

REGULAR MEETING (Monday, February 28, 2022)

Generated by Julie Haines on Thursday, March 3, 2022

Members present

Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

Members absent

Maria Goodrich

Meeting called to order at 6:33 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Celeste Hawkins, Board President

Action: A. Roll Call of Board of Education Members

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Dr. Celeste Hawkins, Board President

3. CLOSED SESSION

Action: A. Request for Closed Session- Pursuant to Sections 8(f) of the Open Meetings Act to review and consider the content of an application for employment

The Board of Education will be going into closed session pursuant to Section 8(f) of the Open Meetings Act to review and consider the content of an application for employment.

... MOVE THAT the Board of Education go into closed session pursuant to Section 8(f) of the Open Meetings Act to review and consider the content of an application for employment.

Motion by Sharon Lee, second by Yvonne Fields.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

Moved into closed session at 6:35 p.m.

4. OPEN SESSION

Procedural: A. Reconvene to Open Session

The Board of Education will return to Open Session.

Returned to open session at 6:54 p.m.

5. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Action: A. Acceptance of Agenda

6. PHASES IN STRATEGIC PLANNING: Mary Kerwin, Facilitator | Senior Consultant, Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB)

Discussion: A. Continuing the Work on Strategic Planning

The board of education will have a discussion facilitated by MASB consultant, Mary Kerwin, regarding long term planning.

Click [here](#) to see the notes from the vision mission brainstorming.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS #1

Information: A. Guidelines for Public Comment

Public Comment Protocol | Pursuant to Board of Education Policy 0167.3

*The Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express their view.

*Please limit statements to three (3) minutes duration.

*Participants shall direct all comments to the Board and not to staff or other participants; no person may address or question Board members individually.

*Remarks shall be made in a respectful and professional manner.

Michael Schersten, 305 S. Adams St., Ypsilanti, MI

Thank you, good evening, my name is Michael Schersten. I have a fourth grader at YIES Elementary and a sixth grader at WIMA. I'd like to address the district mask policy, and in particular the mask update letter sent today by Superintendent Zachery-Ross. First of all, I do appreciate that you will be surveying the district community on this issue, and I sincerely hope that those results are made public after the survey is completed. I do want to address that it looks like you will be waiting until the county health department removes their advisories to make any decision. And I just want to stress that the right and responsibility to make this decision does rest with the board, I appreciate that you are looking to agencies, like the CDC and the county health department for guidance, but the decision does ultimately rest with the board. I'll note that, looking at the county health board today, I did not see a single medical doctor or epidemiologist on the board and really, the health board does not seem to be in any better position than the board of education to make this decision. They are political appointees not medical experts. Further, a number of districts in the county have removed their mandates today. I know Saline and Manchester, I believe, which are too far away from my children, but I do also know that a number of charter schools in the area, including East Arbor, where we know a lot of kids that go to East Arbor, they got to go to school without masks. Addressing a couple other points of what you're kind of looking for, as you reevaluate the mass mandate. One is you here is protection for our youngest preschool students under five year olds, who cannot be vaccinated as well as immunocompromised students and staff. First of all, I want to address that serious illness due to Covid is extremely rare in children. Throughout the pandemic about 16% of the cases and Washtenaw County have been under 18. But in that entire two years that has not been a single death under the age of 18 and children have made up just about 1% of hospitalizations of the last few years. That's a few dozen, I think it was about 35. Pediatric admissions actually peaked in the county during the omicron wave at

three in one week. But, as we know omicron is very effective, many of these may have been incidental admissions and which someone has admitted for something other than Covid but tested positive on the way in. I'm also looking at an increase in student attendance to a minimum of 85% and I'm a little curious what that means. We really don't see students falling ill due to Covid so if this is Covid related I'm wondering, is this just people being forcibly kept out of school do to mandated quarantine and isolation practices because that seems like that could just kind of be done away with and we could let kids stay in school. Well I'm not a doctor, I do have degrees in math and economics, I have extensive healthcare analytics experience. I actually had the pleasure of working with Trustee Fields. And I would like to offer my guidance to the board because I'm not sure that you have anyone guiding you on the science and the data about this and I do have kind of expertise in that, so please reach out if I can.

