

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Independent School District No. 820

Sebeka, MN 56477

Regular Meeting Monday, December 08, 2025

The regular school board meeting was called to order at 6:52 p.m. following the Truth in Taxation meeting. The following members were in attendance: Jeannie Arthur, Nate Erickson, Kayla Frame, Cheri Kangas, Eric Nelson (virtually) and JoAnn Olson. Absent Rodney Huttunen. Also present were Superintendent Dave Kerkvliet, Principal Amie Westberg, Business Manager Holly Paulson (virtually), staff members Melissa Koch and Jerome Meyer; Kim Thurston, Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Loscheider, Mrs. Nevala and Whitney Jones who are parents of 5th grade students and Review Messenger Reporter Dave Hanson.

NOTE: All motions will be by roll call vote due to Eric Nelson attending virtually.

Arthur moved, Kangas seconded to approve the agenda with the following additions: 7.5.1 Approve Marcus Peterson as Assistant Wrestling Coach and 9.8 Approve Online School Idea Plan. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Under Visitor and Delegation comments, a group of concerned parents of Sebeka fifth grade students were present to voice their concerns regarding the classroom size of 32 students with one teacher and the challenges that have occurred.

Student Council Representative Henry Erickson reported that the Student Council has been planning Christmas activities for the week of December 15th. Activities included guessing how many items in a jar, hiding snowmen; treats delivered to classrooms; candy cane match activity, wrapped mystery gift, gingerbread house competition and open gym, movies, Chromebook games, board games and movies on the last day before Christmas break.

The Food Committee of Kayla Frame and Jeannie Arthur, met with Food Service Director DeAnn Evans on Wednesday, December 3rd to review the lunch program. Discussion was held on sending out a survey to the parents regarding students' feedback on the lunch program.

Business Manager Holly Paulson reported that the MEGS Fall amendments have been completed and submitted to MDE for the Title programs of I, II and IV; FY26 budget revisions have been made and summarized for the Truth in Taxation meeting; completed the GASB 75 Valuation report; attended the calendar year end payroll meeting in St. Cloud noting that topics covered included a non-taxable portion of overtime to show correctly on employees W-2's and information on the new MN Paid Leave and also attended a workshop at LCSC on the MN Paid Leave plan presented by an attorney from Pemberton Law. She also noted that all required notices have been sent to employees and posted by the district office.

Mr. Lillquist's AD report included the following winter sports athlete numbers: Cheerleading has 5 girls; wrestling: Sebeka has 8 boys and 5 girls and Menahga has 20 boys and 5 girls; GBB has 12 girls in varsity and JV; and BBB has 19 boys in varsity, JV and C; Jr. High BBB has 22 boys in grades 6-8. It was noted that in discipline reports filed there have been 70 reports filed as of the beginning of December.

Principal Westberg reported on Parent Teacher conferences noting that elementary had an average of 93% attendance with 6 out of 12 teachers having 100% and high school had a good showing with several teachers reporting seeing over 50 families; met with Mary Jordahl to discuss what to select for the Phase 2 PD; doing December dress up days and 12 Days of Christmas "What My Principal Got For Me"; and started a Book Blast fundraiser for students in grades PreK through 8th on December 2nd and will run through December 12th noting that this is a fundraiser that will help build students' home libraries with books and every student will receive at least one book.

Superintendent Kerkvliet reported on the Federal Direct Pay Rebates for the solar system; MREA conference on November 16th through the 18th; attended the MASA Region 5 meeting on November 20th; completed the 24-25 Striving for Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Resources summary report; reminded Board members of the MSBA Winter Conference on January 14th-17th. Under Custodial/Facilities it was noted that we had plow truck problems during the first storm of the year and are having heating issues in Mrs. Oyster's classroom; had a Food Service meeting on December 3rd;

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sold the 2001 Bluebird bus for \$1,600 which was the highest offer received and higher than scrap price; created a new district policy to address the new Paid Minnesota Leave law which goes into effect on January 1st; attended the Freshwater Superintendent's meeting on November 12th with discussion held on SPED updates, financial updates and the Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) and received information on various program services and possibilities of less physical ALC sites in connection to their new ALC online services as a cost savings measure; reviewed information regarding CESO (Center for Effective School Operations) from the last pairing meeting with Menahga to find if there would be more efficient ways to operate both the Menahga and Sebeka transportation departments noting that the cost for the program ranges from \$6,500 to \$17,550 but was under the understanding that Sourcewell will reimburse the districts for the cost; met with the Wadena County Joint Task Force on November 18th to go over updates with our emergency plans and talk about areas for improvements; met with the Sebeka Foundation to provide school district updates and noted that the Foundation is working towards rolling out the existence of the foundation at homecoming; created a new district policy to address the new Paid Minnesota Leave law; and informed the Board that Thad has currently obtained \$32,128 in grant support from MDE to cover the cost of cyber security insurance, a new electronic lock system to be installed this summer and security camera updates.

