

## GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS *Board of Education*

Virtual Special Meeting – March 17, 2021

### MINUTES

President Clark Pierson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Patrick McKennon led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Interim Superintendent Dave Chapin indicated the presence of **Board Members**: Sara Clark Pierson from Eagle Township, Clinton County, Jarrod Smith remotely from City of Lansing, Ingham County, Nicole Shannon Oneida Township, Eaton County, Jon Shiflett remotely from City of Grand Ledge, Eaton County, Denise DuFort remotely from Monitor Township, Bay County, City of Grand Ledge, Eaton County, Patrick McKennon remotely from Oneida Township and Ben Cwayna remotely from City of Grand Ledge, Eaton County. **Central Office Administrators**: Dave Chapin, Steve Gabriel, Bill Barnes, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance** Abby Kenney, Adrienne Burns, Alex Hoeksema, Alice Mills, Allison Bengel, Allison Kildee, Allison Lee, Allison Wardlaw, Allison Zakerski, Alyssa Cummings, Amanda Heinze, Amanda McNew, Amber Baker, Amber Moody, Amber Swing, Amie Long, Amy Bowers, Amy McLean, Andrea Babbitt, Andrea Mans, Andrew Torrey, Ann Paquette0Lukens, Annemarie Reik, Annette Kelly, Ash Gobbell, Ashley O’Neil, Austin Neely, Becki Barber, Becky Zalewski, Ben Kohn, Beth Shuchaskie, Bianca Blackwelder, Bill Albrecht, Braylon Curtis, Brent Martinez, Bri Dennis, Brian Szczepanek, Brian Trudell, Caitlin Fenby, Cara Pfund, Carly Waldrop, Carlyn Ross, Carmon Rademacher, Carolyn Bovee, Carolyn Moser, Cassandra Nelson, Chelsea Hare-West, Chelsey Martinez, Chelsie Helma, Chris Groves, Chris Reynolds, Christie Konieczny, Christina Powell, Christopher Cadogan, Christopher Mumby, Christy Lobdell, Christy Price, Cindy Brummette, Cindy Zerbe, Clifford Hurth, Colleen Price, Cory Maar, D’Anne Golub, Dale Gross, Dana Justice, Dan Cwayna, Dawne Velianoff, Deborah Hall, Denise Green, Diane Garnaat, Doug Waldrop, Ellie Darnell, Elyse Fox, Emily Bartlett, Emily Williamson, Eric Daley, Erica Deters, Erica Ledesma, Erin Miles, Erin Ries, Ethan Fox, Felicia Lutz, Gabby Glassnor, Greg Almy, Halima el-Sulayman, Harmony Brown, Heather Brown, Heather Crandall, Heather Schlagel, Heidi Ransom, Jace Harper News, Jackie Nelson, James Ziehmer, Jamie McKennon, Jason Higgins, Jay Pollice, Jeffrey Davis, Jekeia Murphy, Jenn Grantham, Jenna Riekse, Jennifer McCrumb, Jenny Waybright, Jessica Mathiak, Jessica Newton, Jessica Westfall, Jill Dayton, Jill Huisken, Jim Gee, Joan Pedraza, Jocelyn Thelen, Joe Grant, Haley Grant, John Gollehon, John Hubbard, Joni Fuller, Joni Henretty, Jordan Losch, Josephine Oren, Julia Rollis, Juliann Wright, Julie Boruta, Julie Douglas, Julie Renner, Justin Heany, Kailyn Jones, Karen Batterham, Karen Frisbie, Kassandra Davis, Katie Casteel, Katie Dufresne, Katie Fox, Katie Gregory, Kellee Auge, Kelli Bohnet, Kelly Lambert, Kelly Shumway, Kelly Smith, Kelsey Schwartz, Ken Palmer, Ken Wright, Kent Yaney, Kim Abed, Kim Mulvenna, Kimberly Shoup, Kirsten Nunham, Kristen Heine, Kristin Baker, Kristy Merignac, Kristy Welch, Lara Hubbard, Laura Clark, Laura Dayton, Laura Mauren, Laura

