

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – BOARD OF EDUCATION
 REDFORD UNION SCHOOLS, DISTRICT NO. 1
 December 19, 2016

AMENDED MINUTES

Regular Meeting 12/19/2016

A Rescheduled Regular meeting of the Redford Union Board of Education was held December 19, 2016 at the Board of Education Administrative Offices, 17715 Brady Street, Redford Township, Michigan, 48240. President Kurland called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Call to Order

This meeting was a rescheduled regular meeting of the Board of Education that was scheduled for Monday, December 12, 2016 and was not held due to inclement weather that caused Redford Union Schools to be closed on that date.

Present: Caloia, Graham, Isabell, Kurland, Pridemore
 Absent: Doby, Gubachy

Roll Call

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Pledge of Allegiance

None.

Call to the Audience
 on Agenda Items

President Kurland asked everyone to please up their cell phones on silent or vibrate.

President's Remarks

Superintendent Shivers thanked the Board for allowing the meeting to be rescheduled. She also said that during the presentation she would be filling in for some people that was not able to attend the meeting.

Superintendent
 Remarks

MOVED by Isabell, seconded by Caloia, to adopt the agenda of the December 19, 2016 Rescheduled Regular Board Meeting as amended. Yes: 5 No: 0 Motion: Carries

Adoption of
 Amended Agenda

None.

Board Secretary
 Communications

None.

Asst. Supt. of Business
 Services Communication

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented:

Consent Agenda

Trustee Caloia questioned the wording “Resignation” listed under Item X Consent Agenda, H. Separations, #2 due to the employee had already retired and should have been a 1099.

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Ron Ward said they will clarify the wording going forward.

Superintendent Shivers suggested that HR add a category for contractual people and their effective end dates going forward.

MOVED by Caloia, seconded by Isabell, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. Yes: 5 No: 0 Motion: Carries

- Waive the reading and approve the November 14, 2016 Special Meeting minutes of the Redford Union Board of Education, as presented.
- Waive the reading and approve the November 14, 2016 Regular Meeting minutes of the Redford Union Board of Education, as presented.
- Waive the reading and approve the December 5, 2016 Special Meeting minutes of the Redford Union Board of Education, as presented.
- Approve the payment of \$1,018,356.64 for checks dated 11/8/2016 to 12/2/2016.
- Approve the electronic transfers for the month of November 2016 in the amount of \$2,472,971.86.
- Approve the NEW HIRES: Certified request as listed below:
 1. Suzette Johnson/Special Education Teacher/MacGowan/Effective 11/8/2016
- Approve NEW HIRES: Non-Certified request as listed below:
 1. Cecelia Reed/Educational Assistant/Hilbert/Effective 11/14/2016
- Approve the SEPARATIONS requests as listed below:
 1. Brittlen Wallgren/Teacher/Beech/Resignation/Effective 11/3/2016
 2. Karen McElmeel/Payroll/Keeler/Resignation/Effective 11/30/216
 3. Donald Neibert/Teacher/Hilbert/Resignation/Effective 12/2/2016
 4. Kyle Parkinson/Teacher/Regents Academy/Resignation/Effective 12/20/2016
- Approve the LEAVE REQUESTS as listed below:
 1. Carmen Stuyvenberg/Educational Assistant/MacGowan/Effective 12/5/2016
 2. Debbie Fitrakis/Educational Assistant/MacGowan/Effective 11/23/2016

Special minutes of
November 14, 2016
Regular minutes of
November 14, 2016
Special minutes of
December 5, 2016
Disposition of Checks
December 2, 2016
Electronic Transfers
November, 2016

Suzette Johnson

Cecelia Reed

Brittlen Wallgren
Karen McElmeel
Donald Neibert
Kyle Parkinson

Carmen Stuyvenberg
Debbie Fitrakis

Superintendent Shivers mentioned the National Alliance of Black School Educators conference in Florida that she and four other RU staff members attended back in November 2016. She asked the staff members to provide the board with their thoughts, experiences and what they learned. She asked Judy Nachman, principal of Redford Union High School to go first.

Academic Highlights
NABSE Conference Updates

Judy Nachman first thanked the board for allowing them to travel. Ms. Nachman said it was the most energetic conference she had ever attended. She said the people were very positive and committed to the work. She said it is very rarely to attend a conference where the people are in the trenches doing the work and not retired and providing consultant services.

Regular Board Meeting: 12/19/2016

Ms. Nachman said they heard principals, assistant principal and special education directors speak talking about the struggles and the changes they have made. She said the biggest thing that she learned is that the achievement gap within the African American population is prevalent from district to district. Everyone is trying to close that gap, trying to determine why it is happening. Also to help educators develop strong relationships, build trust and get to know your kids so you can move in the right direction. It was reassuring to know that it is not just RU. She learned about a program that she has spoken to Dr. Shivers about. The program started out to help to reduce the suspension and expulsion and now it is evolving into a program that can help our students that are not successful in the classroom. Teachers are struggling in the classrooms because the gap is so large. Ms. Nachman also said she forward to going again next year.