Sayre Corbin, 188 North Mansfield St, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Good evening, thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening, my name is Sayre Corbin and my daughter attends elementary school here in the district. I'm here tonight for two reasons, first and foremost, I want to express my appreciation for the work you all do. I can tell how much you care and value and support the students here in the district, and I really appreciate that. I also want to express my appreciation for the decision to continue requiring masks in school. As it has been for so many others, this pandemic has been an extraordinarily difficult time for my family. I know I'm not alone in experiencing the weight caused by uncertainty and anxiety and the need to make the best decisions I can support my family. I know that looks different for everyone, for me it involves minimizing contact with others in an effort to protect members of my family and circle were at very high risk for hospitalization and severe outcomes. Given the inherent risk involved, the decision to send our daughter to school in person has been a nerve wracking one. In light of all the precautions we are taking at home, school, although relatively safe is the most likely source of transmission for our family. Every day we weigh the risk of sending her against the benefits we have observed from her time in school so far. We are immensely grateful for the precautions taken by her school staff and other families, including, and especially following universal masking. We are painfully aware that nothing is 100% effective and masking can't last forever, but given the associated reduction and transmission levels, it is a critical piece for us. Without it, we would likely not be able to send her in person. This brings me to my second reason for speaking tonight. As mask mandates fall and masking becomes optional, I feel, quite simply, terrified and exhausted, obviously I do not know more than the CDC. I'm not a public health or medical expert. What I am is a parent who works in health research, who has missed countless hours and celebrations with my loved ones and has watched from a social distance as the narrative has shifted from public health and protecting the herd to prioritizing the individual's right to decide whether to wear a mask. I don't want to wear masks forever. I don't like them any more than anyone else. But right now the hard truth is, they are helping keep my loved ones, healthy and alive and, as we have learned both beautifully and painfully over the last two years, we are all connected. If masks become optional, the choice by another parent to let their child go to school unmasked can and likely may affect my family. As horribly dramatic as it sounds, it may be the determining factor in whether my loved ones get to see my daughter grow up. To me it feels like the district has an opportunity here to be a leader in safety and empathy, to practice the values discuss tonight like mindfulness and community. To demonstrate that we don't have to be required to protect the most vulnerable among us, we can choose to do it simply because it is the right thing to do. We can raise children who understand that our greatness begins and ends with the way we take care of each other. As Mary Kerwin mentioned earlier, we are family and family protects one another. I know the numbers are coming down quickly. I'm overjoyed to see it, but the case numbers and transmission remain as high or higher than they were in the fall when masks were required. The numbers haven't changed, just our relationship to them. In closing, I urge the board to continue universal masking the district, at least through the end of the school year. Give us more time for the numbers to continue improving. My family and many others would be forever grateful. Thank you for your time.

Tom Banks, 230 S. Mansfield, Ypsilanti, MI

Good evening, I'm Tom banks. I live on Mansfield. I've lived in this community for forty years. I had two daughters who graduated from the high school. But I'm hearing another matter. This evening, I'm concerned about things in our community that tend to divide us and create friction between people and make some people feel unwelcome or alienated and what I'm speaking about tonight is the flag out here that says Black Lives Matter that's on this building. I think it's totally inappropriate. I mean all lives matter, don't we agree with that and you know, there are students here that aren't black and maybe that makes them feel unwelcome maybe that is a source of something that affects them psychologically. Not to mention that the Black Lives Matter organization that that flag represents is not a good organization. They are Marxist. They admit they're Marxist. They are anti-family And just the whole nature of it is racist. When you put one group against another, you're creating racial tension. You're saying one group is more significant than another, and I'm sure none of you agree with that so I'm just saying that flag should not be flying out here and I'm ashamed to see it, and I hope that you'll take it down.

