

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – BOARD OF EDUCATION
REDFORD UNION SCHOOLS, DISTRICT NO. 1
March 13, 2023

A Regular meeting of the Redford Union Board of Education was held on March 13, 2023, at Redford Union High School, 17711 Kinloch, Redford Twp., MI 48240.

Regular Meeting
3/13/2023

Call to Order:

Call to Order

President Pridemore called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM.

Roll Call

Roll Call

Present: Bailey, Dean, Miller, Moores, Osowski and Pridemore

Absent: Gray

Pledge of Allegiance:

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

President Remarks:

President's Remarks

President Pridemore welcomed everyone and asked that everyone please place their cell phones on silent. She explained how the roll call was called at the last meeting and about voting. She encouraged the Board to vote their heart, conscience, and mind. She said that their vote should never be based on what her vote is or what Mr. Osowski's vote is, or what anybody at the table's vote is, because ultimately, they are responsible to the people who put them in these seats, and they have to lay their head down at night and be OK with the decision.

The only official recording of this board meeting is the one that is being made with the camera that is controlled by Ms. Crenshaw, Executive Director of Curriculum and Technology. Any other cameras set up in this room are being recorded by a board member against the wishes of this board. Having said that, they are not owned by the Redford Union School District. This board member is not protected by any potential lawsuits or litigations that would become a source from the ownership and or possible editing of said recordings. She said that to protect the Board and District. In the event that somebody wanted that recording and they were not able to provide it, they could be sued.

President Pridemore shared that she had the opportunity last week to attend the Detroit Regional Dollars for Scholars celebration luncheon and she was so

thankful that we are partnered with this wonderful program. She said these young people have so much opportunity at their feet. This program helps them in more ways than just getting scholarship money. They take them in as sophomores. They help them with everything from etiquette to how to fill out their Federal Student Aid (FSA), to taking them on those tours of campuses and getting the scholarship money. This is the brightest future. She cannot wait for the day that our seniors will be at that luncheon being celebrated alongside the other students. Dollars for Scholars have partnered with 15 schools and their goal is 25. They have raised something like \$3 million in scholarship funds and helped over 1000 kids go to college.

Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Member Osowski, seconded by Member Moores, to adopt the Agenda of March 13, 2023, Regular Board Meeting as presented.

Yes: 6 No: 0 Motion: Carried

Adoption of Agenda as presented

Call to the Audience for Public Participation Regarding Agenda Items:

None.

Call to the Audience: Public Participation Regarding Agenda Items

Presentations:

Therapy Dog Program Overview & Guidelines – Robyn Stern, Director of Student Services and Jessica Miller, Coordinator of SEL & Student Wellness and a trained therapy dog named George (Ms. Stern’s dog):

Ms. Stern said since COVID, there have been a lot of changes in schools and huge benefits for having therapy dogs in school. Some Benefits from working or visiting with a therapy dog include reduced distress, Improved physical, emotional wellbeing, lower blood pressure, decreased anxiety, improved self-esteem and normalization of the environment, increasing the likelihood of successful academic achievement by the student. Therapy dogs can help students and staff in the classroom.

Ms. Miller shared some research behind the benefits of a therapy dog and not just because therapy dogs are fantastic. Therapy dogs improve the culture and the general mood of the school for all staff and students. Therapy dogs provide many healing effects, and they make a connection If a student who is typically absent, knows that the dog is going to be there, the student is like more prone to going to school. Animals that have been incorporated into schools can help students to learn and discuss different issues, students can open up and kind of let their guard down. It helps the student feel like they are in a safe place. In a study performed by the American Kennel Club (AKC), dogs were found to have a

Presentations

Therapy Dog Program
Overview & Guidelines

strong immediate benefit for students, and they significantly increased happiness and energy levels and reduced stress right after session.

A presentation was shown, and research articles were provided to the Board as a reference.

Information was shared on the difference of opting to go with outside agencies and third parties rather than district owned dogs. On average, for the district to purchase their own dog and train their own dog, the cost could be up between 10,000 and \$12,000 and that does not include yearly housing and medical. But if the District goes with somebody else like George. He is already trained. It costs \$275 plus \$30 a year to renew his membership. Some districts pay for that, other districts have fundraisers to cover the cost. Another route would be through agencies that would send dogs in for visits at little cost to the District. This would also alleviate the District from responsibility and liability.

Ms. Stern had written a sample handbook up like a board policy that the Board could adopt. The policy would cover what happens if and when, rules for being around the dog, who can be around the dog, where is the dog in certain situations, and more.

