

The Lakewood Board of Education Meeting (Monday, August 2, 2021)

Members present

Betsy Shaughnessy, Edward Favre, Michael Callahan, Linda Beebe, Emma Petrie Barcelona

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL

Procedural: 1. Call to Order - Roll Call

The Lakewood Board of Education met in regular session in the Lakewood High School Cafeteria, 14100 Franklin Boulevard, Lakewood, Ohio at 7:00 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Procedural: 1. Pledge of Allegiance

Board President Shaughnessy led members of the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#200/2021

C. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (ROLL CALL VOTE)

Action: 1. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda for the August 2, 2021 Regular Board of Education Meeting (ROLL CALL VOTE)

Motion by Edward Favre, second by Linda Beebe.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yea: Betsy Shaughnessy, Edward Favre, Michael Callahan, Linda Beebe, Emma Petrie Barcelona

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Information, Reports: 1. District Updates - Superintendent Niedzwiecki

Superintendent Niedzwiecki said there were several reports this evening.

Information, Reports: 2. Update on Summer School 2021

Dr. Christine Palumbo, Assistant Superintendent, said two of our Summer School administrators would speak about this year's program. Assistant Superintendent Palumbo first thanked the administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals that signed on to work all of the District's summer programs. Without their help, we would have been unable to offer this many opportunities to students at no cost to their families. Mrs. Bridgette Firstenberger, LHS Associate Principal, and Mrs. April Patton, Assistant Principal at Harding Middle School, provided a brief review. Mrs. Firstenberger spoke about the K-5 program that she oversaw at Horace Mann Elementary School as well as the program run by Mrs. Gina Bajzer at Roosevelt Elementary School. Having the funding available to offer two concurrent programs in two different buildings allowed us to provide a more robust curriculum for more students. Mrs. Firstenberger echoed the Assistant Superintendent's sentiments that we could not have made this happen without our amazing staff members. Students were extended an invitation to participate in the summer program. However, if there was a need or special circumstance for a non-invited student to attend, we were able to accommodate these requests 100% of the time.

Mrs. Patton spoke about the middle and high school summer school programs. She and Mr. Tony Chiaravalle, LHS House Principal, were the administrators in charge this year. The middle school summer school curriculum was changed this year due to so many students needing intervention in math

and language arts (ELA) from the school year. Math and ELA was offered as a combo class for two (2) hours each day. In the past, students would receive instruction four (4) hours a day in a 6-7-8 class. These offerings were changed from a basic skills class to standards-specific at each grade level, and instruction was changed to be two (2) hours a day at grade level. There were 82 students attending the high school summer school. 52 students were able to complete courses for credit recovery, 31 students completed physical education and health for advancement, and 14 students were able to complete more than one course this year.

The Assistant Superintendent spoke about some of the "tried and true" programs provided through the Recreation Department such as Camp Stop, Camp Can Do, and Camp Invention which were made available at no cost to families this summer. There were several new programs offered this summer: Project Lead the Way, MS STEM, MS/HS STEM, Instruments Rising, Kindergarten KickStart and MakerSpace Summer Camp. Special thanks were extended to Mrs. Leslie Krogman and the Recreation Department for their efforts in running these programs, sign-up, and space allocation. We were able to serve a tremendous number of students this year at no cost to their families. Additional programming at the middle and high schools began today and, elementary programming will begin next week at the elementary schools. The August Academies will take place in ten (10) District buildings. A total count of all program participants indicated that over a thousand students were served. Assistant Superintendent Palumbo responded to questions posed by Board members. Superintendent Niedzwiecki reminded the Board that these courses were possible because of the availability of ESSER funds that came from the Federal government.

Information, Reports: 3. Update on 2020-2021 Opening of School

Superintendent Niedzwiecki said on Friday a District communication was sent out pertaining to the conditions of COVID and what that meant for students' return to school in the new year. She asked for all to remember how rapidly things changed last year; we will continue to adjust and pivot as needed. We will continue to be diligent and work through Federal, state and local data. We will also look at our own building data as we move forward. As soon as this communication was sent out, the Superintendent received new reports over the next three days. We will need to be flexible and keep the best interest of students in mind. She summarized the key points of the communication and said the #1 goal communicated to our families was that students would be ALL IN. All building safety protocols from last year will be kept in place.

The Superintendent spoke about the following mask requirements sent out in the recent District communication:

- Students grades PreK-5: Required when indoors, except when eating.
- Students grades 6-12: Optional for all but strongly recommended for those who are unvaccinated.
- Staff: Optional for all but strongly recommended for those who are unvaccinated.

