

**RSU 54/MSAD 54**

**Meeting of Board of Directors  
April 11, 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 April 11, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at Skowhegan Area Middle School Cafeteria.

**ATTENDANCE BOARD MEMBERS (662 present, 337 absent):**

Sarah Bunker (Mercer-16) PRESENT	Mark Bedard* (Skow-53) ABSENT
Jeannie Conley (Skow-53) PRESENT	Janet Burrill* (Canaan-43) ABSENT
Valerie Coulombe (Norr-46) PRESENT	Samantha Delorie* (Norr-46) ABSENT
Karyn Curran (Skow-53) PRESENT	Jean Franklin* (Canaan-43) ABSENT
Annemarie Dubois* (Skow-53)-ABSENT	Desiree Libby* (Norr-46) ABSENT
Lauren Fox (Mercer-16) PRESENT	Lynda Quinn* (Skow-53) ABSENT
Daniel Frey (Smith-27) PRESENT	Timothy Williams* (Skow-53) ABSENT
Theresa Howard (Corn-30) PRESENT	
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	
Sara Smith (Skow-53) PRESENT	
Michelle Taylor (Smith-27) PRESENT	

Carly McCabe (Student Rep) PRESENT

1. Call to Order

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

a. Flag Salute followed.

2. Good News and Recognitions

Dawn Fickett, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Director, introduced “Chef Brenda” and students in the After School Cooking Club, who shared information on the program, including baking desserts for a local community dinner, and nearly 15 pounds of dog treats to the animal shelter. Chef Brenda is proud of the students’ willingness to try new foods, learn new culinary skills, offer support to each other and building a solid foundation in many areas

necessary to become successful adults. Students shared recipes and treated the board to various snacks and sweets.

3. Approval of the Minutes – 3/21/24

**ON A MOTION BY Sarah Bunker, seconded by Theresa Howard, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors’ meeting of 3/21/24 into the public record. (662 yes)**

4. Communications

a. Letters

Superintendent Moody acknowledged and accepted a letter of resignation from Kristin Smith, School Psychological Services Provider, effective June 2024.

b. School Personnel

There were no school personnel who wished to speak.

c. Visitors

Skowhegan resident Kris Laney voiced his concerns and asked the Board to look into the District’s expenditures for day-to-day operations expenses of maintenance (electrical, plumbing, etc), and bidding opportunities for contractors as he feels that small local contractors are not given the same opportunity to take on small jobs the district has (that don’t require going out to bid by policy).

5. Committee Reports

The Vice-Chair entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the committee meetings below, as written.

**ON A MOTION BY Julian Payne, seconded by Theresa Howard, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the committee meetings, as written. (662 yes)**

a. Support Services Committee – 3/7/24

**ON A MOTION BY Daniel Frey, seconded by Sara Smith, the Board voted to approve the establishment of the Enid F. Carrier Memorial Scholarship. (662 yes)**

b. Personnel Committee – 3/21/24 and 4/1/24

3/21/24 minutes – There were no recommendations.

4/1/24 minutes – The following recommendation was made:

**ON A MOTION BY Theresa Howard, seconded by Sarah Bunker, the Board voted to approve the nomination of Myla Kreider as Principal of the new Margaret Chase Smith Community School in accordance with the contractual terms outlined by the Superintendent, with a two-year contract. (662 yes)**

c. Educational Policy/Program Committee – 3/12/24, 3/19/24 and 4/9/24

There were no recommendations.

6. Superintendent’s Report

a. Vacancies, nominations, recommendations

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

**ON A MOTION BY Michelle Taylor, seconded by Theresa Howard, the Board voted to approve nominations page one. (662 yes)**

b. Report on Assessments Payments to Date

Superintendent Moody shared that as of April 11, 2024, all six towns (Canaan, Cornville, Mercer, Norridgewock, Skowhegan and Smithfield) were current on their monthly assessment. All towns continue to do well paying monthly assessments, which are due on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

c. Update on New School Construction Building Project and Baseball Field

Superintendent Moody shared that following discussions with Skowhegan Selectboard Chair Todd Smith, Chief Bucknam, and Rec Dept Director Denise LeBlanc, it is confirmed that the town is moving forward with a baseball field project and that it is a top priority for the town. According to town officials, timelines are in place for the bidding process, and will be reviewed at the April 23<sup>rd</sup> Selectboard meeting.

