

# **MINUTES OF THE MARGARETTA BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOE) REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 20, 2021.**

The Margarettta Board of Education met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, December 20, 2021 at the BOE Office, 305 S Washington St., Castalia, Ohio.

Mr. Miller, Board President, called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. requesting roll call by Mrs. Keegan:

Mr. Schoenegge:	Present
Mr. Sutorius:	Present
Mr. Warner:	Present
Mrs. Yetter:	Present
Mr. Miller:	Present.

## **Approval of the Minutes**

Motion by Mr. Warner seconded by Mrs. Yetter, to approve the minutes from the regular BOE meeting that was held on Monday, November 15, 2021; Roll Call: Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

## **Board and Staff Reports**

### **Townsend Community School's (TCS) Report**

Mr. Ryan Bohn, TCS Principal and Superintendent, reported that the current TCS student enrollment as of December 20<sup>th</sup> was 502, they have had 27 graduates for this 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Bohn explained to the audience how the TCS students can graduate throughout the school year once the appropriate credits are earned. He also mentioned that the annual Sponsor's Report was distributed to all TCS students and parents' through the online final forms communication tool in November and reported to ODE before the November 30, 2021 deadline. He also reported the TCS has received their 2021 Special Education rating and was pleased to announce that they received Meets Requirements.

### **TCS Margarettta Sponsor's Report**

Mr. Steve Keller, Margarettta Compliance Officer, spoke about meeting our deadlines for the Sponsor Annual Report by November 30, 2021. He also stated that we will start to prepare for the next big deadline for the Quality Practices and Compliance upload in the spring, which is a culmination of the years activities. Mr. Keller also stated that the Margarettta Sponsor team had completed the annual legal training in the previous week. He also referenced the great collaboration and communication between the TCS administration and Margarettta this year and stated he thinks it is the best it has ever been and thanked the team.

### **District Appreciation**

Vice President, Paul Schoenegge then gave a speech and acknowledged Mrs. Yetter and Mr. Miller for their years of community service and their dedication to the district. He thanked them for all they have done and gave them a gift from the school. President, Mr. Miller thanked the staff, board members and community for being allowed to serve the district and Mrs. Yetter echoed the same.

### **Literacy Initiative**

Mr. Kurt then introduced the literacy team that was put into place this last year (Tranette Novak, Teal Balduff, and Heather Campana). Mrs. Novak, Literacy Supervisor, spoke about the Science of Reading, the evidence based and brain based science of how to teach kids how to read and comprehend. She

broke down the five elements we need to incorporate of the Science of Reading to teach kids how to read. The five elements are Phonemic Awareness (hearing the sounds, the beginning and ending sounds of the words, nursery rhymes help with this), Phonics (how we teach reading, explicitly through Foundations and building on the previous words and the cumulative effect of learning words), Vocabulary (understanding what the word is), Fluency (the bridge between word recognition and flow and expression), Comprehension (reading and thoughtfulness). Mrs. Novak stated that at the preschool through third grade levels the teachers are teaching how to read, so by the time the student is in fourth grade they can then read to learn. She stressed the importance to read to young children and teach them nursery rhymes to hear and understand words and meanings. She also stated that the District has recently bought the Geodes for Kindergarten through second grade that is decodable readers. She thanked the board for purchasing these supplies for this initiative.

Then Mrs. Teal Balduff, Literacy Coach and Title I teacher, spoke about the specific initiatives for Kindergarten through third grade that she is focused on. Mrs. Balduff started by thanking the Board for investing in our Literacy Initiative, she also thanked the parents, the students who are rising to the challenge and the teachers for embracing this initiative. She stated this will make a lifelong difference to our students reading ability. She stated that Covid has not allowed our kids to have a normal learning experience and so the focus is to close the gaps that the pandemic has created. She put it into perspective that we need to realize that our third graders have not had a typical year of learning since kindergarten. She then went through how the teachers and the literacy team is closing the gaps by; 1. Providing systematic, sequential, cumulative, focused learning on Phonemic Awareness and Phonics, 2. Utilizing focused and intentional reading with the Geode technology that the district has just purchased that will begin to be utilized in the classrooms after Christmas break that will make a huge difference for our students, 3. Also, gathering each students' data to know exactly where each students' reading level is and then intervening where the child's level is currently. This approach is all based on the science behind reading and is backed by scientific studies of the brain. She also spoke of ways we are reaching the goals by the extensive Orton Gillingham (OG) training this summer, teachers have been embracing the science of reading and incorporating it in everyday classroom settings, the OG training is being used and incorporated in the daily lessons in all classrooms K-3 every day. Also beginning to use the Geode technology and the gathering of lots of student reading data points by student will close each students' gaps. Teamwork, communication, and collaboration will make our students better readers and close the gap.