Under Discussion Items, Principal Westberg reviewed ideas for how an online school could look like. She reviewed options of a regular schedule option with teachers teaching 6 in-person classes, 1-3 online classes and using prep time to connect with online students noting compensation being the most per online class; a mixed schedule option with teachers teaching 5 in-person classes, 1 hour online, 1 prep hour, 1-3 online classes and online hour is dedicated to connecting with online students with compensation being minimal per class; a late start option with teachers teaching 6 in-person classes, 1-3 online classes, every other week on Wednesdays, 7-12 would start at 10:15, buses run their normal schedule, PreK-6 start school at 8:15 like normal, students in 7-12 who ride the bus will have a study hall or open gym and those who drive or parents who want to bring their 7-12 grade students in should arrive by 10:15, teachers have scheduled 2 hour, every other week for online time and teachers who are not teaching online classes help to supervise the study hall or open gym with compensation being less than in option 2 but less than option 1; and a 4-day school week option with teacher teaching 6 in-person classes, 1-3 online classes, no school either a Monday or Friday and teachers would use that time as dedicated online hours or interventions for all students, elementary teachers co do PD, discuss data and have team planning meetings or do Phase 2 training , an MOU will need to be agreed upon regarding contract hours.

Superintendent Kerkvliet reported that CESO stands for "Center for Effective School Operations" and noted that it was discussed at the Pairing meeting to find if there would be more efficient ways to operate both the Menahga and Sebeka transportation departments. The cost for the program is \$6,500-\$17,550 but was under the understanding that Sourcewell will reimburse the districts for the cost.

Olson moved, Kangas seconded to approve the following consent agenda items: November 10th regular meeting minutes; Treasurer and Investment report for December; monthly bills at \$665,914.57; assignment of Marcus Peterson as Assistant Wrestling Coach; and December enrollment at 413 students K-12. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Erickson moved, Arthur seconded to approve the second reading of the 2024-2025 audit report presented by Brian Opsahl from the Brady Martz Audit Firm noting that it was a clean audit with minimal findings of segregation of duties, preparation of financial statements and material journal entries and noted that these findings are not uncommon for a district of our size. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Erickson moved, Kangas seconded to approve the resolution accepting the following donations: \$100 from Todd Wadena Electric for FFA Nationals; \$250 worth of supplies from Thrivent Financial for the Speech Therapy Department; and \$100 from Wadena VFW Auxiliary to Sebeka School. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

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Kangas moved, Erickson seconded to approve the final school tax levy 2025 payable 2026 at a .0078% increase noting that the total levy for the 2025-Payable-2026 is \$1,548,186.71 compared to the total levy from 2024-Payable-2026 of \$1,536,141.67. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Arthur moved, Kangas seconded to approve the first reading of the 2025-2026 EMS Seniority List as presented noting that the seniority list has been posted in both lounges. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Arthur moved, Olson seconded to authorize the resolution authorizing administration to make recommendations for cost containments for the 2026-2027 school year noting that this is a yearly process that is done in the event there would be a change in state funding or some other unforeseen changes in demographics that would take students out of our district, declining enrollment, and other expenditures including inflationary concerns that affect the budget for the following year. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Erickson moved, Arthur seconded to approve the first reading of the 2025-2026 budget revisions presented showing revised revenues of \$7,916,335 and revised expenditures of \$8,8,100,2737 and a revised budget deficit of \$183,938 for FY2026 and noting that this is an early budget revision knowing it will be adjusted when completed again in May. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Arthur moved, Kangas seconded to approve the CESO Baseline Communications Assessment Opportunity as presented by Superintendent Kerkvliet at the level that Sourcewell will fund it. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Olson moved, Arthur seconded to approve the District Paid Family Medical Leave Policy 6.3.1 to be in compliance with the new Minnesota Paid Leave law. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Erickson moved, Arthur seconded to approve their support to proceed with plans for an online school as presented by Principal Westberg. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

Kangas moved, Olson seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:46 p.m. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Kangas, Nelson (virtually) and Olson; Absent: Huttunen; against: none; therefore, the motion was duly passed.

JoAnn Olson
Clerk of Sebeka School District