

Ithaca, Michigan  
December 16, 2020

The regular meeting of the Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District (RESD) was held via ZOOM, on Wednesday, December 16, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Board of Education President Dr. Timm Thorsen. Members present were: Dr. Cheri Booth, Bill Henderson, Cathy Hungerford, Don Schurr, Matthew Showalter, Tom Steere, and Dr. Timm Thorsen. Also present were Dr. Jan Amsterburg, Superintendent; Wendy Giles, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent; Kevin Kolb, Associate Superintendent for Finance; Martin Combs, Associate Superintendent for Special Services; Dr. Kathy Peasley, Associate Superintendent for Instruction; Matt McMahon, Associate Superintendent for Technology; Kim Onstott, Employment Programs Administrator; Doug Bush, Associate Superintendent for CTE.

Bill Hirschman, Auditor, Roslund Prestage and Co, was present on the ZOOM to provide the MMNET (Middle Michigan Network for Educational Telecommunications) 2020 Financial Audit.

Minutes of the regular meeting of November 18, 2020 were presented for approval. A motion was made by Tom Steere and supported by Dr. Booth to approve the meeting minutes of November 18, 2020 as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

Financial statements for the month of November were presented and reviewed. Claims for the month of November were presented in the amount of \$2,294,646.30. A motion was made by Matthew Showalter and supported by Cathy Hungerford to approve the financial statements and claims as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

Bill Hirschman presented the MMNET Financial Audit. After discussion, a motion was made by Matthew Showalter and supported by Don Schurr to place the audit on file as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

An employment contract was presented for Patrick Cassady, Technical Assistant (moving from a contracted employee to an RESD employee) at the annual salary of \$48,000. A motion was made by Tom Steere and supported by Bill Henderson to approve the employment contract for Patrick Cassady as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

Several grants and a donation were received this month.

- The RESD received \$64,893.82 from the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. The breakdown is - Forest Hill received \$30,000 for operating expenses, Dolly Parton Imagination Library received \$17,758 and the Isabella County Restoration House received \$17,135.82 (this is pass through to the Restoration House).
- The Gratiot County Community Foundation awarded Erika Kemler (Forest Hill Nature Area) with a grant of \$4,231.30 for mammalogy science activities.

A motion was made by Matthew Showalter and supported by Cathy Hungerford to accept the grants as listed above. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Don Schurr and supported by Matthew Showalter to approve the following NEOLA Policy considerations: Policy 3362.01 Threatening Behavior Toward Staff Members; Policy 4162 Controlled Substance and Alcohol Policy; Policy 6107 Authorization to Accept and Distribute Electronic Records and Use Electronic Signatures; Policy 8462 Student Abuse and Neglect; Policy 8600 Transportation. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Matthew Showalter and supported by Tom Steere to approve the Thrun Law Firm COVID-19 Remote Work Policy as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Matthew Showalter and supported by Bill Henderson to enter into the Juul Labs, Inc., Altria, lawsuit for fraudulently and intentionally marketing their products to children. Frantz Law Group is representing school districts in the litigation and GIRESD will be working with Thrun Law Firm who is referring clients to Frantz and assisting with the litigation paperwork. Motion carried 7-0.

The monthly Lobbyist Report was given at this time via ZOOM by Abby Cypher and Matt Kurta on the large number of missing school students; federal stimulus, Open Meetings Act, Brownfield redevelopment projects, and Critical Shortage/Employment of Retirees (HB 4694).

Matthew Showalter publicly thanked Senator Rick Outman for all of his work on the Critical Shortage/Employment of Retirees bill.

The following items were discussed by Jan Amsterburg under the Superintendent's Report:

1. Thanked board members for the past six months of service and mentioned January is Board Member Appreciation month
2. Tina Travis is leaving the Gratiot County Community Foundation
4. Disadvantaged families during the pandemic and holidays
5. COVID update

Under the Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan update, Martin Combs stated that there are no changes, people still have a choice of in-person or virtual instruction.

Under Director's Reports the following information was discussed.

Dr. Kathy Peasley, Associate Superintendent for Instruction MTSS Behavior Professional Learning series paid for from the 31n(12) mental health professional development grant; Regional Professional Development Day in August 2021, Early Literacy, MiSTEM, Math Recovery Grant and 31n Mental Health Grant.

Kim Onstott, Employment Programs Administrator, discussed unemployment rates, Michigan Works agencies working with individuals to expunge certain offenses, support services monitoring was very good with no findings, and hoping to open the offices soon since January is their busiest month.

Matt McMahon, Associate Superintendent for Technology, reported on the world-wide Google outage; Solarwinds cyber-attack, National Governor's Association, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation grant – Phase 1 for connectivity, MiConnect Grant update.

Doug Bush, Associate Superintendent for Career Technical Education, provided an update on Marshall Plan Grant funds expecting to not have a deadline for expenditure of funds, CTE programs, Career Navigators and the PRIME program.

Marty Combs, Associate Superintendent for Special Services, discussed the impact of COVID-19 on our special education programs (only two programs open right now, everything else is shut down either to illness or the Governor's orders); Parent Advisory Committee, Reconfirmation of the COVID-19 Learning plan; Strengthening Families Framework; GSG mid-year report and Mandatory RESD Special Education Plan.

Kevin Kolb, Associate Superintendent for Finance stated that because of COVID, some projects are getting done in the Mahoney building: replacing lighting in the lobby, wiring in the floor of the lobby and three small conference rooms. Also the Scenario 6 payments were increased this year to our local districts from \$320 to \$340 per student due to the successful passing of the Headlee Override millage. Kevin also discussed the Fulton School District fund equity deficit.

Under "Other", Matthew Showalter announced he is now the Chairman of the Scholarships Committee for the Mt. Pleasant Community Foundation.

Being no further business before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Bill Henderson and supported by Cathy Hungerford. President Thorsen adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

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Tom Steere, Secretary

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Dr. Timm Thorsen, President