

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, February 23, 2016

Members Present:

Annie Harala
Art Johnston
David Kirby
Rosie Loeffler-Kemp
Alanna Oswald
Nora Sandstad
Harry Welty

Others Present:

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

Student Representatives:

Spencer Fredrickson
Johanna Uden

➤ Chair Harala called the regular school board meeting of February 23, 2016 to order at 6:54 p.m., and the pledge of allegiance to the American flag was given.

M-Sandstad, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the agenda as presented. Upon a vote on the agenda as presented, the same passed – unanimously.

Chair Harala asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting of January 19, 2016.

M-Welty, S-Sandstad, to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2016 Regular School Board Meeting as presented. Upon a vote, the same was approved as presented – unanimously.

Chair Harala asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Special School Board Meeting of February 8, 2016.

M-Loeffler-Kemp, S-Sandstad, to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2016 Special School Board Meeting as presented. Upon a vote, the same was approved as presented – unanimously.

School and Community Recognition

February 2016

Amy Starzecki: Members of the Board, this month I'm pleased to present Duluth resident William Keller for recognition. Duluth East High School is the recipient of a \$1,500 dollar donation check from Kellogg's thanks to Mr. Keller, who obtained the donation through the Kellogg's Back to School Text-to-Win sweepstakes. Not only did Mr. Keller designate the donation to Duluth East, he then matched it with a personal donation of another 15 hundred dollars, for a total of 3 thousand dollars. The donation will benefit the Duluth East Orchestra program. In an interview with KBJR TV, Mr. Keller said he made the donation because he has been committed to music since childhood and his father played in the Duluth Symphony. Elaine Bradley, Orchestra Director for Duluth East, said part of the money will be used to get a new viola, an instrument played by Mr. Keller's father. Many thanks to Mr. Keller for thinking of our schools and for this generous donation!

Public Comments
February 2016

Member Loeffler-Kemp read the community vision statement.

Bernie Bernham, President of Teachers Union, introduced Cindy Jamar, Alli Yakle, and Kim Eaton, who will be talking about the great things going on in the schools

Cindy Jamar, a Lester Park teacher, talked about the collaborative efforts going on at Lester Park and the fun ways they integrated math and physical education.

Kim Eaton and Alli Yakle, spoke to the school board about the Mentor/Mentee program and how it has benefited both of them throughout the school year.

Linda Ross Sellner, 402 Arrowhead Road, spoke to the school board regarding her concerns with the proposed new construction of the Edison High School and how it will affect the surrounding wetlands. She suggested that the board consider selling the Central site to Edison to avoid development on their current proposed building site.

Loren Martell, 623 East 7th Street, spoke to the school board regarding his concerns with the inequity in the number of students between the high schools, and how the new Edison High School will make the problem worse.

Tim Davis, no address provided, spoke to the school board regarding his concerns with the graduation rates within the district and the lack of diversity within the district.

Communications, Petitions, Etc.
February 2016

Superintendent Gronseth acknowledged the communications received.

Superintendent's Report
February 2016

Happy I Love to Read Month! The schools have been busy with a lot of fun activities around I love to Read month. I know several of you have had opportunities this month to be guest readers as well. As you know, I began as an elementary teacher so I really enjoy when I get to read to a classroom of students. I want to take this opportunity to speak to the importance of early literacy and encourage everyone to read to and with their kids. Providing access to books is important as well. The Children's Museum now operates the Little Red Bookshelves throughout the community and accepts donations of books. There are also many tiny libraries popping up in neighborhoods all over the city. It's another great way to make sure all children have access to reading materials at home.

In other news, just this week graduation rates were released statewide. Over-all the district made gains and we can be proud of that. We also have more work to do especially in closing the gap between groups of students. When we look at our numbers, we do have to keep in mind that the smaller the number of students in any group we are considering, the more variance we will see

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from year to year. That is why we tend to see more variance in our numbers from year to year for some groups. What we would like to see is a steady upward trend. I think the work we are doing to implement a multi-tiered system of support, our teacher PLCs, and our efforts in the area of culture and climate are all steps in the right direction. We are also working to increase opportunities for our students and to engage them not only in school, but in a plan for the future.

In fact, engagement is one of the topics being discussed in this year's Think Kids Meetings. We will also be gathering feedback on the year so far, and talking about updating the DWCIP. The meetings start tomorrow with our first meetings at Lowell and Lester Park. People can visit our website at isd709.org for a schedule of meetings. There is also an on-line version for people to provide feedback if they can't make it to a meeting, although I think the conversations that happen at the meetings are most beneficial. I hope everyone grabs a friend or two and heads out to a Think Kids meeting over the next three weeks. I realized today that the final meeting is on St Patrick's Day! Perhaps we will have four leaf clovers for that one.

Denfeld: Johanna Unden – reviewed several events that took place over the last month including; the 55th annual rotary speech competition, hockey day Minnesota, the sweetheart dance, spirit days, soles for soles, a blood drive and winter school sports teams who made it to state. She stated that registration is beginning for next year and 8th grade orientation is coming up.

