza, Jenny Jarrard, Aaron Yusten, Cathy Fox, Crystal VanWalsum, Jill Dayton Fillingham, William Sherman, Sean Stevens, Fay Thomas, Ginny Batchelder, Jim Manning, Benjamin Lund, Kellee Auge, Nate Moore, James R. Waldo, Zack Stevens, Andy Edick, Gina Edick, Patricia Clark Block, Phil Cutts, D'Anne Golub, Jill Mangrum, Frank Gentilozzi, Margaret Allen, Lindsey Grostefon, Erin Snyder, Cynthia Zerbe, Katie Casteel, Annie Reik, Carey Sleight, Erin Marsh, Rachelle Jagger, LeeAnn Dayton, Melissa Mazzola, Kyle Dymond, Heather Algrim, Nancy Folkertsma, Traci Gentilozzi, Jason Westra-Hall, Ryleigh Scott, Elizabeth Price, Jim Price, Lucinda Shier, Stephanie Taylor, Cassey Tien, Claire Mull, Josh Austin, Lisa Nelson, Matt Pierson, Thea Oatman, Julie Renner, Joe Spalding, Karin Gyger, Deanne Arking, Rob LaFay, Melanie Gloden, Sally Jo Nelton, Mark Laforet, Nancy Clark Coleman, Kystal Nurse, Sarah Al-Shakh, Ashleigh Shepard, Katie Grass, Chad Little, Elyse Fox, Susan Burm, Dawne Velianoff, John Hubbard, Erin Ries, Sky Powell, Kurt Rhoads, Diane Rhoads, Brooklyn Rhoads, Elisa Curriston, Michelle Lopez, Annette Kelly, Leesha Lee, Jessica Leopold, Teresa Miller, Alyssa Cummings, Alyssa Murphy, Tavia Zerman, Michael Forman, Erin Jones, Kelly Williams, Henry Arking, Kelly Conaty, Kris Amey, Pauline Quagliata, Ursula Averill, Tim Totten, Ashley O'Neil, Joseph Walczak, Nancy Backus, Leanna Agheneza, Julie Brunk, DiAndrea Herrst, Shari Kissame, Andrew Torrey, Abigail Jackson, Carole Schmidt, Jason Slenay, Ben Flowerday, Kiel Gloden, Warren Lester, Miranda Coburn, Kim Laforet, Beverly Winstanley, Mary Carlson, David Sands, Alison Walczak, Whitney Craig, Nancy Lonberger, Theresa Abed, Jennifer Bouck, Alice Mills, Carolyn Bernardi, Meghan Ritchey, Scott Kissane, Jon Wise, Robert Kinnison, Alex Hoeksema, Deborah Diesen, Michael Perrine, Jason Berkholder, Eve Berkholder, Kim Abed, Russell Swanson, John Bernardi, Roxanne Pollard, Meghan Greenhoe, Chris Terranova, Brian McLaughlin, Tim Daniel, and Kim Manning

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The Board had a moment of silence to honor the life of Malachi Williams, 4<sup>th</sup> grader from Beagle lost way too soon.

President Clark Pierson took a moment to introduce Dr. Marcus Davenport who will join the district as Superintendent of Schools on July 1, 2021.

**GLPS EXTENDED COVID-19 LEARNING PLAN UPDATE**

Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services Bill Barnes provided the board with the two-way communication for and advise the district will continue with the currently approved Learning Plan through the end of the school year on Friday, June 18, 2021.

Additionally, Dr. Barnes provided the board with an update regarding the summer school program.

Dr. Chapin commended Dr. Barnes for his leadership in getting the summer school program off the ground.

President Clark Pierson expressed the board is very grateful for this programming and thrilled to see the number of students who will be taking advantage of this opportunity.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS TO INCLUDE THE GLPS EXTENDED COVID-19 LEARNING PLAN.**

Secretary Shannon read the rules for addressing the board.

Laura O'Connor addressed the board encouraging them to concentrate on education and leaving the COVID decisions to be driven by the CDC.

Amber Swint thanked the parents who were in attendance and Mr. Cwayna. She supports in person learning, full time for all students, expressed concerns with the hiring of Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews and her believe the district is teaching Critical Race theory and concluded asking all members of the board, except Ben Cwayna, to resign.

