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**CXXX  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
OF  
THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS**

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**OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**Regular Business Meeting  
St. Louis, MO  
August 28, 2018**

**MINUTES**

The Board of Education of the City of St. Louis met in Open Session pursuant to Board Bylaw B9350 on the date noted above at Metro Academic and Classical High School, located at 4015 McPherson Ave, St. Louis, MO 63108.

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Charli Cooksey, Bill Haas, Donna Jones, Susan Jones, Dorothy Rohde Collins, Natalie Vowell, Katherine Wessling (arrived at 6:32 PM)

ABSENT: None

A quorum was present.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:31 p.m.

**4a. APPEARANCES - PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Crista Johnson shared the following concern:

- The Special Administrative Board has not taken up any workers' compensation cases in months.
- Injured workers are desperate for their settlements, putting them in a hardship.

Ms. Sally Topping, President of AFT Local 420, shared the following comment:

- There is an arbitration hearing tomorrow, August 29, 2018, at 9 AM regarding the class action for certified staff. No date has been set yet for an arbitration hearing for non-certified staff. The hearing will not be a public hearing.

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- The class action involves over 1000 employees that have the same education, years of experience, certification, and years employed, but have as much as a \$17,000 difference in salary.
- The class action arbitration could cost the district between 10M and 15M dollars.
- This has been going on for years, and members of the district have said that they have known this was a problem.

Mr. Bill Haas and Ms. Sally Topping engaged in a discussion on the comment:

- Ms. Sally Topping stated that this has been going on for 16 years.
- Ms. Sally Topping explained that, in August, the union was asked if they would dismiss arbitration. The following day, the union received a bill from Saint Louis Public Schools for \$145,000, and was told that the bill would need to be paid within three business days or the three union officers would be without benefits unless they returned to the classroom. The officers returned to the classroom, and then secured a loan in order to be out of the classroom.
- Mr. Bill Haas asked how this started 16 years ago. Ms. Sally Topping responded that some of the people that have received higher salaries are related to administrators, and that those coming in without connections were given lower salaries.
- Mr. Bill Haas asked if there had been attempts to settle the class action. Ms. Sally Topping stated that the district had offered to settle and explain all salary disparities if the union dismissed the arbitration.
- Ms. Sally Topping indicated that the union wants a fair, transparent, and clear salary schedule.
- Ms. Sally Topping indicated that the class action can only go back to the last school year, when she became president of the union.

### **4b. APPEARANCES – PRESENTATION BY TAMMY DUNN, OPERATION PROM NITE**

Ms. Jeanita Williams, speaking for Executive Director Tammy Dunn, presented on Operation Prom Nite:

- Operation Prom Nite, a non-profit organization, provides mostly new prom attire, including tuxedos, dresses, shoes and accessories, to young men and women for free.
- Ms. Williams requested assistance in getting information about Operation Prom Nite out to students.
- President Dorothy Rohde Collins requested that materials be shared electronically with the Elected Board.

### **5. APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF THE AUGUST 28, 2018 REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA**

On a motion by Mr. Bill Haas and seconded by Vice President Charli Cooksey, the Board voted to approve and adopt the August 28, 2018 Meeting Agenda, as amended to remove item 7a, on the following roll call vote:

AYE: Charli Cooksey, Bill Haas, Donna Jones, Susan Jones, Dorothy Rohde Collins, Natalie Vowell, Katherine Wessling

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS**

On a motion by Secretary Natalie Vowell and seconded by Ms. Susan Jones, the Board voted to accept the June 26, 2018 meeting minutes, as amended to correct the misspelling of “Danfourth” to “Danforth”, on the following roll call vote:

AYE: Charli Cooksey, Susan Jones, Dorothy Rohde Collins, Natalie Vowell

ABSTAIN: Bill Haas, Donna Jones, Katherine Wessling

On a motion by Vice President Charli Cooksey and seconded by Ms. Susan Jones, the Board voted to accept the July 10, 2018 meeting minutes on the following roll call vote:

AYE: Charli Cooksey, Donna Jones, Susan Jones, Dorothy Rohde Collins, Natalie Vowell

