

## 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, December 15, 2015

### Members Present:

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

### Others Present:

Bill 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 December 15, 2015 to order at 6:30 p.m., and the pledge of allegiance to the American flag was given.

**M-Westholm, S-Welty, 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 Regular School Board Meeting of November 17, 2015.

**M-Harala, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2015 Regular School Board Meeting as presented. Upon a vote, the same was approved as presented – unanimously.**

### School and Community Recognition

December 2015

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Amy Starzecki: Members of the Board, this month I'm pleased to present our two student School Board representatives for recognition. Teachers, principals, administrators and school board members consider subjects and decisions which have a direct impact on our schools and our students. As we do so, we seek out research, best practices, the advice of community leaders and of parents and families. And, because they are directly impacted, we seek out the voice of students. Tom Olafson, Denfeld High School, and Jude Goossens, Duluth East High School, have well and ably served as student representatives to the School Board for the past year. In this leadership role, they invested time and effort to learn more about how our school district operates and how decisions are made. They shared information with their peers and brought a thoughtful student perspective to our meetings. Their participation this year has helped immensely as we consider decisions impacting student achievement, school climate and effective systems. Many thanks to Tom and Jude for their service to the Duluth School Board. We wish you the very best in your future endeavors.

**Truth In Taxation Presentation**  
**December 2015**

The Truth In Taxation Presentation was given by Bill Hanson, CFO/Executive Director of Business Services.

**Public Comments**  
**December 2015**

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Member Loeffler-Kemp read the community vision statement.

Glen Tracey, 4615 Gladstone Street, spoke to the school board about the upcoming Teacher of the Year presentation in January and gave an overview of the nominees Michelle Bowker and Mike Emerson.

Alanna Oswald, 615 N. 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, spoke to the school board to thank the outgoing board members for their service and to note that she is looking forward to beginning her term.

Greg Gilbert, 2401 Greysolon Road, spoke to the school board to thank and congratulate the outgoing board members for the service.

Anita Stech, 2420 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street, spoke to the school board to thank the outgoing school board members for their service.

David Kirby, 2216 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, spoke to the school board to school board to thank the outgoing school board members for their service, noting the amount of experience that the members brought with them.

Jeff Bradt, 306 Isanti Street, spoke to the school board to thank the school board, Superintendent Gronseth and Denise Clairmont for their help in providing assistance to find the best programming for the students at Woodland Hills.

Marcia Stromgren, no address provided, spoke to thank the teachers who are on the front lines every day, and to note her issues with taxes and other things within the District.

Loren Martell, no address provided, spoke to the school board to regarding his issues with some outgoing board members.

Bernie Burnham, 4130 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, spoke to the school board to thank the outgoing board members for their service, and stated that people will be coming to future meetings to talk about the great things happening in our schools.

Ann Krafthefer, 1601 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, spoke to the school board to talk about a program that she has started to collect money for local food shelves and how much she appreciates the support for the backpack program.

Tim Davis, no address provided, spoke to the school board regarding his concerns with the suspension rates within the Duluth Schools.

Ann Wasson, 1715 Lakeview Drive, spoke to the school board to thank and congratulate the three outgoing board members.

Zandra Zweibel, 557 West Wabasha Street, a representative of the PTSA Council, spoke to the school board to thank the outgoing board members for their service.

**Communications, Petitions, Etc.**  
**December 2015**

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Superintendent Gronseth acknowledged the communications received.

**Superintendent's Report**  
**December 2015**

In addressing the suspension rates, it is something I am very familiar with and it is on our continuous improvement plan. There has been a 40% reduction in those rates, but it is still something we are working on. Unfortunately there are some behaviors that need to be addressed and we continue to find other ways to help those students.

This is a busy time of year for our schools! It's a time for thinking about those in need, and I know the Denfeld Exec Board organized a drive that collected over 1700 pounds of food for donation. That's just one of many generous and thoughtful projects going on in our elementary, middle and high schools, from collecting food to gathering toys and clothing.. It's also a great time for music - throughout the community there are many opportunities to see and hear our talented students. I see the Duluth East Choralaires sang at Bentleyville earlier this month. Each building hosts concerts and performances; I encourage everyone to take in one or two if possible. Nothing else gets me in the holiday spirit like the joy of our students - especially when the weather has been less than winter-like! Probably the biggest news item this month is the passing of the Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA). It was supported overwhelmingly in the Senate and House and was signed into law by President Obama soon afterwards. Most educators are supportive of the legislation and believe it is a step in the right direction. ESSA decreases federal control and allows for more state and local decision making. It goes into effect in 2017 and there is much to do at the state level to prepare for implementation. December also marks the end of term for our Student Representatives to the School Board. Jude and Tommy you have both been excellent representatives. Your monthly reports have provided a great connection to the schools. I appreciate your service to your schools and the school board. And now it is time for your final reports as school board reps—