Next Heather Campana, Literacy Coach for fourth through twelve grades, spoke and stated that she works closely with Sara Weller at the high school on literacy as well. They are focused on continuing to build on the Phonics instruction by utilizing small groups in fourth and fifth grade based on the data collected. They are utilizing the data to assist the teachers to focus on where the child is currently. The Literacy Coaches providing additional daily training to teachers during staff time, by going into the teachers classrooms and modeling explicit vocabulary instruction, presenting in the teachers' classroom setting. The Literacy Coaches are also introducing new large vocabulary words and vocabulary skills teaching during the students' B.E.A.R.S. time over the lunch periods. This B.E.A.R.S. time gives the students additional word analysis and vocabulary lessons and tools and technics on how to breakdown large vocabulary words and focusing on the decoding of the words. They put on a Middle School Book Fair this year for the first time and Mrs. Campana stated it was a huge success and took the opportunity to thank Mrs. Gloria Pooch, retired Librarian Aide for volunteering to help with the MS book fair. Mrs. Campana also thanked Mrs. Dana Belak, our new fulltime Gifted Education Instructor for Kindergarten through twelve grade, in helping our students to bridge the transition between elementary and middle school, given Mrs. Belak and Mrs. Campana are in between the buildings every day. Mrs. Belak was unable to make it to the meeting so Mrs. Campana gave an update for Mrs. Belak. Mrs. Belak is

working directly with students and staff to help the teachers to establish differentiated instruction in the classroom for the gifted students. Mrs. Belak has done special projects for the gifted children and one example was a second through fifth grade deep dive project where they develop questions for the students for research and then the students are able to report out on their projects during morning announcements and she is expanding it to the Middle School. The team is also very proud that they are able to start a fifth grade academic challenge team for the first time this year for Erie County. The fifth grade academic team took first place and was then invited to the championship of champions at the BGSU Firelands campus where they got third overall.

Mr. Kurt also mentioned that he is very excited about the literacy initiative for our students and reminded the board that we are able to charge all the costs associated in implementing this initiative to our federal grants that we received in ESSER funds. Therefore our general fund for day to day operations is not impacted by this initiative's costs. He stated we have heard about service before self with our Board members and their volunteerism. He stated the rubber hits the road with literacy. He discussed that Battelle for Kids studied the brain for over 10 years and looked at the science of reading. He stated that the study determined that only 70% of students are reading at their grade level. He stated that if we would follow the studies recommendations that students without disabilities will be reading at 90%-95% of their reading grade level. He thanked the literacy presenters for all their hard work and dedication to improving our students reading abilities.

Mr. Kurt then introduced the new facility project update. He stated that the district had the foresight to acquire 100 acres of land approximately 53 years ago. He also reminded the audience that the Middle School building was built in 1913, the one portion of the High School was 1922 and the far wing was 1959. He also stated that new facilities will help to accommodate better learning and support STEAM programs. Mr. Kurt also introduced our facility team consisting of: Ted Kastor of Kastor Construction who is the district's Owners Representative; three of the Fanning Howey architect team: Steve Wilczynski, Dan Obrynba, and Rod Wiford; Rick Kusmer from Mosser Construction who is the district's Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) and Rick Jeffries, Erie County Auditor. Mr. Kurt went through a series of still slides to acclimate the audience to the property and location of the new facility, and he went through the timeline of the project and where we are in the project overall project. He then turned it over to Mrs. Keegan.

