Van Buren Board of Education
Minutes of the Board of Education
Regular Meeting

June 9, 2025

Secretary Darlene Loyer Gerick called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Esports Team Recognition - Mark Darket and Adam Howard, both coaches for the BHS Esports team were present. They were both very proud of another successful season. With them was Jaedyn Jones who received both All-State and Player of the Year in NBA 2K awards. Congratulations to Jaedyn and his coaches.

Spring Sports Recognition - The boys track and field team are the 2025 Division 1 Track and Field State Champions. Individually, Will Jaiden Smith is the State Champion in the 300m hurdles and the 110 hurdles. The 4x100 relay team of Ray-mond Smith, Will Jaiden Smith, Peyton Trammer, and Schmar Gamble were also State Champions along with the 4x200 relay team of Tim Pinard, JeVon Martin, Schmar Gamble, and Peyton Trammer. Also, Coach Candice Price became the first female coach of a Boys Division 1 Track & Field team in MHSAA history to win a State Championship.

Class of 2025 Recognition - Only two of the Top Ten for the Class of 2025 were able to make the board meeting this evening. They were Ivana Goff and Ella Garland. Ms. Crockett introduced them and read their accomplishments. Congratulations to Ivana and Ella.

VBPS Retirement Celebration - The Retirees that were celebrated this evening were Jackie Floro and Sue Kapcia from Owen Intermediate School; Becky Tennis from Savage Elementary School; Sam Villa and Jill Korody from McBride Middle School; Sylvia Trevorrow from Belleville High School; Norm Lampinen from Plant Operations; Vanessa Lamar from Transportation; Becky Ross from Early Childhood Center and Fred Abel from Tyler Elementary School. Congratulations to all of these employees on well deserved retirements.

Board members present: Darlene Loyer Gerick, Wade Fields, Calvin Hawkins and David Shall. Dionne Falconer, Vic DeLibera, and Amy Pearce were absent. Also in attendance were: Superintendent Peter Kudlak, Julien Frazier, Director of Student Services, James Williams, Director of Plant Operations and John Leroy, Director of Human Resources. Priya Nayak, Director of Finance and Jeff Moore, Director of Instruction were absent.

Motion by David Shall, support by Calvin Hawkins that the Board approves the agenda as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Public Comments (Agenda Items) - None

Motion by Darlene Loyer Gerick, support by Calvin Hawkins to approve the consent agenda with the removal of the check for Wade Fields for Misc. Contracted Services on 5/20/25 in the amount of $497.20 and the check for Dionne Falconer for Misc. Contracted Services on 5/20/25 in the amount of $28.00 as presented: Minutes from the Regular Meeting of May 27, 2025; Requested Changes in Instructional Staff: Ryan Petersmark, BHS teacher, 8 years of service,

Resigned, effective, 6/13/25; Kristen Wrase, District Wide ASD Coach, Hired effective 8/27/25; Heather Herrick, Rawsonville Social Worker, Hired effective 8/27/25; Jennifer Kitchen, Tyler Principal, Hired effective 8/1/25; Ashley Snyder, BHS Athletic Trainer, Hired effective 8/1/25; Whitney Briggs, Savage Resource Room Teacher, Hired effective 8/27/25; Melissa Petty, ECC Principal, Hired effective 8/1/25; Allyson Batson, ECC GSRP Lead Teacher, Hired effective 8/27/25;Requested Changes in Non-Instructional Staff: Leonard Edwards, Transportation, less than 1 year of service, Terminated effective 5/30/25; Shannon Beach, Tyler Secretary, 2 years of service, Resigned effective 6/18/25; Noreen Deliets, Transportation, 16 years of service, Retiring effective 6/30/25; Anthony Marshall, Transportation Driver, Hired effective 5/29/25; Michael Ellerby, Building & Ground Custodian, Hired effective 6/9/25; Checks Payable; BHS Cross Country Field Trip and 2026 Washington DC McBride Field Trip. Motion carried 4-0.

Separate Check Approval: None

Administrative Items:

The first Administrative Item was the MHSAA Membership Approval presented by Joe Brodie. This school membership in the MHSAA requires a yearly approval for athletic participation. This resolution is for August 1, 2025 - July 31, 2026. Motion by Calvin Hawkins, support by David Shall that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the resolution for membership for Belleville High School and McBride Middle School in the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) for the 2025-2026 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

The second Administrative Item was the Band Bleachers Project Approval presented by Rob Kakoczki, Plante Moran Realpoint and James Williams, Director of Plant Operations. Mr. Williams said that as part of the 2019 Bond Program, the district planned to replace the band bleachers at the stadium to better accommodate the needs of the band program. The project was reviewed at the last board meeting and he did not have any questions. He said that once approved the plan is to have these installed over the summer to be ready for the Fall 2025 season. Motion by Wade Fields, support by Darlene Loyer Gerick that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve Southern Bleacher Company, Inc. for the Belleville High School Band Bleacher Replacement Project with a total project award recommendation of $130,400.00 as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

The third Administrative Item was the Bond Paperwork Approval presented by Pete Kudlak, Superintendent. Mr. Kudlak explained that we have been working on this for a while. The ballot language is included in the package. There is an extensive process that the district has to go through to have this approved and be able to move forward. Motion by Calvin Hawkins, support by Wade Fields that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Application for Preliminary Qualification of Bonds as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

The fourth Administrative Item was the 5th & 9th grade Chromebook Purchase Approval presented by Sean Garland, IT Administrator. Mr. Garland said that each year we purchase new Chromebooks for incoming freshmen and 5th graders that they carry for four years. This purchase will give us about a 45 device buffer for new students or any unforeseen issues. Motion by Darlene Loyer Gerick, support by Calvin Hawkins that the Van Buren Public Schools

