

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SESSER-VALIER COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 196  
APRIL 11, 2023  
6:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of Sesser-Valier Community Unit School District No. 196 was held in the High School Library at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, April 11, 2023. The meeting was called to order by President Megan Rounds.

**ROLL CALL**

Secretary Zimbardo called the roll with the following result:

Members Present: Acosta, Barry, Menser, Rounds, Sample, Spence, Stacey

Members Absent:

Staff Present: J. Henry, N. Page, K. Jones, L. Zimbardo, T. Masters, B. Gunter, R. Payne, N. Wingo

Visitors Present: Christie Sweely, Elisha Willmore, Clark Lance

**PUBLIC COMMENT & CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**REPORTS**

SEA: T. Masters reported on the recent activities and field trips including the recent Youth and Government trip to Springfield, the Spring Band/Chorus concert, math field day, and the junior high Trojan Horse project.

LABORERS' LOCAL 773: No report.

CUSTODIAL & MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR: No report.

K-8 PRINCIPAL: Mr. Jones, Elementary/JH Principal, presented information regarding the following to the board: Trust fund, recent activities, upcoming activities and student achievements.

H.S. PRINCIPAL: Mrs. Page, High School Principal, presented information regarding the following to the board: Trust fund, upcoming activities, and recognition for student achievements.

Mrs. Page then presented the Sesser-Valier High School student handbook proposed revisions for 2023-2024. She informed the board that there are no major changes and summarized some of the more substantial updates (all revisions were made due to previous board policy changes). Further, Mrs. Page indicated that no changes are recommended for the District's extracurricular rules or the random drug testing policy.

Mr. Jones presented the Sesser-Valier Elementary/Junior High School student handbook proposed revisions for 2023-2024. He informed the board that most changes or updates to the SVJHS student-parent handbook were consistent with the high school handbook changes. He outlined one additional, substantive change regarding the student dress code for SVES/SVJHS students.

Mr. Jones reported no major changes to the 2023-2024 Title I School-Wide Plan.

SUPERINTENDENT: Mr. Henry, Superintendent, presented the following information to the board:

1. The consent agenda for this month's meeting includes the following additional item(s):
  - Approval of the initial school calendar for 2023-2024;
  - Approval of 2023-2024 school handbooks, extracurricular/random drug testing rules, and the Title I school-wide plan;
  - Authorization for the district superintendent/designee to apply for state, federal, and/or private grants;
  - Authorization for the district superintendent/designee to seek milk/bread proposals for 2023-2024.
2. The 2023-2024 initial school calendar proposed for approval includes mostly-corresponding dates to previous school years' calendars with the exception of the Spring, 2024, break. The proposed spring break for 2024 would start on the Friday before Easter (Good Friday) and run through the week after Easter (April 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>). Since Easter "falls" early in 2024, pushing the week-long break later in the spring 1) increases the chance of good weather during the break, and 2) reduces the number of school days between spring break and the end of the school year.

He is also monitoring the possibility of needing to adjust the school schedule for Monday, April 8, 2024, due to the solar eclipse. Right now, his thinking is that we should use this day as a teaching opportunity, but we will also need to consider the potential for increased traffic/congestion in the area, as well as managing certain risks associated with the event. One possible alternative is to schedule a school improvement day (11:50 AM student dismissal) for that day.

3. As Superintendent Henry mentioned at a recent Board Policy Committee meeting, we are experiencing an "up-tick" in employment processes due to Faith's Law, a relatively-new statutory requirement for more detailed employment history reviews initiated prior to actual employment. The District is currently testing a process to be used on/after July 1, 2023. We intend to have potential candidates for employment engaged in the process of collecting information from past employers using ISBE-produced forms.

4. Benton High School's board has authorized their administrators to engage in the development of an intergovernmental agreement with SV196 for a wrestling cooperative for Fall, 2023 (two years). Mr. Henry has already started working with the BCHS superintendent to get the agreement developed, and believe that the cost per participant will be less than he estimated in February. (As of this writing, however, BCHS has not proposed a per participant cost.) Mr. Henry does not expect any trouble in reaching an agreement.
5. At the conclusion of the regular May, 2023, board meeting, we will recognize and thank Megan Rounds (4 years), Teresa Stacey (16 years), and Kevin Acosta (8 years) for their service on the Board. Immediately following that regular board meeting, we will conduct the "new" board's reorganizational meeting, seating new board members (Shane Garner, Clark Lance, and Kirk Packer) and electing board officers. A board packet for the May 8<sup>th</sup> reorganizational meeting will be sent by mail closer to the meeting date.
6. Superintendent Henry attached a recent Freedom of Information Act request from Vince Espi (Local Labs) dated April 10, 2023, and the District's response to the request.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Stacey and seconded by Acosta approving the minutes of the previous meeting: March 13, 2023 (Regular Meeting); Treasurer's report; the bills in the amount of \$140,554.02 and salaries in the amount of \$401,867.69; approval of the 2023-2024 Public School Calendar (Initial); approval of the Sesser-Valier Elementary/Junior High School student handbook for 2023-2024; approval of the Sesser-Valier High School student handbook for 2023-2024; approval of the district extracurricular rules and random drug testing procedures for 2023-2024; approval of the district Title I School-Wide plan; authorization for district superintendent or designee to apply for state, federal, and/or private grants; and authorization for district superintendent or designee to seek milk & bread bids for 2023-2024.

