

**VICKSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
November 13, 2023 - 7:00 PM
Tobey Elementary
8551 East Long Lake Drive
Scotts, MI 49088**

MINUTES

Members Present: Ron Centofanti, Tina Forsyth, Carol Lohman, Dan Grabowski, David Schriemer, Stephanie Willoughby and Virgil Knowles

Members Absent: None

Board Secretary: Amy Manchester

Administrators Present: Keevin O'Neill, Steve Goss, Gail VanDaff, Adam Brush, Matt Hawkins, Allison Dygert, Joe Werkema, Amie McCaw, Sarah Bacalia, Mike Barwegen, Dewey Waterman, Rick Place, Sarah Dygert, Karen McKinstry,

Guests Present: Lisa Coe, Kelly MacDonell, Aaron Willett, Kathy Haliday, Saleem Ismail, Deb Schnepf, Anna Roach, Heather Fenwick, Michelle Wolthuis, Lyndsay Foote, Jen Buikema, Dan Ouelette, Karen Hill, Tobey PTO members, Grace Gheen, Kelly Doyle, Stanley Hoekstra, Mary Cole, Colton McKinley, Sara Polanco, Rachel Wieleba, Devyn Buell, Brandon & Stephanie Wagner, Tracey Lowe, Cathy Marshall, Penny Lario, Emme Zandt, Tracy Hall, Christine Babcock, Sarah Neff, Katy Furman, Leah Richard, A. Capannola, Dean Jordan, Kristen King, Dae McNaughton, Lisa Melnik, Travis & Julie Koeman, Aaron Willett, Eric Stafinski, Candace Schrader, Sygnett Swann, Lorence Wenke, Randy Germar, Jason Stratemeijer, Jamie Jones, Trudy Gwilt, Elizabeth Kaltenbach, Laura Meschke, Kerry & Lisa Hostettler, Melissa Kohler, Michele O'Neill, Dina Hadley, Harry VandenBosch, Toni Davis-Jones, Kat Miller, Braiden McEachern, Abbey & Randy German, Chad Wilson, Rev. McCartney, Miriam Epskamp, JB Vicioso, Stacey Charron-Milails, Rachel Simonds, Maxwell Myers, Dan Coer, Adam & Tori McCleary, Leah Faircloth, Liz Healy, Ashley Burwell, Pamela Mairs-Lorio, Joel Carrick, Dakota Torolski, Garrett Kaltenbach, Kate Proanier, Joan Hoekstra, Michael Foster, Keegan Zoll, Echo Sorensen, Kari & Nick Garman, Sofi Hudson, Josh Phillips, Samantha DeRyke, Charles Eyster

President Knowles called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

I. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Recognitions

Tobey Elementary students shared songs and a presentation of the Tobey Way. They thanked the PTO and all the teachers and staff at Tobey.

B. Legislative Update

Supt. O'Neill reported that Senate Bills 395 and 396 have moved through the House and Senate and are awaiting Gov. Whitmer's expected signature. These bills change the teacher evaluation process. It will reduce the valuable categories from 4 to 3. The student growth will be reduced to 20% from 40%. The administration is in favor of these changes for next school year. Another bill SB 463 mandates students must

complete the FASFA in order to graduate high school. It has been sent to the House. Administrators and many organizations do not support this bill as it adds stress and burden to students, parents and school staff.

C. Important Dates

Supt. O'Neill referred to the listing of important dates including many student holiday musical programs and concerts.

II. REPORTS AND PUBLIC INQUIRY

A. June 30, 2023 Audit Presentation - Plante Moran

Mike and Kristen presented the VCS 2023 audit with an Unmodified opinion, which is the highest rating auditors can place. There were no findings in the financial or compliance audit. Again, as in the past several years, the District is a low-risk auditee.

B. Special Board of Education Committee Report

Committee members Ron Centofanti, Dan Grabowski and Virgil Knowles shared discussions held regarding vaping at the Middle and High Schools. The District is trialing new technology. The committee will be meeting with the administrators at the Middle School and High School soon to discuss the issue. Working together, parents and school staff and students can make a difference.

C. Budget and Finance Report - Steve Goss

Asst Supt. Goss presented the Monthly Budget Report for month ending October 2023 showing total revenues of \$5,123,277; total expenditures of \$7,015,878 and deficiency of revenues over expenditures of \$(1,892,601).

D. Investment Holdings Update - Steve Goss

Asst. Supt. Goss gave an update on the District's financial investments.

E. Bus Purchase Recommendation - Steve Goss

Asst. Supt. Goss shared the district's recommendation for new buses and the rationale behind it.

F. School Nutrition Annual Report - Sarah Dyer

School Nutrition Director, Sarah Dyer, gave the department's annual report. She shared this year's breakfast and lunch numbers which have increased from last year as lunch and breakfast is free for all. She informed the Board regarding new items and equipment purchased last year. She also shared information regarding the new pizza program purchased for the HS.