Tommy Olafson – Denfeld High – the two show choirs had a busy season performing over the holiday season, the holiday concert will be held December 21<sup>st</sup> at Denfeld, White Side scholarship interviews are underway, the food drive collected 1700 items, the Pennies for Patients program is in full swing, winter sports have started, robotics is gearing up and many co/extracurricular programs have been successful. He thanked the school board, his school, parents and principal for making the opportunity to serve with the board available to him.

Jude Goosens – East High – The HOSA drive, Pennies for Patients, Food Drive and the Library project have all been successful. There is a hat, sock and mitten drive in progress now. Winter sports have been gearing up. The East High Holiday Concert will be on December 19<sup>th</sup>. He

thanked the school board members, Superintendent Gronseth, Administration, his family, and all of East High School for allowing him to serve with the board.

Member Miernicki stated that the students have done outstanding job this year.

I'll close my report by wishing everyone a safe winter break! No matter what you celebrate, I hope that you take time to build memories that will last. As someone who grow up celebrating Christmas as part of my faith, I probably couldn't name many of the gifts I received, but I can certainly describe the joy and comfort of spending time with family and friends and it is these memories and traditions that I cherish more than any gift I might have received. That concludes my superintendent report until next year!

**Education Committee Report**  
**December 2015**  
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Member Harala presented the Education Committee report, a copy of same being in the hands of each school board member.

Member Harala presented the resolution:

**RESOLUTION**  
Acceptance of Grant Awards to Duluth Public Schools

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

WHEREAS, acceptance of the grant 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 grants from said organizations in accordance with the terms set forth herein.

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

	Organization	Author/Contact	Project Title	Award Amount	Terms
1	Minnesota Department of Education	Pam Rees	Increase to Head Start State Grant initially approved by the School Board on May 19, 2015	An additional \$91,020 bringing the total grant award to \$490,768.	Funds from this grant increase will be used to support the Duluth Public Schools Head Start Program.
2	Lester Park Foundation	Various	Lester Park School Foundation Grants	Eight (8) mini grants for a total of \$2,372	Funds from these mini grant awards will be used to support student projects in eight (8) classrooms at Lester Park Elementary.

**M-Harala, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve Resolution E-12-15-3315 – Acceptance of Grant Awards to the Duluth Public Schools. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.**

**Item 2.D. – ISD709 2016-17 School Year Calendar was pulled.**

**M-Harala, S-Welty, to approve the remainder of the Education Committee Report. Upon a vote on the remainder of the Education Committee, the same was approved – unanimously.**

**Human Resources Committee Report**  
**December 2015**

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

**Resolution HR-12-15-3321 – Duluth Principals Association Contract was pulled.**

**RESOLUTION**

**APPROVAL OF THE SUPERINTENDENT’S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

WHEREAS, the Superintendent and the School Board recognize the need to evaluate the Superintendent’s performance annually.

WHEREAS, the annual performance evaluation shall be conducted in the month immediately following the Superintendent’s *Annual Report of the School District*.

WHEREAS, the Superintendent’s evaluation will consist of the completion of a written appraisal instrument by individual School Board Members, of which the School Board Chairperson will calculate, and complete a summary evaluation document.

WHEREAS, the School Board shall meet with the Superintendent in Executive Session to discuss a preliminary summary document and modify as appropriate. After the Superintendent’s final summary evaluation has been prepared by the School Board, the School Board shall adopt, by vote, the summary evaluation at their next open meeting.

WHEREAS, the Superintendent and the School Board Chairperson will sign the summary evaluation as an indication that the evaluation has been reviewed. A copy will be placed in the Superintendent’s personnel folder and a copy given to the Superintendent. After School Board adoption, the Superintendent’s summary evaluation shall be made available as provided under current law.

