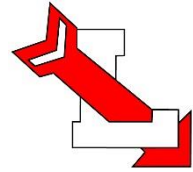


Board Briefs



Regular Meeting of August 12, 2024

Consent Items Approved

- Minutes from July, 2024
- Payment of bills for July, 2024
- Approval of new hires

Action Items

- MASB Certification of Delegates and Alternates
- Bus Wash
- Return to Learn and Continuity of Services Plan

Human Resources Update

Dustin Cichocki reported he is busy filling open positions. The annual paraprofessional bid meeting left 4 open positions. There are still a couple bus routes that need to be filled. Secretarial and custodial positions are filled. There were a couple late resignations that will need to be filled. Administrative Assistant and administrator professional development took place last week. New staff orientation will take place this week. Lowell Area Schools and the Lowell Chamber of Commerce are partnering to host a job fair on September 24th from 4-7:30pm at the Middle School. Lowell Area Schools will have a booth for bus drivers and any other open positions.

Curriculum Update

Nate Fowler stated that Dan VanderMeulen is working hard to make sure that buildings have all the materials they need to start school as well as working on opening day staff professional development. This year's theme is "Better and Beyond."

Budget Update

Sonia Hodge stated that the first round of student loan forgiveness payments to qualified staff will start on Friday. These funds were made available by a grant from the State of Michigan. Twenty-three staff members qualified for reimbursement. Auditors were in the district in July. The Business Office will continue to virtually work through the rest of the process. Mrs. Hodge stated that the Summary of Revenues and Expenditures report was not included in the Board packet. She stated that this report is time intensive and feels she can provide a better report. She asked the Board for their feedback on what would be helpful for them to see in their Board Packet. Brian Krajewski asked Mrs. Hodge to bring the revised reports to an upcoming Work Session for discussion. Lowell Area Schools is moving to a new online payment system. Food Service payments will continue through the family portal, athletics will be made through Final Forms and any other payments will be made through the new e-Funds for Schools system.

Public Comments

Three audience members made public comments. No action taken.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Fowler thanked Dustin Cichocki and Sonia Hodge for their work with staff on the student loan forgiveness payments. He also thanked the maintenance and custodial staff for their hard work this summer. Fowler gave an update on summer projects:

- CAD Lab furniture arrived and is being assembled.
- High school security cameras have been installed. The clarity and visibility are amazing.
- Door entry replacements have been installed and are operational.
- 135 computers have been installed throughout the district.
- New Chromebooks are being distributed. The high school Chromebooks have been moved to the elementary schools

He stated that the second reading of the Title IX policy was not on the agenda for tonight. Lowell Area Schools has paused adoption of this policy due to court rulings which has resulted in a patchwork of implementation across the States. Fowler is not aware of any additional court rulings. The new Title IX rules did take effect August 1st in Michigan. Lowell Area Schools did not fall under some of the exceptions to the new rules. Lowell Area Schools does have protections in place through anti-bullying policies, anti-harassment policies, the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and a current Title IX policy. Additional Board of Education discussion is needed on this policy. Fowler brought the focus back to why we are all here - to educate students. He stated it was great to see students and families in the buildings - middle school smart start, fall sports have started, band camp, elementary open house and seniors painting their parking spots.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Laurie Kuna welcomed everyone back.
- Pat Nugent welcomed principals back and is looking forward to a good school year. He stated that Jessica Curtis and himself serve on the Lowell Education Foundation Board. This Board fosters innovation and curriculum enhancements through teacher grants in September and October each year. He urged everyone to visit the website or Facebook to donate to the Lowell Education Foundation. One way to donate is to purchase a leaf for the Tribute Tree at the high school for \$400.
- Jessica Curtis is looking forward to a great school year.
- Brian Krajewski welcomed everyone back and is looking forward to seeing new staff at the September Board meeting.

Lowell Area Schools Board of Education

Brian Krajewski, President • Lauria Kuna, Vice President • Pat Nugent, Secretary • Tom Kaywood, Treasurer
Jennifer Dougherty, Trustee • Jared Blough, Trustee • Jessica Curtis, Trustee