Nick Crofut expressed his sadness in starting recall ballots for members of the board of education as he does not have confidence the district will be back to 100% in person learning in the fall. He expressed his hope everyone will stay professional noting this has gotten emotional on both sides.

Jeff McNeilly addressed the board to express his concerns with requirements for students to wear masks and encouraging the board to unmask the kids.

Don Brooks addressed the board to express his concerns regarding Critical Race Theory, Common Core and encouraging the return to teaching students computer science or skilled trades such as masonry, carpentry, how to repair a car. He encouraged the return to teaching the three R's.

Michael Perrine expressed he feels there is a disconnect noting Grand Ledge hasn't specifically said they are going to teach critical race theory but if Grand Ledge is, there needs to be information shared breaking it down systematically so parents know what is being taught to the kids.

Beth Crofut addressed the board to express her concerns about the district being back to full time in person learning next year after receiving several text messages and emails regarding virtual learning for next year.

Erin Jones addressed the board expressing her frustration with teachers traveling to Florida for Spring Break and noting if the district does not return to full time in person next year she will enroll her students in a different district.

Raquel Ditriech addressed the board to express her concerns regarding the requirement of students wearing masks. She noted she home schools her four kids and encouraged the board to listen to the science and the effects wearing a mask has on children.

President Clark Pierson recessed the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

President Clark Pierson reconvened the meeting at 6:50 p.m. reminding the audience there is time limits on public comment as is part of board policy.

John Clore addressed the board advising he knows the audience is not supposed to be attacking anybody and expressed his concerns with the mannerisms of the board members. He noted he believes federal funding from the CARES Act has perpetrated COVID and now he hears Critical Race Theory and questions how much the district is getting from the federal government for that. He encouraged an audit of the schools noting these funds are just being used to line "their pockets".

Tara Kopietz addressed the board noting she moved back to Grand Ledge because she wanted her children to attend Grand Ledge Public Schools. She shared she pulled them out of district and sent them to private school this year and her kids have excelled. She noted her students will continue in the private school because she can't put them back with virtual learning, masking and social distancing. She encouraged the board to consider unmasking the kids and letting the kids be kids again.

Lena Schaefer addressed the board noting eight of her nine children has graduated from Grand Ledge but she has decided not to send her sixth grader back because of mask mandates. She noted she will do online schooling with him next year. She further expressed she does not want her child to be taught critical race theory.

Katherine Flowerday addressed the board advising she removed her kids from the district due to the COVID restrictions the district had in place. She stated as she has watched the year unfold, she is uncertain they will return in the fall. She expressed her concern of critical race theory and the virtual learning noting she feels this will hurt the kids even more.

Dawne Velianoff addressed the board congratulating Dr. Chapin on his retirement, welcoming Dr. Davenport and stating it is a sad place we are in. She expressed concerns in teachers wearing black students matter noting all students matters.

Erica Ledesma addressed the board to thank everyone. She noted she has listened to everyone and stated her family has learned a lot this year. She noted her son excelled under the virtual platform and advising he will continue virtually next year but her daughter has struggled. She encouraged everyone in attendance to get involved with their PTA, club leadership, volunteering in the schools. She thanked the board for moving next year in a positive direction.

Jennifer Broadbent addressed the board sharing she has three children and she moved her youngest to Portland this year. She advised she will move the others if Grand Ledge is not full-time next fall. She commented masks do not work and asked the board to step down.

Rachel Marcino addressed the board sharing an excerpt from the Byron Center School Board Meeting from a doctor of optometry on the impact of masks on children's vision including worse visual skills, lower oxygen levels and higher CO2 levels. She noted parents are hopeful in working together with the board to come up with a consensus that suits everyone.

President Clark Pierson asked Dr. Chapin to speak to the Virtual Learning communication that is being sent out by the district.

Dr. Chapin noted the district will continue to offer an online, or virtual, option for students next year. He noted his recent communications have repeated advised the district is planning for the start of the 2021-2022 school year as a full-day, five-day-a-week schedule for all students. The district has heard that some students excelled under the virtual platform this year and the district believes it would be remiss if we didn't offer that learning option to those that might want it, or thrive under it.