Carol LaPointe, Director of Student Services said it was nice to share their ideas. They had time to talk and reflect on different presentation that they attended. She and Ms. Nachman attended a presentation on suspensions. The suspended group of kids were in the next building near the high school. The student didn't get to go home for a number of days. They were right there getting support and then right back to the high school. She also went to a presentation called drop everything and write. Every day there were topics for the students to write about. The writing scores improved which is part of the SAT. She said it was rewarding to hear that their scores were going up.

Damion Jackson, Dean of Student at Beech said he had shared with Dr. Shivers that it was the best conference he had ever been to as an educator and a minority educator in years. He said there were several things that stood out for him. They were amongst other educators throughout the country and we were no different. To be in a think tank with like minds to be able to come up and have some concrete solutions and to witness school districts that actual found solutions to turn around gaps in educational deficits. Students and success rates. Mr. Robert Jackson was a motivation speaker addressed some issues that we are dealing with regarding minority males in the educational system. He said that he and Ms. Norfleet attended a workshop on Implicit Biases in schools. Mr. Jackson said personally he think that was one of the best workshops he had ever attended. He said they nailed that particular issue from the top to the bottom. It gave examples such as Cam Newton and Peyton Manning and how the media depicts the two quarterbacks. He said the same things happens in the education system and it is called stereotypes. Mr. Jackson said that he has the PowerPoint from the workshop and he would like to share it with the district and the board. He said it also shows different facial expressions of Caucasians Americans vs minority Americans and how it is depicted in different phases of life. He and Ms. Norfleet were impressed on how it all came together and showed how to identify and address the MTSS process. He said they are always talking about Tier II and Tier III but never talk about Tier I which get over looked. He said he would love to see the presenters come to RU as an opening day presentation in the Fall. Mr. Jackson said he too would love to attend the conference next year.

Sonia Norfleet the newly hired Behavior Intervention Coordinator at Hilbert introduced herself. Ms. Norfleet said she had a blast. She is in her first major job as an educator and that was her first conference. She learned a lot. She agreed with what her colleagues said. Also with her job dealing with African American males daily and the population, they do have a hard job. One of the things that she learned was that they cannot give up.

At the end of the day they have a hard job. They have to instruct the kids on how to live and how to live right. Some may not have a mom or dad at home. We have to show them that their experiences are valid. How do we show the child I'm the teacher and you can depend on me to make them successful? How do we get that child to come back to RU and say thank you, you helped me out, here is my college diploma? One of the ways was limiting our mental minds with our perception. We may be limited from really helping a child but dig deeper to find out what is really wrong. She said hereditary may load the gun but your environment pulls the trigger. We deal with a lot of kids that have the cards stacked against them every day. So let's not be the environment that pulls the trigger. You have to build the trust then we can open the flood gates for our children to write and bring their SAT scores up. Then we can have a district that is successful and closing that gap. She has taken some of what she learned at the conference and taken it to Principal Andy Christopherson. She and Mr. Jackson also attend a workshop on what to do when the student or parent is disengaged. How to deal with a hot headed student or parent. She shared her notes with Mr. Christopherson. Ms. Norfleet said she too would love to attend next year.

Dr. Shivers said what makes NABSE unique is that it is as much of a spiritual experience as it is just getting information. She wished she could have taken everybody. She said her former Superintendent of Washtenaw (a Caucasian male) has gone every year since she had taken him the first time. He and members of his team and some board members were there this year. There are many people of diverse backgrounds attending. The organization was designed for African America Educators but their mantra is anybody that cares about African American children. It is inclusive and exclusive of everyone. It is important to get outside of the walls of Redford Union, outside of Wayne County, outside of Michigan and understand that is issues that we are dealing with is not just unique to us. But there are also solutions out there. This is tuff, tuff, tuff work.

Dr. Shivers said they heard beautiful performances by some of the most talented African American children across the country. They heard from many educators from all ethnic backgrounds that are doing this work and are successful.

Dr. Shivers met a Superintendent from Mississippi. When he started at the school district they had no technology and a few broken computers and laptops. They had hardly any infrastructure. That same school district on February 21st will be recognized by the US Dept. of Education as an exemplary technology center in the country. The government is going to be there to showcase the work that has been done in that district. The district is mostly technology. Another workshop she attended was the Superintendent in Ferguson that talked about how he had to shift the narrative in that community because they were so broken in regards to the tragedy. Kids weren't going to schools. The media portrayal of them was a poor, broken, uneducated community. The Superintendent said those were not his kids or community. He talked about how he had to use resources to get teacher all on the same page. He focused on a specific framework that taught teachers about student engagement, work with difficult parents and how to deal with the challenge of their self-image in the community.

Dr. Shivers also went to a workshop on intervention. When students make poor choices. By educating people you can turn around the likelihood of them doing it again. She said the question became, what do we do with the kids in RU when they make poor choices.