Shumate, Laurie Hubbert, LeeAnn Dayton, Leesha Lee, Lesley Simon, Lesley Templeton Keith, Leslie Pittsley, Lindsay Weichlein, Lindsey Edmiston Chemacki, Lindsey Fender, Lindsey Grostefon, Lindsey Ulrich, Lucas Terpstra, Lucinda Shier, Mandy Leik, Marc Grass, Margo Susnjar, Marisa Lay, Marlene Promer, Mary Hankins, Megan Drake, Megan Soltow, Megan Spedoske, Megan Szczepanek, Megan Weber, Melissa Mazzola, Melody Patterson, Michele Abbruzzese, Michele Cadwell, Michelle D'Alessandro, Michelle Mabis, Michelle Mead, Michelle Oppenheim, Michelle Snitgen, Michelle VanDuine, Mike Ostertag, Mike Price, Miranda Coburn, Molly Cool, Morgan Cross, Nancy Coleman, Nancy Lonberger, Nicholas Mcnew, Nicole Leitch, Mikki Piggott, Patrick O'Connor, Paul Stoddard, Pauline Quagliata, Pete Bucholtz, Rachel Buffenbarger, Rachel Parish, Rachel VanDeven, Ryleigh Scott, Samantha Ybarra, Sara Haas, Sara Ostertag, Sara Taylor, Sara Zeko, Sarah Felsing, Sarah Hopper, Sarah Koons, Scott Millbrook, Sharon Brock, Shirley Ries, Stacy Nelson, Steph Keith, Stephanie Dudek, Stephanie Phillips, Steve Baker, Susan Sowle, Susan York, Sylvia Chemacki, Tara Barnhill, Taylor Brush, Teresa Dyer, Teresa Mills, Tonya McGill, Traci Gentilozzi, Tracy Feazel, Tracy Smith, Trisha Warner, Ursula Averill, Vicki Wenzlick, Whitney Craig and Kim Manning

**DISCUSSION ITEM – Public Act 3 of 2021**

Interim Superintendent Dr. Chapin began a discussion with the board regarding the enactment of House Bill 4048 and the uncertain requirements included in the legislation. He shared letters from the Barry Eaton District Health Department (attached to these minutes), and Michigan State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice (attached to these minutes). He shared he has communicated with Senator Tom Barrett and Representative Angela Witwer and noted they would be in support of a proration for district's not meeting the requirements of the legislation, however, no decision has been made on the clarification of the language. He clarified information regarding the latest positive cluster and noted he works on behalf of the board of education to ensure they have all the information in front of them before taking action.

President Clark Pierson noted this meeting was called to specifically address Public Act 3 of 2021, formally House Bill 4048. She explained the breakdown of funds and noted this specific legislation deals with one piece of funding which Grand Ledge Public Schools would get a small piece of. She shared there are several other funding sources coming that will allow the district to implement the programs outlined in this funding along with all kinds of other supports for school systems and the American people.

Vice President Smith clarified the letter from the Barry Eaton District Health Department is recommending the district focus on April 12 to increase in person instruction as opposed to March 22.

Further it was noted the letter from Dr. Rice clearly shows there are many unanswered questions with regard to this legislation.

Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services Dr. Bill Barnes presented the board with an update regarding the planning in light of PA 3 and post Spring Break. He reviewed the specific language of PA 3 and what it means for Grand Ledge Public Schools. He presented what the district is currently providing with regard to in-person instruction hours at all levels,

logistical considerations of implementing the requirements of PA 3 and shared other factors to consider. He presented the district's plan, by grade level, for implementing the requirements of PA 3 that will allow us to do so with the least disruption to families and staff. In closing, he provided a short overview, by grade level, of what the district will be presenting to the board at the March 22, 2021 meeting that seamlessly integrates new in person students and meets the requirements of PA 3 beginning April 12, 2021.

