

**Meeting of Board of Directors
November 21, 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 November 21, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at Skowhegan Area Middle School Cafeteria.

ATTENDANCE BOARD MEMBERS (708 present, 291 absent):

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

1. Call to Order
 - a. Flag Salute – 7:00pm

2. Good News and Recognitions – Literacy Grant Initiatives Presentation

Erin Madore introduced District Literacy Coaches, Heidi Goodwin, Barbara Welch and Kara Bubier who spoke about MDOE Literacy Grant. The District received \$400,000 to support Literacy district wide, covering all costs for the initiative including K for ME, 1st for ME and 2nd for ME pilot materials, and professional development for 93 teachers and 20 ed techs. Extremely positive feedback with regards to content and growth from both regular education as well as special education.

3. Approval of Minutes – 11/7/24

ON A MOTION BY Amy Rouse, seconded by Karyn Curran, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of 11/7/24 into the public record. (708 yes)

4. Communications

a. Letters

The Superintendent acknowledged and accepted a letter of intent to retire from Lori White, Special Education Teacher at Mill Stream Elementary School, effective June 2025.

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. Support Services Committee – 11/7/24

ON A MOTION BY Jean Franklin, seconded by Sarah Bunker, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Support Services Committee meeting of 11/7/24 into the public record. (708 yes)

Jean Franklin, Committee Chair, reviewed the minutes and asked the Board to vote on the following recommendation:

ON A MOTION BY Jean Franklin, seconded by Theresa Howard, the Board voted to accept a donation of peanut butter and jelly from Bangor Savings Bank to Canaan Elementary School. (708 yes)

b. Educational Policy/Program Committee – 11/19/24

ON A MOTION BY Karyn Curran, seconded by Peggy Lovejoy, the Board voted to accept the minutes of the Educational Policy/Program Committee meeting of 11/19/24 into the public record. (708 yes)

Karyn Curran, Committee Chair, reviewed the minutes and asked the Board to vote on the following recommendations:

ON A MOTION BY Karyn Curran, seconded by Sarah Bunker, the Board voted to remove Policy II from the current list of District policies. (708 yes)

ON A MOTION BY Karyn Curran, seconded by Samantha Delorie, the Board voted to adopt Policy DM as revised. (708 yes)

ON A MOTION BY Karyn Curran, seconded by Janice Malek, the Board voted to adopt Policy DN as revised. (708 yes)

ON A MOTION BY Karyn Curran, seconded by Jean Franklin, the Board voted to adopt policy DO as revised. (708 yes)

6. Superintendent's Report

a. Vacancies, nominations, recommendations

ON A MOTION BY Karyn Curran, seconded by Theresa Howard, seconded by Theresa Howard, the Board voted to approve nominations page one. (665 yes, 43 abstain)

b. Report on Assessment Payments to Date

Superintendent Moody shared that as of November 21, 2024, Mercer was current with November paid; Canaan, Cornville, Norridgewock, Skowhegan and Smithfield were outstanding for November. Assessments are due on the 20th of each month.

c. Update on New School Construction Building Project

The building is impressive from an educational perspective and will be a game-changer for our in-town students. Several classrooms are nearly complete. Window installation has been a challenge and the contractor is working through this. The Pre-K wing is taking shape. The goal is to set up tours for staff in the next few months. The building will include 4 Electric charging stations, with room for expansion in the future.

The next Building Committee meeting is scheduled for 6:00 pm on 12/11; the Percent for Art committee meeting is set for 10:30 am on 12/11.

d. Federal Funds Plan Final Review

Superintendent Moody requested the Board's final approval of the MSAD Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services (as required under the federal American Recovery Plan).

ON A MOTION BY Samantha Delorie, seconded by Sarah Bunker, the Board voted to approve the MSAD Plan for Safe

Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services. (708 yes)

e. Budget Update

Superintendent Moody shared that the district budget will be frozen in anticipation of a tough FY26 budget, which likely includes reduced state funding and will be impacted by rising town property valuations relative to other communities around the state. The Superintendent met with staff from across the district to discuss the budget and the impact a budget freeze can have on building up fund balance to offset the loss of funding for the FY26 budget.

f. Other

The Superintendent shared that he attended the 2024 Superintendent of the Year of the Year Gala/Conference in Washington DC, which was paid for by AASA and included nationally renowned speakers from across the nation that focused on educational best practices.