Roll call voting was as follows:

Yeas: Acosta, Barry, Menser, Rounds, Sample, Spence, Stacey

Nays: None

There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Superintendent Henry gave updates for the cooperative high school boys and girls wrestling program with the superintendent report. No action needed at this time.



**CLOSED SESSION:** At 6:23 PM, a motion was made by Acosta and seconded by Stacey to enter closed session for the purpose of discussing the following exceptions to the Open Meetings Act:

- a. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by P.A. 93-57)
- b. Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning the salary schedule for one or more classes of employees (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2))

Roll call voting was as follows:

Yeas: Menser, Rounds, Sample, Spence, Stacey, Acosta, Barry

Nays: None

There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

**RECONVENE FROM CLOSED SESSION:** At 7:15 PM, a motion was made by Stacey and seconded by Acosta to reconvene from closed session.

Voting was as follows: All voted yea. There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

## **PERSONNEL**

**EMPLOYMENT OF TEEN REACH GRANT COORDINATOR & ASSISTANT COORDINATOR (TINSLEY, R. & HACKER, L.):** A motion was made by Acosta and seconded by Spence to employ the following extracurricular coach(es) and/or sponsor(s) subject to IDHS approval of the FY 2024 Teen REACH grant/budget.

- Teen REACH Grant Coordinator: Regina Tinsley
- Teen REACH Grant Assistant Coordinator: Leslie Hacker

Roll call voting was as follows:

Yeas: Sample, Spence, Stacey, Acosta, Barry, Menser, Rounds

Nays: None

There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

**EMPLOYMENT OF EXTRACURRICULAR COACH(ES) AND/OR SPONSOR(S) (HOLDER, GRASKEWICZ, WINGO, GRIDER, HOUGHLAND):** A motion was made by Acosta and seconded by Barry to employ the following extracurricular coach(es) and/or sponsor(s).

- HS Boys Basketball Head Coach: Tommy Holder
- HS Girls Basketball Coach: Beth Graskewicz

- HS Girls Volleyball Assistant Coach: Cody Wingo
- HS Cheerleading Sponsor: Sierra Grider
- JHS Boys Baseball Coach: Rich Houghland

Roll call voting was as follows:

Yeas: Spence, Stacey, Acosta, Barry, Menser, Rounds, Sample

Nays: None

There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TEACHING ASSIGNMENT (TRANSFER;PAGE, OLIVIA): A motion was made by Stacey and seconded by Acosta to transfer Olivia Page to a JHS English/Language Arts Teacher position for the 2023-2024 school year, subject to her presentation of licensure/endorsement for the position.

Voting was as follows: All voted yea. There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EMPLOYEE RESIGNATION(S) AND/OR RETIREMENT(S) (HOTTENSEN, ROBIN): A motion was made by Acosta and seconded by Spence to acknowledge the following employee resignation:

- Head Cook: Robin Hottensen (effective at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year).

Voting was as follows: All voted yea. There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

APPOINTMENT OF HEAD COOK (HUNT, ANGIE): A motion was made by Acosta and seconded by Stacey to appoint Angie Hunt as Head Cook effective at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year.

Voting was as follows: All voted yea. There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF ADMINISTRATOR EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT(S) (JONES, JAMES KEITH): A motion was made by Stacey and seconded by Acosta to approve Principal Employment Contract for James Keith Jones, as presented.

Roll call voting was as follows:

Yeas: Rounds, Sample, Spence, Stacey, Acosta, Barry, Menser

Nays: None

There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF ADMINISTRATOR EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT(S) (PAGE, NATALIE):  
A motion was made by Stacey and seconded by Acosta to approve Principal Employment Contract for Natalie Page, as presented.

Roll call voting was as follows:

Yeas: Sample, Spence, Stacey, Acosta, Barry, Menser, Rounds

Nays: None

There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Acosta and seconded by Stacey to adjourn.

Voting was as follows: All voted yea. There being seven (7) yeas and zero (0) nays, the president declared that the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:19 PM.

**CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES**

The above-listed account of the regular meeting of the Board of Education of Sesser-Valier Community Unit School District No. 196, held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 6:00 PM, is, to the best of my knowledge, a true and accurate account of the aforementioned meeting.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Board President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary