

Minutes of Study Session

The Board of Education Mahtomedi Public Schools

A **Study Session** of the Board of Education of Mahtomedi Public Schools was held **Thursday, April 8, 2021**, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Mahtomedi District Education Center - Community Room, 1520 Mahtomedi Avenue, Mahtomedi, Minnesota 55115. This meeting was livestreamed.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Lucy Payne.

2. ROLL CALL OF ATTENDANCE

Present: Kevin Donovan; Julie McGraw; Lucy Payne; Kelly Reagan (Virtually); Stacey Stout; Tony Vosooney (Virtually); and Superintendent Barbara Duffrin, ex-officio.

Also present: Tony Pierce, Director of Student Support Services; and Laura Eliason, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Donovan moved, McGraw seconded, approval of the agenda. Roll Call Vote: Donovan-Aye, McGraw-Aye, Payne-Aye, Reagan-Aye, Stout-Aye, Vosooney-Aye. Carried 6-0.

4. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Adapting and Responding: Providing Academic and Social-Emotional Support During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tony Pierce, Director of Student Support Services, updated school board members on how the district is adapting and responding to providing academic and social-emotional support during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic. Potential academic concerns included student engagement and being able to access important content to meet grade level benchmarks, credits and grade requirements. Potential social-emotional concerns included making sure students felt connected to the school community and mental health needs were identified. Academic support structures and interventions included level technology training and access, differentiated small group instruction with push-in intervention support (reading specialist in the classroom) and targeted in-person learning for students in need of additional support. Social-emotional structures and interventions included counselors/social emotional specialists providing small group or individual intervention/support and school based mental health services provided by North Homes. A new Special Education Counselor is providing additional support for students/families

both in and out of school. Additional in-person learning days during Hybrid/Distance Learning Models, along with increased virtual parent meetings and connection to supports and resources in the district and community (food, school supplies and internet access) were made available. Another social-emotional intervention was adding the Empower U course for high school students. Teacher learning and collaboration work included vertical teaming to plan for grade level transitions, creating common assessments and focusing on priority standards. Pierce also discussed the academic and social-emotional tools used to monitor and assess progress, including the Social Academic and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS). Pierce explained the pandemic has taught staff to be responsive to changing needs, has expanded the boundaries of teaching/learning beyond the classroom, and has emphasized the importance of connections and relationships. Superintendent Duffrin reported the April 9 Professional Development Day will be used for vertical teaming and equity case studies. There will be increased Summer School opportunities for K-12 students based on academic needs and Community Education is offering Kinderstart, a class to prepare children with no preschool experience for Kindergarten. The August 2021 Instructional Leadership Workshop will be used to review spring data for curriculum planning and interventions.

B. Elementary & Secondary Schools' Start Times Survey Results

Superintendent Barbara Duffrin reported on the history of school start/end time changes and on the previous discussions on the impacts and wellness issues. The operational changes due to the COVID-19 Pandemic included a change in start/end times to 7:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. for O.H. Anderson Elementary School, 7:55 a.m. – 1:25 p.m. for Wildwood Elementary School and 9:00 a.m. - 2:30/2:45 p.m. for Mahtomedi Middle and High Schools for the 2020-2021 School Year. Some families had expressed interest in continuing the current start times for the 2021-2022 School Year. The school board requested a district survey of students, families and staff regarding their experiences this year with the time changes and the impact of continuing the change in future years. Highlights from the family survey included 56% of families rated their experience with the 2020-2021 start/end times as excellent or good. Family concerns for continuing the schedule included childcare needs, transportation and the impact on student activities and employment. Families were split on the positive/negative effects. Highlights from the student survey include 65% of secondary students rated their experience with the 2020-2021 start/end times as excellent or good and most strongly agree or agree they are more rested. Students concerns were similar to family concerns, along with leaving school early for activities. Highlights from the staff survey included 74% of staff rated their experience with the 2020-2021 start/end times as excellent or good. Elementary staff noted students were more engaged in learning. Staff concerns included commuting/reporting times, coaching commitments and childcare, along with students leaving school early during periods five and six. Duffrin stated the survey data reiterates the importance of interrelated operational impacts such as childcare, transportation, school day schedule, activities schedule, and facilities. These types of operational changes need additional considerations. There are specific operational changes like changing the secondary daily schedule to align with our district and school-level

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strategic plans that should be a higher priority for our district at this time. Superintendent Duffrin recommended a return to the pre-COVID-19 schedule with the following start/end times for the 2021-2022 School Year: O.H. Anderson Elementary School 9:05 a.m.-3:25 p.m.; Wildwood Elementary School 9:15 a.m.-3:35 p.m.; Mahtomedi Middle School, Mahtomedi High School, and Passages Transition Program 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. The school start/end times discussion may resume again for future school years based on our strategic planning work.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Stout moved, Vosooney seconded, adjournment. Roll Call Vote: Donovan-Aye, McGraw-Aye, Payne-Aye, Reagan-Aye, Stout-Aye, Vosooney-Aye. Carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

JULIE MCGRAW, CLERK