President Clark Pierson noted this is just a level of increased flexibility.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**A. APPROVAL OF THE GLPS EXTENDED COVID-19 LEARNING PLAN**

**Motion by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve returning students to full-day, every-day, in person learning for the remainder of the year.**

There was no second to Mr. Cwayna's motion.

**Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education approve the Continuation of the GLPS Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan, as presented and approved on March 22, 2021 with the understanding the current schedule will be maintained for the balance of the 2020-2021 school year.**

Ms. Shannon	_____	Mr. McKennon	_____
Mr. Smith	_____	Mrs. DuFort	_____
President Clark Pierson	_____	Mr. Shiflett	_____
Mr. Cwayna	_____		

An exchange among the members led to increased agitation in the room.

President Clark Pierson recessed the meeting at 7:15 p.m. for the remainder of the evening and advised the district will post a time when the meeting can be reconvened.

President Clark Pierson reconvened the meeting at 6:01 p.m. on Monday, June 21, 2021. She noted that Ms. Shannon was not in attendance for tonight's meeting but was in attendance on June 14 and that Mrs. DuFort who was not present at the June 14 meeting, is present tonight.

She went on to thank everyone for coming and caring about the district noting there may be disagreements but there is an exciting year ahead with wonderful things coming for Grand Ledge Public Schools for many years to come.

**Mr. Smith withdrew his support of the motion to approve of the GLPS Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan. Motion failed.**

**APPROVAL OF SUPERINTENDENT’S CONTRACT**

**Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Superintendent Contract of Dr. Marcus Davenport, as presented.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Dr. Davenport thanked the board and community. He noted there is no blueprint for coming off a pandemic, but noting his job is to do the very best he can for all students. He noted he will be a leader who listens and a leader of action.

**APPROVAL OF EMPLOYEE CONTRACT WITH GRAND LEDGE ADMINISTRATORS EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

**Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Employee Contract with the Grand Ledge Administrators Educational Association, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR SALARY SCHEDULE**

**Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Central Office Administrator Salary Schedule, effective July 1, 2021, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES, BOARD POLICY NEG700 AND TEACHER LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Board Meeting Minutes, Board Operations Policy NEG700 and the Teacher Leave of Absence for Renee Sommerlot, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF HAYES INTERMEDIATE LIBRARY / MAKER SPACE PURCHASE**

**Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Library Collection / Maker Space Purchase for the Hayes Intermediate School from Mackin Educational Resources in the amount of \$252,371.67 using General Fund Dollars, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MDOT PERFORMANCE RESOLUTION**

**Motion by Mr. McKennon, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Michigan Department of Transportation Performance Resolution for Grand Ledge Public Schools, as presented.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

The motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MDOT CONTRACT #21-5200 AUTHORIZED SIGNERS**

Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Michigan Department of Transportation Contract #21-5200 Authorized Signers Resolution, as presented.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

The motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF SINKING FUND, PROPOSAL 1 & 2 BOND INVOICES**

Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Sinking Fund Invoices in the amount of \$17,772.01, Proposal 1 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$1,808,321.19 and Proposal 2 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$1,206,113.72, as presented.

Mr. McKennon provided an overview of the invoices and noted all invoices had been reviewed and approved to be brought forward by the Board Bond Advisory Committee.

**The motion carried unanimously with President Clark Pierson abstaining from the vote in compliance with MCL 380.1255.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. McKennon provided the rules for addressing the board.

Melissa Mazzola thanked the board for their work this year and welcomed Dr. Davenport. She expressed the teachers are looking forward to being in-person, full time, five days a week next year and removing masks to see the students' smiles. She addressed EDI expressing support for the work of the committee and commenting she wants all students, families and staff to feel welcome at Grand Ledge Public Schools and went on to advise CRT is not being discussed to be taught at Grand Ledge Public Schools.

Jennifer Bouck thanked the board and Dr. Chapin and congratulated and welcomed Dr. Davenport. She noted Greg Almy could not join this evening so she is speaking for both of them. She read a statement on display at Arlington National Cemetery.

Shawn Brownson addressed the board to provide information on how she has to diversify her curriculum to meet the needs of her students noting all students come from different backgrounds and have different life experiences and she celebrates their individuality. She expressed support of the district's EDI Committee.

