

Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting

Of the School Board of Independent School District No. 709 held at the Historic Old Central High School, 215 North First Avenue East, Duluth, Minnesota 55802, on

Tuesday, April 21, 2015

Members Present:

Annie Harala
Art Johnston
Rosie Loeffler-Kemp
Mike Miernicki
Judy Seliga Punyko
Harry Welty
Bill Westholm

Others Present:

William Gronseth, Superintendent
Bill Hanson, Deputy Clerk
Melinda Thibault, Secretary

Student Representatives:

Jude Goossens
Thomas Olafson

➤ Chair Seliga Punyko called the regular school board meeting of April 21, 2015 to order at 6:30 p.m., and the pledge of allegiance to the American flag was given.

Terry Norton, Art Teacher at Denfeld High School, spoke to the school board regarding the stained glass mosaics her students had on display prior to the board meeting.

M-Westholm, S-Harala, to approve the agenda as presented. Upon a vote on the agenda as presented, the same passed – unanimously.

Chair Seliga Punyko asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Special School Board Meeting of March 17, 2015.

M-Welty, S-Miernicki, to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2015 Special School Board Meeting as presented. Upon a vote, the same was approved as amended - unanimously.

Chair Seliga Punyko asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Special School Board Meeting of March 24, 2015.

M-Westholm, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2015 Special School Board Meeting as presented. Upon a vote, the same was approved as amended - unanimously.

Chair Seliga Punyko asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting of March 24, 2015.

M-Harala, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2015 Regular School Board Meeting as presented.

Pg. 2 - Member Johnston asked about the mission statement read at the beginning of public comment. Member Loeffler-Kemp stated it is out of the annual report and will be read each month.

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Pg. 25 - Member Johnston stated that he voted for the tabling of Resolution HR-3-15-3242.

Pg. 29 - Member Johnston noted that his appeal wasn't recorded in the minutes. There was a corrected version in the board members folders.

Upon a vote, the same was approved as amended - unanimously.

Chair Seliga Punyko asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Special School Board Meeting of April 13, 2015.

M-Miernicki, S-Westholm, to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2015 Special School Board Meeting as presented. Upon a vote, the same was approved as amended - unanimously.

School and Community Recognition

April 2015

Ed Crawford: Members of the Board, this month I'm pleased to present Lester Park Elementary School for recognition. Pat Pfingsten and Nancy Dallum are with us tonight representing Lester Park. We know hunger is a problem in the Northland. For eight years, Lester Park Elementary School has made it their mission to help make a difference in the lives of those experiencing hunger. Pat spearheads the school's food drive and has done so for several years. Nancy works closely with Pat to organize and support the drive. Pat initially set a goal eight years ago of collecting 'One Ton' of food, and the Lester Park community has achieved or exceeded this goal since then. That includes this year. Students and staff from Lester Park Elementary School recently collected over a TON of food for donation to the Union Gospel Mission in Duluth. There was so much food that Mission staff had to make two trips to transport it all. In addition to collecting 2,961 pounds of food they also raised \$471 in funds. Congratulations to Pat, Nancy and the students and staff at Lester Park for a very successful effort and for investing time and talent into making a difference in our community!

I'm also pleased to present Pheasants Forever of St. Louis & Carlton County for recognition. A warm welcome to Phil Storsteen, Matthew Bremer, and David Lood, who are joining us this evening. Pheasants Forever recently partnered with Duluth East High School's "Green Club" and Agriculture/Natural Resources students to create a pollinator habitat between the Lakewalk and the school parking lot. This location is designed to favor the attraction, survival, and reproduction of pollinators, as well as providing a weigh station along the Monarch butterfly's migration path. This pollinator project establishes a long-term ecologically sound landscape that is adapted to the specific site and adds distinctive aesthetics which will be enjoyed by those using the Lakewalk. It also provides a valuable learning environment for students of Duluth East High School. Many thanks to Pheasants Forever for their partnership and support. Representatives from Pheasants Forever presented a check to Duluth East High School in the amount of \$5,845.00.

Public Comments

April 2015

Member Loeffler-Kemp read the District mission statement.

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Stephan Witherspoon, Sharon Witherspoon, Claudie Washington, and Carl Crawford spoke to the board and read a resolution asking them to implement a K12 Curriculum designed to undo the influences of racism in the district, implement an ongoing professional development policy, and work with them in the continuous improvement in the quality of instruction to work toward undoing racism in the schools.