We know at least 85% of our staff, and likely more, have been vaccinated. The positivity rate in Lakewood remains relatively low, and hospitalizations have remained at a stable, low level throughout the latest case increase. Students and staff that have had a chance to get vaccinated should have a choice at this point. If our numbers continue to grow, Superintendent Niedzwiecki said the recommendation could be that we all mask at times or that just a building would need to mask based on quarantine or isolation levels. She asked that everyone continue to be patient. Superintendent Niedzwiecki said she wants everyone to know they always have the option to wear a mask in our buildings.

Information, Reports: 4. Update on Community Recreation & Education Matters

The Superintendent updated Board members on City and School personnel as it pertains to Community Recreation and Education and additionally the baseball fields. Mayor George and her team met with District administrators two (2) Fridays ago to continue the discussion on how best to go about repairing the City fields. Through that discussion we were also able to discuss the opportunity to research and develop a 3-5 year strategic plan for Community Recreation and Education in Lakewood. Following this meeting Board President Shaughnessy and Assistant Superintendent Palumbo attended City Council's committee meeting. The information gleaned from the committee meeting and other information solidified that we have an obligation not only to improve our fields but to improve our communication and programming with our commitment to community recreation and education. Therefore, we will be meeting together for the purpose of updating our fields and also will pull the community together to engage in stakeholder dialogue to establish a direction for the future. We will then develop the right targets and focus to improve our programming and communication on the facilities. Board members engaged in conversation on the topic.

Thus ended the Superintendent's Report.

E. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE SECOND REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

F. DISCUSSION - FINANCE REPORT - MR. CALLAHAN, MS. PETRIE BARCELONA

Discussion: 1. Investments Purchased and Matured - For the Month of June 2021

Discussion: 2. Financial Information - For the Month of June 2021

Treasurer Zeman said two (2) weeks ago Cabinet members met to discuss the ESSER III ARP funding stream and had to submit a plan by August 20, 2021 for those estimated expenditures through fiscal year 2024. These funds will have to be spent by September 30, 2024.

G. DISCUSSION - BUILDINGS, SITES AND MAJOR PURCHASES REPORT - MS. PETRIE BARCELONA, MR. CALLAHAN

Discussion: 1. Rental Agreement: Horizon Education Center

H. DISCUSSION - EDUCATION REPORT - MS. BEEBE, MR. FAVRE

Discussion: 1. Resolution to Adopt Franklin School of Opportunity Courses of Study

Discussion: 2. Resolution to Adopt West Shore Career-Technical Education Courses of Study

Discussion: 3. Agreement Between the Lakewood Board of Education and Insight Behavioral Consulting, Inc.

Discussion: 4. Resolution to Approve Service Agreements with PSI

Discussion: 5. Agreement Between The Lakewood Board of Education, the Ohio Schools Council and the Lake Erie Educational Media Consortium for the 2021-2022 School Year

Discussion: 6. Resolution to Approve Out of State Field Trip

Discussion: 7. Gifts to Schools For the Month of August 2021

I. DISCUSSION - POLICY - MRS. SHAUGHNESSY, MR. FAVRE

Discussion: 1. Resolution to Adopt a Policy of the Lakewood City Schools Board of Education

J. DISCUSSION - HUMAN RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT - MR. FAVRE, MS. BEEBE

Discussion: 1. Certified

Discussion: 2. Classified

Discussion: 3. Community Recreation & Education

Discussion: 4. Community Recreation & Education Pay Rate Adjustment

Discussion: 5. Resolution to Approve Addendum to the Master Service Agreement Between the Lakewood Board of Education and Rachel Wixey and Associates.

K. COMMUNICATIONS

Information: 1. Board of Education Comments

- Mr. Callahan thanked everyone who attended the Superintendent's reception this evening. It was great to see so many community members in attendance. He has received a range of emails and communications with regard to the District's return-to-school plan. Comments vary from all students and staff should have the option to wear masks to all individuals should be required to be masked. He appreciates the Superintendent's comments that we will need to remain flexible in an ever-changing environment.

- Ms. Beebe also received many of the same emails expressing legitimate concerns on both sides. She expressed her appreciation that parents and staff have all taken the opportunity to communicate their thoughts and concerns to the Board. She suggested the District might want to again consider offering a vaccination clinic at the high school.

- Mr. Favre reiterated that we are trying to implement a plan to get all kids in school in an ever-changing environment. He has grave concerns that this is going in the wrong direction, and he supports the Superintendent as she tries to navigate this issue. There will be difficult times, but we need to maintain the focus that we want to do what's best for the kids and educate them. At the same time we must remain mindful of the different opinions of our parents and our community as to the best way to accomplish this.