A detailed discussion among the members addressed this meeting tonight is to specifically deal with the two weeks from March 22 – 25 and April 5 – 9 noting the district has Spring Break March 26 – April 4, the ambiguity of the legislation, the lack of clear guidelines for receiving the funds, other funds coming down the line, the struggle of having allowed sports participation, the increased number of vaccinations, the recent spike in positive cases in the area, not receiving these funds would not be a budget cut, hearing over and over that some students are still struggling, providing increased school time, guidance provided from the local health department discouraging the increase in hours, the short time frame to plan for this legislative requirement, the plan does not bring more students into the building than what are currently attending, noting this is a small tweak in what is currently being provided, after Spring Break is the next phase, the positive outcomes in offering the increased hours even if only a few students take advantage, while infection rate is spiking, hospitalizations are down and the vulnerable population is being vaccinated and staffing with regard to the increased hours and transportation concerns. All of the members noted they wanted to hear public comment on this issue.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Secretary Shannon provided an overview of the rules for presenting public comment to the board.

Alex Hoeksema addressed the board with questions regarding Wacousta being in Clinton County, doubling the number of students currently in the buildings and the variant. In closing he expressed support for increasing in person instruction in Grand Ledge.

LeeAnn Dayton addressed the board to encourage the increase in in-person instruction and expressing frustration for not being able to go back to five days per week.

Erika Ledesma addressed the board again increasing the in-person instruction and encouraging the board to stick with the metric, the science and the data.

Dawne Velianoff addressed the board questioning the data shared with regard to the exposure and the number of cases.

Lucas Terpstra addressed the board in support of increasing in-person instruction and supporting getting the kids back to school.

Chelsey Martinez addressed the board with regard to the increased hours noting this just has to be offered by the district it doesn't require students in seats, parents have been provided the option of sending their students back or not and the logistical nightmare of planning and frustration over sports being provided but not more in-person instruction.

Laura Dayton addressed the board expressing students should have been in school more than 20 hours a week months ago and noting she does not understand why we are not full-time, face-to-face.

Jessica Mathiak addressed the board in support of the Grand Ledge parents who want their children to return to the classroom providing her input with regard to the pandemic and its impact on students.

Stephanie Phillips addressed the board regarding the options presented and expressing she feels logistically the plan for the 22<sup>nd</sup> is not going to work and supports the April 12<sup>th</sup> date to increase in-person learning.

John Hubbard addressed the board in support of increasing in-person learning on March 22<sup>nd</sup> and expressing frustration the students are not back full time.

Shirley Ries addressed the board to urge opening the schools and expressing she has put her faith in the board for 13 years.

Laura Clark addressed the board to express her concerns regarding the lack of services being provided to her student and expressing support for students being back in school five days per week.

Carolyn Bovee addressed the board to express her concerns with the sacrifices students have had to make during this year and noting the educational opportunities not being provide will have an impact on students for a long time.

Michelle Mead addressed the board noting she will do anything to get her daughter the needed additional time and remarked she would love to see in-person offered four days per week and urged the board to offer whatever they can to the students.

Jeffrey Davis addressed the board expressing the lack of organization and structure within the group is troubling and believes this should have been figured out long ago.

Mike Price addressed the board expressing all have struggled, the teachers have done a wonderful job – to the best of their abilities – but students are still struggling. He noted if this plan moves us one step closer to more in person learning, if it helps even one child, it is worth it.

Rachel Buffenbarger addressed the board to share that not all staff who want to be vaccinated have been, noting she has had issues getting her vaccine. She urged the board not to increase hours and continue to put safety first.

Lara Hubbard addressed the board expressing her frustration with regard to board members offering their own opinions and bringing politics into the conversation noting she believes politics has no place in a board meeting. She further noted kids need to be in school for their well-being.

Megan Spedoske addressed the board expressing she believes some of the comments tonight are dismissive and disrespectful to everyone who has been involved in the day-to-day planning process, noting the district is following a data driven, phased-in plan that has been adjusted as we have gone along moving in the direction we want to be and expressing her appreciation for the work being done.

Abby Kenney addressed the board noting she believes the district will miss a wonderful opportunity for the fall of 2021 if the March 22<sup>nd</sup> plan isn't implemented and encouraged speaking to other districts that are making it work.

Jill Huisken addressed the board expressing two days per week is not enough noting in person learning is important to high schoolers who are preparing for college and expressing this has to be figured out now.