Loren Martell, 623 East 7th Street, spoke to the school board regarding his concerns with using the same audit firm each year and asked board members not to change the policy requiring an audit by the state.

Tim Davis, no address provided, spoke to the school board regarding his concerns with the lack of progress toward equity for students of color.

Communications, Petitions, Etc.

April 2015

Superintendent Gronseth stated that no communications had been received.

Superintendent's Report

April 2015

Superintendent Gronseth: I would like to thank Mrs. Norton and her art class for joining us tonight. I'd like to share a big thank you to everyone joined us for Think Kids this month. I appreciate the staff, families and community members that have taken time to share their thoughts and ideas at fourteen meetings so far and through the online survey. It's great to hear from people all over the community about things that are going well and about things that could be improved. This year we're presenting information about the demographic study and talking about racism and harassment in our schools and community. We have had great conversations and I look forward to sharing the compiled information with the school board and Duluth citizens. Think Kids is a wonderful way for our community to connect with the schools - we're making progress because of the feedback and suggestions we have received.

The legislative session is a topic of conversation all around the state, and there are several bills regarding education and educational funding. Per pupil funding continues to be an important priority - as a point of reference, school districts would need at least a 3% increase in per pupil funding over the biennium to just to keep up with inflation. There are also bills regarding universal programming for four-year olds, and other topics that may have financial implications. We are supportive of the programming, but if it's not fully funded by the state, we would be forced to make cuts in other areas in order to implement the mandates.

On to the topic of Nerf Wars. First, I want to be clear that Nerf Wars is a non-school activity that takes place out in the community. It's prohibited in the schools, on school property and during school events. The Duluth Police Department recently held a press conference to talk about concerning behaviors associated with this game, including dangerous driving. I encourage Duluth residents who observe any unsafe activity to report it to the Duluth police or to their community liaison officer. I urge our young people to please, please be smart and be safe while you're playing Nerf Wars. None of us want to be the "fun police" - however all of us want you to stay out of harm's way while you have fun.

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Jude Goossens – East came out of March with a successful food drive, raising \$1733 and collecting 1506 items of food, which will be doubled because they were donated in the month of March. A variety of groups at East have seen success in various competitions in April. The choir took a trip to San Antonio, Texas and won multiple awards, 2 Knowledge Bowl teams competed at the State tournament, several members of the Duluth Speech team competed at the state tournament, and many participants of FFA and BPA also won many awards at their respective competitions. The student forum has met and discussed what the student body feels should be done with the "What I Need" or "WIN" period next school year. There was a lot of good input for administration to consider during their discussions. The Duluth branch of the NAACP hosted a community-wide youth summit on racism, which several students from East attended representing the Executive Board, Association, and Students for the Future, as well as the general student body. This was an eye opening and valuable experience for many of us. It helped to improve our understanding of racial issues and to strive to cultivate a more open, accepting, and inclusive culture within our school and community. Upcoming events and activities include Prom on 4/25, the ACT for all Juniors on 4/28, the Band and Orchestra competition on 4/29, and a trip to Chicago with the physics class which leaves on 4/30.

Tommy Olafson – The Acapella choir went to New York City, The theme concert all choir, orchestra and band students will be taking place on Saturday at 7pm. The ACT will be taking place on Tuesday and students not taking the test can participate in ACT Action Day where different school groups go out and volunteer in the community. This Friday there is a Trig Star Competition put on by the Land Surveyors Association of Minnesota at Lake Superior College. Prior to spring break we had an organization called Know the Truth come in and talk to us know the truth about substance abuse, which was a great presentation.

Education Committee Report

April 2015

Member Harala presented the Education Committee report, a copy of same being in the hands of each school board member.

M-Harala, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the Education Committee Report.

Member Welty withheld Item 2.B.

Member Westholm withheld Item 2.C.

Member Johnston withheld Item 1.

Member Loeffler-Kemp withheld Item 2.A.

Member Johnston withheld Item 1. Informational Items to note the request by the NAACP during public comment and ask that it be put on the May Education Committee report.

Member Loeffler-Kemp withheld Item 2.A. – 2015-16 Federal Head Start Grant Application to make notes regarding the Head Start Policy Council.