Mrs. Weathers, 1695 Cliffs #102, Ypsilanti, MI

I am Laveda Weathers. I taught in Willow Run. I was the co-chair, with one of your former board members, Maria Sheler-Edwards for consolidating Willow Run and Ypsilanti. I taught in Willow Run for 24 and a half years. Presently I supervise students at Eastern who are trying to become teachers. When we were working to consolidate the schools, I was from Willow Run, my husband was from Ypsilanti. We have been married 61 years. That is relevant because when we join the school districts, we join, and now we are Ypsilanti Community Schools. Having said that, there are pictures of former graduates from Willow Run who were honored for a number of different reasons. There are pictures of graduates from Ypsi who are honored for a number of reasons. I'd like to see all of those pictures put together in a building and right now the only two buildings, I see that might be appropriate are Ypsi High and this one all across these walls. Having said that, I also want to mention that wearing masks says, "I care about others, and I do what I can to live safely with others." You talk about children and wearing the mask or not wearing the mask, my husband's younger sister, we buried her a few months ago. She was a grandmother. She got Covid from her grandchildren. The youngest was nine and he didn't die, the other one was a think 11 and then 12 but she did. So wearing masks affects more than just the children. I also want to say children mimic adults. They do whatever they hear that is okay with us. And that's very important whether we're teachers or parents. Speaking of parents, I have three daughters, I have a grandson and a great grandchild so I have been a parent and I really feel like I'm still a parent. Black Lives Matter was born out of a need to recognize and acknowledge that yes, all lives matter. But it is necessary to remind haters that black people's lives matter too. That's what this was built out of. I am a Black Lives Matter advocate and I don't belong to any racist organization. All lives matter but it appears in our society, I'm not talking about just locally Ypsi, black people aren't seen as people with lives, so we have to stress that. That is all that is about, and when you talk about our students being affected I taught in the middle school for 24 and a half years. Our students would be all of us people that are 18 and over like me, out there fighting for black lives matter whether they're white black or whatever, because they got a lot more sense with a lot of these issues than we do.

Freddie B. Chea, 900 Parkwood Ave., Ypsilanti, MI

My name Freddie Chea. I have 3 kids in the district. I wear masks because I love my special needs kids. They are the ones in danger. People don't wanna like it. They are still human being. The most people that would die of this disease are deprived of going to the doctor still. In the community, a lot of us don't have insurance. But you can look at some of these people that have insurance look at us, "oh it doesn't matter. I have insurance. That's your problem." My son used to have a seizure every three or four times a

day, but for me he is still my son. Every time he had a seizure, I still loved him. Wearing a mask, it's not just for me, it's for my special need kids. I am only doing my job by coming here to talk to you about the Special Olympic specifically. For some reason, it went away. Not a lot of our coaches push that because for us, we want to win all the time. It's not about winning to me as a coach. It's about having a kid get exercise every day, build the muscle, build a brain, build a self, keep themselves up. I was talking to a kid in a wheelchair, and I tried to pick up the kid and she was like, "Come on, Coach. I can do this. You've been teaching me," and slide right into the chair. I cried. I'm a grown man. I'm almost 50 years old and this little girl made me cry. We have to be responsible for each other. I come from a country where we lost 2000 people to ebola in less than two weeks. I lost my mom and two sisters. Most people will say "Oh that's bad." No, we learned our mistake. Our mistake is we don't care about other people. We just care more about our people. Everybody is in this community. It takes a village to raise a kid. I'm not rich but I'm a proud dad. My daughter going to Michigan. I went to Bowling Green. I couldn't afford it but I wanted to go to college. I have a homeless. I lived in the YMCA while I go to high school and I still went to college. When people tell me that you can't go to college because of such and such, I laugh at them because when you want to do something there's nothing that can stop you. I wanted a job, Ms. McCarty, she helped me so much, we've been doing it for two months, and when I came here today thanks to the board and the energy you all gave me. If I get a job or not, I love you because anyone who wants to get a job in this district, I know you're going to do right. And I want to speak on the Black Lives Matter. Every life matters. For years we sit back and we don't speak up. When the kids get hit or a man hits a woman we say in the communities like it's none of my business. Well, we are responsible, it's your business to speak up. And I understand where he's coming from and where she is coming from but that's not what it's about. It's about everybody. Every life matters. Black lives matter because, as a young man and now whether black or white any young kids from the high school, they can walk down the street and the police still mess with them. You don't see that, but I see that every day becoming a community and I thank you for just listening to me. I came here for my special needs kid and I'm not gonna let that go. Well I'm here for the Special Olympics. This year we have to do something. I'm depending on you. We're gonna rock it this year. I believe in you. You gotta have a blessed day.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Action (Consent), Minutes, Report: A. Consent Agenda