Heather Algrim addressed the board seeking face-to-face learning next year and noting the board has faced harsh criticism. Despite her disappointment over this last school year, she believes the board made their best decisions and she has never thought the board should be recalled. She thanked the members for all they do. She welcome Dr. Davenport.

Brenda Thelen addressed the board asking what is driving the school board, commenting masks don't work, and stating we have all been played. She referenced how many kids have died from COVID in Iowa, Colorado and Michigan. She remarked public schools want to teach our white children to be ashamed.

Doreen Earl addressed the board reviewing her teaching career and noting her experiences have benefited her effectiveness as a teacher. She commented EDI does not say one is better than the other. She noted Grand Ledge teachers aim to educate, make aware and give the facts to students so they can form their own opinions.

Annette Kelly addressed the board noting she has three children attending Grand Ledge and noting she considers her students her children. She expressed support of the EDI Committee and thanked the board for their leadership and for thinking of students first.

Tiffany Vallo addressed the board noting kids and parents have had enough of masks and stating long term mask wearing impacts the physical health of children. She expressed her believe the administration is pushing CRT and stating equity is the opposite of equality. She further addressed CRT and expressing she is upset the teachers and board cannot respect parents.

Joseph Alding addressed the board stating he has faced racism, noting CRT is taught to post grad students and that West Point teaches Marxism. He advised he made a video breaking down the 7-hour meeting from last June and commenting there is a long-standing process of racism in Grand Ledge.

Erin Jones addressed the board to address her desire to have a commitment from the district of a no mask policy and the damage that CRT poses to all of our students stating our children deserve better.

Lindsey Grostefon addressed the board noting she is Grand Ledge resident, graduate, proud mother of three and a Grand Ledge teacher. She expressed support for the work of the EDI Committee and commenting her students are her priority during the school year, in the evening and on the weekend.

Tim Totten noted he has two children in the district and commenting CRT seeks to turn people against each other. She expressed concerns over the use of consultant Dorinda Carter Andrews and asked if the board supports her framework for structuring the teaching of students and staff.

Katie Grass thanked the board for making touch decision noting she believes each decision was made with the students and science in mind. She thanked Dr. Chapin, Dr. Barnes and Dr. Gabriel for their creative thinking. She thanked Willow Ridge Principal Mr. Gee and her colleagues for

continuing to work together and she thanked her students and families for sticking with us. She commented pandemics are hard. She noted there is more work to do, but the hard work will bring us together in a way we never have before.

Jenny Jarrard expressed her support for the work of the EDI Committee and noting her classroom is a place where all are welcome.

Ben Flowerday noted he is a Grand Ledge graduate and commenting the plight of the students is getting lost in the discussion. He noted students have lost an entire year of education in the name of some arbitrary safety measure and his belief the best way to get back is by reestablishing students as the focus. He encourage the board to get us back to normal in the fall.

Gillette addressed the board noting he will not allow the CRT to continue to abuse his child, expressing he doesn't believe no masks will ever happen here and commenting whit students get to eat before the brown kids and noting this has to stop.

Andrew Westra Hall addressed the board sharing his experiences with his students over the year noting he saw the students come together and focus on each other. He commented Equity and inclusion is about bringing people together from different backgrounds but it doesn't focus on the different. He thanked Grand Ledge for a wonderful year.

Michelle Lopez addressed the board noting this school year has been a disaster for her daughter stating she does not see this as her daughter's failure but the district's failure. She noted her son had difficulties as well and will be spending his summer in summer school. She asked that CRT be put to a vote of the parents noting this is a hot topic that is causing division.

Josh Austin expressed his disappointed in the view that teachers don't want to come back to school because they don't want to work hard. He commented he wakes up every morning for your kids. He goes to different learning events so he can bring it back to his students. He expressed support for the administration, board and work of the EDI Committee and stressed the teachers are working hard for their students no matter what anyone says.

Tavia Zerman noted she teaches human beings. She teaches children. She teaches them that she cares about them and support them and they should support one another. She expressed support of EDI because people are seen for who they are and who they can become. She noted there is beauty in the differences of human beings and she supports all students.

Carey Sleight addressed the board noting Grand Ledge has some of the greatest students who are warm and generous. She expressed her support of the EDI committee.