A copy of the document will be sent to the Board members.

Ms. Stern shared some background information about George.

The District is planning to formalize the use of therapy dogs within the district. But first they needed to develop consistent guidelines so any entity that wants to bring in therapy dogs has to abide by the same guidelines. While there are tremendous benefits to a therapy dog program, it is very worthwhile to pursue. The District also needs to make sure that they are covered when they are having other entities bring therapy dogs on site. In Ms. Stern's previous district, she had experience in developing the therapy dog program guidelines. When Superintendent Witt found that out, he suggested that this be something that the District wanted to try and formalize to make a consistent process throughout the district.

There were questions and answers.

President Pridemore said she loved this idea, and she would encourage a policy to be brought to this board. Hopefully at the next board meeting. A board policy would require two readings. She said that they could move forward on this if it is the will of this board.

Superintendent Witt said it would be on the April agenda.

The Board thanked the presenters.

E Sports Program Overview – Chris Norton, Coordinator of Teaching and Learning, Mike Taylor, RUHS Principal, and Justin Rosin, RUHS Teacher

Superintendent Witt said he challenged Mr. Norton to put together a video presentation instead of a PowerPoint presentation, and he was up to the task so.

Mr. Norton's video was a preview of the E-Sports Program.

Superintendent Witt said that there will be equipment purchase that hopefully will be ready to bring the recommendation to the Board by the April board meeting. Tonight, they wanted to highlight this new student offering that will also not only be a student activity offering for students to participate in after school, but the same space will allow the District to expand their programming and offer for students during the school day as well.

Mr. Taylor, principal of Redford Union, said that this is something that our students have been asking for, for a long time we just have not had the facility or funds to do it. He said of course, there is more to it. As Justin Rosin, our computer science teacher, said, it is not just about playing video games, they are going to tie it into the curriculum, AP computer principles, and some programming classes as well to start running it up the STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.) He said it is a work in progress. They are going to put some things in place next year and then assess things at the end of next year and try to apply it for the following year. Mr. Taylor said it is going to be great for the students to get them engaged during the day and after school.

There were questions and answers.

Some of the games that the program will start with are League Rocket, League Overwatch 2, League of Legends, and Super Smash Brothers.

The E-Sport Program is an engagement program that the District is going to tie into some of the STEM areas. They will introduce AP Computer science. There is video game design currently one and two, they are going to tie that into the curriculum as well as coding. Getting the students engaged and getting them in the video game realm and getting them thinking down that line hopefully is going to increase the interest in our other classes as well and start maybe even designing games that we can play in that studio.

There were more questions and answers.

Superintendent Communication:

Staff Members of the Month (March 2023) – *Jasen Witt, Superintendent*

- Christopher Norton, Coordinator of Teaching and Learning, Keeler Administration

Superintendent
Communication:
Staff Members of the
Month (March 2023)

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- Lisa Hildebrandt, DHH, Teacher Consultant, Beck Center
- Carmen Wisniewski, Behavior Intervention Coordinator, MacGowan @ Keeler
- Denise Jones, Best Practices Coach, Beech Elementary School
- Dave Thompson, Math Teacher, Hilbert Middle School
- John Rodriguez, Counselor, Redford Union High School

Calendar of Events
3/12/2023 – 4/9/2023

Calendar of Events March 12th – April 9th – *Jasen Witt, Superintendent*

Superintendent Witt reported on the calendar events. The calendar will be posted on the District's Facebook page.

March 2023 Board
Brag Book

March 2023 Board Brag Book:

MacGowan Elementary School @ Keeler:

The 100th day of school is an exciting milestone for every elementary classroom. It signifies both the halfway point of the year and an important time for setting new goals and realigning a fresh outlook for the remainder of the year ahead.

We celebrated the 100th day of school at Keeler by dressing up like we were 100 years old, wearing a necklace with 100 items on it, or by wearing cute shirts celebrating the 100th day. We also all zoomed in for a school wide 100 exercises together. We engaged in a variety of engaging learning activities around the number 100. It was a fun day for staff and students alike.

Beech Elementary School:

After School Clubs have started at Beech! Students have the opportunity to participate in game club, chess club, cooking club, coding club yearbook/photography club, and Girls on the Run. We have partnered with the YMCA and are able to offer partial scholarships for the running club that helps to offset the cost. All of these clubs are offered through our Title Funding free of charge for students.

Beech Elementary School:

This past Month we honored Black History Month throughout the building. Students in our 3rd grade created a wax museum, 2nd, 4th, and 5th graders read books and wrote papers. All students learned about important figures in Black History during morning announcements each day of the month.