Member Welty withheld Item 2.B. – Request for Suspension of Policy 6160 – Field Trips and Resolution E-11-10-2826 –Waiving Liability on Foreign Travel with the Exception of Canada to ask about the purchase of a rider for the upcoming trip to China.

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Member Westholm withheld Item 2.C. Revised ISD 709 2015-2016 School Year Calendar Reflecting Grading Period Changes for 2015-16 to ask why it was originally changed. Member Miernicki reviewed the history of these changes. Member Westholm voiced concern with the lengthened grading period and timely notification to parents. Discussion continued regarding the grading period change.

Upon a vote on the Education Committee, the same was approved – unanimously.

Human Resources Committee Report

April 2015

Member Miernicki presented the Human Resources Committee report, a copy of same being in the hands of each school board member.

M-Miernicki, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the remainder of the Human Resource Committee report, noting that Item 2.C. - had been tabled.

Member Welty withheld Item 2.A. and B. – Individual Contracts for Amy Starzeck and Kathleen Kaufman to note that he would like to see copies of the individual contracts. Superintendent Gronseth stated that they had been provided at the Human Resources Committee meeting. Superintendent Gronseth welcomed Amy Starzeck as the new Assistant Superintendent. Member Johnston stated that he would like to see a board member on the selection committee for that position in the future. Superintendent Gronseth clarified that normally the board is only involved in the Superintendent search. Member Harala thanked Katie Kaufman for her continued work as the Public Relations Coordinator.

Item 2.C – Placeholder to Modify the Districts Civil Service Rules was tabled.

Upon a vote, the same was approved - unanimously.

Business Committee Report

April 2015

Member Westholm presented the Business Committee report, a copy of same being in the hands of each school board member.

Member Westholm presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

Acceptance of Donations to Duluth Public Schools

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 465.03 requires a school district to accept donations by resolution expressed in the terms prescribed by the donor in full; and,

WHEREAS, acceptance of the donations in accordance with the donor's terms is in the best interest of the Duluth Public Schools:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Duluth Public Schools does accept the below-described donations from said organizations in accordance with the terms set forth herein.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Duluth Public Schools wishes to extend its grateful appreciation to these various organizations.

SCHOOL	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME/ORG.	RESTRICTION	AMOUNT
Lester Park	MN-SHAPE	Jump Rope for Heart	Grant \$ for Leighann Viche	500.00
Denfeld	Eddie	Crawford	Skills USA Auto	50.00
Denfeld	Wayne	Gunderson	Robotics	500.00
Denfeld		Piedmont Heights Dental Associates	Robotics	100.00
Denfeld	Jordan	McMillian	Art	30.00
Denfeld	Trevor	Manisto	Art	30.00
Denfeld	Gimmy	Yagoda	Art	50.00
Denfeld	Carmen	Rich	Art	25.00
Denfeld	Shareese	Edwards	Art	20.00
Denfeld	Ann	Knuth	Art	30.00
Denfeld	Denise	Olson	Art	30.00
Denfeld	Beth	Nelson	Art	20.00
Denfeld	Carmen	Rich	Art	50.00
Denfeld		Exodus Machines	Art	100.00
Denfeld	Target	Take Charge of Education	General Fund	1,129.42
Denfeld	Lori	Bryant	Hunter Hut	50.00
Denfeld		DSGW	Robotics	50.00
Denfeld		Dahlberg Law Office	Robotics	100.00
Denfeld	Chris	Dahlberg	Robotics	100.00
Lester Park	Lester Park	Elementary School Foundation	36 Chrome books w/ laser etching and charging station	13,446.75
East High	Leah/Lisa	Abrahamson	Art Department	200.00
East High	Mark & Mary	Fralich	Robotics	50.00
East High	Allan & Joan	Dunderman	Robotics	1,000.00
East High		Minnesota Power Foundation	Robotics	1,000.00
East High	Cynthia & Steven	Grindy	Robotics	100.00
East High	Laurie	Knapp	Speech	50.00
East High		Cirrus	Orchestra	250.00
East High		Choice Unlimited	Orchestra	200.00
			TOTAL	19,261.17

Resolution B-4-15-3257

April 21, 2015

M-Westholm, S-Miernicki, to approve Resolution B-4-15-3257 – Acceptance of Donations to Duluth Public Schools. Upon a vote, the same was approved - unanimously.

