

HOUSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, February 3, 2022

- I. Call to Order – Chair Stilin called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Members present were Richard Erdmann, Mimi Carlson, Tom Stilin, Mark Swenson, Arlin Peterson, Gene Lundak and Josh Norlien. Via electronic means was Mary Morem.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Agenda Approval – A motion was made by Lundak to approve the agenda. Seconded by Swenson. Motion passed unanimously.
- IV. Public Comment - None
- V. Consent Items – A motion was made by Erdmann to approve the consent items. Seconded by Lundak. Discussion was held regarding the work load for the teachers that have increased contracts and the positions listed in the hiring memos. Motion passed unanimously.
 - A. Minutes
 1. Approval of January 6, 2022
 - B. Payment of Bills
 - C. Personnel
 1. Increased Contracts
 - a. Anthony Decamillis
 - b. Elizabeth Kisner
 - c. Peggy Knetter-Johnson
 - d. Ann Lopez
 - e. Elizabeth Mangan
 - f. Alex Peterson
 - g. Robert Ralph
 - h. Joe Sobolik
 - i. Jennifer Stoopes-Makomba
 2. Hiring Memos
 - a. Anna Botcher
 - b. Jason Carrier
 - c. Ryan Gatzlaff
 - d. Cecilia Hamrick
 - e. Anita Jarvis
 - f. Michelle Knutson
 - g. Kiel Koehler
 - h. Susanna Ojakangas
 - i. Alisa Payne
 - j. Kitt Patton
 - k. Steve Walters
 3. Resignation
 - a. Jason Rohweder
 4. Request for Leave
 - a. Dena Buccieri
- VI. Discussion Items
 - A. Solar Options – Superintendent Morem provided details regarding the grant available for updating our buildings to solar power. She explained that approval has been given for the initial step of the grant process with the next step to be completed by the end of May. She asked for Board feedback and was given permission to continue the grant application process.

- B. School Uniform Color Guidelines – Superintendent Morem shared a request from the athletic director for clarification regarding school uniform colors. Board members indicated that the approved colors are red and white with silver accents possible, and any changes would require approval from the MSHSL.
- C. Banking Location Change – Superintendent Morem noted that Bremmer Bank in Houston will be closing this spring so the district will need to find a new bank. She shared information from Merchant’s bank and asked for Board member input regarding other banking options. Board members offered suggestions on other locations and asked for more proposals so the Finance committee can review them for future Board approval.
- D. Principal Updates – Superintendent Morem shared an update from MNVA Principal Angela Specketer. Her information included enrollment numbers, details regarding the success of the new reading interventionist position, MCA testing and graduation plans. Houston Elementary Principal Richard Bartz highlighted improvements being seen in math and reading test results after intervention strategies have been implemented this year. High school principal Michael Mangan provided details on the social-emotional programming, PBIS and Career and College readiness activities in the high school. He also noted that second semester focus will be on the creation of personal learning plans for the students. Congratulations were also given to the Summit program that just had five students complete their programs and graduate.
- E. Student and Exchange Visitor Program – Superintendent Morem provided details regarding the student exchange program and asked for Board input regarding renewal at a cost of \$1,200.00. Board members indicated approval of the program and are in favor of the renewal.
- F. New Bathroom Partitions for Elementary/High School – Superintendent Morem described the need to replace bathroom and locker room partitions in both the elementary and high school and shared a quote from Scholastic Equipment to replace them. Board members asked for more quotes and requested that a Facility meeting be held to review them prior to Board approval.
- G. Hurricane Hero’s – Triple A Winners – HS Principal Michael Mangan introduced Houston’s two Triple A Winners and read the letters of recommendation for their awards. Congratulations were extended to Therese Jore and Caden Ness for their outstanding efforts that earned them this honor.

VII. Old Business (Items for Discussion and Approval)

- A. 22-23 Academic Calendar – Superintendent Morem described the process used to develop the 22-23 calendar and noted that the teachers have completed their voting and have approved the version with the shorter Christmas break. Board members requested more time to review the calendar prior to approval.
- B. Approve Building Purchase Prices – Superintendent Morem offered a description of the two properties available for purchase here in Houston and shared that we have accepted offers for both. Discussion was held regarding ongoing maintenance, financing and the need to create a committee to determine the best use for each. A motion was made by Lundak to purchase the church property at 202 S Sheridan Street for the amount of \$200,000.00. Seconded by Erdmann. Motion passed unanimously. A motion was made by Peterson to approve the purchase of the ABLE property at 105 West Elm Street for the amount of \$450,000.00. Seconded by Norlien. Motion passed unanimously.
- C. Elementary Camera Upgrade – A motion was made by Norlien to approve the elementary camera upgrade in the amount of \$15,365.00. Seconded by Lundak. Motion passed unanimously.

- D. Policies for Second Reading – Board member Lundak asked for information regarding the bond counselors described in policy 726 and clarification was given that Baker Tilly fills that roll. A motion was made by Lundak to approve policies 410, 414, 415 and 726. Seconded by Norlien. Motion passed unanimously.
 - 1. Policy 410 – Family Medical Leave
 - 2. Policy 414 – Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect
 - 3. Policy 415 – Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults
 - 4. Policy 726 – Post Issuance Compliance
- VIII. New Business (Items for Discussion and Approval)
- A. Resolution Accepting Donations – Board member Peterson introduced the resolution accepting donations from the American Legion in the total amount of \$1,850.00, AcenTek in the amount of \$100.00 and the Jonathan Huhn golf tournament in the amount of \$720.00. Seconded by Norlien. A roll call vote was taken, and the resolution passed unanimously. Board members extended their gratitude to the donors for their generous donations.
 - B. Policies for First Reading – No recent updates were done for these policies and Board members were encouraged to review them for approval at the March 3 meeting.
 - 1. Policy 404 – Employment Background Checks
 - 2. Policy 417 – Chemical Use and Abuse
 - 3. Policy 418 – Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School
 - 4. Policy 424 – License Status
- IX. Announcements
- A. Important Events – Superintendent Morem shared that the Minnesota Paraprofessional Recognition Week was held January 24 – 30. She described the valuable roll the paraprofessional staff play within the district and thanked them for all they contribute. She also shared that the Minnesota School Board Recognition Week will be held February 21 – 25 and recognition will be done at the March meeting. A reminder was also provided that Kindergarten Roundup will be held on March 11 at the elementary school.
 - B. Meeting and Committee Updates – Leadership Conference Highlights – Board members Carlson and Lundak and Superintendent Morem shared highlights from sessions they attended at the recent MSBA Annual Leadership Conference. Sessions included successful Board meetings and communication, school safety, social-emotional learning, exploring engineering options for students and finances. Board member Lundak shared that conversation was held regarding intervention strategies at the February HVED meeting. Superintendent Morem also announced that a District Advisory meeting will be held on February 8 and staff development will be the main focus.
 - C. Board/Superintendent Feedback/Thank You’s/Future Agenda Items – Board member Lundak noted that the Breakfast of Champions will be held on Friday, February 11 and Board members are invited to attend. Board member Peterson provided details of the recent MSHSL meeting where Triple A winners were selected. Board member Norlien also congratulated the HHS Dance team for their sectional win.
- X. Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was made by Lundak and seconded by Swenson. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM.