

Richmond Community Schools

35276 Division * Richmond, Michigan 48062 * (586) 727-3565 * www.richmond.k12.mi.us

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Deborah Michon, President
Angela Pacitto, Vice President
Sandra Fortuna, Secretary
Margaret Teltow, Treasurer
Candess Cunningham, Trustee
Kelly Oldani, Trustee
Danielle Sutton, Trustee

Brian J. Walmsley, Ed.S.
Superintendent

BOARD OF EDUCATION **REGULAR** MEETING AGENDA

7:00PM ON JANUARY 9, 2023, IN THE MEDIA CENTER AT RICHMOND HIGH SCHOOL
(35320 Division, Richmond, Michigan 48062)

This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Education in public for the purpose of conducting the School District's business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time for public participation during the meeting as indicated in Agenda Item 8.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board member Michon called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance recited by Board of Education, Superintendent, Central Office, and audience.

3. MISSION STATEMENT

Mission statement read by Board member Fortuna.

4. ROLL CALL

Board member Fortuna took roll call: Candess Cunningham – Present, Sandra Fortuna – Present, Deborah Michon – Present, Kelly Oldani – Present, Angela Pacitto – Present, Danielle Sutton – Present, and Margaret Teltow – Present.

7 – 0 Quorum of the Board

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Board member Teltow to approve the agenda as presented. Support by Board member Cunningham.

All in Favor: 7. Opposed: 0. Motion passed.

6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Non-Discrimination Statement

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Motion by Board member Pacitto to approve the *Consent Agenda* as presented. Support by Board member Oldani.

Discussion: Superintendent Walmsley recognized, and noted the following corrections:

Personnel Report:

Resignations and Retirements:

Bartels, Kyle	Teacher	2022-12-22
Hooks, Kenneth	Interim Bowling Coach <u>MS Social Studies Teacher</u>	2022-12-22
Nash, Eric	Mathematics Teacher	2022-12-22
Pieters, Karen	Lunchroom Supervisor	2023-01-06
Ray, Matthew	Interim Bowling Coach	2022-12-14
Wycinski, Jolie	MS School Social Worker	2023-01-06
Woodberg, Michael	Middle School Dean of Students	2023-01-08

Termination:

None.

Lay-off / Non-renewal of Contract:

None.

New Hires:

Campbell, Melanie	COVID-19 Aide	2023-01-09
Christensen, Corinne	CTE Teacher	2023-01-23
Fowler, Michael	PM Custodian	2023-01-09
Holdwick, Tisha	Interim Bowling Coach	2023-01-09
Kramer, Tammy	HS Special Education Teacher	2023-01-23
Piebiak, Laura	MS Special Education Teacher and 7 th Grade Boys Basketball Coach	2023-01-03
Platz, Barbara	Special Education Paraprofessional	2023-01-03
Taylor, Robert	8 th Grade Boys Basketball Coach	2023-01-03

Notice of Appointments (Previously Hired by the Board):

Burg, Brett	MS Social Studies Teacher	2023-01- 09 <u>23</u>
Day, Brandon	Physical Education Teacher	2023-01- 09 <u>23</u>

Superintendent Walmsley stated no errors brought to his attention regarding the 2022-12-12 Regular Board Meeting minutes.

Superintendent Walmsley stated no questions or concerns were brought to his attention regarding the Claims and Accounts.

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No discussion by Board members.
All in Favor: 7. Opposed: 0. Motion passed

7. BOND UPDATE

There was no bond update provided by Superintendent Walmsley.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following members of the public spoke:

- Cheryl Jahr, Richmond Education Association (REA) President, spoke on behalf of the REA. Ms. Jahr stated she would like to correct misconceptions regarding the reason for the shutdown last week. Ms. Jahr stated she is appalled that people are stating that the shutdown was due to staffing and the threat was a cover up. Ms. Jahr discussed district staffing issues. Ms. Jahr stated the staffing issues are not a result of the Board of Education or district administration. Ms. Jahr stated State leadership is causing the teacher shortage, not district administration. Ms. Jahr stated the biggest hinderance of attracting talent to Richmond is social media and the negativity. Ms. Jahr stated bashing the district on social media is not helping the current reputation of the district.
- Jessica Schlehuder deferred her time to Cheryl Jahr to continue. Ms. Jahr continued stating the speculation on the current investigation is not helping the perception of Richmond. She continued stating she would like to encourage people to stop the gossip on social media.
- Carolyn Gallo addressed the Board with her concerns about the teacher exodus. Ms. Gallo stated her daughter has not had a designated teacher in her honors class. Ms. Gallo stated this begs the question why people are leaving, how do we make it stop, and what are we doing to attract and retain teachers. Ms. Gallo would like to know what the plan is for staffing. Ms. Gallo stated if there is no plan, parents may have to pull their students from the district. Ms. Gallo stated Richmond needs effective leadership and we need to work together to fix this.
- John Pepper addressed the Board stating it has been difficult watching teachers leaving and the threat. Mr. Pepper stated that the information shared from his end seemed to be lacking. Mr. Pepper stated he received the text messages but not the emails. Mr. Pepper requested the Board look into communication on the district website. Mr. Pepper stated he would like to look at notifications sent to parents. Mr. Pepper stated the Richmond Schools Facebook page has a link that directs people to the Facebook page in Indiana, not Richmond.
- Christina Turchi addressed the Board regarding the handling of the situation with her daughter. Ms. Turchi stated the district has violated board policy regarding her daughter being interrogated. Ms. Turchi also stated policy 4601 was violated. Ms. Turchi stated the Board

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seemed shocked about the incident. Ms. Turchi spoke regarding other board policy that she believes were violated.