Seeking Board approval of the presented meeting minutes and personnel matters; see attachments below.

Resolution: ... MOVE THAT the Board of Education approve the: 1) February 7, 2022, Regular Board Meeting Minutes 2) Personnel matters as per the presented list dated 2/21/22; New Hires and Resignations.

... MOVE THAT the Board of Education approve the:

1) February 7, 2022, Regular Board Meeting [Minutes](#)

2) [Personnel matters](#) as per the presented list dated 2/21/22; New Hires and Resignations.

Motion by Gillian Ream Gainsley, second by Sharon Lee.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

9. ACTION ITEMS: Human Resources

Action: A. Consideration of Extension of Superintendent's Contract

The YCS Board of Education will consider and vote upon extending this Contract for an additional year, and will notify the Administrator as Superintendent of its decision in writing.

Trustee Gainsley: I know that we will announce this but Ms. Kerwin made a couple of references to, I believe it is now public, the glowing report that this district received from COGNIA which is an independent evaluation firm which came and evaluated the district and looked at a lot of our processes and systems, and so I just want to really commend the superintendent. I really want to acknowledge as we're renewing our superintendent's contract, the incredible work that she and her team that she has built into making that happen and really making YCS rated among one of the highest schools in Michigan in terms of our internal systems and the systems we put in place to succeed, so it is with great great pleasure that I support this extension.

Dr. Hawkins: I just want to note, just for the benefit of those who are here with us, that this particular extension is germane to what is already in the superintendent's contract, this extension for a year. I know that all of us would like to say, for the next 100 years. Because your work in this district has been stellar. We are better because you are here and so your leadership and leadership of your team, the collaboration, the community, everything that has come together under your helm has made YCS a district that other districts are talking about, so I enthusiastically support this, although we're not to that point yet, but I just wanted to say it in advance.

...MOVE THAT the Board of Education accept the extension of the superintendent's contract.

Motion by Yvonne Fields, second by Jeanice Townsend.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

Action: B. Potential New Hire: Approval of Employment

The YCS Board of Education met in closed session to consider an employment request from District Administration. The Board will consider the request and determine the employment opportunity.

... MOVE THAT the Board of Education approve the district's employment request.

Motion by Yvonne Fields, second by Meredith Schindler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

10. ACTION ITEMS: Business and Finance

Action: A. Acceptance of Delegate/Partner Contract for the Provision of Head Start Services

The attached 2021/22 Head Start grant award includes a detailed budget and a program description. The award amount is \$1,914,403 which includes COLA. The grant is for Head Start services to a minimum of 245 children and families enrolled in the YCS

Head Start program.

This grant funds programming at three YCS buildings: Beatty ELC, Ford ELC and Perry ELC. Funds pay for teachers, supplies, teacher training, contracts and other basic needs of an educational program. According to the requirement of our Head Start contract, the district is committed to funding transportation services, maintenance and substitute costs to support the Head Start programs at all three buildings.

...MOVE THAT the Board of Education accept, as presented, the Delegate/Partner Contract for the Provision of Head Start Services in the amount of \$378,265.

Motion by Sharon Lee, second by Jeanice Townsend.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

Action, Recognition: B. Acceptance of the Our House Lease

...MOVE THAT the Board of Education accept the Our House Lease.