East: Spencer Fredrickson – reviewed some events that took place over the last month including; hockey day Minnesota, spirit week, a blood drive, a food drive, and that 8th grade orientation was a great success.. He stated that the boys hockey team made it to the section finals and noted other team successes including One Act Play, Alpine and Cross country success at state competitions. He thanked Mr. Keller for his generous donations

Member Johnston suggested having a committee of the whole meeting to discuss graduation rates and stated some graduation rate statistics.

Education Committee Report
February 2016

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

Member Loeffler-Kemp 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	Jason Crane Director Special Services	Special Education: State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Year 1 and 2 (2015-2017)	\$320,000.00	The focus of the five-year State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) project is the Part B State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), to improve graduation rates for Black and American Indian children and youth with disabilities through the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBP). Due to the high concentration of Black and American Indian students with disabilities and some of the state's lowest graduation rates for these two groups, Duluth is one of four school districts MDE has identified as partners for the next phases of SSIP planning and EBP implementation.
2	National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR)	Susan Mikel, 1 st Grade Teacher Lester Park	History Superstars!	\$323.46	Funds from this grant will be used to purchase informational Social Studies text books at the first grade reading level, which will be shared across the first grade level (three classrooms).
3	Northland Foundation	Ann Ek	Save Lives with CPR	\$500.00	Funds from this grant will be used to support the Saving Lives with CPR program.

E-2-16-3334

February 23, 2016

M-Loeffler-Kemp, S-Kirby, to approve Resolution E-2-16-3334 – Acceptance of Grant Awards to the Duluth Public Schools. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

M-Loeffler-Kemp, 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

February 2016

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

M-Kirby, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve the Human Resource Committee report.

Member Welty and Member Johnston asked about any upcoming changes in pay rates. Tim Sworsky, Senior Human Resources Manager, stated that there were no rate changes planned.

Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

Business Committee Report
February 2016

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

Member Sandstad 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/PROGRAM	DONOR	RESTRICTION	AMOUNT
Autism Program	Autism Association	Books and Supplies	500.00
ECSE Program	Charley Reuter	B-5 ECSE Adaptive Equipment	In Kind
East High	William & Mavis Keller	Orchestra	1,500.00
East High	Brett & Hilaire Hauer	Music Dept.	50.00
East High	Mark Christiansen	Robotics	500.00
East High	Tricel Corporation	Robotics	5,000.00
East High	J&S Partnership	Robotics	3,000.00
East High	Krech Ojard & Associates	Robotics	1,000.00
East High	Saturn Systems	Robotics	1,000.00
East High	Duluth Lions Club	Choralaires	100.00
East High	North Shore Scenic Railroad	Choralaires	150.00
East High	Duluth Women's Club	Choralaires	150.00
East High	Kragseth Consulting, LLC	Choralaires	175.00
East High	Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite	Choralaires	150.00
East High	Greater Downtown Council	Choralaires	50.00
East High	Hermantown Community Church	Choralaires	150.00
East High	First Lutheran Church	Choralaires	100.00
		TOTAL	13,575.00

B-2-16-3335

February 23, 2016

M-Sandstad, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve Resolution B-1-16-3335 – Acceptance of Donations to Duluth Public Schools. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

Member Sandstad presented the resolution

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM 2016

General Education Formula

Increase the general education formula and provide an ongoing adjustment to protect against the negative impacts of inflation.

Special Education

Full funding of special education services as identified in state statute.

Integration Revenue

The State of Minnesota should continue funding of both inter-district and intra-district integration revenue. Any further redistribution of integration aid should be tied to a specific consensus on the proper use of integration funding. The MDE should continue to cooperate with districts to further develop programs that provide choice, reduce segregation, close the learning gap, and promote integrated learning experiences for all students.

Election Enhancements

Increase the filing fee for school board candidates to a level equal with other local election candidates in order to more adequately offset the costs of providing required documents. In addition, allow the Duluth school district an opportunity consistent with other Minnesota school districts to realize the cost reduction opportunity made possible by moving to even year elections.

Mandate Reform and Reduction

Mandates that have negative, unintended consequences should be considered for repeal or revision. Included would be system-wide technology infrastructure investments that would result in enhanced efficiency, eliminating mandated newspaper publishing that could be more effectively done via websites and provide funding to implement staff evaluation systems.

School Based Early Education Programs *(added at meeting)*

Fully fund the expansion of school-based early education programs allowing for school board flexibility in implementation and design to meet the needs of the local community.

The Duluth Public Schools serve the City of Duluth and certain outlying areas beyond the city limits. This area constitutes 328 square miles. The majority of the schools serving the district lie within the city limits. These schools are located within or near a ribbon of land two miles wide and seventeen miles long which follows the shoreline of Lake Superior and the St. Louis River.

The Duluth School System currently provides service to 8,800 students in the city of Duluth and outlying townships, including PreK and ECFE programs and education at the Area Learning Center and Secondary Vocational Programs.