- Karen Turchi deferred her time to Christina Turchi. Ms. Turchi continued to read board policies that she felt related to her daughter's situation. Ms. Turchi addressed a letter received from the middle school principal. Ms. Turchi stated that the district lied about the building sub helping with the new classroom teacher.
- Kristy Jackson deferred her time to Kristina Turchi. Ms. Turchi went on to state she was happy the district was closed through the week last week, but she believed it was because the district was short staffed. She stated every threat needs to be treated seriously and stated that no one is safe.
- Christina Bass stated she is a mother of two daughters in the district. Ms. Bass stated she is a firearm instructor and counselor. Ms. Bass stated it is her job to understand human violence and to train everyday citizens to prevent recognizing and handling things that may go sideways. Ms. Bass stated she has trained with the best of the best in the country in the behaviors that lead to violence. Ms. Bass stated violence is inside of our home and it is escalating. Ms. Bass stated she is here to offer ideas and seek a resolution. Ms. Bass stated she has three questions: why risk sending our kids, teachers, and administrators into a building when there is so much unknown. Ms. Bass asked why we are risking their lives. Ms. Bass asked if the district contacted the attorney General for the help or the State Police, and if the district contacted the governor for increased time off. Ms. Bass asked if there is available counseling to support the staff and students that are experiencing trauma. Ms. Bass stated her final request is for administration to communicate better with the community.
- Amanda Spears addressed the Board stating five (5) of her students go to this district. Ms. Spears stated she is disappointed with the situation at hand. Ms. Spears said she moved her children here for stability and safety. Ms. Spears stated she is involved in everything that her students do and has applied for jobs with the district. Ms. Spears stated the threat last week was tragic, but she would like to know an update on the situation. Ms. Spears stated she is keeping her children home until the investigation is completed. Ms. Spears stated parents should have been notified about the situation with the new threat. Ms. Spears stated her daughter is on her third math teacher this year. Ms. Spears stated this district is failing her.
- Reverend Kim Newport directed her comment to Superintendent Walmsley. Rev. Newport stated she sees posts and news reports focused on Superintendent Walmsley questioning his integrity. Rev. Newport stated Superintendent Walmsley is not alone, and people in the community trust his decision making. Rev. Newport stated the teacher shortage is not a reflection of Superintendent Walmsley and there is only so much information he can provide regarding an ongoing investigation. Rev. Newport stated she is sorry for the way

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Superintendent Walmsley has been treated. Rev. Newport addressed the Board and requested they refrain from any conversation other than unity.

- Ashley Rose stated she has two daughters in middle school right now and she is disappointed with the staffing in this district. Ms. Rose stated there was a huge problem child issue in her daughter's class, Ms. McNichol. Ms. Rose is glad there is a new teacher in place of Ms. McNichol. Ms. Rose stated that the news reporters present in the audience is embarrassing.

9. SUPERINTENDENT AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Superintendent Walmsley provided the following update on legislative, county, and district issues.

Legislative Update:

None.

County Update:

None.

District Update:

Superintendent Walmsley reported on the following events at Will L. Lee Elementary School, as provided by Ms. Mangune:

- NWEA testing has begun. We are looking forward to using the data to drive our instruction.
- Second Grade won the monthly attendance reward
- February Lee is featuring a kindness month..... stay tuned.

Superintendent Walmsley reported on the following events at Richmond Middle School, as provided by Ms. Marella:

- On Monday, January 9, 2023, we welcome all our RMS students back!
- Tuesday, January 10, 2023, is our SHINE Day! Show your RMS pride!
- Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at 7:00 is the Middle School Band Concert in the RMS cafeteria
- Friday, January 13, 2023, RMS Spirit Day—Wear your favorite scarf!

Superintendent Walmsley reported on the following events at Richmond High School, as provided by Ms. Szabo:

- Richmond High School students finished 3rd at the *We the People* State competition on Friday, January 6, 2023. Congratulations to Dr. Ladd and the students who competed in the competition.
- NWEA testing beginning the week of January 9 and will continue to February 10 in English and math classes.

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- Final exams are Wednesday, January 18, Thursday, January 19, and Friday, January 20.

Superintendent Walmsley provided a summary of the situation that occurred on Tuesday, January 3, 2023 (i.e., Anti-Semitic Threat towards MS Dean of Students) and the situation that was reported on Sunday, January 8, 2023 (i.e., Threat towards staff person).

Superintendent Walmsley distributed to Board members and read a letter written by the Richmond Administrators Association regarding the current situation going on in the district and a call to action by the administrators.

10. ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board member Cunningham asked the community to have patients and try to support one another with this situation. Board member Cunningham stated we need to act like a community to get through this. Board member Cunningham stated we have a great year ahead of us and we need to look forward to a positive year.

Board member Fortuna echoed what everyone else has said. Board member Fortuna stated emotions are running high and understands because everyone's children are important to them. Board member Fortuna stated safety is number one to her and everyone on the board.

Board member Michon agreed with the rest of the Board's statements. Board member Michon stated that whoever did this effected a lot of people, staff, students, and programs. Board member Michon doesn't understand how someone could do this. Board member Michon stated she prays we find the person that did this because this person does not represent our district. Board member Michon stated she believes in our staff and administration.

Board member Oldani stated that she is echoing the sentiment from Board members Cunningham and Teltow. Board member Oldani also thanked Ms. Jahr for her statements and brining to light the rumors and issues with social media. Board member Oldani also stated her overwhelming disappointment for what is being said on social media. Board member Oldani stated many comments on social media are blatant lies. Board member Oldani stated she has full confidence in the Richmond police and thanked them for being here. Board member Oldani stated her students are back in school today and she felt safe sending her students because she trusts the Police Chief and Superintendent Walmsley.

Board member Sutton addressed the issue with communication. Board member Sutton stated she has issues with communication as well. Board member Sutton stated she echoed other Board members opinions. Board member Sutton stated she was part of the conversation on social media and made a comment regarding school closure. Board member Sutton stated that she was confident in the decision to be closed through Friday. Board member Sutton stated that community members should address questions to Superintendent Walmsley.

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Board member Pacitto thanked the staff for prioritizing safety. Board member Pacitto thanked Richmond police for keeping the school safe. Board member Pacitto stated she is saddened about the level of hate that was demonstrated by this note. Board member Pacitto asked for grace for the Board members as they navigate this situation. Board member Pacitto stated that everyone is doing their best in this situation.

Board member Teltow stated she went to the *We the People* competition this weekend. Board member Teltow stated we had an amazing group of students talking about the constitution and government. Board member Teltow said Dr. Ladd deserves credit for a job well done with the students. Board member Teltow commended Ms. Jahr for her comments tonight. Board member Teltow stated it is great to see support from the union. Board member Teltow stated we have great employees leaving but we have a great staff still here and great new people coming to the district. Board member Teltow also stated that with respect to the threat, it is sickening to see a threat like this in the district. Board member Teltow stated that it was unbelievable that this threat is what welcomed the Dean of Students to Richmond. Board member Teltow stated the community must treat people better than they do. Board member Teltow stated that she would like remind staff not to share communications on social media.

11. ACTION ITEM

A. Approval of Amendment to Bus Purchase

Board member Teltow motioned to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and amend the approval to purchase one (1) school bus from Midwest Transit for a total not to exceed \$117,300, as outlined in the attached documentation, for which funding transferred from the FY2023 General Fund to the non-bond capital projects fund is authorized. Supported by Board member Sutton.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call Vote: Candess Cunningham – YES, Sandra Fortuna – YES, Deborah Michon – YES, Kelly Oldani – YES, Angela Pacitto – YES, Danielle Sutton – YES, and Margaret Teltow – YES. Favor: 7. Opposed: 0. Motion passed

B. Approval of Hatch Program Technology for Early Learning Childcare Center

Board member Teltow motioned to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and approval to purchase Hatch Early Learning Computers and Software for a total not to exceed \$30,279.76, as outlined in the attached documentation, for which funding from the FY2023 General Fund is authorized. Supported by Board member Sutton.

Discussion: Board member Oldani asked who collects this data and who analyzes it. Board member Cunningham stated that she has concerns over data and facial recognition with the program. Superintendent Walmsley stated that the data is used by the teachers and the data is not sent to anyone other than staff. Renee Stapels, Executive Director of Curriculum & Educational Services, clarified it is not facial recognition; students click a picture of

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themselves. Ms. Stapels stated all data is internally hosted and the information stays in preschool.

Roll Call Vote: Candess Cunningham – NO, Sandra Fortuna – YES, Deborah Michon – YES, Kelly Oldani – N), Angela Pacitto – YES, Danielle Sutton – YES, and Margaret Teltow – YES.
Favor: 5. Opposed: 2. Motion passed

12. CLOSED SESSION TO CONSIDER MATERIALS EXEMPT FROM DISCUSSION OR DISCLOSURE BY STATE OR FEDERAL STATUTE PURSUANT TO SECTION 8(H) OF THE MICHIGAN OPEN MEETINGS ACT

Pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Board member Teltow motioned that the Board of Education go into Closed Session to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute. Support by Board member Fortuna.

Discussion: None.

Board member Michon called for a roll call vote: Candess Cunningham – YES, Sandra Fortuna – YES, Deborah Michon – YES, Kelly Oldani – YES, Angela Pacitto – YES, Danielle Sutton – YES, and Margaret Teltow – YES.

No opposition. No abstention.

7 – 0 Quorum of the Board

Closed Session Started: 8:35 PM

Closed Session Ended: 9:46 PM

13. ADJOURNMENT

Board member Michon adjourned the meeting at 9:46 PM.

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