

**SALINE AREA SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, November 13, 2007**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Saline Area School District was held on Tuesday, November 13, 2007, in the Board Room at Historic Union School.

Board Members Present: Lisa Slawson, David Friese, Paul Hynek, Bari Livsey, David Medley, and Kim VanHoek

Board Members Absent: Trudy Driscoll

Central Administrators Present: Scot Graden, Betty-Rosen-Leacher, and Tom Wall

I. **CALL TO ORDER** of the Regular Meeting of November 13, 2007 by President Lisa Slawson at 7:00 PM.

II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

III. **ITEMS OF INTEREST AND INQUIRY:**

A. **Public:**

Mike Mychajlonka - 7493 Dell Road, Saline, wanted to comment about the handling of Dr. Geltner's resignation. He felt that if there were additional issues other than the football incident the public should be made aware of them.

He also spoke about achievement gaps and how a student sued a school district after his graduation because potential employers told him that he was unemployable. He wondered what Saline's defense would be in a similar situation.

Perry Kantner - 5536 Weber Road, Saline. He and his wife Denise moved to Saline from Ann Arbor 26 years ago because of the schools excellent reputation. During that time they have had a very hands-on approach and a great deal of interaction with the Principals and Superintendents. He indicated that instead of wasting money on a Superintendent search that the best person for the job is right here in the community, Mr. Scot Graden. He

spoke about how Scot has a proven track record of healing in the district as exemplified by his job as Interim Athletic Director. He indicated that although he has not run an entire school system he has taken on many new roles and done them all very well. He also has strong ties to the Saline Community. He felt that the Board should do some research on Scot and felt confident that they would see that he has broad based support from the unions, staff, and the community.

Jennifer Edwards, respectively disagreed with Mr. Kanter and that a national search should be done because of how badly the situation was handled with Dr. Geltner. She indicated that Saline received a lot of bad publicity during the past month and we may have difficulty finding someone who would want to come here as a result. She feels that a doctorate degree is an absolute must for this position

Joyce Jonik – Ypsilanti Township Resident, Teacher at Saline High School. Ms. Jonik spoke to the Board about the need and importance of revising the Policy Manual. She spoke about how Dr. Geltner heard, applauded, and approved the switch to trimesters and the Board was never informed of what was decided and how. She hopes that the new manual will describe policies that are honest and provide accountability.

Tim Heim, SEA President. Tim wanted to applaud Scot's efforts in working with the union and its representatives to quickly resolve seven grievances instead of going to arbitration. He stated that Scot has a great understanding of the history in Saline and has gotten people working together.

**B. Administration**

Interim Superintendent Graden noted that the budget presentation tonight by Mr. Wall includes the cost of the grievance settlements with Tim Heim and Betty Rosen-Leacher. He appreciates the willingness of the staff to all work together.

Interim Superintendent Graden announced that the Saline Drama Club will be presenting "A Night with Horton Foote" November 16-18 at the Ellen Ewing Performing Arts Center.

Report cards went out on Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup> and conferences will be held the week of November 19<sup>th</sup>.

**C. Board of Education Members**

Board President Slawson acknowledged Sam Musto and Jody Gielinski in the Culinary Arts Program for the wonderful job they have done at the High School this year. She has received many compliments from the community about this wonderful group.

The High School SADD and STAND groups gave a presentation recently to the Middle School students on handling bullying, harassment, and peer pressure.

Paul Hynek wanted to thank Betty Rosen-Leacher and everyone who worked to get the eSembler program up and running. It is proving to be a very useful tool.

David Friese and David Medley both wanted to recognize the Girls and Boys Cross Country Teams on a job well done at the State Meet. The Girls Team came in 5th and the Boys Team came in 2nd.

