

**St. Johns Public Schools
St. Johns, Michigan
Minutes of Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Held on August 23, 2021**

The St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, August 23, 2021, at the St. Johns High School Auditorium. President Darragh called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

President Darragh appointed Member Jackson to act as secretary for the meeting as Secretary Dedyne was absent.

**ACTING SECRETARY
APPOINTED**

Members Present: Darragh, Drabek, Hallead , Jackson, Nelson, and Watson

ATTENDANCE

Members Absent: Dedyne

Motion by Vice President Drabek, with support by Member Nelson, to approve the agenda. Agenda unanimously approved.

AGENDA APPROVED

Motion by Member Nelson, with support by Member Hallead, that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education accept the resignation of Rhonda Dedyne as Secretary of the Board of Education. Motion unanimously approved.

**BOARD SECRETARY
RESIGNATION,
NOMINATION AND
ELECTION
RESIGNATION OF
SECRETARY POSITION
APPROVAL**

President Darragh nominated Member Jackson as Secretary of the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education. Motion by President Darragh with support by Member Hallead, that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education elect Timothy Jackson as Secretary of the Board of Education. Motion unanimously approved.

**NOMINATIONS AND
ELECTION OF
SECRETARY**

Motion by Member Nelson, with support by Vice President Drabek, to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from the meeting held on August 9, 2021. Motion unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

Karen Andrews, resident of the district, shared information on inclusion, diversity, and critical race theory. She also spoke to a second topic regarding mandating students to wear masks.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Several residents of the district communicated their views about requiring students to wear masks while on school property, the socio-emotional health of students required to wear masks, and trusting the District to make correct decisions. Those sharing they do not believe students should wear masks were Kelly Havens, Carol McClain, Kelly Nethaway, Tonya Phinney, and Ava Diffin. Heather Romero shared her concerns on wearing the proper personal protection equipment. Speaking in favor of wearing masks were Kendel Darragh and

Christina Snyder. Kendel Darragh also shared that she was proud of the way the staff responded to last years pandemic and is ashamed that the district is starting this school year without a mandate.

Gayle Griggs shared concerns about members of the audience being treated fairly and with respect during meetings. She also voiced her concerns about the curriculum in the district.

Josh Heethuis thanked the administration for their work and conversation during negotiations with the SJEA/ICEA.

Raquel Dietrich submitted a document to the Board of Education. She referenced wording in MCL Revised School Code 380.1307B, section H. She also stated that the public comment cards available are against the Open Meetings Act and feels it is used as an intimidation tactic. She also reviewed her understanding of absenteeism and funding on count day, and school taxes.

Curriculum Director Jason Gnegy provided the members of the Board of Education with information on the course offerings the district will be using at the middle school and elementary levels for students assigned to the My Virtual Academy. The approval of the course offerings will be an action item at the next regular meeting.

President Darragh would like to attend a legal workshop sponsored by MASB. Approval of this workshop must be approved by the Board of Education.

Superintendent Palmer provided information on the 2021 MASB Annual Leadership Conference and Delegate Assembly. There will be both an in-person and an online option to attend. The Board of Education must designate up to 3 members to attend the delegate assembly. The designation will be an action item at the next regular meeting.

Motion by Member Hallead, with support by Vice President Drabek, that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education approve the consent grouping number VII, A1, A2, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, C1, C2, D1 and D2. Motion unanimously approved.

Approved expenditures for the payment of bills for June 2021:

General Fund	\$2,248,267.07
Food Service Fund	\$55,880.63
Activity Fund	\$43,075.36
1998 Debt Fund	\$300.00
2021 Refunding	\$95,225.23
Energy Bond Construction	\$163,740.60
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$2,606,488.89

**REPORTS AND
INFORMATION
2021-2022 MY
VIRTUAL ACADEMY
COURSE OFFERINGS
FOR MS AND ELEM
LEVELS**

**MASB CONFERENCE
REGISTRATION – BACK
TO SCHOOL LEGAL
WORKSHOP**

**2021 MASB ANNUAL
LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE AND
DELEGATE ASSEMBLY**

**APPROVAL OF
CONSENT
GROUPING
ITEMS**

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Approved expenditures for the payment of bills for July 2021:	
General Fund	\$1,572,417.16
Food Service Fund	\$12,887.11
Activity Fund	\$18,331.37
2020 Refunding	\$500.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,604,135.64

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Approved the hiring of the following St. Johns Public Schools employees: Sara Boettger – Eureka Elementary Preschool Teacher, Jacob Bendele – Middle School SSP, Lorraine Hammer – Middle School ELA Teacher, Lindsie Grieve – Childcare Provider, Tom Rollis – District Licensed Professional Counselor.

NEW HIRE APPROVAL

Approved the resignation of the following St. Johns Public Schools employees: Patrick Kent – High School Custodian, Aaron Kipper – Network Technician.

RESIGNATION APPROVAL

Approved the position transfer of the following St. Johns Public Schools employees: James Martens – Bus Driver to High School Custodial/Maintenance, Dana Nickols – Sub Custodian to Riley Elementary SSP.

POSITION TRANSFER APPROVAL

Motion by Treasurer Watson, with support by Secretary Jackson, that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education approve the registration for President Scott Darragh to attend the MASB Back-to-School Legal Workshop on August 26, 2021, as presented. Motion unanimously approved.

**ACTION ITEMS
MASB CONFERENCE
REGISTRATION- BACK TO
SCHOOL LEGAL
WORKSHOP**

Superintendent Palmer provided a staffing update to the members of the Board of Education. He thanked Jason Gnegy for the great job he did with new teacher orientation. He also provided an update on sporting events and beginning of the year activities.

**BOARD
COMMUNICATIONS
SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT**

Several of the in-person and online audience shared their views on mask mandates for students at school, and their concerns for the socio-emotional health of the students. Many expressed a lack of trust for decisions made by the District and Board. Those included Chuck Eldridge, Jessica Minor, Gary Schmitt, Raquel Dietrich, Dwayne Pippin and Ava Pippin. DJ Logan commented that she is excited to start the new year, and the results she perceived in her classroom, particularly while students wore their masks. Gavin Griggs thanked the Board for being open and listening to everyone. Emily D. asked why answers to questions that parents had were not answered publicly. She also expressed concern for the lack of communication she receives from the school and her child's teacher.

**PUBLIC AND BOARD
COMMENTS**

Several members of the Board of Education welcomed the newly hired staff.

President Darragh motioned that the St. Johns Board of Education move into Executive Session to discuss the tentative contract with the SJEA/ICEA, and was supported by Secretary Jackson.

**MOVE TO EXECUTIVE
SESSION**

The motion passed unanimously via a 6-0 roll call vote at 8:37 p.m.

The Board of Education returned from Executive Session at 9:12 p.m.

**RETURN FROM
EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion by President Darragh with support by Member Nelson, that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education approve the contract with the SJEA/ICEA as presented. Motion unanimously approved.

**ACTION ITEMS
ST. JOHNS EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION/ICEA
CONTRACT APPROVAL**

Motion by Vice President Drabek with support by Member Hallead that the St. Johns Public Schools Board of Education approve the 2021-2022 and the 2022-2023 school year calendars. Motion unanimously approved.

**PROPOSED 2021-2022
AND 2022-2023 SCHOOL
YEAR CALENDAR
APPROVAL**

President Darragh adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Jackson, Secretary
St. Johns Board of Education
Minutes submitted by: Michelle Gorby, Recording Secretary