ABSTAIN: Bill Haas, Katherine Wessling

On a motion by Ms. Katherine Wessling and seconded by Vice President Charli Cooksey, the Board voted to accept the July 24, 2018 meeting minutes, as amended to strike the line “Ms. Susan Jones commented that how well the Board works together cannot be pre-gauged before responsibility has been given to the Elected Board,” on the following roll call vote:

AYE: Charli Cooksey, Donna Jones, Susan Jones, Dorothy Rohde Collins, Katherine Wessling

ABSTAIN: Bill Haas, Natalie Vowell

**7B. NEW BUSINESS: LETTER TO SLPS COMMUNITY**

A discussion on a possible letter from the Elected Board to the Saint Louis Public Schools community took place:

- Katherine Wessling commented that the Board might come up with a short communication to send to the community to address concerns, to make it clear that the Board does not intend to interrupt anything, and that the Board wants the transition (from an appointed Board to an Elected Board) to go smoothly. Concerns included a hesitation to come work for the district. Ms. Katherine Wessling suggested a statement that the Elected Board’s goal is good governance, that the superintendent will remain the superintendent, and that employees will still work for the superintendent.
- Mr. Bill Haas commented that the Board shouldn’t commit to anything other than professionalism and a seamless transition.
- Ms. Susan Jones commented on the importance of providing assurance that the Elected Board is here for the right reasons.
- Vice President Charli Cooksey commented on the current Elected Board’s commitment to stability and a seamless transition, but indicated that the Elected Board is not in a

position to make future commitments given upcoming Board elections. Vice President Charli Cooksey stated that the Board could provide an update on the transition so far, and could incorporate listening sessions for district administrators and school personnel into the Elected Board's transition strategy.

- Secretary Natalie Vowell stated that the Elected Board could share what has been done so far in training sessions.
- Ms. Donna Jones shared her agreement with communicating with district employees and staff the Elected Board's intent.
- President Dorothy Rohde Collins shared that the Elected Board has an approved Code of Ethics that it could share, which includes sections on commitment and professionalism.
- Mr. Bill Haas indicated the Elected Board shouldn't write a letter right now, and that the language discussion will take a while.
- President Dorothy Rohde Collins recommended that this agenda item be taken to a work session, with a draft of the letter prepared ahead of time, and that all Board members review the Code of Ethics to see if pieces would be relevant.

### **8a. NEW BUSINESS: TRANSITION/ TRAINING**

Ms. Donna Jones shared her reflections on the August MSBA/ NSBA training session:

- Overall, the training was very good.
- The training lacked in access to staff members in Saint Louis Public Schools (including staff to address finance, AYP, the Consortium, or lobbying).
- The process has been disrespectful; no other board has been asked to do training, and no definitive transition dates have been provided. No video was taken until Ms. Donna Jones requested it.
- If the Elected Board had been given access to the same information that the Special Administrative Board received in the past, the training, and the associated cost of \$52,000, wouldn't be necessary.

Secretary Natalie Vowell shared her reflections on the August MSBA/ NSBA training session:

- The training provided an opportunity for a positive interaction with Dr. Adams.
- The training helped identify what the Board needs to learn to govern.
- It would have been beneficial to have all Board members present.
- The training was lacking in specifics related to Saint Louis City.

Vice President Charli Cooksey shared her reflections on the August MSBA/ NSBA training session:

- The training had amazing facilitators and content.
- The training was a great opportunity to have meaningful discussion in strategic ways.
- The training had the right sequence of topics for an introductory session.
- The training could have been improved with more time with Dr. Adams, to lean into the process of working together in a productive way.

Ms. Susan Jones shared her reflections on the August MSBA/ NSBA training session:

- The training was time well spent and was engaging.
- The facilitators worked to make it specific to Saint Louis

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President Dorothy Rohde Collins shared her reflections on the August MSBA/ NSBA training session:

- The training session was very positive.
- The Missouri School Board Association, DESE State Board member Dr. Vic Lenz, SAB member Mr. Rick Sullivan, and Dr. Adams all gave glowing feedback.
- President Dorothy Rohde Collins will pass along suggestions of things that were lacking.

