

Sturgis Public School District, St. Joseph County  
Minutes of the Study Session of the Board of Education  
Held at Sturgis Central Commons West St. Lawn  
Monday, August 10, 2020 – 5:30 pm

The Study Session of the Board of Education was called to order by President Scott Boland at 5:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Swihart with support from Mr. Gorsuch to approve the agenda as presented. 5 ayes – 0 nays, motion approved.

Present: Paul Gorsuch Gwen Donmyer (5:32 pm)  
Scott Swihart Scott Boland Ann Bird  
Emily Halling

Absent: Kerri Millett

Administration Dr. Arthur Ebert, Superintendent  
Present: Ms. Nicole Airgood, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Ray Sterling, Business Manager

Visitors Dan Cherry-Sturgis Journal, Mike Stiles-WBET, Lisa Schroer,  
Harmonee McCrea, Sonja Duffy

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

The Consent Agenda: Mr. Sterling reviewed the July financial statements. Any board member with questions on the July minutes should contact Mrs. Karen Stimson within the week. Questions on financial statements and invoices should be directed to Mr. Sterling. Approval will be sought at the August 17 meeting.

Action Items for Immediate Consideration:

A. New Hires (Teachers) – Nicole Airgood

Ms. Airgood introduced two new teachers who were in attendance: Lisa Schroer for SMS Math, and Sonja Duffy for K2 Music. There was a motion to approve the hiring of teachers by Mrs. Halling with support from Mr. Swihart. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

B. New Positions (Online Mentors) – Art Ebert

Dr. Ebert requested approval to hire up to 10 mentors to support the online learning option for 2020-2021. There was a motion to approve by Mrs. Donmyer with support from Mrs. Bird. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

C. Memorandum of Understanding #2 – Art Ebert

Dr. Ebert reviewed the 2<sup>nd</sup> memorandum which shortens the school day by 45 minutes to compensate teachers for lunch and breakfast in the classroom. There

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was a motion to approve by Mrs. Bird with support from Mrs. Donmyer. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

D. K-5 Virtual Learning Platform – Nicole Airgood

There were a total of 7 bids received. Ms. Airgood and 4 teachers reviewed the bids and are recommending Edgenuity. There was a motion to approve by Mrs. Donmyer with support from Mrs. Halling. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

E. Revisions to June 8 and June 15 Minutes

Mrs. Stimson explained that the closed sessions were inadvertently left off the minutes from the virtual meetings. Mrs. Stimson will attend closed sessions moving forward to avoid any further issues. There was a motion to approve by Mr. Swihart with support from Mrs. Halling. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

In administrative reports Mr. Sterling had project updates on several summer projects, including wireless access, SHS and SMS water softeners, Wenzel office relocation, and Wenzel playground. The audit work is almost complete.

Ms. Airgood is working on special education challenges and online IEPs during Pandemic Learning.

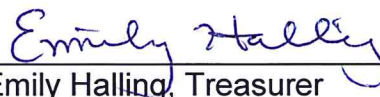
Dr. Ebert gave an update of implementation of the Back to School Plan. 95% of enrolled students have chosen their option for online, in person, or hybrid learning. Installation of touchless technology continues throughout the district.

In Board Comments Mr. Gorsuch said that the outdoor meeting gets loud! He appreciated the 1 to 1 calls to the board members. Mrs. Halling was grateful for the time put in by admin and staff, and for forgoing summer vacations. Mr. Swihart welcomed new hires Sonja Duffy and Lisa Schroer. Mrs. Bird welcomed Mrs. Schroer, who was still in attendance. She thinks that the "shout outs" from Dr. Ebert and Ms. Airgood are a great idea. Mrs. Donmyer echoed that and welcomed new hires. Mr. Boland added his agreement with all said and thanked admin for all the effort that went into the Back to School Plan.

Mr. Boland adjourned the meeting at 6:04 p.m., after a motion by Mr. Swihart with support from Mrs. Donmyer. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.