Mrs. Keegan then reminded the audience of the current state of the Nexus pipeline payments. She reminded the audience that Nexus had communicated that Margareta was projected to receive \$6.2M in year one of operation and when the final tax bill was published it reflected that Nexus was to pay us \$8.3M, which they immediately appealed it ultimately to only 42% and is paying at the 42% level. The ruling on the first level of appeals was very clear and stern response and in our favor. The first appeal upheld the tax bill amount and specifically for Margareta was \$8.3M. Nexus then appealed to the next level to the Board of Tax Appeals (BTA) and the BTA is currently scheduled for February, 2022 after one earlier delay due to an extension request from the parties. She then explained the state OFCC project, that the district applied for the ELPP program with the state to help co-fund the project. We were approved for the ELPP program in July of 2020 and have a locked in percentage of 38% funded by the state, which will equate to approximately \$15M. She then explained that the percentage share that the state will fund is adjusted annually and if we didn't lock into the 38% then it would continue to go down as the incremental Nexus dollars are received. OFCC required the district to show forward progress on the project within twelve months to keep the percentage at that highest rate. Therefore we began the design of the building, hiring Fanning Howey architects, our owner's representatives, and our CMR. We then needed to determine the logical pause of the project to wait for the result of the Nexus appeals, to determine what we will be funded through Nexus and also not create redundant costs. It was

determined that we would stop at the completion of the construction documents and then pause. Mrs. Keegan then introduced Mr. Rick Jeffries to give us an update on the Nexus appeal status.

Rick Jeffries stated that they began discussions this last fall and are preparing for the Feb 6<sup>th</sup> hearing, which is the first year appeal with the hope to resolve all three years at once and find a middle of the road answer. Mr. Jeffries also confirmed that Nexus has also appealed the third year valuation.

Mr. Jeffries also encouraged the audience to contact their commissioners to recommend that they support and vote in favor for the Wheatborro Solar PILOT program. If the commissioners were to support and approve the PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) for the solar panel project, then we would eliminate any future appeals and locks in the tax payment values for twenty years. One of the audience members asked what happens if the solar company goes bankrupt; Mr. Jeffries response was that it has never happened yet with any of the projects and the PILOT will still be honored.

Mrs. Keegan also reiterated Mr. Jeffries comments and stated that it is a Win-Win for the district. The PILOT program is designed to lock in at a set value for 20 years (and will not depreciate over time like the Nexus payments will), with the ability to do a 10 year extension. The solar project installation has already been approved and at this time all the company is asking the commissioners to do is for them to accept PILOT program, which is just the way in which they pay their taxes. Mrs. Keegan stated that not only having a guaranteed locked in value as a positive for the district, but the PILOT tax payments do not affect the district's state foundation formula and will not affect how much received from the state of Ohio Department of Education (ODE). She stated that the state funds approximately \$6,000 per student if not on an IEP. As the Nexus payments begin, the amount that the state will fund per student will be decreasing due to more local share.

It was also stated that ODE foundation formula is using the higher Nexus valuation that the tax commissioner gives them. So the ODE formula will be using the higher tax values that were billed, in the case of Margareta that would be \$8.3M, even though we are only receiving approximately \$4M. So the formula is assuming more local share then we are receiving so we lose money from the state level even though we haven't been receiving that level for the local share. The other issue discussed was that the Margareta homeowners' effective tax rate has gone down and thus reducing the tax payers tax bill, because of the \$8.3M Nexus tax basis that is paying a large portion of the fixed tax rate levy.

Mr. Kurt then took the audience through a virtual tour of the new facility design. Several questions on the project were asked about amount of storage in the buildings, how the library would be in the new building, etc.

### **Public Participation**

None

### **Introduction of Additional Items to the Agenda**

No additional items

### **The Financial Report and Schedule of Bills**

Mrs. Keegan presented the schedule of bills, bank reconciliations, or fund balances, etc., that were included in the Board's packages for review. Mrs. Keegan reminded the board that we are reviewing November's Fiscal Year To Date (FYTD) results (the fifth month of the 2022 fiscal year). She stated that the fiscal year to date revenue is a total of \$7.8M and expenses of \$7.8M resulting in a decrease to the general fund balance of \$(72,218). The beginning cash balance on July 1, 2021 was \$1,574K and

