

RSU 54/MSAD 54

**Meeting of Board of Directors
February 8, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Skowhegan Area Middle School**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Maine School Administrative District No. 54 was held on February 8, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at Skowhegan Area Middle School Cafeteria.

ATTENDANCE BOARD MEMBERS (662 present, 337 absent):

Mark Bedard (Skow-53) PRESENT	Sarah Bunker* (Mercer-16) ABSENT
Jeannie Conley (Skow-53) PRESENT	Janet Burrill* (Canaan-43) ABSENT
Samantha Delorie (Norr-46) PRESENT	Karyn Curran* (Skow-53) ABSENT
Annemarie Dubois (Skow-53)-PRESENT	Daniel Frey* (Smith-27) ABSENT
Jean Franklin (Canaan-43) PRESENT	Cheyenne Goodrich* (Norr-46) ABSENT
Theresa Howard (Corn-30) PRESENT	Desiree Libby* (Norr-46) ABSENT
Bruce Hurley (Mercer-16) PRESENT	Timothy Williams* (Skow-53) ABSENT
Michelle Kelso (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Michael Lambke (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Peggy Lovejoy (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Janice Malek (Norr-46) PRESENT	
Julian Payne (Corn-30) PRESENT	
Amy Rouse (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Lynda Quinn (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Sara Smith (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Michelle Taylor (Smith-27) PRESENT	

Carly McCabe (Student Rep) PRESENT

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

a. Flag Salute followed.

2. Good News and Recognitions

Valerie McNamara, JMG's Communications Coordinator for Aspire River Hawks presented to the Board. Valerie shared a few highlights that showcase what Aspire is doing to help make educators' visions a reality.

3. Approval of the Minutes – 1/18/24

ON A MOTION BY Mark Bedard, seconded by Theresa Howard, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting of 1/18/24 into the public record. (662 yes)

4. Communications

a. Letters

Superintendent Moody acknowledged and accepted letters of intent to retire in June 2024 from the following:

- Melanie White, Special Ed Teacher at Canaan Elementary School
- Ann Seliano, Ed Tech III at Margaret Chase Smith School
- Dennis Burke, Custodian at Canaan Elementary School

Also acknowledged and accepted were the following letters of resignation:

- Nancy Luce, Ed Tech at Skowhegan Area High School
- Christopher Beaman, Welding Instructor at SCTC

Superintendent Moody shared a letter of request for a one-year unpaid leave of absence from Pamela Lattin, Math Teacher at Skowhegan Area Middle School and asked the Board to vote on the following recommendation:

ON A MOTION BY Michelle Kelso, seconded by Michelle Taylor, the Board voted to approve a one-year unpaid leave of absence to Pamela Lattin for the 2024-2025 school year. (662 yes)

b. School Personnel

There were no school personnel who wished to speak.

c. Visitors

There were no visitors who wished to speak.

5. Committee Reports

a. Personnel Committee – 1/18/24

ON A MOTION BY Theresa Howard, seconded by Jean Franklin, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting of 1/18/24 into the public record. (662 yes)

Theresa Howard, Committee Chair, reviewed the minutes. There were no recommendations.

b. Building Committee – 1/24/24 and 1/31/24

ON A MOTION BY Peggy Lovejoy, seconded by Sara Smith, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Building Committee meetings of 1/24/24 and 1/31/24 into the public record. (662 yes)

Superintendent Moody reviewed the minutes. There were no recommendations.

c. Educational Policy/Program Committee – 2/6/24

ON A MOTION BY Samantha Delorie, seconded by Sara Smith, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Educational Policy/Program Committee meeting of 2/6/24 into the public record. (662 yes)

Samantha Delorie, Committee Vice-Chair, reviewed the minutes and asked the Board to vote on the following recommendation:

ON A MOTION BY Samantha Delorie, seconded by Michelle Taylor, the Board voted to support the adoption of draft policy KBF-E2, Title I School Wide Parental Involvement Policy, as written. (662 yes)

6. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Moody requested the Board's approval to ratify the 2024-2027 Comprehensive Contract between MSAD 54 and the MSAD 54 Education Association for the period September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2027.

ON A MOTION BY Jeanne Conley, seconded by Theresa Howard, the Board voted to ratify the 2024-2027 Comprehensive Contract between MSAD 54 and the MSAD 54 Education Association for the period September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2027. (662 yes)

a. Vacancies, nominations, recommendations

Superintendent Moody reviewed vacancies and recommended the Board's approval of nominations.