Motion by Gillian Ream Gainsley, second by Meredith Schindler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

Action: C. Acceptance of the E-Rate Networking Project for 2022-23

... MOVE THAT the Board of Education award, as presented, the conditional purchase agreement with Sentinel Technologies Inc. with a base bid for \$230,000 of network equipment, contingent upon E-Rate funding.

Motion by Yvonne Fields, second by Sharon Lee.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Dr Celeste Hawkins, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Sharon Lee, Meredith Schindler, Yvonne Fields, Jeanice Townsend

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS #2

Information: A. Guidelines for Public Comment

Public Comment Protocol | Pursuant to Board of Education Policy 0167.3

*The Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express their view.

*Please limit statements to three (3) minutes duration.

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*Remarks shall be made in a respectful and professional manner.

Amanda Smith, 523 Fairview, Ypsilanti, MI

When I was in my AmeriCorp program we learned, a Zulu proverb called a boonto that translates roughly to "I am a person through other people. My humanity is tied to yours." I was sitting at home, listening to this meeting, and I was shocked at the comments made by another member of our community, and I was not comfortable letting that stand without saying something so I'm here. My seven-year-old daughter, who is white and feels very much welcomed in our district and in our community, even with a Black Lives Matter sign in our front yard begged me to come and say something tonight. I'm so sorry that someone spoke to you that way. And I wanted to just share with you how much I appreciate everything that all of you have done. And I'm grateful that you've extended the superintendent's contract as well because she's done so much for this district and I appreciate each and every one of you. I also want to say, I appreciate everything you've done related to masking. I feel safe at our school. My daughter feels safe. She told me that if they remove the mask policy that she would like to continue to wear one but as afraid that she'll look funny. I hope that's not a decision she has to make. Thank you all.

Mrs. Weathers, 1695 Cliffs #102, Ypsilanti, MI

I want to offer a suggestion. When Mary was doing her presentation, be a former educator I'm trying to pay attention. We are stakeholders. We cannot read the doggone thing that's up there and I want to offer a suggestion for the next time. I think those two lights, the round ones, if they could be turned off, we could be able to read the screen. Now, if you want us here, and you want to pretend like we're a part of the program, let us be a part of the program. Thank you.

12. DISCUSSION

Discussion: A. Board of Education Subcommittee Reports

Trustee Gainsley: I did attend my first meeting of the YCS Foundation group and was very pleased to join that group and it was a great meeting to start with. I felt that one of the exciting pieces of news from the YCS Foundation is that they have an additional \$14,000 available in scholarships that they're going to be giving out. The decision was made to spread that out over two years and so these are scholarships that had been previously awarded in previous years but hadn't been accepted because the student chose to do something different than they said they would for the scholarship and chose not to accept that scholarship. So there is additional funding. So they'll give out an additional \$7000 this year and additional \$7000 next year on top of the scholarships that they normally give. We had a great presentation from DJ Sherrif, who has been working closely with the counseling office in the high school. One of the exciting new scholarships that's going to be offered is called the resiliency scholarship or we had been debating on the name but Ms. Sherrif had noted that there was a barrier. One of the reasons that the scholarship is exciting and different from a lot of other scholarships, is that it doesn't have a minimum GPA but it is specifically for students who have shown a huge amount of resiliency who have overcome obstacles and who have been accepted into some sort of post-secondary program. So we're very excited about that scholarship, so I hope that folks apply for that. We also had a great presentation from Dr. Zachery-Ross who was invited to talk about some of the districts priorities and I'm really pleased that we were able to make that connection between the district and YCSF.

Vice President Lee: Is the \$7,000 in scholarship will there be a lot of different scholarships or just one scholarship?

Trustee Gainsley: I think there are some \$2,500 scholarships and some \$1,000 ones.

Dr. Hawkins: Do you know how they're going to announce those new scholarship dollars that have become available?

Trustee Gainsley: I don't know when that will be announced and so all I'll bring that back to the board after our next meeting.