Superintendent Moody shared that the Illustrative Math program the district is using was touted as the program that has shown the most growth for students. The Superintendent noted MSES's impressive fall data.

The Superintendent noted that after talking with DOE and representatives from the Maine Charter School Commission, he has directed district schools to return files to the Cornville Charter School. He shared that the Charter School had a practice of after a student unenrolled (after Oct. 1), sending those student files to MSAD 54 even though those students were not enrolling in MSAD54 schools. The recommended practice from DOE is that all students remain on the roles of the last school they attended, with files being sent only when a student enrolls in another school.

The Superintendent updated the Board on his work representing MSAD54 and the Maine Superintendent's Association on the State Board of Education as the state liaison for Superintendents. He and several colleagues are working to impact the revision to Chapter 115 (state certification), in hopes of making it easier for non-traditional individuals (those switching careers to enter education), to get certified and enter the field of education. The current alternate pathways are not adequate for the staffing shortages across the state. MSAD54 has been fortunate to hire strong staff but applicant pools have dwindled.

The Board Holiday Gathering will be 12/19 at 6:30 pm. Tina will send out information regarding pot-luck options for all to contribute. The Board Chair

noted that there will be an ugly sweater contest and she expects everyone to participate.

The Superintendent discussed his annual goals and evaluation. The Evaluation will be sent out by Tina in the coming weeks and will again be coordinated by Theresa Howard.

The Superintendent shared that the District has prided itself in tailoring district-professional development to staff needs / desires and has done this through an active PD Committee that is open to all staff district-wide. Although there is very little PD time available this year with adjustments to the calendar, the upcoming March workshop should be a good one. It will include a keynote speaker on behavior who will return in August for start of year workshop days. The speaker and PD is being funded through a state grant.

The Superintendent acknowledged the principals and district directors who have done an amazing job working with staff to positively impact the lives of our children district-wide.

The Superintendent shared news that MDOE will be conducting a site visit at SCTC/SAHS on Monday, 11/25. This visit is part of the District's application to have SCTC be considered for new school construction. The Board inquired if this would be based on old funding model or new model and the Superintendent indicated that although we don't know if/what changes may come from the group reviewing school construction, it could potentially change to one based on the state funding rate (which is based on poverty). The board discussed the potential impact a new school could have on the students and community.

7. Assistant Superintendent and Support Services Manager

The Assistant Superintendent shared information on the following:

- SAHS drama production The Butter and Egg Man is performances are on 11/21, 11/22 and 11/23 at 7pm.
- Aspire initiative has been doing a lot of great things, including the Adopt a Classroom Program, which connects high school students with elementary students. A note was shared from Jason Bellerose expressing sincere gratitude to staff for the role they play in making our ASPIRE Adopt a Classroom Program. 34 seniors signed up to participate and hope to see these numbers grow.

Desiree Libby asked if we would ever be going back to letter grades (A-F) vs numbers (1-4) and the Superintendent indicated that this should be discussed at the grading and reporting committee meeting as the purpose of grades is for them to

accurately reflect student growth – and for parents, teachers AND students to understand them. If that isn't happening, work needs to be done.

The Support Services Manager reported that boilers are being installed at MCSCS on Tuesday, 11/26. The building is now energized with its own power source.

8. Old and Unfinished Business

Julian Payne inquired about daycare for staff. Superintendent Moody shared that staff are interested and the group exploring childcare will continue this discussion in the second half of the year.

Julian Payne inquired about the recent lock-in as a result of the issue at the charter school shared by local PD. There was no threat to MSAD54 schools and although the charter school were not able to reach out during the situation, the Police notified MSAD54 immediately and followed-up to share that the situation was resolved.

9. Introduction of New Business not listed on the Agenda

There was no introduction of new business not listed on the agenda.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:04pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Moody, Superintendent of Schools