**IV. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDAS:**

**MOTION** made by David Friese, seconded by Kim VanHoek to approve the agendas as printed/revised.

Ayes – All Present - **MOTION CARRIED.**

**V. SCHEDULED REPORTS/PUBLIC STATEMENTS:**

**A.** Mr. Carl Hartman and Dr. Michael Emlaw of the Michigan Association of School Boards gave a presentation to the Board of Education on potentially being retained to do the superintendent search. They emphasized that this is one of the major jobs of the Board and the process is very important. They would work with constituents, staff, and students to establish a criteria of items they feel are important for the Superintendent to be successful in Saline. They would be conducting a national search and all applications would be submitted and processed directly through the MASB. They are not a public school district so any information received is exempt from the Freedom of Information Act. The fee for obtaining MASB to do the Superintendent search is \$6,500 plus expenses that were estimated to be below \$1,500.

Kim VanHoek inquired as to how many applicants they felt the position would attract and it was indicated that between 25 and 30 would be the average number expected.

## B. Tom McLennan and Associates

Mr. Tom McLennan passed out his presentation to the Board outlining his proposal for the Superintendent search. He indicated that he usually conducts two or three searches per year. He was very concerned about funding in public schools and that Saline needs to find an outstanding Superintendent that they feel they can trust and has integrity. It was his opinion that the Board has a highly qualified Interim Superintendent in Mr. Graden.

He indicated that he felt the Board had the following options:

- The Board can do a national search with either his company or MASB.
- The Board could leave Scot Graden in the Interim position for six to eight months until the district has returned to normalcy and then initiate a search. He felt that this option would be fair to Scot because it would give him some interim experience and put him on a level playing field.
- The Board could give Mr. Graden a trial period and then if they liked his performance appoint him to the position permanently.

Mr. McLennan also indicated that Mr. Graden would bring continuity to the position and that if you select him he already knows the district better than anyone else and could be off and running. He indicated that he felt he was very experienced for the position.

His fee is \$9,500 with the stipulation that if the candidate leaves within one year he will conduct the next search free of charge with the exception of the brochure mailing which is generally around \$800.00. He said that he expected the Saline position would draw about 30 qualified candidates.

## C. Superintendent Search Discussion

Kim VanHoek stated that she thinks the world of Scot and thinks that he has great potential. However, she feels that it is incumbent upon the Board and only fair to him to do a thorough search and either he will be the #1 candidate or he will not.

David Medley indicated the he felt that we need to do a search because selecting the right Superintendent is the most important job that the Board has and the Board owes it to Scot and the Community to do that job to the best of their ability.

David Friese felt that it was not necessary to be a classroom teacher to become Superintendent. He worked as a teacher for 38 years and worked for some very

good Superintendents who were never in the classroom. He felt that it was important to do a search. He also stated that the Board was very fortunate that they currently have a very qualified person in the position right now so there is no rush and they can take their time to make a sound decision. He felt that Scot was doing a good job for the district.

Bari Livsey supports a Superintendent search although she would highly urge Scot to apply. Paul Hynek also supports a search because there may be some people in the community who don't know Scot very well.

**VI. ACTION ITEMS:**

**A. Superintendent Search – President Lisa Slawson**

**MOTION** by David Friese to employ MASB to conduct a Superintendent Search for Saline Area Schools, seconded by David Medley.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED.**

**B. Annual Report Adoption – Assistant Superintendent Betty Rosen-Leacher**

Bari was happy to see all schools met the criteria and that no school was identified for improvement in any way. Kim likes the fact that the formats are all very similar. Scot credited Betty Rosen-Leacher with putting them in a unified format.

**MOTION** by Kim VanHoek to adopt the Saline Area Schools Annual Report for 2007-2008, seconded by Bari Livsey.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED**

**C. Board Goals – President Lisa Slawson**

Scot Graden displayed a poster made by Bruce Ross and his high school students of the board goals to be hung in the Board Room.

**MOTION** by David Medley to adopt the board goals as printed, seconded by Paul Hynek.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED.**

**D. Interim Superintendent Stipend** – Assistant Superintendent Tom Wall and President Lisa Slawson

Tom stated that this is a standard agreement and the cost for this year will be \$18,000 which includes a mileage stipend of \$500.00 monthly. There is an out clause of a 30 day notice of change for either party. No tenure is provided. The agreement will be signed by Board President Lisa Slawson and Interim Superintendent Scot Graden.