Trustee Schindler: The policy subcommittee met and talked about a number of different policies related to a lot of different things and most of them are going to come before the board. Some of them had to do with the structure of meetings, how we are going to manage some of the structure of the meetings. Some of them are just nuts and bolts kind of things, but I would expect those are coming before the board in the next short while as we consider how to continue to meet the needs of the district through effective and efficient board meetings.

Trustee Gainsely: The Operations and Finance Committee also met. The operations and finance subcommittee did have a joint meeting that was convened between Washtenaw County and Superior Township and we did discuss some potential interest in the Cheney school property. Some opportunities that might be available there, and so the district is very open to those discussions and interested in seeing where that goes and if anything becomes more concrete than that we'll certainly bring it to the full board.

13. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Trustee Townsend: I just want to again thank the superintendent and her team, Ms. Willis, who has done a lot of the programming and events. We had an outstanding black history month. We started off with "Just a Kid from Ypsi" and then we also have the Divine Nine and other African American organization scholarship event and those scholarships, many of them are open to everybody in the community regardless of race or anything like that, but we have over \$250,000 of money that is out there and the goal is to push that for YCS students to get access to those dollars and the Foundation was part of that as well. In March, we will be hosting a realtors' event at 9 a.m. It will be a virtual event on March 18th via zoom and we may be on Facebook live. This event will have a lot of our resources in here for people who are interested in learning more about YCS as well as the different services for first time homebuyers, Habitat for Humanity Old National Bank. We will have Ann Arbor Housing Commission on the air, as well as Bad Credit is Childish and some other resources. So I encourage the community to check that out. To please subscribe to YCS on YouTube, Facebook, Like, share, send a smoke signal, whatever it is. Facebook, Instagram, and on our website for information but we're doing some powerful things for the district, to change the narrative and also to make sure that everyone has access to resources in order to build the family. Thank you.

Dr. Hawkins: I will just say that Trustee Townsend did an amazing job facilitating the session on scholarships. It was a wealth of information. It is good to know that we live in a community where there is so much support for our students, particularly our seniors who are graduating and need access to scholarship dollars, so I just wanted to say it was a well-attended event. It was a great event for our young people to know that there is money available and if we can do everything we can to get the word out to share with our seniors that there is funding available for them to support them on their college journey, I think that will be outstanding. So I just wanted to say kudos to our trustee who facilitated that entire session and did an amazing job with the help of Taryn, of course. Also tomorrow kicks off March is Reading month and I know that many of us have been contacted by schools to be able to go in to read whether its face to face, whether it's a recording but there are opportunities to get into school building to read to our young people and to support them throughout literacy month.

Vice President Lee: I know you mentioned it at the last meeting about the summer works program with the Washtenaw County Youth Format Program and I just want to mention it again. It for the ages of 16 to 24. The due date is March 13 which is coming up, so please teenagers and young adults, please get your applications in. I know you have put it on the YCS website, all the information, where you can go and click on a link to fill out the application. So please do so. I know I got my grandson into it because he's got to work.

Trustee Fields: I just wanted to find out some information about a program that YCS is doing with drivers ed with Washtenaw sheriff's department. I didn't hear about it but is it possible to give some kind of information because I thought it was a very interesting program but I don't know how widely it was talking about.

Dr. Zachery-Ross: So through the high school, we were able to receive scholarships for ABC Driving School and the high school determine who would get the scholarship so that we can encourage those students to get their driver's license and remove barriers. So when other people come and ask us about what ways they can support us this is one way by helping us to make sure that our students are able to have their independence. They're able to do beyond even a high school diploma but to have their independence and that's one of the things we've asked for support for that has come from the high school staff.

Dr. Hawkins: Driver's ed used to be free when I was in high school so I am grateful for this support for our students.