Hilbert Middle School:

This month Hilbert Middle School celebrated Black History Month daily through highlighting important African American figures and the impact they have had on our society. Students read these short biographies and facts each morning over the daily announcements.

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We also celebrated Black History through a guest speaker who is a Community and Social Responsibility intern for the Detroit Pistons and Motor City Cruise. Members of different fraternities and sororities came and spoke to the students about the legacy of joining these organizations and what that entails. The marching band from Chandler Park Academy came and performed for students to expose students to the Show style methods that are used with HBCU bands across the country.

Hilbert Middle School:

Our choir, under the direction of our exceptional instructor/director Schianti Jaramillo, earned an overall score of a 1 at this year's district level choir festival. The students not only performed well, but they represented Hilbert Middle School through their positivity and poise. They were invited to advance to the next level of competition. We are excited to see how they continue to perform.

Hilbert Middle School:

Our SEL staff member, Ms. Carlton, continues to put together weekly Lunch and Learn sessions for our students. These sessions are vital in teaching students how to regulate their emotions and make the right choices when faced with obstacles. This month's sessions include: Fostering Gratitude in your Life, Controlling your Emotions, Weighing My Choices/Positive and Negative Consequences and Mindfulness Activities/Chair Yoga Exercise

Redford Union High School:

On Sunday February 19th, Redford Union staff members participated in the annual Redford Township Chamber of Commerce bowling fundraiser - which raises scholarship funds to benefit seniors from high schools within Redford Township. The Chamber of Commerce did another great job hosting their annual event!

Redford Union High School:

On Wednesday, March 8th, Redford Union Schools staff members attended the 10th Annual Detroit Regional Dollars for Scholars Luncheon to celebrate the amazing achievements of high school scholars enrolled in its program. Redford Union High School is one of 15 member schools of DRDFS and currently started its inaugural cohort school year with our sophomores.

Redford Union High School:

On Tuesday, RUHS continued the tradition of honoring our past accomplished student/athletes.

The 2003 boys' varsity basketball team was honored at halftime and several former players and coaches returned home to take part in the celebration. The 2003 team finished the regular season with a 19-1 record and won both the regular season and tournament conference championships.

Redford Union High School:

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This past Friday, the Redford Union boys' basketball team won our school's first District championship in 51 years by defeating rival Livonia Clarenceville in the finals.

The last boys' team to win Districts was in 1972.

RU will now play in the Regional semifinals against Detroit Voyageur on Monday, March 10th at Flat Rock High School. Tipoff is at 7PM.

Veritas Alternative Education:

Veritas would like to give some special recognition to Mr. Marable. Mr. Marable joined the Veritas team this school year and he has been the MVP of the Veritas staff. Mr. Marable is critical to making sure all students have things that they need, feel supported, and holds students accountable all at the same time. His wealth of experience has made it seem like he has been part of our staff forever. In addition to his work at Veritas, Mr. Marable serves as the district photographer, freely giving students, parents, and administrators the photos that capture the essence of Redford Union. He is a Panther through and through!

Communication Received by the Board Secretary:

None.

Secretary of
the Board
Communication,
Lorna Dean

Chief Financial Officer's Communications:

Michael Beltinck, Chief Financial Officer reported on the 2022/2023 Mid-Year Budget Adjustment. The Budget is available on the District's website under Transparency Reporting.

There were questions and answers.

The Food Service fund is in excess of \$700,000. the District will be looking to purchase new equipment, upgrades, backup generators, things like that, that they can do to ensure that there are no outages, they do not lose food, and potentially even purchase a new box truck for deliveries.

Chief Financial Officer's
Communications,
Mike Beltinck

Executive Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations Communication:

Judy Nachman, Executive Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations Communication said that they did open negotiations with the RUEA on

Executive Director of
Human Resources and
Labor Relations
Communication,
Judy Nachman

February 27, 2023. She is optimistic, and she thinks they are great teams on both sides.

Ms. Nachman said that they will go into negotiations with the office staff in April and they will be using the Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB) again for that group and then they will have a wage reopener which will probably take place in April through IBB with the educational assistances.

