

**MADISON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, March 8, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Kendra Horn. Luke Cordingley, Ridgley Elser, Kendra Horn, Cory Rowberry, and Kaylie Theis, and William T. C. Wood were present. Superintendent Micheal Wetherbee and Principal Rodney Stout were present.

Visitors: Sara Decker (Zoom), Laurie Bartoletti (Zoom), Kaiden Batzler, April Wuelfing (Zoom), Boone Hodgins

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Kaylie Theis led the Board and the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None at this time.

Public Comment

**REPORTS:**

Student Council: Student Council President Kaiden Batzler reported on the following: basketball season has ended, with both the boys' and girls' teams winning a few games, and both teams won their play-in games to be able to play in the District tournament, and two players were elected to play in the All Star game; National Honor Society members have been reading to elementary students; Close Up is still doing fundraisers for their trip in April; Academic Olympics will be in Bozeman March 15 and March 16; the Ruby Valley FFA hosted District CDEs on February 21, and the mechanics team and Farm Business Management team have qualified for state in Bozeman March 30-April 2; FFA will also hold their Open House on March 10 at 7:00 pm; FCCLA members sold and delivered Valentine's Day candy; all high school students will attend a college visit at MSU on March 28; Jenna Nate won a "Shark Tank" business plan competition in Butte on Feb. 25; prom will be in Twin Bridges on March 19.

Student Co.

In response to the Board's request, Kaiden also reported that overall, students are fairly happy with school lunch; some would like a few more options on the salad bar, and would prefer not having wheat bread; some days lunch counts aren't accurate so seconds aren't available. Further discussion included: the lunch program has improved in recent months, there is a good variety on the salad bar for what we can do; high school students have been getting a snack mid-morning, and breakfast is very popular.

Negotiation Committee: Kendra Horn updated the Board that negotiations are going well; there is some language clean up that has already been tentatively agreed upon by the committees, and a little more to work out at the next meeting; the raise on the base has not been settled yet; the board committee's objective is to remove the retirement incentive, and the SFT has proposed adding additional steps to the last four lanes of the salary matrix in exchange.

Negotiation  
Comm.



Football Co-op: Superintendent Wetherbee reported that MHSA has not yet responded to the co-op application, and he is not optimistic; he anticipates they will have a concern with the large roster size and expects an answer at the end of the month; MHSA will hold their executive meeting in April, and if the application is denied, he can work with Twin Bridges school to appeal the decision based on other schools and co-ops with similarly sized rosters.

Football Co-op

**BOARD GOALS AND TRAINING:**

Sheridan School Board will provide the staffing structure to promote a diverse and well-rounded education for all students through the employment of highly qualified individuals. Superintendent Wetherbee stated that the District has very qualified teachers, always meet accreditation, and offers a lot of options for students for elective classes.

Board Goals

Board Retreat: The Board held their annual retreat on Saturday, March 5; a lot of time was discussing the budget and how the budgeting process works; the Board did a walk-through of the campus, and discussed the District's strategic plan.

Board Retreat

County Wide Board Meeting: The county wide board meeting was held in Ennis on Feb. 28; agenda items included hiring and retention, teacher shortage, strategies for District's to market themselves to potential employees, and upcoming legislative issues.

County Wide  
Mtg.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

ESSER II/III PLAN UPDATES: Superintendent Wetherbee was in contact with Amareco regarding the project to replace the high school's heat exchange unit; they are getting items ready for the bid process, and will need Board approval before proceeding.

ESSER  
II/ESSER III  
Plan

**NEW BUSINESS:**

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT: William T. C. Wood moved to approve appointing Rhonda Boyd to fill the vacant Alder trustee position, and Ridgley Elser seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Trustee  
Appointment

OUT OF DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS: William T. C. Wood moved to acknowledge the out of district application for the Kinion family, and Cory Rowberry seconded the motion. The motion carried. Cory Rowberry moved to approve the out of district attendance agreement for the Eisele family; William T. C. Wood seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Out of District  
Attendance

HIRING AND/OR RESIGNATION: The Board reviewed Jen Dvorak's letter of resignation, and William T. C. Wood moved to accept her resignation. Luke Cordingley seconded the motion. Discussion included adding her to the sub list, and she has been a great employee. The motion carried.

Hiring/Resignati  
on

Superintendent Wetherbee recommended hiring Mike Wetherbee as the assistant varsity track coach. Ridgley Elser moved to hire Mike Wetherbee as assistant



varsity track coach, and William T. C. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF RENEWAL/NONRENEWAL OF TENURED TEACHERS: Superintendent Wetherbee recommended that the Board renew all tenured teachers as listed for the 2022-23 school year. William T. C. Wood moved to renew the following tenured teachers for the 2022-23 school year: Kord Anderson, Rodney Braaten, Ed Burke, Sara Decker, Paula Elser, Michelle Gasper, Destiny Howser, Lyra Hyndman, Anthony Johnson, Heather Kenworthy, Jennifer Konopacki, Rachel Minert, Lanaie Morgan, Shawn Regnerus, Janelle Schmit, and April Wuelfing. Cory Rowberry seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Tenured Teacher  
Renewal

CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL CERTIFIED POSITIONS: Superintendent Wetherbee discussed the District's increasing load of special education students; Mrs. Morgan's current case load is 22 students from K-12, and he anticipates more students next year, with some possibly having severe needs; it is a large case load for one teacher and one paraprofessional; he would like the Board to consider adding another certified position; there is a shortage of special education teachers around the state; at the very least, a position could be added for half-time special education and half-time Title I; the state requirements for the special education program are becoming more of a burden. Ridgley Elser moved to add a certified position, and Kaylie Theis seconded the motion. Discussion included, but was not limited to, the following: a teacher with a second endorsement in English or K-8 curriculum would be preferred; adding another position will increase the percentage of the general fund budgets that are allocated for salary and benefits, and will have an effect on negotiations; if we are unable to fill the position, we will maintain our current staffing, but it will be helpful to lighten the load; people are attracted to the area and to working in a district with a four-day school week; our district has a good reputation, and there is a relatively good chance we can fill the position. The motion carried.

Additional  
Certified  
Positions

Superintendent Wetherbee also proposed adding another certified position for the Title I program; another option would be hiring an employee for half-time certified for Title I, and half-time classified position; there is a need for more Title I support in addition to the additional special education piece; Title I interventions at the elementary level would be beneficial to the program all the way through the school; other possibilities could be sharing a certified teacher with another school; the position would be primarily funded through the Title I grant, but the general fund would need to absorb costs that are currently being paid from there; other considerations for the general fund are the increased prices for fuel, energy, and supplies, and the additional position is another discussion item for negotiations. William T. C. Wood moved to table the second FTE until after discussion with SFT and Cory Rowberry seconded the motion. Discussion included, but was not limited to, the following: it is financially responsible to table the discussion; the budgets have room for an additional SPED position; there is a need for another certified teacher, but with other outside factors, a second full-time position may be a stretch. The motion to table carried.



**PRINCIPAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS:** Principal Stout gave a hand-out (enclosed) to the trustees, and proposed an increase of 3% on his base salary to match what the board committee offered the teacher's union in negotiations; he is also stepping down from his transportation duties, as the duties of special education director are taking more time; William T. C. Wood moved to approve the principal contract for the 2022-23 school year with a 3% increase to the base salary, and the appropriate increase for health insurance when next year's premiums are received from MUST. Luke Cordingley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Principal  
Contract

**CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION TO ADOPT FY23 NOTICE OF INTENT TO INCREASE/DECREASE NON-VOTED LEVIES:** The Board reviewed the proposed resolutions for non-voted levies for FY2022-23. Discussion included, but was not limited to, the following: the Board has consistently chosen to publish the notice showing all levies, and not only the ones that are statutorily required; neighboring districts publish the statutory requirements, and by comparison, it looks like our District is levying more taxes; the county superintendent compiles the information and publishes all the county's schools together; if we publish ours separately so there isn't a side-by-side comparison, or find a way to explain the difference; Cory Rowberry moved to adopt the FY23 elementary notice of intent to increase/decrease non-voted levies, and publish the notice with all funds and with the language presented for the purposes of the permissive building reserve fund levy. Kaylie Theis seconded the motion. Further discussion included: publishing an ad in the paper with the notice explaining what the notice means; the District wants complete transparency; the newspaper can't educate the public very well because it is a complicated issue; how mills are calculated and taxable valuations are an idea for future board trainings. The motion carried. Cory Rowberry made the same motion for the high school resolution, and Luke Cordingley seconded the motion. The motion carried. The clerk will publish the notices immediately to try and avoid having the ad in the same issue as other Madison County schools.

Notice of Intent

**READING AND/OR APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S) MINUTES:**

Ridgley Elser moved to approve minutes from the January 20, 2022 negotiation committee and the February 8, 2022 regular meetings as presented, and Kaylie Theis seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Minutes

**REVIEW AND/OR APPROVAL OF CURRENT BILLS AND EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS:**

William T. C. Wood moved to approve the March warrant list as presented, including warrants #109871 through #109908 totaling \$61,590.12, and Ridgley Elser seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Expenditures

Expenditure Proposals: None at this time

**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:**

- Attendance: JS-6=96%, 7-8=98%, 9-12=94%, JS-12=95%;
- February students of the month;

Principal's  
Report



- The Spelling Bee was held March 9, and the top 4 students went on to compete at the Madison County Spelling Bee;
- Teacher evaluations for non-tenured staff are complete;
- STEAM projects: the 1<sup>st</sup> graders are hatching trout, and will be building air powered dragsters later this spring; 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade will build their CO2 cars this spring, as well;
- Upcoming dates include the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter on March 24;
- Space and Rockets will be the theme for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter;

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Superintendent Wetherbee reported on the following:

Supt. Report

- Enrollment: 222 total
- Attendance has been good; COVID has been non-existent for about a month, and the current county number is 0 cases for the first time in two years.
- Discipline has been ok this past month;
- The high school attended MSU for a college visit; Helena, Butte, and Dillon put on a better presentation for our students;
- 10 juniors and 7 seniors will be going to Close Up at the end of April. This will be the last year that juniors and seniors go together;
- Altacare has been a part of the school for a long time, but the company is in a rough spot in Montana, which creates uncertainty around providing services to our students; Mr. Wetherbee would like to move to a different model with a therapist on staff; it may cost a little more than what we are doing now; Carolyn Hamilton gave a brief overview of how the Altacare model currently works: she develops individualized plans for kids with mental health issues, and is able to get them back into the classroom; services are provided at school through individual or group sessions; groups work on social skills and behavioral issues; family therapy is available; she is able to work with school staff to identify students in need, consults with teachers about skills that students need for success; she is involved in IEP meetings, and provides crisis care for students regardless of their enrollment in the Altacare program. Currently, Altacare collects fees for service through a private insurance, CHIP, Medicaid, or cash based on a sliding fee scale; the Butte office handles billing; she handles approximately 16 cases per year, and current issues are anxiety, ADHD, anger management, ODD, suicidal thoughts or ideation; she is able to provide consistent care; she gave a brief overview of her typical daily schedule. Superintendent Wetherbee would like the Board to consider adding a staff position, and eliminate the need to contract with an outside company; the school would be able to bill Medicaid and CHIP; he believes it would create a more comprehensive approach in grades K-12 with a curriculum for mental health, and if things are addressed earlier, then students may not have as much need for crisis care.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 8:43 pm, Bill Wood moved to adjourn the meeting.

The minutes of this meeting were recorded and transcribed by Rebecca E. Larsen,  
District Clerk.



CLERK



CHAIRMAN