Independent School District 709 is committed to ensure that all requirements in hiring, training, promotion, personnel management practices and collective bargaining agreements are structured and administered in a manner which furthers equal employment principles.

M-Sandstad, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve Resolution B-2-16-3336 – Legislative Platform.

Member Johnston noted that there is a delegation looking to obtain additional funding for drivers education. Discussion continued regarding the platform, lobbying, and keeping up with the legislative session.

M-Sandstad, S-Welty, to amend the legislative platform to add - The Legislature fully fund the expansion of school-based early education programs allowing for school board flexibility in implementation and design to meet the needs of the local community. Upon a vote on the proposed amendment the same passed – unanimously.

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

Member Sandstad presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

To Approve Application and Petition to Vacate the City of Duluth Existing Road Easement on the Rockridge School Property

WHEREAS, the School Board by Resolution B-12-15-3322 authorized the sale of a portion of the Rockridge School property; and

WHEREAS, the buyer has identified in their due diligence the need to vacate a street easement through the subject property; and

WHEREAS, in order to complete this sale transaction and transfer of property, the street easement must be vacated; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the School Board hereby authorizes the application and petition to the City of Duluth requesting the vacation of the street easement shown on Exhibit A; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the School Board hereby authorizes Administration to sign and submit the application and petition to the City of Duluth for the street easement vacation and any other documents or testimony required to complete this process.

B-2-16-3337

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M-Sandstad, S-Welty, to approve Resolution B-2-16-3337 – Approve Application and Petition to Vacate the City of Duluth Existing Road Easement on the Rockridge School Property. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

Member Sandstad presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

Granting a Pedestrian Walking Path Easement to the City of Duluth at Rockridge School

WHEREAS, Independent School District #709 is the owner of the property described as Lots 8 thru 9, Block 1 and Lots 3 thru 4, Block 5, LAKESIDE GARDENS, in St. Louis County, Minnesota; known as the Rockridge School site; and

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth wishes to obtain this Pedestrian Walking Path Easement across the District's property for the benefit of the general public and City of Duluth; and

WHEREAS, the pedestrian trail easement is shown on Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, this Pedestrian Walking Path Easement is contingent upon the City of Duluth's vacation of the street easement generally described on Exhibit B;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 709, St. Louis County, State of Minnesota that the Dedication of the Pedestrian Walking Path Easement dedicated to the City of Duluth as conditioned above, is hereby approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School Board authorizes the School Board Chair to execute the final Easement Agreement upon approval of the vacation of the street easement by the City of Duluth described in School Board Resolution B-2-16-3337.

B-2-16-3338

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M-Sandstad, S-Loeffler-Kemp, to approve Resolution B-2-16-3338 – Granting a Pedestrian Walking Path Easement to the City of Duluth at Rockridge School. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

Member Sandstad presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

To Accept Real Property from the City of Duluth Relating to the City of Duluth's Construction of a Greenhouse Near Denfeld High School

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth is the owner of real property near Denfeld High School; and

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth intends to construct a greenhouse on their adjacent property which construction will require the vacating of a public alley which currently supports access to the Denfeld School site; and

WHEREAS, ISD709 must maintain and preserve appropriate driveway and road access for the school, ISD709 has requested the transfer of property as described on Exhibit 1; and

WHEREAS, the City of Duluth is willing to convey the requested property to ISD 709;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the School Board of Independent School District No. 709, St. Louis County, State of Minnesota approves and accepts the transfer of property from the City of Duluth as described in Exhibit 1 attached hereto.

B-2-16-3345

February 23, 2016

M-Sandstad, S-Oswald, to approve Resolution B-2-16-3345 – Accept Real Property from the City of Duluth Relating to the City of Duluth's Construction of a Greenhouse near Denfeld High School. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

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

Member Welty withheld Item 3.I.

Member Johnston withheld Item 1.F

Member Loeffler-Kemp withheld Item 3.J.

Member Johnston withheld Item 1.F. APU/(WADM) Projections to note that this was the first month we hadn't lost students.

Member Welty withheld Item 3.I. – New Policy 203.2 Order of the Regular School Board Meeting to note his concerns that the last paragraph be moved up into the body of the policy under section 3.B. Discussion continued regarding adding the verbiage to the policy.

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M-Welty, S-Oswald to amend the policy to move the verbiage at the end of the policy into the body of the policy under section 3.B. Upon a vote, the same was approved – unanimously.

Member Loeffler-Kemp withheld Item 3.J. – New Policy 203.5 School Board Meeting Agenda but decided not to discuss it.

Upon a vote on the remainder of the Business Committee, the same was approved – unanimously.

Other
February 2016

Member Welty asked about the staffing issue he brought up earlier. Member Harala stated that administration would respond to the full board on the issue at a later time.

Member Johnston suggested that the board allow members of the public to speak during the time the item is being discussed on the agenda.

Member Oswald noted that she is grateful that the board has been able to work together on the policies.

Chair Harala adjourned the Regular School Board Meeting of February 23, 2016 at 8:36 p.m.