Board of Education approve the purchase of 850 Student Chromebooks from Sehi Computing for the total amount of $256,054.00 from the 25-26 Sinking Funds as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

The next Administrative Item was the Building Presentations - McBride, Owen and Savage. Tracy Bryant, McBride Middle School Principal presented first alongside Asst. Principal David Turner. Ms. Bryant said that we took a hard and innovative approach this year to build a positive Climate and Culture at McBride. We also wanted an approach that would promote academic growth and increase student engagement and this led to "McBride Pride". We started Partnership Mentoring Exposures to Careers. For example, S.I.S - Sister in Stem. Wa;yne Resa ISD chose to partner with us and provided a grant opportunity that exposed our girls to STEM careers with weekly female guest speakers with hands-on-learning. We were able to invite 5 Owen ladies as well. Ms. Bryant and Mr. Turner reviewed the Office Referral data and showed the decrease from the 23-24 school year to the 24-25 school year. Ms. Loyer Gerick was impressed with how much the suspensions had decreased within the 2 year span. The next presentation was from Nadine Dufrane, Owen Intermediate School Principal. The new Asst. Principal, Patrick White also joined Ms. Dufrane. Ms. Dufrane began by explaining that one of their goals this year was to heighten parent engagement and change the perception of Owen to an open, inviting and student-centered school. Ms. Dufrane said that weekly newsletters to families included a section about PTO and resources for families as well as making weekly positive phone calls home. Parents really appreciated the positive phone calls. Ms. Dufrane reviewed iReady data for math and reading. Great strides have been made but we are still not where we want to be yet. Ms. Dufrane said that the next steps for Owen are to continue with PBIS assemblies, add a new program Capturing Kids Hearts (like Leader in Me at the elementary schools) and focus on developing instructional practices for staff. The next building presentation is from Savage Principal Christine Walker. Ms. Walker said that one of our main focuses this year was on Math Fact Automaticity. Ms. Harding and Ms. Lang both explained how it worked in their classrooms and the variety it offered students. Ms. Walker reviewed the iReady scores for K - 4 in the fall compared to the spring. She reviewed the iReady reading scores and said that the staff is excited to start the new ELA program, Wonders in the fall. Ms. Walker ended with the fact that the One Size Fits All concept does not work for our kids.

The next Administrative Item was the Bilingual Therapies Contract Approval presented by Julien Frazier, Director of Student Services. Mr. Frazier explained that Bilingual Therapies is a special education services provider committed to providing comprehensive and effective educational support to students with special needs. Currently a part-time physical therapist vacancy exists to assist students with disabilities who have significant gross-motor needs. Motion by Calvin Hawkins, support by Wade Fields that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Special Education Contractual Agreement with Bilingual Therapies for the 2025-2026 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

The next Administrative Item was the Tentative Agreement between VBPS and VBFSA Approval presented by John Leroy, Director of Human Resources. The tentative agreement has been ratified by the members of VBFSA and includes updates to compensation, benefits and working conditions that align with district goals and financial considerations. Motion by David Shall, support by Wade Fields that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Tentative Agreement between VBPS and VBFSA beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027 as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

The last Administrative Item was the Non-Affiliated Salary Approval presented by Pete Kudlak, Superintendent. The non-affiliated group of employees are those that are not covered under a union contract. We look at this group independently each year to set salaries for the following year. These salaries will take effect on July 1, 2025. Mr. Kudlak discussed this at the last board meeting and did not have any questions. Motion by Calvin Hawkins, support by Darlene Loyer Gerick that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Non-Affiliated Salaries as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Public Comments (Non-Agenda items) - T. Blackburn, community member - School Buses Speeding; M. Sampson, BHS Student - Worried and feeling the pressure of counselors leaving; L. Capers, BHS Student - Counselors leaving the district and student concerns; C. Capers, BHS Alumni - Counselors leaving the district; S. Currie, BHS Counselor - Reassignment of high school counselors; R. Jager, BHS Teacher - Concerns about BHS; R. Ion, Community Member - Recruiting; J. Ford, BHS Student - Matters of the Counseling Situation; A. Howard, BHS Teacher - Counseling Staff Re-location; S. Cross, VBPS Staff - Counseling Dept. moved to new buildings and BHS left with one new counselor; and J. Laginess, Community Member - Student Counselors.

Cabinet Member Reports:

Pete Kudlak, Superintendent – Congratulations to Joe Brodie for his 10 year Athletic Director Award. Also, Congratulations to Bryce Underwood for being named Detroit Athletic Club Male Athlete of the Year.

Julien Frazier, Director of Student Services - I am working on the extended school year for the Student Services Department and I am wrapping up our budgets too.

James Williams, Director of Plant Operations - The renovations at Savage and Tyler Elementary Schools are progressing well. I have RAHS kick off meetings scheduled already for this summer.

John Leroy, Director of Human Resources - I am wrapping up contracts and end of the year.

Items of Business from the Members of the Board:

Darlene Loyer Gerick - Thank you to everyone who helped with the craft event last weekend. The event raised over $1400.00 for the Tiger Village program.

Calvin Hawkins - Congrats to the retirees and the Top 10 Class of 2025. Also, congratulations to our Esports team and our Track team for winning the State Championship this year.

David Shall - I like to see all of the celebrations of benchmarking ourselves against other communities.

Motion by Calvin Hawkins, support by David Shall to adjourn the regular meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

Regular session adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Darlene Loyer Gerick
Board of Education Secretary

Debra McWilliams
Recording Secretary