G. Tobey Elementary Annual Report - Mike Barwegen

Principal Barwegen presented the Tobey annual report sharing student data, staff and student accomplishments. He answered questions from the Board.

III. AUDIENCE

Garrett Kaltenbach addressed the Board and thanked Mr. Barwegen. He shared that he does not agree with the hate on Facebook.

Charles Eyster spoke to the board about how he believes you need to be kind and keep people safe. His children don't care about transgender students using the restrooms. He's not happy with the disharmony in the Vicksburg Community.

Marian Epscamp shared her support of the LGBTQ+ students. She thanked the Board for the positive school board meeting and appreciates VCS.

Travis Koeman thanked the board for addressing the vaping issue and informing the audience about the FAFSA bill. He stated he was there to stand for the teachings of the church. He wants an answer to the bathroom issue from the Board.

Julie Koeman wanted to recognize Mr. Rosier for a wonderful band season. She addressed the Board regarding the bathroom issue and believes boys are boys and girls are girls. She wants the Board to change the policy.

Sygnett Swan addressed the Board regarding her HS experience at VHS. She did not feel like her LGBTQ+ friends were well protected then.

Lisa Hostetler also thanked the Board for looking into vaping and recommended looking into Marijuana also. She is worried about the safety of students and does not want transgender men or women in the bathroom. She is worried about sporting events where other people, not just students, can use the restrooms.

Grace Gheen from Up Front Kalamazoo said she supports the bathroom policy at Vicksburg Schools. As a parent and teacher she is more worried about trans children using restrooms being hurt rather than trans people hurting others.

Kelly Doyle from CARES addressed the Board to thank them for keeping all students safe. She wants all students to be free and have inclusive restroom policies.

Colton McKinley addressed the Board regarding bullying and what he suffered as a child. As a transgender male, he is much happier and healthier. He asked the board to continue to support the transgender bathroom policy.

Tracy Hall, Executive Director for Out Front Kalamazoo is happy with the free lunch in schools. She addressed the Board regarding trans students. She thanked the Board for following the law and stated that Out Front Kalamazoo is there for any students in need.

Christine Charron-Milails addressed the Board with her story. She has PTSD from the way she was treated during her childhood as a queer person. She shared stats from the Trevor project.

Stacy Sharon addressed the Board regarding children's safety. She shared some statistics about assaults in bathrooms.

Lawrence Wenke addressed the Board regarding the truck he parked in the lot. He was a legislator for several years. He voted in favor of support of LGBTQ people. He encourages the Board to stand up for LGBTQ community members.

Brady McKaktrin addressed the Board regarding his good friend who is a trans man. A solution that worked at his school was to give that student a different restroom.

Reverend McCarthy addressed the Board to share support of the inclusion and equity of all students. She encouraged the Board to stand strong and stand on the side of love.

IV. BOARD ACTION REQUIRED

A. Approval of the October 9, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes: A motion for approval was made by Forsyth and supported by Lohman.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of General Fund Invoices Totaling \$546,269.37 - ROLL CALL VOTE: A motion for approval was made by Schriemer and supported by Grabowski.

Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote.

- C. Approval of Purchase Card Disbursements for September 2023 Totaling \$145,346.82 - ROLL CALL VOTE: A motion for approval was made by Forsyth and supported by Centofanti.
Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote.
- D. Approval of Altria Settlement Resolution - ROLL CALL VOTE: A motion for approval was made by Schriemer and supported by Willoughby.
Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote.
- E. Approval of Bid Award to Smart Mouth Pizza in the amount of \$107,945 for Pizza and Equipment - ROLL CALL VOTE: A motion for approval was made by Schriemer and supported by Forsyth.
Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote.
- F. Approval to purchase 7 (seven) school buses under the MSBO Cooperative Bus Purchasing Program, from Holland Bus Company, at a total cost of \$925,260 - ROLL CALL VOTE: A motion for approval was made by Forsyth and supported by Lohman.
Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote.
- G. 1st Reading Approval of the Following Policies - ROLL CALL VOTE: A motion for approval was made by Lohman and supported by Forsyth.
Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote.
1. PO 2370.01 - Online/Blended Learning Program
 2. PO 7217 - Weapons
 3. PO 8305 - Information Security (Technical Correction)
 4. PO 8531 - Free and Reduced Meals
- H. 2nd Reading Approval of the VCS Policy 9700.01, Advertising and Commercial Activities - ROLL CALL VOTE: A motion for approval was made by Forsyth and supported by Lohman.
Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Knowles adjourned the meeting at 9:16 pm.

President Virgil Knowles
December 11, 2023

Secretary Amy Manchester