WHEREAS, the School Board met with Superintendent William L. Gronseth in Executive Session on December 15, 2015 at approximately 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of discussing his annual performance evaluation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the School Board of Independent School District 709, St. Louis County, Minnesota, that the School Board shall adopt the December 15, 2015 Summary Evaluation of Superintendent William L. Gronseth.

Resolution HR-12-15-3320

December 15, 2015

**M-Miernicki, S-Harala, to approve resolution HR-12-15-3320 – Approval of the Superintendent’s Performance.**

Board members thanked Superintendent Gronseth for his hard work.

**Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.**

**M-Miernicki, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the remainder of the Human Resource Committee report.**

Member Welty asked about a resignation listed on the report.

**Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.**

**Business Committee Report**  
**December 2015**

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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.

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

SCHOOL	DONOR	RESTRICTION	AMOUNT
Laura MacArthur	ISD 709 -endowment grants	4th grade rocket day	\$1,000.00
Laura MacArthur	Rotary club of Duluth Harbortown c/o Holiday Inn	5th grade Wolf Ridge	\$1,500.00
Laura MacArthur	Hermantown Federal Credit Union	Kindergarten Field Trip Bussing	\$200.00
Laura MacArthur	unknown	5th grade Wolf Ridge	\$5.00
East High	The Thirsty Pagan	Student Council	\$300.00
East High	Minnesota Power Employee Credit Union	Student Council	\$150.00
East High	Gallery Dental	Student Council	\$200.00
East High	Sir Benedicts Tavern	Student Council	\$50.00
East High	Bridgemans	Student Council	\$50.00
East High	Lake Superior Dental Assoc.	Student Council	\$100.00
East High	Language of Hair	Student Council	\$50.00
East High	Mt. Royal Dental	Student Council	\$100.00
East High	Whole Foods Co op	Student Council	\$100.00

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East High	Marshall Hardware	Student Council	\$50.00
East High	Carlson Orthodontics	Student Council	\$50.00
East High	Nevada Bob's	Student Council	\$150.00
East High	Northland C&C	Student Council	\$50.00
East High	Kaylynn's Daycare	Student Council	\$75.00
East High	Play it again Sports	Student Council	\$150.00
East High	J. Skylark	Student Council	\$100.00
East High	Pizza Luce	Student Council	\$200.00
East High	First Associated Investment Advisory	Student Council	\$100.00
East High	Graf LeSavage	Student Council	\$50.00
East High	Maurices	General fund/School	\$115.00
East High	East End Auto	Robotics	\$500.00
East High	National Bank of Commerce	Robotics	\$750.00
East High	Duluth East Foundation	Sterling Strings	\$100.00
East High	Duluth Library Foundation	Sterling Strings	\$120.00
East High	Eddie Crawford	Sterling Strings	\$100.00
East High	Five Star Automotive	Drama	\$100.00
East High	Gary Black & Celeste Curley-Black	Drama	\$100.00
East High	Duluth Kidney Services, LLC	Drama	\$200.00
Denfeld High	Maurices	General fund/School	\$95.00
Denfeld High	St Germain's Glass	Robotics	\$50.00
Denfeld High	Marine Iron & Ship Building Co	Denfeld Criterion	\$50.00
Denfeld High	James & Stephanie Mickle	Denfeld Criterion	\$25.00
Denfeld High	Piedmont Heights Dental	Robotics	\$100.00
Denfeld High	Duluth Business University	Cheer Team	\$50.00
Denfeld High	Proctor Federal Credit Union	Cheer Team	\$50.00
Denfeld High	St Germain's Glass	Cheer Team	\$50.00
Denfeld High	Daugherty Appliance	Cheer Team	\$25.00
Denfeld High	Susan L. Coen State Farm Agency	Cheer Team	\$100.00
Denfeld High	Donald & Susan Sell	Cheer Team	\$200.00
Denfeld High	Mielke Electric Works Inc	Cheer Team	\$100.00
Denfeld High	Fit - N - Clean	Cheer Team	\$60.00
Denfeld High	Gopher Restaurant & Lounge	Cheer Team	\$50.00
Denfeld High	T Bonz Bar & Grill	Cheer Team	\$100.00
Denfeld High	Chris Lane		Viola
Homecroft	Brett & Rochon Kinney	None	\$50.00
Homecroft	Anonymous	None	\$90.00
Homecroft	Jacob Dryke	None	\$100.00
Homecroft	Robert & Constance Smith	None	\$30.00
Lincoln Park	Irving Community Association	Homebase Maker Spaces	3,600.00
Lincoln Park	American Legion	Student Needs	\$200.00
		TOTAL	\$12,040.00

