

Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting

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

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

Members Present:

Kelly Durick Eder
David Kirby
Rosie Loeffler-Kemp
Jill Lofald
Alanna Oswald
Paul Sandholm
Sally Trnka

Others Present:

John Magas, Superintendent
Cathy Erickson, CFO
Melinda Thibault, Secretary

Student Representatives:

Nabiha Imtiaz (East)
Phoenix Ocean (Denfeld)

- Chair Lofald called the Regular School Board meeting August 18, 2020 to order at 6:34 p.m.

M-Durick Eder, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the agenda. Upon a vote on the agenda as presented, the same was approved – Unanimously.

School and Community Recognition

August 2020

This month we recognize students from Denfeld and Duluth East High Schools for their accomplishments.

Keegan Chastey, Denfeld, is a recipient of the Yale Book Award. The Yale Alumni Club asks schools to present the Award to a junior, based on intellectual promise and outstanding character. Counselors at Denfeld chose Keegan as this year's recipient, congratulations!

Two Duluth East students realized success at the Minnesota Virtual National History Day Competition. Natalie Miller received the Gold Medal in Senior Paper: "Too Strong for a Woman: How Bernice Sandler Created Title IX to Break Barriers for Female Faculty in Higher Education."

Natalie also received a scholarship to the National History Academy in Summer 2021. Erin Coleman took 6th place in Senior Paper for "Breaking Barriers in Public Health: John Snow and London's 1854 Cholera Epidemic."

This year's theme for the 2020 Virtual National History Day competition: Breaking Barriers in History.

Congratulations, Natalie and Erin! Thanks to Mr. Tracey, Mrs. Fuller, Ms. Andrews, Ms. Jensen and Ms. Nachbar for offering History Day and supporting this learning opportunity.

Public Comments

August 2020

Public comments were read into the record by the Board Chair or played via voice messages (no public presence was allowed at the meeting) as follows (some spellings/names may be incomplete due to lack of information via voice messages):

The following people spoke in favor of sending students back to school full time:
Krista Simonson, Analisa Redinger, Lacy Lipe, Christine Simonson, David Raisanen, John Simonson, Dean Simonson, Melissa Anderson, Karri Rosenlund, Angie Hanson, Deserie Tommaro, Jeff & Jessica Aili, Megan Massie, Heidi Smerz, Kayli Johnston, Bethany Nelson, Tori Sundberg, Bern Young, Karla Aili, Kelli Johnston, Brittany Hallstrom, Karin Bruckelmyer, Lexi Sundberg, Susanne Aili, Sara Johnston, Amea Johnston, Derek Aili, Darren Stanley, Jude Homola, Kristy Blomquist, Tiffany Simonson, Jordan Oja, Dany Bruckelmyer, Nikki Sundberg, Karen Reabe,

The following people spoke against sending students back to school:
Marcus Jones

The following people had comments/questions regarding the return to learn plan:
Chayme Loraas, Stephen Abernethy

The following people spoke in favor of keeping the school resource officers in the schools:
Cathleen Waterhouse, Johanna Cummins, Laurelei Gunsolus, Nicole Scharte, Jeremy Rupp

The following people spoke regarding the school resource officers issue:
Jennifer McDowell

Communications, Petitions, Etc.

August 2020

Chair Lofald stated that there were no communications received.

Superintendent's Report

August 2020

Superintendent Magas stated: I want the public to know, and I want our teachers to know, and I want our students and community to know how hard we are working to listen to the multiple perspectives, to consider the multiple voices, and the multiple concerns. To listen to the science, to learn about the numbers as things change, and to very carefully weigh what is the best course of action at this time. I also want to say this is something the board is thinking about 24/7 as well, and all of us are really trying our best to make sure that we're thinking about these multiple needs and multiple perspectives. It is by far one of the most difficult decisions that I've made

from a professional perspective and I'm sure from a board perspective it's very much one of the most challenging decisions as well. He reviewed a return to learn planning presentation.

Student Representative Phoenix Ocean (Denfeld): Stated that Denfeld's community is mourning the loss of Dick Swanson. She said the student representatives are continuing discussion regarding the role of SRO's in the schools. The MSHSL has released its recommendations for fall sports, and stated that as a student she agrees with the guidelines and the decision to move to a hybrid model as she does not feel it could be safe to send everyone back in person. We can learn to work together as a community to keep everyone safe and educated.

Student Representative Nabiha Imtiaz (East): The sports season is starting up taking safety into account during practices. Please remember to think of students' mental health as we return to school and make sure we have supports and resources in place for students to use both in person and at home. As a student and someone who really struggled with the isolation that school closing caused, I personally still promote the hybrid model the district has come up with because I want to be in school and see my teachers and friends every day, but I want to be safe and have everyone's safety to be put first.

Chair Lofald reviewed the schedule of meetings.

Policy Committee Report

August 2020

There was not a policy committee meeting in August.

Monthly Committee of the Whole Report

August 2020

Member Lofald presented the Monthly Committee of the Whole report which was available electronically to each school board member.

Human Resources/Finance Committee Report

August 2020

Member Trnka presented the Human Resources Committee report which was available electronically to each school board member.

Consent Agenda

August 2020

M-Loeffler-Kemp, S-Durick Eder, to approve the Consent Agenda. Upon a vote on the consent agenda, the same was approved - Unanimously

Special Resolutions/Other Action Items
August 2020

- Superintendent Magas presented the resolution:

Temporary Suspension of District Policy during COVID-19 Emergency Pandemic

WHEREAS, the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose significant challenges for Minnesota’s school districts and charter schools as they serve their students, families, and communities.; and

WHEREAS, Governor Walz authorized through various Executive Orders for the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota State Board of Education, and other State executive departments to provide for waivers of State laws and rules that were interfering with the response to the state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have released new directives and guidelines regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, which are being updated and modified based on new information and changes in the state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the school district continues to follow the newly created and ever-changing guidance from the “Minnesota’s Safe Learning Plan for the 2020-21 School Year”, the Minnesota Department of Health “2020-21 Planning Guidance for Schools”, additional instructional guidance by the Minnesota Department of Education and all other state and federal requirements; and

WHEREAS, many new executive orders, changes or modifications in regulations at the state and federal level are intended to be temporary; and

WHEREAS, school district policies may not address or may be in conflict with district Covid-19 implementation of all school district educational and operational planning models;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 709 as follows:

All board policies, regulations, and administrative procedures may be suspended in whole or in part to the extent that any policy or procedure of the district conflicts with new state and federal guidance, laws, or requirements relating to Covid-19 and the scenario and planning guidance created by the district to implement educational and operational models.

- The Superintendent will provide to the School Board regular updates pursuant to this resolution.
- This resolution will continue until the Governor declares the end of the state of emergency or when the school board rescinds the resolution in whole or in part.

Resolution SP-8-20-3754

August 18, 2020

M-Trnka, S-Oswald, to approve Resolution SP-8-20-3754 Temporary Suspension of District Policy during COVID-19 Emergency Pandemic.

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Discussion took place regarding the resolution.

Upon a vote on the resolution, the same was approved – Unanimously

➤ Face Covering Policy as recommended by MSBA

Member Lofald presented the proposed face covering policy which was available electronically to each school board member

M-Loeffler-Kemp, S-Sandholm, to approve Policy 808-COVID-19 Face Covering Policy.

M-Oswald, S-Trnka, to strike the second sentence of item V.E. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

~~[To the extent the face covering requirements of this policy conflict with MSBA Model Policy 504 – Student Dress and Appearance, this Policy shall control.]~~

M-Oswald, S-Durick Eder, to strike the first sentence of item IV.D. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

~~[The school district may, in its discretion, report violators of this policy to law enforcement.]~~

Upon a vote on the policy as amended, the same was approved – unanimously.

Other
August 2020

M-Trnka, S-Durick Eder, to adjourn the meeting. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

Chair Lofald adjourned the Regular School Board Meeting of August 18, 2020 at 11:23 p.m.