Julie Renner commented she would give anything to be fighting for something like a balanced calendar tonight, where we weren't hating our neighbors. She noted her family considered leaving the district because of the racism and hatred that was in this community. Then they saw changes and people who were willing to do the work. Then last week was heartbreaking. She commented she hopes over time we can bridge the gap and the community is looking to the board to do that. She expressed absolute faith in the leadership of our teachers.

Erica Ledesma congratulated and welcome Dr. Davenport noting she is ready to support his leadership. She expressed this year has had challenges but noting we don't grow when things are easy, we grow through challenges. She noted her children were successful in the virtual platform



but understands that some may have struggled. She noted decisions were hard this year with the direction from the government and local health officials changing, sometimes daily. She noted no one is perfect, and she learned from her student's teacher, Erin Ellis, "practice doesn't make perfect, practice makes personal best". She thanked the students, family and staff for showing up for our kids.

Emily Williamson commended Ms. Ledesma on her comments. She welcomed Dr. Davenport. She noted she is just completing her 36<sup>th</sup> year of teaching. She noted she has friends on the board, she has friends in the audience. She stated she completely support compassion, empathy and kindness and supports the work of the EDI Committee.

Adam Boyd does not live in the district but has family that are facing this daily as this is a concerted effort to take away our rights. He expressed PCR tests have a lot of false positives noting you can find pretty much anything in any body. He noted we are framed by the media as extremist because we are going around to board meetings and speaking stating what is extreme is following something that continues to not work. Masks do not stop the virus. He stated children should not be in front of a screen for hours a day.

Michael Perrine noted the board isn't telling us they are going to put CRT in the curriculum but expressed his concerns over the use of consultant Dorinda Carter Andrews. He encouraged the board to get everyone in the same room and talk about this. He noted he has had enough of the consistent bashing of people. He noted all he is asking for is just to talk.

Adam Hikkela noted he is not from the district but was asked by parents to address the board. He stated the problem we have as Americans is we have been lied to and told to send our children to be education when in fact we are sending them to be indoctrinated. He referenced the similarity to a school of fish who move and act exactly the same. He noted the district is forcing people to look at skin color and commenting equity is about controlling the outcome.

Raquel Dietrich addressed the board about the failure of No Child Left Behind, stating Common Core gives everyone a trophy, gender fluidness, remarking whit kids are bad, black kids are bad, black kids can't do good because they are black. She stated we came today because we care about our kids. She remarked you judge on character instead of the color of their skin stating the whitest of white school boards is pushing us back a century in race relations.

Toshia Rios Thomas noted she is here to share her voice just like others are here to share theirs. She noted she teaches her students to use their voice. She commented there are systems in place that treat people differently based on their race and the EDI committees is doing what everyone wants them to do. Diversity is not politics, inclusion in not politics. It should be humanity – everyone should have the same opportunities. Thankful for my students who use their voices to grow and be productive citizens.

Valerie Holly noted she is not here to attack the board and she appreciates everything they do. She expressed concerns over the use of consultant Dorinda Carter Andrews and some recent Facebook posts from community members. She noted we are not a perfect city, country or world but noting she is not a white supremacist.

Russ Swanson noted he is from a multi-facial family and this wasn't talked about growing up. He noted you don't need a national education program. He expressed Core Curriculum is a failure,

No Child Left Behind is a failure and schools need to get back to teaching the 3R's. He noted this is a local school district and we will control this school district. He stated we will not have CRT.

Jeff McNeilly noted he comes from a diverse family. He welcomed Dr. Davenport and stated he hopes we can work together. He expressed concerns over the teachers' union. He stated he was optimistic as we are a close-knit community, but the pandemic has brought out the worst in people. He noted the students are "our children" that we entrust to you for their education. He called for the immediate resignation of Nicole Shannon and Sara Clark Pierson for their behavior at the June 14, 2021 meeting.

Kyle Dymond addressed the board noting he is a schools of choice parent with two children in the district and one is transgender. He expressed his support of the board and the EDI initiative and the actions the board has taken over the course of the year. He recognized High School Teachers Jason Westra-Hall and John Szczerowski for their outstanding support of his transgender son noting they are great examples of what EDI should look like in Grand Ledge. He noted he believes that systemic racism exist and he believes he has benefited from that. He welcomed Dr. Davenport expressing he knows his leadership will lead us through this difficult time.