- Board President Shaughnessy said the comments she received a few weeks ago on this topic were "please don't make our kids wear masks." In the last few days the messages have been asking for everyone to be masked. Board President Shaughnessy stated the main focus is to keep our kids in school, all day, every day.

Mrs. Shaughnessy received several emails regarding the fields and the need to work on improvements. She reassured folks that Board members do get these emails, and they do read these communications. She said it was evident at the committee meeting organized by Tristan Rader that there is plenty of room for improvement by everyone. The Board President believes we can create a better system for our kids and our families.

Board President Shaughnessy reported she had received a letter commending Dr. Barnes for his work on developing a new State school funding option. The Lakewood City School District has a history of superintendents and administrators travelling to Columbus to work to initiate change to benefit children. This letter thanked the District for allowing former Superintendent Barnes time away from the District in order to be a part of this initiative.

Information: 2. Public Comments

- Ed Denk, 12330 Lake Rd., Lakewood. Mr. Denk shared his personal experiences when he coached football at Horace Mann Middle School.

The following individuals voiced their opinion regarding the District's mask protocols for students and staff:

- Kristy Gibbons, 17704 Archdale Ave., Lakewood. Ms. Gibbons also spoke in support of District and City staff collaborating to improve the athletic fields.
- William Yeung, 1620 Victoria Ave., Lakewood.
- Owen Miller, 2066 McKinley Ave., Lakewood.
- Johnny Miller, 2066 McKinley Ave., Lakewood.
- Ahmie Yeung, 1620 Victoria Ave., Lakewood.
- Emily Berens, 1217 Giel Ave., Lakewood.
- Brittany O'Connor, 2173 Mars Ave., Lakewood.
- Mike Russell, 13521 Detroit Ave., Lakewood.

The following individuals shared their opinions on the care, maintenance, and future of the City's public athletic fields:

- Caitlin Magner, 15710 West Shore Ct., Lakewood. Mrs. Magner asked for an update on the current status of the memorandum of understanding being drafted by the District and the City regarding the maintenance of the fields. Board President Shaughnessy stated as a matter of policy the Board does not answer questions at Board meetings. Board members listen to questions raised at the meetings and then have the appropriate individual(s) respond with answers. However, Mrs. Shaughnessy responded that the Superintendent had reported earlier this evening that they are meeting weekly, and this was still an ongoing process. Mrs. Magner also asked when a meeting would take place where stakeholders would be able to have input. Mrs. Shaughnessy said there is not a date for that yet, but that the Superintendent is working on this matter.
- A.J. Magner, 15710 West Shore Ct., Lakewood. Mr. Magner said there have been consequences due to the lack of care and lack of a strategy for managing these assets that the City has entrusted to the Board of Education. He provided a list of deficiencies and said there has been no input from citizens as to how these assets would be deployed. He believes the MOU needs to contain provisions whereby the stakeholders have a voice in how these assets are maintained and how these assets are used throughout the periods they are available. Mr. Magner also asked that communications improve and become more transparent. He indicated they were very pleased in the way the City has responded to this issue.
- Vince Frantz, 1455 Waterbury Ave., Lakewood. Mr. Frantz said he is encouraged by the progress made by the District and City Council. He stated that Mrs. Maureen Dowell, CREC President, reminded him of the big impact youth athletics has on kids regarding their memories and their development. Many childhoods have been affected due to the inability to solve the problems with the fields. All of the sports

are struggling to balance the available resources with the available facilities. Mr. Frantz said this issue has been brought up with City Council because this is a civic matter.

- Tim Wenderoth, 1463 Grace Ave., Lakewood. Mr. Wenderoth spoke about the conditions of the baseball fields. He said that "we, the citizens, own the baseball fields" and that the School Board is the tenant. He feels that as a tenant, the School Board is responsible for taking care of the property that they are using. He read excerpts from District Policy 7510, Use of District Facilities, and Policy 7430, Risk Reduction Program. City Council is ready to move forward, and the same expeditious action is needed from the Board now.

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L. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

Action: 1. Certified - Request Approval on One Reading (ROLL CALL VOTE) (Favre, Beebe)
Motion to approve the Certified actions on one reading (ROLL CALL VOTE)

Motion by Edward Favre, second by Linda Beebe.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yea: Betsy Shaughnessy, Edward Favre, Michael Callahan, Linda Beebe, Emma Petrie Barcelona

M. ADJOURNMENT

Action: 1. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Motion by Edward Favre, second by Linda Beebe.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yea: Betsy Shaughnessy, Edward Favre, Michael Callahan, Linda Beebe, Emma Petrie Barcelona