the first five months generated a final General Fund cash balance of \$1,502K (which includes the general fund reserve of \$944K). She also reviewed the Food Services results for this November, 2021 FYTD compared to last November, 2020 FYTD. She stated that the MS/HS kitchen has been serving over 100 plus additional meals daily than last year, with no additional labor or benefit costs and that is what is primarily driving the additional revenue of \$82,691 this year. She also stated that the revenue this fiscal year through November was \$197K and the expenses were \$194K, which resulted in a favorable balance of \$3,026. She also stated that she went back as far as the September of 2019 and this is only the second time the food service account has been in the black (higher revenues than expenses). The first time was in June of 2020, when the district was providing the bag and go breakfast and lunches to the community through the subsidized federal program (called the Summer Seamless Program).

### **Treasurer's Report**

#### **New Business**

Motion by Mr. Warner seconded by Mr. Sutorius, on Resolution number 21-22-31, to set the date and time of the Board's Organizational meeting and budget hearing, which needs to occur prior to January 5th at 6:30 p.m.; Roll call: Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Motion by Mr. Sutorius seconded by Mrs. Yetter, on Resolution number 21-22-32, to approve the renewal of Corporate Health Center consortium drug screening agreement for 2022-23 school year; Roll Call: Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Motion by Mr. Warner seconded by Mr. Schoenegge, on Resolution number 21-22-33, the reimbursement of the parents' nonrefundable deposit or the insurance cost for their out-of-pocket expenses (list by name included in Board package for review). Mrs. Keegan also mentioned that the remaining fundraiser dollars are planned to be transferred to the appropriate class incentive fund hopefully in January board meeting; Roll Call: Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Motion by Mr. Sutorius seconded by Mrs. Yetter, on Resolution number 21-22-34, authorizing the Treasurer to make Inter-Fund Transfers of funds for the current fiscal year of 2022; Roll Call: Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

### **Superintendent's Report**

#### **New Business**

Motion by Mr. Warner seconded by Mr. Schoenegge, on Resolution number 21-22-35, to approve the annual Sandusky Rotary Club dues for the 2022 Calendar Year for the Superintendent, approximately \$900; Roll Call: Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

### **Personnel Actions**

Motion by Mr. Sutorius seconded by Mr. Warner, to approve the FMLA and unpaid leave requests, (list included in Board package for review); Roll Call: Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

#### **Certified:**

Motion by Mr. Sutorius seconded by Mr. Warner, Motion to accept resignation of Todd Polk, Head Football Coach for the 2022 Fall Season. Mr. Miller thanked Mr. Polk for all his year of service as our

head football coach; Roll Call: Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Classified:

Motion by Mr. Sutorius seconded by Mrs. Yetter, to approve the hiring of Tyler Henderson, Sub Custodian, for the 2021/2022 school year, pending the completion of all State and local requirements; Roll Call: Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Motion by Mr. Schoenegge seconded by Mrs. Yetter, to approve the hiring of Katie Ramon, Sub Custodian, for the 2021/2022 school year, pending the completion of all State and local requirements; Roll Call: Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Motion by Mr. Sutorius and seconded by Mr. Warner, to approve the hiring of Lucinda Kapler, Custodian, pending the completion of all State and local requirements; Roll Call: Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Motion by Mr. Warner and seconded by Mr. Sutorius, to approve the hiring of Angela Weidbrauk-Lukochko, Drill Team Advisor for the 2021-2022 school year; Roll Call: Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Motion by Mr. Sutorius and seconded by Mr. Warner, to approve the hiring of Deena Brace, Event Worker, for the 2021/2022 school year; Roll Call: Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Mr. Kurt closed by thanking Mr. Miller and Mrs. Yetter for their service and dedication to the district.

Motion by Mr. Sutorius and seconded by Mrs. Yetter, to adjourn the meeting having no further business to come before the Board; Roll Call: Mr. Warner: aye, Mrs. Yetter: aye, Mr. Schoenegge: aye, Mr. Sutorius: aye, Mr. Miller: aye.

Adjourning at 8:30 p.m.

The next BOE meeting will be the district Organizational Meeting which is scheduled for Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Margareta Board of Education, 305 S. Washington Street, Castalia, Ohio

Respectfully Submitted

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Kent Miller  
Board President

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Diane Keegan  
Treasurer