Lori VanHoesen addressed the board noting that as a proud Grand Ledge teacher and parent, she doesn't settle for simply knowing better or doing better, but sets out to serve her families the best she can every day. She expressed support for the work of the EDI Committee noting we will all benefit from this work. She welcomed Dr. Davenport.

Cindy Zerbe noted she is a parent of two graduates, a grandparent to two current students and a school secretary. She stated that every child that walks into the door of her building, whether begindergarten student or a senior, they become our babies. She stated they are as important to us as our own children. We do what is best for them. She expressed "your children matter to us each and every day", not just during the school year. She welcomed Dr. Davenport. She noted we are all entitled to our opinions, but somewhere along the line we lost the respect that we all deserve.

Ethan Fox addressed the board noting he graduated two weeks ago and this board failed the class of 2021. He noted the numbers in January should have allowed students back to in-person learning but Grand Ledge was still sitting behind a computer. He claimed the in-person learning was a joke. He expressed his disappointment the board did not implement a scholarship as he suggested to recognize a few from the Class of 2021.

Rachel Jagger expressed thanks to her two children's teachers and assistants. She noted her family chose Grand Ledge for the positive reputation and the events of last June had them reconsidering. But she witness the community come together and it made her proud. She noted she supports the diversity and inclusion work. She expressed appreciation for all the teachers, administration and board. She thanked the board for their new superintendent selection and noted she looks forward to a great future in Grand Ledge Public Schools.

Nick Kuhl thanked the teachers. He expressed the district did not follow the science and made every effort to keep kids out of school and lost 500 students, but did the best you could. He expressed appreciation for the communication but stated it failed to rise to the occasion. He encouraged the board to focus on bringing students back for the 2021-2022 school year, with no masks.

LeAnn Dayton expressed she has lived in Grand Ledge all her life, she is a Grand Ledge graduate as are her kids and her five grandkids are attending now. She noted a deep division arising since the start of the pandemic. She noted Grand Ledge has always offered a quality education program and the sports program is hard to beat. However, the Comet Community is lost. She urged the board to make a motion for in-person learning in the fall with no masks so parents know.

Sherry Kissane expressed she does not believe there is systemic racism. She noted racism is a hard issue that has to be dealt with individually. She addressed a recent newspaper article and the EDI webpage on the district website wherein it states implementing a racially diverse and social justice focused curriculum. She stated if anyone understands CRT, they would understand that justice focused curriculum is CRT and she will fight against it.

Tracy Gentilozzi thanked Dr. Davenport for accepting this job and noting he has a task ahead of him. He thanked the teachers noting her son was remote all year and did fabulous. She stated she has supported Nicole Shannon, as a voter, and she doesn't know what happened last week and she wasn't in attendance, but her absence tonight is very disappointing to her and she would like her to resign.

Benjamin Lund noted he has a student that will be starting Kindergarten in the fall and advising he doesn't know a lot about CRT and he doesn't really care. He stated we had an election and the board was elected to do a job. There are rules. He stated people can be as angry as they want but he doesn't believe that anyone who doesn't care about kids would accept a not very well-paid job. He noted when he was in school there were things taught to him that didn't match his morals, but it was his decision to maintain his morals.

Nannette Pierson shared she has two Grand Ledge grads and three grandchildren. She thanked the board noting they are elected by our community and everyone had a chance to vote. She expressed her appreciation for the hard work the board does for this community. She expressed appreciation for the administration and teachers in the under-valued profession of public education. She welcomed Dr. Davenport. She asked why we were arguing about democracy and noted she wants to raise her grandchildren in a community where the board listens, based on policy and law, not based on screaming, yelling and threats. She again thanked the board.

Kim Laforet shared she has two Grand Ledge graduates and six grandchildren noting the division in this community. She commented it breaks her heart that parents are not being listened to, people are screaming and asking why we can't just sit down and have a normal discussion about this. She stressed they are concerned about CRT, concerned about what is being taught to our children and asking that we have a voice. She noted parents should be allowed on the EDI Committee and in the classrooms. She expressed appreciation for the teachers but said she is bothered the teachers are all saying the same thing.

