

# Board of Education Meeting

Liberty School Board Room  
September 24, 2024 at 6:30 PM



## AGENDA

### Mission

*We, the Saline Area Schools, will equip all students with the knowledge, technological proficiency, and personal skills necessary to succeed in an increasingly complex society. We expect that our students, staff, and the Saline Community will share in these responsibilities.*

### OPENING

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Education Meeting was called to order by President Michael McVey at 6:30 pm.

**Board Members Present:** Tim Austin, Susan Estep, Brad Gerbe, Lauren Gold, Michael McVey, Jenny Miller and Jennifer Steben.

**Central Administration Present:** Superintendent Laatsch, Assistant Superintendent Diglio, Executive Directors Clary, Davis, Martin and Voelker

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### 3. SUPERINTENDENT RECOGNITION

*Saline High School NHS*

*American Red Cross Award*

*Presenters: Gerry Abejuro & Leonard Rezmierski*

The American Red Cross presented an award to Saline High School's National Honor Society for their outstanding contributions to blood drives. The award was given in recognition of the school's efforts in collecting 1166 units of blood for the community in the 23/24 school year, which has helped over 33,100 people receive life-saving treatments. The next blood drive is October 25th at Saline High School.

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

**STUDENTS**

**Alisha Sachdeva, Student** - Spoke about the recent incidents of racism and vandalism at Saline High School

**Rebecca Singer, Student** - Spoke about the recent incidents of racism and vandalism at Saline High School

**OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS**

**David Rosenfeld, Resident** - Spoke regarding concerns about the proposed changes to the DEIAC Policy 1941

**EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Special Education Millage Renewal*  
*Kelly Van Singel, Daisie Scharmen*

Spoke about the special education millage renewal that will be on the ballot in November. The proposal is asking voters to renew an existing 2.3826 mil tax that would cover unreimbursed costs for special education services for 12 years starting in 2026. This is not a new tax, but a renewal of the existing millage.

**5. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMENT**

**AGENDA**

**6. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Treasurer Gerbe **to approve the agenda as printed.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

**7. STUDENT SHOWCASE**

*Saline Community Fair Student Animal Exhibitors*

The Junior Livestock Association is a program that allows students to raise and show animals, teaching them responsibility, hard work and how to market their animals. The association has different clubs for various animals. The students talked about their animals and experiences being involved through the Livestock group and at the Saline Community Fair.

**8. SCHEDULED REPORTS**

**A. WEOC (Washtenaw Educational Options Consortium)**

*Presenter: Executive Director Monique Uzelac*

WEOC basically offers 3 programs, Early College Alliance at Eastern Michigan University (ECA), Washtenaw Alliance for Virtual Education (WAVE) and Washtenaw International High School and Middle Academy (WIHI). These alternative programs offer non-traditional learning environments for students who require flexibility and support. In total about 67 Saline students are participating in WEOC programs. At ECA a number of students are staying for a 5th year and earning up to 60 college credits. WAVE is an alternative education program that provides a flexible online learning environment with in person support. WIHI is an international education program that offers a rigorous and well-rounded curriculum. The program is designed to foster critical thinking, intercultural understanding, and community service. Each program has an enrollment window and application period which is communicated through the school districts. Program and application information can also come from other resources as well.

WEOC programs are currently undergoing strategic planning to identify community goals and objectives. This process involves listening and learning from staff, families, and community partners to ensure that the programs meet the unique needs of students.

**B. Enrollment Update**

*Presenter: Superintendent Laatsch*

There are 2 methods in which to calculate enrollment, FTE which calculates the number of full-time students, with part-time students counted as a decimal. FTE determines funding. Headcount method counts each student as one, regardless of their enrollment status (FT or PT). Alt HS, Young Adult, WAVE, Progress Park, ECSE and special education students at St. Andrews are all included in the head count. The predicted loss of 59 students is less than the budgeted loss amount of 110. This results in an increase of 51 students to the budget (approx. \$490K in state aid revenue). Declining birth rate in Washtenaw County as well as more educational choices for families also are contributing factors to declining enrollment. While the district aimed to reduce its budget by \$1M, higher than expected enrollment allowed the ability to add back some staff. The district will continue to monitor and adjust to changes in per pupil funding and student FTE to ensure financial stability. The goal is to stabilize and eventually grow the district's enrollment and funding.

**9. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Board Policy Committee Update**

*Facilitator: Jenny Miller, Chair*

The Policy Committee has met twice since the last board meeting. Included on the agenda has been the review of proposed revisions to Policy 9141 which were presented by President McVey. Revisions are being considered to the membership selection criteria. Both MASB and Thrun have been consulted. Recommendations to model the selection process of both the SEAB and Wellness Committees. Current policy also states that board members can participate in the selection process but this raises issues with

OMA. In complying with the Open Meetings Act, OMA requires public posting of a meeting and holding open meetings in a place available to the public, also including public participation during every open meeting, making all committee decisions in open session, and keeping minutes of committee meetings. The Policy Committee will continue to review this policy with some urgency and also keeping in mind the legal advice and concerns that have been shared. In the meantime, the DEIAC can continue to meet and function. They will be looking to select a co-chair at the upcoming meeting.