Executive Director of Curriculum & Technology Communications:

Executive Director of
Curriculum &
Technology,
Kim Crenshaw

NWEA Mid-year Result:

Kim Crenshaw, Executive Director of Curriculum & Technology shared a brief explanation of the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) map measurement and the reasons for administering the test to our students for the new Board member. The test is a requirement by the State of Michigan and is supposed to be administered at least twice a year. The District gives it three times. The data does get pulled to different agencies around the state, but the data is mostly for each District to look at. The administration pulls and data teachers review it. It gives a quick snapshot of the things they need to do, to work on, if the student hit specific targets and more. It allows them to dive in a little deeper. She went on to explain how the test works. Mrs. Crenshaw reported on the NWEA test results.

6th Grade Placement Advisory Committee Update:

Mrs. Crenshaw said that they had two meetings with the school's 6th Grade Placement Advisory Committee. At the first meeting they talked about the benefits of the neighborhood school, what the effects of the pandemic which was obviously significant. They talked about some handouts that they received from the research company, and the concerns from the group regarding what this might look like. They talked about the bond a little bit. The Board was provided copies of the handouts that she mentioned. There were two different handouts. She said that the handouts basically said that the benefits of a 6th grader being in an elementary school far outweigh that of being in middle school academically and emotionally. She shared some of the concerns the group had such as: 1) The physical size of the students in the elementary school with our kindergarten and first graders. 2) They wanted to know how they were going to put kids on buses together. 3) How would they handle the buses that operate with some significant behaviors? 4) Who would teachers work together in the grade level teams? 5) What would the impact of having the 6th grade or the 5th grade might be? Ms. Crenshaw did go back and met with Hanover Research and there really was not a ton of research to say, yes, those kindergarteners are really going to be affected by those sixth graders because there is not much research out there on that topic. At the second meeting they discussed the pros and cons of putting the 6th graders back to our elementary school. She said that they did see more

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leadership opportunities for our 6th graders, more peer-to-peer opportunities, and a little bit more time to mature before they make that step into the high school secondary campus. The students would have more time to focus on academics because it is more structured and fewer groups of students. Mrs. Crenshaw continued with the summary of their meeting discussion. She also shared data on the number of students that started in the District for kindergarten through high school, and a breakdown of other grade levels where students started in the district.

There were questions and answers.

Consent Agenda:

It was Moved by Member Osowski, Seconded by Member Dean, to approve the consent agenda items as presented below:

Consent Agenda
Approved as presented

Waived the reading and approved February 13, 2023, Organizational Minutes of the Redford Union Board of Education, as presented.

Regular Minutes of
February 13, 2023, as
presented

Approved check register list from February 1-28, 2023, in the amount of \$724,233.46.

Check Register List
February 1-28, 2023

Approve the electronic transfers for February 2023, in the amount of 2,476,158.11.

Electronic Transfers for
February 2023 as
presented

Human Resources Recommendations:

Human Resources
Recommendations

Approved Approve NEW HIRES: Non-Certified as listed below:

- Regina Durham/Behavioral Specialist/Stuckey/Effective 4/03/2023

Regina Durham

Approved LEAVE REQUEST as listed below:

- Pam Shuffler/Food Service Manager/Beech/Effective 3/23/2023
- Alyssa Jabarra/Speech Pathologist/Beech/Effective 3/07/2023

Pam Shuffler
Alyssa Jabarra

Yes: 6 No: 0 Motion: Carried

Action Items:

Action Items

2022/2023 Mid-Year Budget Adjustment:

2022/2023 Mid-Year
Budget Adjustment

It was Moved by Member Moores, Seconded by Member Osowski, that the Board of Education, at the recommendation of Michael Beltinck, Chief Financial Officer, approve the 2022/2023 Mid-Year Budget Adjustment as presented.

Roll Call:

J. Bailey: Yes, L. Dean: Yes, R. Gray: ABS, L. Miller: Yes, T. Moores: Yes,
J. Osowski: Yes, E. Pridemore: Yes Yes: 6 No: 0 Motion: Motion Carried
Hilbert Elementary Accessible Playground Space (Bond Project):

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Hilbert Elementary
Accessible Playground
Space (Bond Project)

It was Moved by Member Moores, Seconded by Member Bailey, that the Board of Education, at the recommendation of Jasen Witt, Superintendent and Michael Beltinck, Chief Financial Officer, approve Game Time c/o Sinclair Recreation for the equipment & material purchase and installation of the Hilbert Elementary Accessible Playground Space in the amount of \$180,324.78 from the 2021 Capital Bond Project funds.

The Board had discussion and concerns were shared. There were questions and answers.