Scott Boland, President



Emily Halling, Treasurer



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Between**  
**STURGIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**And STURGIS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

**Back-to-School MOU #2**

We have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place that shortens the school day by 45-minutes to compensate teachers for conducting 25-minutes of supervision in the morning and supervising lunch in the classroom. The district is appreciative of our teachers, and this MOU (Back-to-School MOU #2) alters the previous MOU based on challenges that have been discovered during implementation. Those challenges include:

- Logistical challenges with keeping Elementary Specials the same length during a shortened day.
- Logistical challenges with transportation. Trying to fit the following into a shortened day: CTE routes, SE routes, and two bus runs.
- Logistical challenges with fitting in appropriate instruction in a shortened day.
- Logistical challenges of maintaining secondary planning time during a shortened day.
- KidsCare staffing (our before & after school care program at Eastwood). These are hourly staff and some have other jobs, so the 45-minutes (and the potential transition to a longer day) makes for some staffing conflicts.
- Challenges for families navigating the transition between a shortened and longer day.
- Challenges for staff (especially hourly staff who rely on their hours and do not have a shortened day) on shortened days.
- Challenges for staff navigating the transition between a shortened and longer day.
- We send CTE students elsewhere and receive CTE students at SHS for part of the day. The logistics of this will be challenging under a shortened day then potentially longer day.
- The full 45-minutes is not yet allowable per pupil accounting rules (although our hopes are that it will be).
- It is hard to publish start and end times (for families and staff) prior to knowing what is allowable per pupil accounting rules when utilizing a shortened day.

The district and the association agree to the terms below. These terms provide a remedy that is guaranteed regardless of what Phase that we are in or what pupil accounting procedures are put in place at the state level.

- Maintain the 25-minute classroom supervision before school during Phases 4 and 5 contained within the previous MOU during the 2020-21 school year. This supervision is not needed in Phases 1-3 or 6.
- For the 2020-21 school year, alter the length of the instructional day. Instead of 45-minutes shorter, it will be 30-minutes shorter than the 6-hour 55 minute day that we were planning on for the 2020-21 school year prior to COVID-19 (to meet instructional minutes). A sample day would look like this: 8:05am-8:30am (25-minute supervision), 8:30am-2:55pm (instructional time, normal planning time, and lunch supervision), 2:55pm (end of contractual day).
- In Phase 4 and 5, teachers will eat lunch with their students in the classroom or outside. In Phase 6, teachers will eat lunch with their students in the classroom, outside, or in the cafeteria. This is necessary in all phases in order to meet our instructional minutes requirement.
- Provide each teacher with a \$1,000 stipend for the 2020-21 school year. The stipend will be paid regardless of how long we are in Phase 1-3, 4, 5, and/or 6. The stipend can be put towards an FSA (flexible spending account), HSA (health savings account) contribution (paid in September) or added to salary (half paid in November and half paid in June).
- When planning your day, teachers may utilize strategies such as these: Have students get up, move, and engage in brain breaks; take students out for an extra recess; conduct instruction outside; and/or use assigned carpet squares, pillows, etc... in place of sitting directly on the floor. In addition, as we come back together our collective brainpower will offer up many more possibilities.

Please note: The current health crisis is unprecedented and has taken many twists and turns. Both the Association and the District understand that it is likely that we will need to revisit portions of both this MOU and our Back-to-School Plan due to unforeseen circumstances. We agree that either party may bring forward recommendations to revise this MOU. These recommendations will first be brought before the IBB Collaboration Team for consideration, and if supported, will then be brought before the Board of Education and Association Membership for approval.

  
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For the Board

9-2-2020  
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Date

  
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For the Association

9-2-2020  
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Date



Sturgis Public School District, St. Joseph County  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education  
Held at Sturgis Central Commons Playground  
Monday, August 17, 2020 – 5:30 pm

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Scott Boland at 5:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Dr. Millett with support from Mrs. Bird to approve the agenda as presented. 6 ayes – 0 nays, motion approved.