The Capping Ceremony for installation of the final beam at the new Margaret Chase Smith Community School is scheduled for 10:00 am on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

The Support Services Manager, David Leavitt, provided an update on the new school construction project, which is going well with just one foundation wall to go in. Classrooms are laid out and sheetrock is going up.

Superintendent Moody shared that following feedback from classrooms and parents, and the Parent Advisory Committee, principal Johnson has put an action plan in place for the current playground at MCSS.

d. Review/Update of Federal Projects/Federal Funds

Superintendent Moody reported that spending is winding down on ARP funds over the next 6 months and that the Finance Director continues to work on reimbursements for federal funds.

e. Review and Potential Approval of FY25 Proposed Budget

The Superintendent reviewed the FY25 proposed Board budget, which has a 3.950% local increase to taxpayers.

Each warrant article was reviewed as well as revenues.

Superintendent Moody recommended the Board's approval of the FY25 proposed Board budget, as presented.

**ON A MOTION BY Theresa Howard, seconded by Valerie Coulombe, the Board voted to approve the FY25 proposed budget, as presented. (622 yes)**

The Board will meet on April 25<sup>th</sup> to review and sign warrants.

Superintendent Moody shared that he will be speaking at upcoming town Selectboard meetings, prior the May 22<sup>nd</sup> District Budget Meeting, to share information on the proposed budget. A schedule of meetings will be shared with the Board.

f. Other

1. SCTC Spring Outdoor Leadership Trips

Superintendent Moody reviewed and recommended the Board's approval of two field trip requests from SCTC's Outdoor Leadership Program. From May 2<sup>nd</sup> – May 5<sup>th</sup> students will be attending a free training through Tourism for ME at Adventure Bound in the Forks, which will provide students with opportunities for employment in the outdoors. From May 11<sup>th</sup> – May 14<sup>th</sup>, the Senior Final trip is scheduled for a multiday adventure exploring the upper Kennebec Valley camping at Indian Pond Campground.

2. SAHS Drama Team Trip to New England Drama Festival

SAHS Principal Jason Bellerose provided information to the Board on the upcoming New England Drama Festival, which is scheduled for April 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> in Attleboro, MA. Students will be attending various workshop sessions and will be performing *The 146 Point Flame* on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Superintendent Moody recommended the Board's approval.

**ON A MOTION BY Michael Lambke, seconded by Karyn Curran, the Board voted to approve above mentioned field trips. (622 yes)**

Superintendent Moody shared that the next Building Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 8<sup>th</sup>. The Committee will be starting the process of selecting furniture for the new building and Percent for Art.

Superintendent Moody updated the Board on LD-974, an Act to Establish Minimum Pay for Educational Technicians and Other Support Staff, which passed in the house and senate, and will now go before the Appropriations Committee. If approved, LD-974 would raise Ed Tech salaries over the State Minimum Wage by 150% and other staff by 125%.

In regard to LD-40, An Act to Amend the Cannabis Law, Superintendent Moody shared his opposition to the bill. He shared that if passed this law would potentially weaken protections in place for students including removing the requirement that youth have a government-issued ID to enter a cannabis shop and have access to free cannabis giveaways. Cannabis distributors would have expanded abilities to market cannabis to kids as has been done in other industries. Superintendent Moody shared that he believes there is significant medical evidence that marijuana is a gateway drug which has the potential to cause significant harm in minors whose brains and bodies are not yet fully developed.

Superintendent Moody informed the Board that, through working with administrators, the board may have students brought before it for possible expulsion. He shared that although it is rare, the district is working very hard to ensure that our schools are safe for all students and that based on several recent meetings it would not be out of the question for an expulsion hearing to be brought forward at some point in the future.

7. Assistant Superintendent and Support Services Manager

Assistant Superintendent Hatch was not present.

Support Services Manager David Leavitt reported that the support services team is ready for spring. The boiler at Marti Stevens Learning Center died this past week and is scheduled to be replaced during school break next week.

8. Old and Unfinished Business

There was no old and unfinished business shared.

9. Introduction of New Business

There was no introduction of new business.

10. Adjournment

The Board adjourned at 8:33 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Moody, Superintendent of Schools