Roll Call:

J. Bailey: Yes, L. Dean: Yes, R. Gray: ABS, L. Miller: Yes, T. Moores: Yes,
J. Osowski: Yes, E. Pridemore: Yes Yes: 6 No: 0 Motion: Motion Carried

Hilbert Elementary Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)/Pre-K Playground
Space (Owner's Project)

Hilbert Elementary Great
Start Readiness Program
(GSRP)/Pre-K Playground
Space (Owner's Project)

It was Moved by Member Osowski, Seconded by Member Bailey, that the Board of Education, at the recommendation of Jasen Witt, Superintendent and Michael Beltinck, Chief Financial Officer, approve Game Time c/o Sinclair Recreation for the equipment & material purchase and installation of the Hilbert Elementary GSRP/Pre-K Playground Space in the amount of \$80,809.88.

This will not be done with Bond money.

The Board had discussion and concerns were shared. There were questions and answers.

Roll Call:

J. Bailey: Yes, L. Dean: Yes, R. Gray: ABS, L. Miller: Yes, T. Moores: Yes,
J. Osowski: Yes, E. Pridemore: Yes Yes: 6 No: 0 Motion: Motion Carried

Placement of 6th Grade into Beech Elementary and Hilbert Elementary:

Placement of 6th Grade
into Beech Elementary
and Hilbert Elementary

It was Moved by Member Osowski, Seconded by Member Bailey, that the Board of Education, at the recommendation of Jasen Witt, Superintendent and Kim Crenshaw, Executive Director of Curriculum and Technology support the placement of 6th Grade students into the District's two neighborhood Elementary Schools – Beech Elementary and Hilbert Elementary beginning with the start of the 2023/2024 school year.

Roll Call:

J. Bailey: Yes, L. Dean: Yes, R. Gray: ABS, L. Miller: Yes, T. Moores: Yes,
J. Osowski: Yes, E. Pridemore: Yes Yes: 6 No: 0 Motion: Motion Carried

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda:

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None.

Items Removed from the
Consent Agenda

Call to the Audience: Public Participation Regarding Non-Agenda Items:

Ms. LaKeya Martin, representing herself. Topic of discussion: Study Sessions / 9th grade placement.

Call to the Audience:
Public Participation
Regarding Non-Agenda
Items

Ms. Anistia Thomas, representing Baber Preparatory Academy Board of Directors. Ms. Thomas left the meeting before the Board reached the Public Communication portion of the meeting. However, she did complete the Public Communication form and requested that someone contact her regarding cultivating a professional network relationship.

Superintendent's Remark:

None.

Superintendent's Remark

Board of Education Communication/Discussion:

Mr. Bailey asked the Board and staff if they would like to sign two cards. 1) An appreciation card for the Redford Police who caught the person responsible for a hit and run of a six-year-old last summer. The second card was for one of our students that is having health issues and a fundraiser was posted on Facebook.

Board of Education
Communication/
Discussion

Trustee Bailey had questions about the afterschool programs at Beech, in particular with the YMCA. Mrs. Melissa Nickel, Principal of Beech, was not present at the meeting to answer his questions. However, Superintendent Witt and Mrs. Kathy Robbins, Principal of Keeler (MacGowan) responded to his questions.

Regarding the Budget, Mr. Bailey requested information on the smaller numbers that were sent to the State.

Per Mr. Beltinck, CFO, he does not send small numbers to the State, but he would provide those numbers to the Board.

Mr. Bailey spoke about the possibility of having lead testing done. He said that the State indicated that they would be willing to pick up the bill, if the Board/District would be interested in having it done.

President Pridemore shared information about our marching band. The program is growing, and they need to purchase another instrument. She asked that we please reach out to them through the link on Facebook for their Go Fund Me to help with the purchase of a marching baritone at the cost of \$19164. There is also a Popcorn Fundraiser for Vocal, music and band.

Mrs. Nachman said that we are the only district that provides the instruments for our students. The District started about four years ago. That is something that we should be proud of because performing arts departments are typically self-funded.

Future Meeting Dates:

Future Meeting
Dates

Monday, March 13, 2023 – Board Workshop – Immediately Following this Regular Meeting, Redford Union High School (Library), 17711 Kinloch, Redford Twp., MI 48240

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 – Regular Meeting – 5:00 PM (Please note this meeting was rescheduled for Tuesday due to the district will be closed on Easter Monday.) Redford Union High School (Library), 17711 Kinloch, Redford Twp., MI 48240

Adjournment:

It was moved by Member Osowski , seconded by Member Dean, to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 PM.

Adjournment

Yes: 6 No: 0 Motion: Carried

Respectfully Submitted

Lorna Dean
Secretary
Redford Union Schools
Board of Education