President Dorothy Rohde Collins commented on the following:

- Provided are typed notes from the August MSBA/ NSBA training.
- A reading assignment has been sent out as homework in advance of the September MSBA/ NSBA training.
- The September training will cover Educational Equity, which is Module 3.
- SAB member Mr. Rick Sullivan will be present on Saturday, and will hold a closed executive session to cover items related to personnel or legal matters, including the superintendent's evaluation and the Consortium Partnership.

Board members shared additional information regarding presence at and individual requests for the September MSBA/ NSBA training

- Mr. Bill Haas indicated that he will be in attendance at the September MSBA/ NSBA training.
- Ms. Natalie Vowell indicated that she may need to attend via teleconference.
- Ms. Katherine Wessling indicated that her presence is under consideration.
- Ms. Susan Jones requested childcare for the meetings.
- Mr. Bill Haas requested a vegetarian meal option.
- Vice President Charli Cooksey requested a gluten-free meal option.

Mr. Bill Haas commented on the following:

- Reading proficiency is an essential part of the equity conversation.
- Mr. Bill Haas requested to participate in the planning committee for Transformation Plan 3.0 Pillar 4: All students learn to read and succeed.

President Dorothy Rohde Collins commented on the following:

- MSBA/ NSBA will provide hard copies of the materials from the August training for board members who were not present.
- The second day was recorded, and all future sessions will be recorded.

President Dorothy Rohde Collins commented on the following:

- State Board of Education member Dr. Vic Lenz presented a positive update on the working group for the transition process at the state board meeting.
- The report included information regarding modules, goals for each module, deliverables and expectations, and mock open and closed sessions with the superintendent.
- Following completion of the modules, there will likely be an opportunity to hold Elected Board meetings one week prior to SAB meetings to review the same content and to address pertinent staff. Subsequently, there will likely be joint open and closed meetings between the Elected Board and the Special Administrative Board, where the Elected Board will not be able to vote but will be able to express questions and concerns.

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- The next MSBA/ NSBA training session will cover Module 3. MSBA indicated that there was too much content to complete the next two modules in one weekend.

Ms. Donna Jones commented on the following:

- Can we have the lobbyist for SLPS present at the next training session?

President Dorothy Rohde Collins commented on the following:

- There may not be enough time, given the addition of a closed session with Mr. Sullivan.
- MSBA can definitely work the desire to speak with the lobbyist into a training session.

### **8b. NEW BUSINESS: ONBOARDING PLANS POST- NOVEMBER 2018 ELECTION**

A discussion related to an onboarding process for new Board members took place:

- President Dorothy Rohde Collins commented that, given the upcoming elections in November and April, the Elected Board should have a robust onboarding process for new members.
- Ms. Katherine Wessling expressed interest in participating.
- Vice President Charli Cooksey and Secretary Natalie Vowell tentatively planned to meet tomorrow (August 29, 2018).
- Drafts produced by the committee will be included in the board packet for the September 11<sup>th</sup> Elected Board meeting.
- Mr. Bill Haas commented that new Board Members will also have videos from eight days of the MSBA/ NSBA trainings to watch in the future.

### **9. BOARD MEMBER AND BOARD PRESIDENT REPORTS**

Mr. Bill Haas, Ms. Susan Jones, and Ms. Katherine Wessling indicated that they did not have any Board Member Reports.

Vice President Charli Cooksey presented the following Board Member Report:

- At the last SAB meeting, Dr. Adams presented a Back to School Update, a Reading Intervention Plan, an update on Transformation Plan 3.0, and a Financial Update. Additionally, while the Consent Agenda was considered, SAB member Mr. Richard Gaines greatly emphasized the importance of attire and professionalism within the chess club partnership.
- Questions at the meeting on the Reading Intervention Plan included ones on what benchmark data was collected this year and in previous years, what progress has been made compared to last school year, and which evidence based practices are being used for this school year. Dr. Adams stated that he would give a much more detailed report on this at an upcoming meeting of the Special Administrative Board. Dr. Paula Knight did a lot of the presentation for Reading.