Present: Paul Gorsuch      Kerri Millett      Gwen Donmyer  
Scott Boland      Ann Bird      Emily Halling

Absent: Scott Swihart

Administration      Dr. Arthur Ebert, Superintendent  
Present:      Ms. Nicole Airgood, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Ray Sterling, Business Manager

Visitors      Patti Miller, Marilyn Sanderson, Jennifer Outlaw, Jimmy Lamb,  
Vincent LaPorte, Sherry Coblentz, Heather George, Mike Stiles-  
WBET Radio, Dan Cherry-Sturgis Journal, Matthew Spohr, Andrea  
Barry

Sturgis Showcase:      Mrs. Miller presented food service employee Marilyn Sanderson with a  
certificate in appreciation of 25 years of service.

Dr. Ebert noted that it's been 165 days since school ended in March. We are trying to reach the final 20-30 kids to have 100% registered for their preferred option. The online school could use some Spanish speakers if anyone is interested. Today we met with new teachers at Plumb Lake Park. It was a nice setting. Wednesday will be a teacher workday and Thursday will be professional development. Athletics are underway except football. KidsCare before and after school program begins at Eastwood on Monday, August 24.

Public Comments:      Mrs. Patti Miller, Director of Food Service thanked Dr. Ebert, Ms. Airgood and the board for their work on the Back to School Plan.

The Consent Agenda:      There were no questions on the consent agenda items. There was a motion to approve the consent agenda by Mrs. Donmyer with support from Mr. Gorsuch. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

Action Items for Immediate Consideration:

A.      New Hires (Teachers) – Nicole Airgood

Ms. Airgood introduced three new teachers: Matthew Spohr-SMS Social Studies, Sherry Coblentz-K2 PE, and Jennifer Outlaw-SMS Special Education. There was

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a motion to approve the hiring of teachers by Mrs. Halling with support from Mrs. Donmyer. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

B. Edgenuity PD Update – Nicole Airgood

Ms. Airgood asked for approval to add the cost of more training to the Edgenuity purchase. There was a motion to approve by Mrs. Donmyer with support from Mrs. Bird. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

In administrative reports Mr. Sterling reported that the Wenzel office relocation was done on Friday and the playground work was completed today. Inspectors are due on Tuesday.

Ms. Airgood met with new teachers today at Plumb Lake Park. She is planning for PD on Thursday, and working on special education changes.

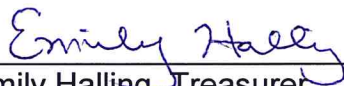
Dr. Ebert noted that Ms. Airgood will be the Principal of the Online Learning School. He will act as Assistant Principal. The staff are located upstairs at SCC. We are planning for engaging, meaningful, and fun learning.

In Board Comments Dr. Millett is glad that the opening is near and thanked all for a great job. Mrs. Bird thanked Ms. Airgood for the early invitation to meet the new teachers. Mr. Gorsuch welcomed the new teachers, who range from 20 years of experience to just starting their careers. Mrs. Halling expressed gratitude to everyone for stepping up. She asked for an update on the pending Senate bill, which Dr. Ebert provided. He noted that most of the work required by the Senate bill is already done. Mrs. Donmyer is amazed and grateful to staff and admin. She welcomed new teachers. Mr. Boland is glad to be opening school on time and wished all a safe opening!

Dr. Ebert added congratulations to Mr. Sterling, who just completed his Masters in Organizational Leadership. He shared home-made (as in by Sarah Ebert!) cookies.

Mr. Boland adjourned the meeting at 5:54 p.m., after a motion by Mr. Gorsuch with support from Dr. Millett. 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion approved.

  
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Scott Boland, President

  
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Emily Halling, Treasurer