**ACTION ITEMS – Public Act 3 of 2021**

**Motion by Mr. Cwayna , seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education offer a minimum of 20 hours of in-person instruction to students beginning March 22, 2021 enabling the district to receive the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds under Michigan PA 3 that requires compliance with new section 11r(4) of the State School Aid Act.**

Mr. Shiflett, Mrs. DuFort, Mr. McKennon and Ms. Shannon each, individually, expressed their thoughts and whether they would be supporting or not supporting this motion.

**Ms. Shannon motioned to amend the current motion changing the date to April 12, 2021. The motion failed.**

President Clark Pierson and Vice President Smith individually expressed their thoughts and whether they would be supporting or not supporting this motion.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>President Clark Pierson</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Ms. Shannon</b>	<b><u>NO</u></b>
<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mrs. DuFort</b>	<b><u>NO</u></b>		

**The motion passes 5-2.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON - AGENDA ITEMS**

John Hubbard thanked the board for passing the motion.

Alex Hoeksema shared a bussing issue he is experiencing.

Dawne Velianoff thanked all the parents who spoke tonight noting it brings her great joy.

Megan Weber shared concerns with regard to the special education component in the switch from virtual to in-person learning.

Laura Dayton thanked the board for the yes vote noting this is step toward what they want and noting now they need to push for five days.

**COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD**

Dr. Chapin addressed the concerns addressed by Mr. Hoeksema but sharing support for Transportation Supervisor Pete Bucholtz explaining the driver shorter has had Mr. Bucholtz, along with a bus mechanic driving routes to meet the need. He noted a few phone calls, a few emails, have been fumbled. He apologized and noted he will reach out to Mr. Bucholtz. He went on to note that this March 22<sup>nd</sup> plan was developed in very short order, but the district is ready to go on March 22. He expressed the job of the administration is to bring forward a range of options, provide the board with all the information so they can make a decision based on the best information available at the time. He expressed he will reach out to the Traverse City Superintendent noting he is a friend. He shared he has taken many notes tonight and encouraged anyone with questions or concerns not answered tonight to send an email to his Administrative Assistant, Kim Manning. He expressed he likes this faculty, he likes this board and he knows they all care about students noting everyone is reading the data provided and making decisions as best we possibly can. He shared he has been communicating every Wednesday, delayed today's writing because of this meeting but he will be writing and sharing that our data is up, our positivity rate is up, but we are moving forward on March 22<sup>nd</sup> because we are ready to do that and we will do it as well as we possibly can.

Mr. McKennon thanked the administration and staff noting the extra hours it has taken to have this plan ready not really knowing if it was going to be the plan. He recognized that everyone has been working really hard, with a lot of it unseen. He expressed his appreciation to Dr. Chapin for guiding the district through this knowing it has been a tough year.

Mr. Shiflett thanked everyone for their public comment noting as we proceed into next Monday's meeting we are hopeful, and the goal of the district, is to expand in-person learning. He noted he would like us to have some guidelines as he is not in favor of abandoning the metric.

Mr. Cwayna questioned if the board should start talking and thinking about next fall with a new superintendent coming in he believes it best to have a plan in place.

President Clark Pierson was in support of this noting there is a lot planning under the bond that has taken a back seat this year that needs to be discussed as well.

Mr. Smith expressed he believes it will be important to get the new superintendent's viewpoint on how they see the fall start.

Mrs. DuFort thanked the building secretaries for their extra work in reaching out to families who had not completed the most recent survey, she thanked the administration and everyone who is pulling together on Sunday's to plan noting so many are going above and beyond and wants people to know the board sees it, the board recognizes it and the board thanks you for it.

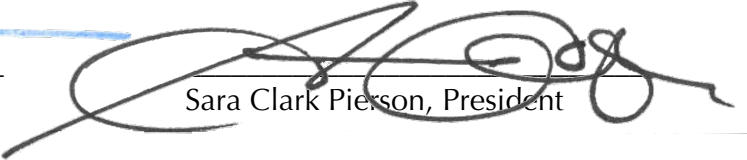
**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

  
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Nicole Shannon, Secretary

  
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Sara Clark Pierson, President