Secretary Natalie Vowell presented the following Board Member Report:

- June and July tax auctions have happened, which occurs when someone gets three years behind on property taxes.
- The official Sheriff's Report of Sale typically comes out in 6-12 weeks. The following are preliminary numbers.

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- In June, \$299,628 was cumulatively owed on all properties in the Land Tax Suit. The total amount of bids cumulatively placed on all properties was \$668,635. In July \$329,807 was owed. In July, bids totaled \$515,452.
- This delinquent tax revenue is intended for the schools.
- At least six students enrolled in SLPS were living in homes that were auctioned in June and July.
- In August, approximately \$213,000 was owed, mostly in the Walnut Park and Wells/ Goodfellow neighborhoods. Approximately \$612,000 was raised due to the presence of some commercial properties. Three additional SLPS students were affected, and at least four additional SLPS students may be displaced by this process.

Secretary Natalie Vowell continued her presentation of the following Board Member Report:

- There is a work flow document that lays out when documents and meeting minutes will be distributed.
- The Elected Board will review this work flow document in an upcoming work session, but comments ahead of time are more than welcome.

Ms. Donna Jones presented the following Board Member Report:

- The Back to School Fair was well done and well attended, but could have used a sign-up table for SLPS and better signage.
- There are at least four SLPS buildings that have sustained damaged: the Walnut Park school, Cleveland High School, a school on Goodfellow next to Martin Luther King, and the fence at Beaumont.
- President Dorothy Rohde Collins commented that she can forward a specific list of concerns to Dr. Adams.

President Dorothy Rohde Collins presented the following Board President Report:

- President Dorothy Rohde Collins met with Special Administrative Board member Mr. Rick Sullivan to share the Elected Board hopes for transition and to ask for more interactions between the Elected Board and the SAB.
- Mr. Rick Sullivan stated that he would be present at the MSBA/ NSBA training on Saturday, September 15, along with Dr. Adams.
- President Dorothy Rohde Collins met with Ms. Jane Donahue from the Saint Louis Public Schools Foundation. Ms. Jane Donahue shared the Foundations priorities going forward, provided an update on Transformation Plan 3.0, and expressed interest in working with the Elected Board.
- Ms. Donna Jones, Ms. Katherine Wessling, and President Dorothy Rohde Collins indicated that they could attend the Special Administrative Board meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **10. INFORMATION REQUESTS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Vice President Charli Cooksey presented the following information request:

- Is there a formal, streamlined process for when philanthropic dollars or in-kind contributions are given to the district? Do the funds go to the school, to the teacher, or to the foundation?

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- After the transition of governance occurs, it will be important to meet with funders to understand how the relationship has been going and to determine ways to improve it.

Ms. Donna Jones presented the following information request:

- Is it possible to get a copy of the RubinBrown audit report, or whatever is available to the public right now?
- Secretary Natalie Vowell indicated that she will ask.
- Ms. Donna Jones also requested additional information on the giveaway that Dr. Adams spoke about at a previous Elected Board meeting at Stix Elementary School.

Secretary Natalie Vowell presented the following information request:

- It was reported that 3,000 students were absent on the first day of school, but the Back to School update has different numbers.
- Are we allowed to share Transformation Plan 3.0?
- How many schools have washers and dryers? What data or metrics are available to show if they are having measurable results, including on attendance or on test scores?
- Do we have updated textbooks in all schools? Which schools have the oldest editions of textbooks being used?
- President Dorothy Rohde Collins requested more details for this request.

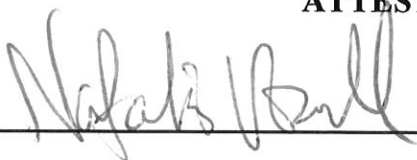
### **11. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, upon a motion by Mr. Bill Haas and seconded by Ms. Donna Jones, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m. on the following roll call vote:

AYE: Charli Cooksey, Bill Haas, Donna Jones, Susan Jones, Dorothy Rohde Collins, Natalie Vowell, Katherine Wessling

The motion carried.

**ATTESTED BY:**



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**NATALIE VOWELL**