**10. ADMINISTRATION / BOARD UPDATES**

**Superintendent Laatsch:** The district takes incidents of racism and hate speech very seriously and is following due process in addressing a recent incident. A statement was released to district families on September 14th and the district is working on a formal resolution.

**Student Representatives Allmand & Sonnenday:** Homecoming and Spirit Week next week with all grade levels participating. Prior to the game on Friday will be the Saline Homecoming Parade which starts at 5 pm and will feature businesses, clubs, and sports teams.

**Trustee Austin:** National “See You at the Pole Day” is on Wednesday, September 25th. Students gather at their school's flagpole to pray for their schools, communities and country. This is a student led initiative.

**Trustee Estep:** The school administration is committed to supporting students and promoting a safe and welcoming community. As such the school is supposed to implement anti-bullying programs to educate students on how to address hate speech and behavior. Students have expressed concerns about the lack of communication and support from the administration regarding incidents of hate speech and racism.

**Secretary Miller:** Spoke in support of the Special Education Millage renewal. She will be voting yes and encouraging the community to vote yes as well. This millage supports special education initiatives and programs in the school district and impacts every student as well as supporting the district's efforts to promote inclusion. Thank you to the SAR students for coming and speaking at the Board Meeting. Grateful that administration will be addressing many of their concerns.

**President McVey:** Will be attending the Chadtough Run on Sunday, September 29th. This event raises funds for the fight against childhood cancer. Senate Bill 911 was recently passed reducing the MPSERS rate by 5%, which will put money back into the district. This reduction in the MPSERS rate will benefit employees who will no longer have to pay 3% for healthcare in their retirement years.

**Vice President Steben:** Acknowledges the value of partnerships with teachers, parents and the community to support students. This includes the collaboration with organizations such as Chadtough Foundation. Supports the Special Education Millage renewal. Thank you to the students from SAR who attended the meeting this evening. To all students, remember OK2Say. Thank you to the efforts of SEAB committee and teachers for your contributions to the discussions regarding the curriculum.

**Treasurer Gerbe:** Thank you to the work being done by SEAB on the updating of the curriculum. Thank you to the current DEIAC for your work on this committee and commitment to our district and students as we work toward a resolution regarding the policy wording. Your commitment and work does not go unnoticed. Supports the Special Education Millage renewal. Acknowledges the fundraising efforts of

Chadtough and their run on Sunday and the boys soccer team doing the “Buddy Walk” in Ann Arbor which supports Downs Syndrome. Also we commit to do better and be better and will not condone acts of hate and racism and will commit over again and again to creating a safe environment for our students. Thank you to the students who came this evening from SAR.

**Trustee Gold:** Please talk with your physician about Covid and Flu boosters. Very proud of our NHS and the award they received this evening from the Red Cross. Spoke regarding the recent incident of racist graffiti. Deeply saddened by the continuation. We know this is a nationwide problem that requires a collective effort to address. It’s not just a school problem, but a community problem that requires the involvement of many stakeholders throughout the community. We need to encourage open and honest discussions about racism and hate. These acts don’t just harm individuals, they harm the whole community by striking at our values.

11. **CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION** made by Vice President Steben, support Trustee Austin **to authorize the Consent Agenda as printed.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

- A. **Approval** of the Board of Education Meeting Minutes of September 10, 2024
- B. **Approval** of the Board Finance Committee Minutes of September 10, 2024
- C. **Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of September 24, 2024, in the amount of \$968,376.90
- D. **Approval of Payment** of Bond Series III Accounts Payable of September 24, 2024 in the amount of \$479,616.00
- E. **Approval of Payment** of 2023 Bond Fund Series I Accounts Payable of September 24, 2024 in the amount of \$2,166,703.32
- F. **Receive and File** Human Resources Report

<b>CLOSING</b>
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12. **ITEMS SCHEDULED ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (MICIP) Update

13. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**STUDENTS - None**

**OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS**

**Mikayla Lewis, Maria Hejna & Wouter Verkerk, Members of DEIAC** - Spoke regarding the recent hate acts.

**Percival Pangilinan, Saline Resident and Parent** - Spoke regarding the recent hate acts.

**14. NEXT MEETING**

The next Board of Education Meeting will be held on October 8 , 2024, at 6:30 PM

**15. CLOSED SESSION**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Estep, support Treasurer Gerbe **to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 9:25 pm, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at approximately 10 pm, for the purpose of:**

- 1. Discussion of personnel matters under Section 8(a)**
- 2. Superintendent Evaluation under Section 8(a)**

**Under Section 8(a) a simple majority vote is sufficient to enter into a closed session.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

**RETURN to Open Session at 10:23 pm**

**16. MOTION** made by Trustee Estep, support President McVey **to approve the settlement and release as discussed in the Closed Session on September 24, 2024.**

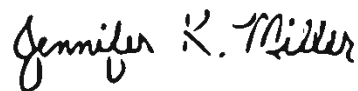
Ayes (1) - McVey Naves (6) - Austin, Estep, Gerbe, Gold, Miller and Steben

**MOTION does not pass 1-6 vote**

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Estep, support Vice President Steben **to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of September 24, 2024, at 10:25 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Miller  
Board Secretary

*Recorded by: Betty Jahnke*