

SALINE AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MINUTES
October 8, 2007

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education of the Saline Area School District was held on Monday, October 8, 2007, in the Gymnasium at Historic Union School.

Board Members present: Lisa Slawson, Trudy Driscoll, Paul Hynek, Bari Livsey, David Medley, David Friese, and Kim Van Hoek

Board Members absent: None

Central Administrators present: Scot Graden, Betty Rosen-Leacher, Tom Wall, Ann Callan, Sean Enright and Neal Elyakin

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** of the Special Meeting of October 8, 2007, by President Slawson at 9:07 a.m.

- II. **OPPORTUNITY FOR DR. BEVERLY GELTNER TO SPEAK**

Superintendent Geltner spoke and highlighted her reasoning for reinstating student x to the freshman football team. She reiterated the entire incident in time-line fashion and mentioned other individuals and organizations in and out of the district that she spoke with. Superintendent Geltner also referenced the SAS Policy manual and the Athletic Department manual.

- III. **ACTION ITEMS**

MOTION by Bari Livsey, seconded by David Friese to place Superintendent Dr. Beverly Geltner on immediate paid administrative leave pending completion of an investigation.

MOTION CARRIED. Ayes – all present.

MOTION by Bari Livsey, seconded by David Friese to appoint Scot Graden as temporary Interim Superintendent of Saline Area Schools effective immediately.

MOTION CARRIED. Ayes – all present.

- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. Bill G'Sell – withdraws his support of Superintendent Geltner after supporting her at Saturday's meeting. His reasoning involves conversation with two teachers who he has utmost respect for. Their stories were shockingly similar. There are serious problems to deal with. Fact finding committee. Tough job for the Board.
- B. Frank Parkinson – doesn't know extent of all the facts. Seems meetings have all been about "airing dirty laundry". Disappointed on the way this has occurred – taint on her position. Supervision by committee doesn't work.
- C. Nancy Brewer – sat on the bench and observed the coaches for four years. Utmost respect. Cannot sit in an office (Superintendent Geltner) and observe what it actually happening.
- D. Keith Wood – was a great leap that guidelines were there, but not applied. Did Superintendent Geltner observe? Pointed out that no one can follow

- students at school all day and be sure they drink and eat. Parents must make students aware. Excellent job by the coaches.
- E. Denise Bertin-Epp mentioned "mob mentality". CEO of local health organization – praised Superintendent Geltner's work with substance abuse and underage drinking – not always popular. Look at the facts objectively and professionally.
 - F. Mike Burchyett- First to resign. Superintendent Geltner time-line is revisionist history and not correct. Simple matter on the football team. Followed administrative level. No easy decisions, but there are simple answers. Do the right thing.
 - G. Grace Reeves – 9th grade Mom. Worked closely with all coaches. Talked with son about incident. Hurts – for your child – for all the kids. This also affected other teams – Adrian, Dexter and South Lyon. Coaches not supported by their employer. Micro-managing by Superintendent Geltner trying to protect herself.
 - H. Elizabeth Parkinson – Four children – marketing professional – recruiting. Superintendent Geltner has been instrumental – state in crisis – 21st century view – football controversy will pass.
 - I. Bonnie Bennyhoff - Superintendent Geltner was a change agent. Need to investigate the facts. Need a leader with a positive attitude and energy.
 - J. Jennifer Holmes – local hairdresser – not one person has told the same story. Different views and different blame. The mis-information is startling. Superintendent Geltner changed support and structure in Saline Area Schools. At the end of the day - a 15 year old boy was asking for water – denied water.
 - K. Susan Heren – 9th grade parent. Coaches support kids. Teach life skills – welfare of the boys. Not a football issue – a leadership issue – or lack of leadership. Came seeking information and direction and saw Superintendent Geltner mocking other parent. This is not leadership. Manipulation of the truth. Leader needs to pull together. Superintendent Geltner's speech was demeaning – to the public and to the Board.
 - L. Cathy Riesterer – on behalf of student x. Misconception of the facts – allegations – were things fair? Wrote a six-page letter – attorney. Take a step back – 5 ½ weeks – was expulsion fair? Consistent with past? Did not discipline coaches. Student x needs body guard at school. Bullying by parents of other. Two sides to every story. Family seeks peace.
 - M. Barb Manuel – supportive of Superintendent Geltner in the past. Standards of schools have risen. Leader changes and needs to bring together. Leader has been very divisive. Superintendent needs to demand support.
 - N. Jeannie Armstrong – need community buy-in. 90% has been positive in the schools. Supports the Board decision and investigation. Private interviews so no repercussions. All need to respect any decision.
 - O. Julie Brown – has no quarrel with Superintendent Geltner. Need agent of change. Personal skills – lead by example.
 - P. Al Bates – Twenty-six years in Saline. Kids out of school. Supports decision – follow the trail – check the time-line. Football has become a catalyst for prior issues. Lots of issues – address them along with the credibility of Superintendent Geltner.
 - Q. Kim Kaster – Wednesday after in Superintendent Geltner's office. Speaks with hands. Always received the highest respect. Asked Superintendent Geltner if she was the one with the whole story. Her 14 year old said that her Mom speaks with her hands. Need leadership.
 - R. Scott Wynne – Hypocritical and ironic. Coaches, Board – administrative leave – mis-handling of the situation – everyone on the board is responsible for every child. Son has been wronged – IEP – Choked on watermelon at pep-rally last year. Rob White did not call 911. Parents not called. Your school is broke and you better fix it. Step carefully – everyone makes mistakes – allow

corrections.

- S. Kim Mitchell – parent 9th grade son. Wants to play football. Traded vacation for football practice – understands that coaches need standards – and our have them.
- T. Shannon Needham – moved to Saline two months ago. Three children in schools. Very active in former schools near Chicago. Board and Superintendent always have conversations. Came to meeting and was unbiased at 9:05, but by 9:20 she was in awe. Superintendent Geltner looks and glares – appalling. Need changes.
- U. Jack Goeman - representing his son. Applauds the Board action. Put kids on the field and reinstate the coaches this afternoon.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Trudy Driscoll seconded by Kim Van Hoek, to adjourn the Special Board of Education Meeting of October 8, 2007, at 10:35 a.m.

MOTION CARRIED. Ayes – all present.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Hynek, Secretary

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