John Hubbard addressed the board stating his best friend was killed in Iraq and he was upset the board did not extend his time to speak. He stated the board had a choice. He encouraged them to hold themselves accountable. He asked for all board members, except Ben Cwayna, to resign. He noted Dr. Davenport is a very nice guy.

Mary Carlson addressed the board noting she is a sixth-grade teacher and is moving to Hayes Intermediate in the fall. She welcomed Dr. Davenport. She noted she did hear about this meeting through the union following last week's meeting. She didn't attend the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> as she was preparing report cards and outlining the progress of her students and getting her classroom

packed for the move. She stated she is not teaching CRT in her classroom and she would welcome any into her classroom for a visit, to watch her teach. She stated you will see respect for every student, race, religion, gender identity, family. She stated she respects her students.

Kyle Gloden extended his congratulations to Dr. Davenport noting it is probably a tough road ahead. He thanked the teachers noting there may be political differences but for the most part he is extremely happy with what the teachers do for our children. He noted there were probably some mistakes made, avoidable or otherwise. He expressed concern with regard to the EDI program noting that everyone here tonight should show how divisive this subject is and his believe that if the board continues to push this through it will hurt the district and community. He encourage the board to take the masks off the kids, get the kids back in school and drop the EDI.

Henry Yorking noted he has three children attending and expressed his appreciation for the district response to the pandemic noting he believes it saved lived. He noted CRT was not on his radar but he remembers when he was told he couldn't read "Catcher in the Rye", the first thing he did was went out and bought the book. He noted CRT is a little too advanced in its form, but we shouldn't be afraid of it.

Amber Redman welcomed Dr. Davenport noting she has faith in him coming in and doing the right thing. She thanked Mr. Cwayna for always supporting them. She further stated this has been a year of being ignored and suppressed by Zoom. She stated the board serves us, not the other way, has ran away from accountability and has been derelict their duties. She stated the board has no right to require masks and if people want to send their kids to school, the board is not her child's doctor and advising the board stay in their lane.

#### **COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD**

President Clark Pierson apologized noting she should have shared that Dr. Davenport's contract provides him a salary of \$195,000 for the first year, with \$5,000 increases over the next two years. She advised there are no gimmicks and no hidden annuities it is a straight salary.

She further explained that during the meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup> there was some question surrounding if the meeting was recorded following an exchange between Dr. Chapin and the board recording secretary with regard to capturing a motion. She advised the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> was not recorded but, at the request of the board, tonight's meeting was being recorded.

Mr. McKennon recognized Steve Baker, Dr. Chapin, Dr. Barnes and Dr. Gabriel for the graduation ceremony they brought together for the six senior baseball players who were unable to participate in their graduation ceremony due to playoff games. He thanked the many teachers who have signed up to teach summer school and the over 1,000 students who are taking advantage of this program. He went on to state we are all here for the kids even if we haven't come to same conclusion. He apologized if there was misinformation on the board's part with regard to EDI noting no decisions have been made and recommendations will be presented to the board on June 28. He assured the board is not trying to hide anything and again stated we are all here for the kids.

Mr. Shiflett thanked everyone for coming and gave a shout out to Mr. Austin.

CLOSED SESSION – Attorney Client Privilege

Motion by, seconded by for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session for the purpose of receiving Confidential Attorney / Client Communication as Per Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.

**Roll Call Vote**

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

The motion carried unanimously at 8:33 p.m.

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 9:20 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS FOLLOWING CLOSED SESSION

**A. Sale of EBS License**

Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Shiflett for the Gr Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education approve Resolution Authorizing the Sale of the Grand Ledge Public Schools' EBS License to WCO Spectrum LLC and authorize and direct Interim Superintendent Dr. David Chapin to execute the Purchase Offer and Commitment Costs Agreement, subject to review and approval by the District's legal counsel.

**Roll Call Vote**

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

The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

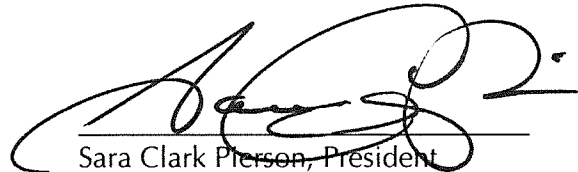
The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:



Nicole Shannon, Secretary



Sara Clark Pierson, President