**MOTION** by Kim VanHoek to accept the stipend recommendation by Assist Superintendent, Tom Wall, for Interim Superintendent, Scot Graden and to extend the interim period through 6/30/08, seconded by David Friese.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED.**

**E. Set Retreat Date** – President Lisa Slawson

The following retreat dates were scheduled with the location to be determined:

- Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 10:00 PM
- Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 10:00 PM (Joint Retreat)

**MOTION** by Paul Hynek to set the Saline Area School Board of Education retreats as indicated, seconded by David Medley.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED.**

**F. District Library Appointments** – Interim Superintendent Scot Graden

**MOTION** made by Bari Livsey to accept the recommendation of Interim Superintendent, Scot Graden to appoint Donald Fyall and Lisa Flynn to the District Library Board for two year terms (12/1/07 – 11/30/09), seconded by Kim VanHoek.

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED.**

**VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**A. Election Consolidation Update**

Discussion tabled until next meeting.

**B. Budget Information**

Tom Wall gave a presentation updating the budget and the financial picture of right now. Tom will continue to provide these monthly for the Board.

**VIII. CONSENT AGENDA:**

**MOTION** made by Bari Livsey to authorize the following items as part of the Consent Agenda, seconded by Paul Hynek

- A. **Approval of the Minutes** of the meetings of October 6, 8, 23, November 6 (6:30 PM), and November 6 (7:30 PM).
- B. **Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of November 13, 2007, in the amount of \$424,851.78.
- C. **Receive and File** the letters from Executive Director of Human Resources Callan for the resignation of Cynthia Baxter, Paraeducator, effective November 2, 2007.
- D. **Acceptance** of the recommendation of Executive Director of Human Resources Callan to hire (for school year 2007-2008) the following candidate for a School Social Worker position within Saline Area Schools, in accordance with the Master Agreement between the SEA/WCEA and the Board of Education:
  - a. **Rachel Porter**, to be placed on Step 1 of the MA+30 salary schedule
- E. **Acceptance** of the recommendation of Executive Director of Human Resources Callan to hire (for school year 2007-2008) the following candidates for the positions of Paraeducator within Saline Area Schools, in accordance with the Support Collective Bargaining Agreement:
  - a. **Angela DeBolt**, to be placed on Step 1 of the Paraeducator Scale
  - b. **Lisa O'Connell**, to be placed on Step 1 of the Paraeducator Scale

Ayes – All Present – **MOTION CARRIED.**

***CLOSING***

**XI. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- A. Mary Lirones, Saline spoke about the last time that a national wide search was conducted for the Superintendent position. She hopes that with all the money

that will be spent on this that the Board comes up with a better candidate than the last time. She said that the school system has both strengths and weaknesses and they should remember that and not continually pat themselves on the back.

- B. Richard Issacs, Saline questioned why it has taken five weeks to get the minutes out and the inconsistency in getting the word out to the public regarding Board meetings.

**XII. ITEMS SCHEDULED ON NEXT AGENDAS:**

- A. Election Consolidation Update – Tom Wall
- B. High School Course Adoption – Betty Rosen-Leacher
- C. Holiday Greeting
- D. MASB/NEOLA
- E. Policy Manual Update and Revision
- F. Superintendent Search
- G. Retreat Discussion

**XIII. CLOSED SESSION:**

**MOTION** made by Bari Livsey, seconded by Kim VanHoek to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 9:15 PM, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at 9:45 PM, for the purpose of considering a confidential attorney-client communication pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Open Meeting Act.

Motion must pass by 2/3 roll call vote:

- President Lisa Slawson – yes
- David Friese – yes
- Paul Hynek – yes
- Bari Livsey – yes
- David Medley – yes
- Kim VanHoek - yes

**MOTION CARRIED**

**RE-ENTER OPEN SESSION** at 9:50 PM.

**XIV. POST-CLOSED SESSION ACTIONS:**

**A.** No Action

**B.**

**XV. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** by Paul Hynek to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of November 13, 2007, at 9:52 PM, seconded by Bari Livsey.

All Ayes – Present – **MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Hynek, Secretary

By: Patti Waltz, Recording Secretary