Member Westholm presented the resolution:

R E S O L U T I O N
 Release and Pledge of Collateral

BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 709, St. Louis County, Minnesota, that it hereby releases the \$200,000 par value FFCB note, CUSIP number XXXXXAGL6 pledged as collateral by North Shore Bank of Commerce.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, By the School Board, that it accepts the pledge collateral of a \$200,000 par value FHLB note maturing 5/30/2019, CUSIP number XXXXXEADG1 in exchange for the released collateral noted above.

B-4-15-3258

April 21, 2015

M-Westholm, S-Miernicki, to approve B-4-15-3258 – Release and Pledge of Collateral. Upon a vote the same - unanimously.

Member Westholm presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

Authorizing a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Duluth for Construction of a Multi-use Duluth Traverse Trail on Lincoln Park School Property

WHEREAS, in March 2012, the Duluth School Board approved Resolution #B-3-12-2986- Authorizing a Joint Powers Collaborative Agreement Between the City of Duluth and Independent School District #709 to establish and operate jointly used facilities and services for the citizens of Duluth to eliminate duplication of effort and maximize the effectiveness of the services provided. Under this Agreement, the collaboration on Programs and joint use of Facilities would be memorialized in Joint Powers Collaborative Specific Purpose Agreements as addendums to this master Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth, at its sole cost and expense, is constructing a multi-use, mountain biking Duluth Traverse Trail, a portion of which is intended to cross School District property at the Lincoln Park Middle School as shown on Exhibit A. The City therefore proposes to execute a specific purpose agreement to facilitate the development of the School Trail Portion on School Property by the City; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 709, St. Louis County, State of Minnesota, that the Joint Powers Agreement for the Construction of the Multi-use Duluth Traverse Trail on Lincoln Park School Property, as presented at the April 13, 2015 Business Committee Meeting and attached hereto is hereby approved.

B-4-15-3256

April 21, 2015

M-Westholm, S-Harala, to approve Resolution B-4-15-3256 – Authorizing a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Duluth for Construction of a Multi-use Duluth Traverse Trail on Lincoln Park School Property. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

M-Westholm, S-Harala, to approve the remainder of the Business Committee report.

Member Welty withheld Item 3.B.

Member Johnston withheld Items 1.B., 1.F, 2.A., and separate votes on 3.B. and C.

Member Johnston withheld Item 1.B. – Approval of Payment of Claims to note his concerns with legal fees.

Member Johnston withheld Item 1.F. – WADM Projections to ask questions regarding the report. Discussion continued regarding student numbers.

Member Johnston withheld Item 2.A. – HOCHS Retaining Wall Improvements to ask if the funding was part of the Long Range Facilities Plan monies. Kerry Leider, Facilities Management Supervisor stated that it is.

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Member Welty withheld Item 3.B. - Policy 3215 –State Auditor’s Review of Finances to note that they had good discussion at the committee meeting and was pleased with the amendment that future school boards could request an audit. Discussion continued on the item.

Upon a separate vote on Item 3.B., the same was approved – unanimously.

Member Welty withheld Item 3.C. – Bylaw 9115 – School District Elections to ask if the 2015 elections would still take place if this change to even year elections would be approved. Discussion continued regarding the item.

M-Johnston, S-Welty, to table Item 3.C. - Bylaw 9115-School District Elections.

Discussion took place regarding the item.

Upon a vote, the same failed 2-5 as follows:

Yea: Johnston, Welty

Nay: Harala, Loeffler-Kemp, Miernicki, Seliga Punyko, Westholm

Upon a separate vote on the first reading of Item 3.C. , the same was approved 5-2 as follows:

Yea: Harala, Loeffler-Kemp, Miernicki, Seliga Punyko, Westholm

Nay: Johnston, Welty

Upon a vote on the remainder of the Business Committee, the same was approved – 6-1 as follows:

Yea: Harala, Loeffler-Kemp, Miernicki, Seliga Punyko, Westholm, Welty

Nay: Johnston

Other
April 2015

Member Harala recognized the administrative assistants for Administrative Professionals Day.

Member Welty raised concerns that he had not been included in communications regarding the lawsuit against the district and 5 board members or the upcoming hearing involving Member Johnston. Discussion took place regarding his concerns.

Chair Seliga Punyko adjourned the Regular School Board Meeting of April 21, 2015 at 8:50 p.m.