Dr. Zachery-Ross: I want to just continue to reiterate the wonderful programs that happened last month and it all happened and we talked about it today because of community. I want to just thank those who are on a panel. I saw some people here today who are on the panel for "You Don't Know my Story" the boys' group and the girls' group here that was led by Ms. Cherisa Allen. When we talk about pretty much the vision, the profile of the graduate, we talked about identity quite a bit and the genius of our students and we want to go beyond a high school diploma to saying you can be and do whatever you would like to do because you have the genius and talent inside of you, and part of that is mirrors and windows and that's what you did so thank you, Trustee Townsend, for being a part of "Just a Kid from Ypsi." Also at "You Don't Know my Story" where they heard from panelists. The boys' group was here one day, the girls' group had another day. She brought a person from the Vikings for them to see and to meet and hear about and other professions, so those persons from the community who participated, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. You provided the mirror and the window to what they can be. We also want to congratulate all of those high school students, we talk about talent and genius of our students from the Black Heritage Collage Concert. There is a video that we are putting up on the website for those who could not see it. Our students performed amazingly well. There's so much talent here and so we're going to put that up and thank you to Miss Crystal Harding for the work that she did pulling them all together. We also know that Chef Garner was here just last month talking about our students being involved in programs, and I just want to say that, right now, we have some students in Lansing participating in the Michigan Restaurant Association Pro Star Culinary Competition and it's today and tomorrow. Board, thank you for supporting them going to compete. They've been really doing a tremendous job in doing the work and sharing their culinary skills and beyond that it just gives them those speaking skills, it gives them the ability to know what was happening in the world. We understand also that they participated just last week for NASA. They created a NASA meal and it had all kinds of requirements. Our students were on a RCTC NASA team. They had to do a mission lift off to the international space station and they had to design a menu following the strict NASA nutrition standards. Our students created Caribbean Jerk chicken tamales with pineapple salsa and roasted vegetables, sweet potato bread pudding with pecan, almond, praline sauce. And then they had to break down the nutritional value and ensure that it met the strict NASA value and so when we think about the potential and what our students are doing and learning here, it's just exceptional and so I just thank them. We have the opportunity this month as we come into women's history month, March is Reading month to participate, so thank you for volunteering. If you have not received that follow up email, please contact Julie, because there are many opportunities to read in the community. I invite you this Saturday to the Washtenaw Democratic Women's Program "I Am Every Woman." I'm one of the speakers, along with Gretchen Whitmer and Congresswoman Debbie Dingell and so, if you are coming YCS will be representing. I'm also the keynote speaker for Washtenaw Community College's Women's History Month program this month. So Ypsilanti Community Schools will be representing strongly this month in March just like we represented strongly last month. Finally, I just want to let the community know that our Grizzly Learning

Camp, the plans continue to go on. You heard me talk about last month that we were recognized at the Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators, our Association's conference. This month we just received from AASA, that is, the national superintendents' organization along with Motts Foundation, a request to be part of a new project they just began which is focused on the Power of Partnerships highlighting places with strong school district after school and summer partnerships to promote student well being, recovery, and acceleration. They are bringing together one district from each of the eight states identify and that is Colorado, Florida, Missouri, Michigan, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Ypsilanti has been identified by AASA and the partners from the Michigan After School Network as the representative of Michigan, so we are proud to represent not only this state but being only one of eight in the nation to go to AASA to represent the work that we're doing after school and with our summer programs. I know we separate Bible from school yet they talk about we can't be a prophet in our own land and oftentimes right here in Ypsilanti people talk about Ypsilanti Community Schools and about what we don't have from a deficit mindset yet it takes the nation to say what we're doing. It takes others outside of Michigan to talk about what we're doing in our own backyard and it is up to us to talk about what Ypsilanti Community Schools are doing and stop trying to compare us to our surrounding districts. To recognize our amazing staff and what they continue to do, day in and day out on behalf of our students, are amazing partners and what they continue to do, day in and day out, our amazing students who we all work and support and how they show up and demonstrate that they represent at a national platform, not just in culinary, not just in the sciences, but across the board and so I'm appreciative of the fact that the narrative about Ypsilanti Community Schools continue to shift and instead of people come in and saying "What can we do for you?" it is "How can you be a model? Can you explain what you're doing for others?" and I'm appreciative that we're getting to the table now. And thank you, lastly, for extending my contract.

14. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.