Do we educate kids on how much school they have missed and much time that adds up being suspended three or four times? Hilbert has made a shift in the number of students being suspended by approaching it as an intervention.

Dr. Shivers said it was a great conference and she also hope to go next year. She said she really appreciate the board letting them go.

Dr. Shivers said she would put information about the Mississippi school district in her Friday notes to the board.

The board thanked the staff for going and providing them with a presentation.

Dr. Shivers said she would forward the Implicit Biases PowerPoint to the board.

Action Items

MOVED by Pridemore, seconded by Isabell, that the Board of Education, at the recommendation of Superintendent Dr. Shivers, approve the Service Contract/Collaborative Agreement between Redford Union School District and Lincoln Behavioral Services for School-Community Specialist (Success Coach).

Success Coach Position-
Partnership with Lincoln
Behavioral Services

Yes: 5 No: 0 Motion: Carries

Dr. Shivers said as of November 30th there are over 400 students that have been absent 5-10 days. There over 100 students that have missed 15 and more days. There are 50 students with 20 plus days absent and 49 students that have missed 15 and more days.

Trustee Caloia asked if the high school was still doing the 3 - 10 minutes' tardies equal 1-day absent?

Principal Nachman said that any 3 tardies equal 1-day absent no matter the amount of minutes. She said that the tardy absences were not included in the high school statistics. Those are coded differently.

Dr. Shivers said they have a new category for students missing first period and right after lunch. They have also begun to isolate siblings, school of choice, male, female, free/reduced lunch, special education, and more so they can look at the data. She said that they need to get their arms around the kids that have already missed 15-20 plus days. The Success Coach is a family therapist. Dr. Shivers said if there are students that have already missed 30 plus days and we are only in December there is something seriously wrong in the household. The goal is to start with the most severe families and work their way backwards.

The Superintendent will share with the new attendance protocol with the board in January. It will be rolled out to the building staff for the early release day in January. She said there are thresholds with different list of intervention.

We are educating ourselves but we have to come back and educate our staff. We have a plan and we have to work the plan with everybody on the bus and moving in the right direction.

Trustee Caloia asked Principal Nachman if the high school is still setup where if a student had less than 3-days absent they don't have to take the final?

Principal Nachman said no but she would like to bring it back.

The board said it was such an incentive.

Trustee Caloia said for the record, she never voted to discontinue that incentive.

Dr. Shivers said it is about education the community as well. Last year our attendance team went out and asked the gas stations in the area and asked them not to service our kids during school hours.

MOVED by Isabell, seconded by Caloia, that the Board of Education, at the recommendation of Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Ronald Ward, approve the Administration of Employee Flexible Spending Account.

Administration of Employee
Flexible Spending Account

Yes: 5 No: 0 Motion: Carries

The district's current Flexible Spending Account and COBRA administrator is bswift. bswift acquired Corporate Benefit Strategies, INC. (CBS). Redford Union Schools signed a contract with CBS on November 10, 2009.

Assistant Superintendent Ron Ward said in the Fall they were notified that CBS (Corporate Benefit Strategies) would terminate our agreement which provides administrative services for health care and dependent flexible spending accounts (FSA) and COBRA benefits for our employees.

He and Assistant Superintendent McIntyre and Jennie Li, Accounting Manager explored possible companies and they preferred AFLAC.

However, since then, bswift agreed to stay on until June 30, 2017 which will facilitate a smoother transition for our employees. We have communicated with representatives of AFLAC who agreed with the change effective July 1, 2017.

Superintendent Shivers mentioned that January 9, 2017 is the Regular Board Meeting and Organizational meeting. The Agenda will include the Board Ceremony and the Football Recognition. Also the meeting will include the Strategic Mid-Year Update. She had shared that information with the Administrative team in hopes of them all attending. And January is Board Appreciation Month.

Superintendent's
Comments

None.

Call to Audience on
None Agenda Items

Treasurer Pridemore said that RU has an amazing Music department with two dedicated teachers. She said Tuesday night was choir performance and Thursday night was band. She said she was just blown away by the amount of talent at RU and she is very proud of the students.

Board of Education
Communication/Discussion

President Kurland gave a reminder that Hanukkah is Saturday, December 24th so we all will be celebrating our holidays this year. She said Merry Christmas to those that celebrate, Happy Hanukkah to those that celebrate and Happy New Year.

Monday, January 9, 2017 – Organizational Meeting – 7:15 PM
Board of Education Administrative Offices, 17715 Brady Street, Redford, MI 48240

Future Meeting Date

Monday, January 9, 2017 – Regular Meeting – 7:30 PM
Board of Education Administrative Offices, 17715 Brady Street, Redford, MI 48240

MOVED by Caloia, seconded by Isabell to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 PM.
Total: Yes: 5 No: 0. Motion: Carries.

Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Isabell,
Secretary
Redford Union Schools Board of Education