ON A MOTION BY Samantha Delorie, seconded by Julian Payne, the Board voted to approve nominations page one. (662 yes)

d. Report on Assessments Payments to Date

Superintendent Moody shared that as of February 8, 2024, all six towns (Canaan, Cornville, Mercer, Norridgewock, Skowhegan and Smithfield) were current on their monthly assessments, with February due on the 20th.

e. Update on New School Construction Building Project

Superintendent Moody shared that due to time constraints for placing orders, the architects have requested a Building Committee meeting on February 13th to review color pallets for floors and window trim. The general color theme discussed is a different color scheme for each wing.

At the January 24 Building Committee meeting feedback on traffic in the area of the new school was shared. Principal Johnson worked with staff to address this and has made changes to dismissal of walkers at the front of school, which frees up parent pick up at the back of school. There has been positive feedback from parents following the changes that were put in place.

Principal Johnson and her staff will be engaging students to get their feedback in the coming weeks. Following student feedback the principal will reach out to parents for ideas/discussion of how to improve the playground experience for students over the next year + as the new school is being constructed.

d. Review/Update of Federal Projects/Federal Funds

Superintendent Moody shared that ARP was re-submitted and that once approved finance Director, Melannie Keister, will continue working on reimbursements of federal covid relief funds.

e. SRO Update

Superintendent Moody has met with Sheriff Lancaster and Chief Bucknam on the new SRO position. Chief Bucknam has agreed to continue to support the in-town schools with a SRO, continuing a positive partnership that has been in place for over 20 years. Sheriff Lancaster has recommended a retired officer and former SRO from Cape Cod who has been with the Somerset County Sheriff's for the past 14 years. The agreement is being reviewed and plan to move forward with a start date of February 26. The new SRO will focus on Canaan and Mill Stream Schools, while Officer Daigneault will continue his work in Skowhegan.

f. 2024-2025 School Calendar

Superintendent Moody reviewed the proposed 2024-2025 District Calendar and recommended the Board's approval, as presented:

ON A MOTION BY Julian Payne, seconded by Michelle Taylor, the Board voted to approve the 2024-2025 proposed District Calendar as submitted. (662 yes)

g. Other

Superintendent Moody shared that in addition to a variety of school-based articles the spring edition of the newsletter will highlight the 2024-2025 budget, the new school and PreK bussing for next year.

Superintendent Moody shared that the FY25 new state valuations and loss of poverty will have a significant impact on several towns. If the budget were to remain flat, with new state valuations of towns, one town's share went down over \$117,000, while another increased by nearly \$62,000, representing a swing of nearly \$180,000. As a result, this budget year shapes up to be a particularly challenging one. Additionally, with state Bonding for the school project now part of the budget (1st Bond represents 60%) the district budget will increase substantially. The Superintendent shared the importance of explaining that the increase caused by the new school will need to be carefully explained to towns/taxpayers as it will have little to direct impact on local taxes in the coming year – and likely less than the building of the Mill Stream School did (2008) as a result of the tremendous amount of local fundraising that has occurred.

The Superintendent shared that in addition to valuation shift, the primary driver of district increases will be from a declining poverty rate, negotiated salary increases, increases to insurance, electricity, and other fixed costs as well as a significant increase in both contracted services and supplies across the board. Finally, the District Draft Status Quo Budget will not include anticipated health insurance increases, which will be added to reflect actual costs once released in early April. The Superintendent anticipates recommending the use of a significant amount of fund balance to mitigate the impact to local property taxes. The draft budget will be presented at the March 7 meeting.

The Superintendent shared that District Facebook accounts now exist for all schools; principals have been updating information on school pages and have had positive feedback from parents.

Superintendent Moody recognized Maura Smith as Speech Coach of the Year.

7. Assistant Superintendent and Support Services Manager

Assistant Superintendent Hatch shared that the First Ten Community School Grant application has been submitted.

The March Workshop planning is well underway with a chose your own adventure theme. We are hoping that a recent literacy grant application filed with the state will provide funds to support literacy focused instruction strategy presenters.

Support Services Manager David Leavitt reported that the final state inspection on the Middle School was completed. The elevator is being installed at the high school with expected completion in March.

8. Old and Unfinished Business

There was no old and unfinished business.

9. Introduction of New Business

Michelle Taylor mentioned Biometric Standards attendance in other Districts and the concerns involved.

10. Adjournment

The Board adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Moody, Superintendent of Schools