

Meridian Public Schools

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Meridian Early College High School Learning Lab – Room 403

February 8, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Michael Bowen, Dennis Cole, Ryan Holzinger, Janice Goodall, Debbie Passmore, and Stephen Grubaugh

Absent: Rebecca Hitsman

Staff: Craig Carmoney, Sarah Glann, Dana Weisenberger, Patrick Malley, and Joshua Hook

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance led by President Michael Bowen.

Public Communication

None

Consent Agenda

Motion by Dennis Cole, supported by Stephen Grubaugh, "I move adoption of the consent agenda as presented."

Vote: 6 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

Old Business

None

New Business

Final Adoption of Bond Resolution

Superintendent Carmoney stated that the entire Resolution calling for an election and the Ballot Language for the School Bond Proposal was included in each Board Packet and needs to be approved at tonight's meeting. He stated that the Bond will address identified needs around facilities, technology and transportation and the election will take place on May 8, 2018 and is for 1.18 mills for 24 years.

Motion by Stephen Grubaugh, supported by Dennis Cole, "I move that the Meridian Board of Education approve the Final Adoption of the Bond Resolution as presented."

Vote: 6 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

Presentation on the School Finance Research Study

Superintendent Carmoney shared a video with the Board of Education on the results of the latest School Finance Study. He stated that the latest study was released in January 2018 and calls for significant investment in education to meet the needs of students and to be able to accomplish the expectations set forth by the State of Michigan related to growth and achievement. Superintendent Carmoney stated that this study demonstrates the need to reform Michigan's school funding system and provides the state with ways to begin the process. He stated that this is a very comprehensive and collaborative research study and every state but Michigan has implemented the recommendations of the study; we will just have to wait and see what the state does with these recommendations.

Second Reading – Updated NEOLA Technology Policies

Superintendent Carmoney stated that there are several updated Technology Policies from NEOLA that he and our Technology Director, J Cole, have reviewed. He stated that the Policy Committee also met and reviewed the recommended changes.

Motion by Debbie Passmore, supported by Ryan Holzinger, “I move that the Meridian Board of Education approve the Second Reading of the updated Technology Policies as presented.”

Vote: 6 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

Discussion on the Options to Increase Bus Driver Wages

Superintendent Carmoney stated that the Board of Education had requested at the last meeting for him to provide them with information on the possible options related to increasing wages for bus drivers. He stated that he presented a memo to MESPA that listed 2 main options: to reopen the MESPA contract to negotiate bus driver wages or to do an RFP, which can be tailored to the district’s needs and allow MESPA to bid the same as everyone else. Superintendent Carmoney stated that reopening the MESPA contract for limited negotiations is the preferred option. He stated that the response from MESPA was that they too would like to reopen the contract for limited negotiations so the two parties will be meeting soon.

Athletic Trainer Update

Business Manager Sarah Glann stated that there is a current RFP on our website which has also been sent out to 3 potential vendors. She stated that the scope of the RFP will be based on the various proposals and should show the options and levels of service in each proposal. Business Manager Glann stated that the bids are due February 26th and the Athletic Trainer will cover the Junior High and High School with grades of 6th through 12th.

Retirement – Connie Holsinger – Elementary Assistant Cook

Superintendent Carmoney stated that Connie Holsinger has been with Meridian in the food service department for close to twenty years and has recently given her notice of retirement. He stated that she will be retiring at the end of this school year and he thanked her for her years of service, stating that she will be greatly missed by staff and students.

Motion by Janice Goodall, supported by Stephen Grubaugh, “I move that the Meridian Board of Education accept the retirement of Connie Holsinger effective the end of the school day, June 7, 2018.”

Vote: 6 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

Resignation – Laura Kelly – Early College High School Teacher

Superintendent Carmoney stated that we recently received a resignation from Laura Kelly effective January 19, 2018, for her high school math and extracurricular positions.

Motion by Ryan Holzinger, supported by Janice Goodall, “I move that the Meridian Board of Education accept the resignation of Laura Kelly effective January 19, 2018.”

Vote: 6 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

Employee Purchase Card Increase Approval – Technology Director

Superintendent Carmoney stated that District Policy 6423 calls for the Board of Education to approve employees with purchase cards on an annual basis. He stated back in August, the Board approved the purchase card limit of \$5,000 for our Technology Director, J Cole, and with J also being involved with the Robotics Program, we are asking for his limit to be increased to \$10,000.

Motion by Debbie Passmore, supported by Ryan Holzinger, "I move that the Meridian Board of Education approve Technology Director, J Cole's employee purchase card limit to be increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000."

Vote: 5 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

****Board Secretary Dennis Cole Abstained from the vote due to Conflict of Interest****

Weighted Grading Committee Update

Superintendent Carmoney introduced Early College High School Principal, Patrick Malley, and Dean of Student Supports, Amy Boxey, to share some information on weighted grading and the goal of the committee. Principal Malley stated that they feel that Meridian students are currently opting out of rigorous coursework or may in the future because of possible negative impacts to the GPA and/or scholarship considerations because we do not have weighted grading. He stated that the average GPA for Meridian's top ten students as a whole is decreasing slightly every year due to the tough courses these students are continually taking and he is worried what will happen if this trend continues. He stated that the committee wants to make sure that Meridian students are considered fairly for possible scholarships. Principal Malley stated that other area high schools do offer weighted grades for Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses and he suggests that Meridian offer an incentive for certain dual enrollment college courses. He and the committee propose that additional language be added to the current high school student handbook allowing for two new "rigor levels" each allowing additional grade points for certain courses. Principal Malley proposes that there be an "Accelerated course" level for classes such as Statistics and other College Level Algebra or above classes where students can possibly earn an additional 0.2 grade points and an "Advanced course" level for difficult classes such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Calculus I and II where students can earn an additional 0.5 grade points. He stated that the committee will have another meeting very soon and will bring proposed language to the Board of Education at their March meeting. Board Member Goodall suggested that the committee be very conservative in their numbers and go very slow with the weighted grading concept. Principal Malley also stated that all courses currently being taken that would qualify for the incentives would be weighted retroactive this school year.

Closed Executive Session – Superintendent Evaluation

Superintendent Carmoney stated that the Board of Education will enter into Closed Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the evaluation of the Superintendent.

Motion by Ryan Holzinger, supported by Janice Goodall, "I move that the Meridian Board of Education enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss the evaluation of the Superintendent at 7:59 p.m."

Roll Call Vote: 6 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

The Board of Education returned to Open Session at 8:48 p.m.

Motion by Ryan Holzinger, supported by Stephen Grubaugh, "I move to Adjourn at 8:49 p.m."

Vote: 6 – yes, 0 – no. Motion Carried.

Dennis J. Cole
Secretary, Meridian Board of Education