B-12-15-3316

December 15, 2015

**M-Westholm, S-Harala, to approve Resolution B-12-15-3316 – Acceptance of Donations to Duluth Public Schools. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.**

Member Westholm presented the resolution:

**RESOLUTION**

**Authorized Bank Account Signer**

RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 709, St. Louis County, Minnesota, that it hereby authorizes the following:

<u>District Building</u>	<u>Banking Institution</u>	<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Addition of Authorized Signer</u>	<u>Removal of Authorized Signer</u>
Lester Park	DTCU	XXXX7	Tracy Packingham	Barbara Souffle

B-12-15-3317

December 15, 2015

**M-Westholm, S-Welty, to approve Resolution B-12-15-3317 – Authorized Bank Account Signer. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.**

Member Westholm presented the resolution:

**RESOLUTION**

**Certified Tax Levy 2015 Payable 2016**

BE IT RESOLVED, By the School Board of Independent School District No. 709, St. Louis County, Minnesota, to hereby set the Tax Levy for 2015 Payable 2016 at \$33,149,546.88.

**M-Westholm, S-Miernicki, to approve Resolution B-12-15-3318 – Certified Tax Levy.**

Discussion took place regarding the levy.

**Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-1 as follows:**

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

**Nay: Johnston**

Member Westholm presented the resolution:

**RESOLUTION**

**Authorizing the Sale of the Rockridge Elementary School Property**

WHEREAS, the School Board by Resolution B-6-07-2452 adopted a Long-range Facilities Plan for the District, and therein also directed the District's administrative staff to commence with the disposition of certain non-school sites including the Rockridge School property; and

WHEREAS, said property will no longer be used for purposes set forth in Minnesota Statute Section 123B.51; and

WHEREAS, there are recent changes to the zoning relating to this property that have created conditions for this property to be subdivided and sold as separate parcels.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the School Board of ISD 709, Duluth Minnesota hereby authorizes the sale of real property described on EXHIBIT A attached hereto, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the School Board authorizes District Administration to negotiate with prospective buyers the terms of sale for all property or portions of subject property as long as the terms for sale are consistent with parameters agreed by the board in Executive Closed Session on December 15, 2015, and the School Board Chair is authorized to execute purchase agreements and all other documents required for closing sale transactions.

B-12-15-3322

December 15, 2015

**M-Westholm, S-Miernicki, to approve Resolution B-12-15-3322 – Authorizing the Sale of the Rockridge Elementary School Property. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.**

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

Member Welty withheld Items 3.A. and 3.D.

Member Johnston withheld Items 1.A.1), and 3.A., B., C., D., and E. for a separate vote as a block

Member Johnston withheld Item 1.A.1) –Financial Report to ask a question on the report relating to the General Unrestricted Fund Balance. Bill Hanson, CFO/Executive Director of Business Services stated he will send out an explanation.

Member Welty withheld Items 3.A. and 3.D. – Policies 8020-Deletion and 212-Addition to note his concern with some changes being made to the policies. He stated that within the transition to the MSBA policies we should be able to tailor them to our own needs. Discussion continued regarding the proposed policy changes.

**Upon a separate vote on Items 3.A., B, C, and D, and E., the same were 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, Welty, Westholm**

**Nay: Johnston**

**Special Resolutions**

**December 2015**

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Member Miernicki presented the resolution:

**R E S O L U T I O N**

**Authorizing New School Board Members' Attendance at the Minnesota School Boards Association Phase I and II Orientation Workshops**

RESOLVED, That Independent School District 709, St. Louis County, Minnesota, pay costs incurred, as per District policy, for new school board members to attend the Minnesota School Boards Association Phase I and II Orientation Workshops held in December 2015 and January 2016.

Resolution SP-12-15-3314

December 15, 2015

**M-Miernicki, S-Harala, to approve Resolution SP-12-15-3314 – Board Member Attendance at 2016 MSBA Leadership Conference. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.**

**Other**

**December 2015**

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Members Miernicki, Westholm, and Seliga Punyko made outgoing statements. Superintendent Gronseth thanked the outgoing board members and students for their service.

Chair Seliga Punyko adjourned the Regular School Board Meeting of December 15, 2015 at 8:46 p.m.