

MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD MEETING -

St. Joseph County Intermediate School District Board of Education

PLACE: St. Joseph County ISD Administration Building, Centreville, Michigan.

DATE: July 25, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Elizabeth O'Dell, Benjamin Fries, Theresa Danberry

MEMBERS ABSENT: Terry Cropper, Patricia Keller

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Teresa Belote - Superintendent, Benjamin Daugherty, Kelli Dechnik, Pam Panozzo-Jones, and Theresa Sussdorf.

The Planning Board Meeting was called to order at 12:20 a.m. by Board President Elizabeth O'Dell.

Mrs. O'Dell offered time for Public Participation, none was taken.

Superintendent Belote and the Board reviewed/discussed the following goals:

Assistant Superintendent of Finance, Operations, & HR, Kelli Dechnik, spoke on evaluating facility needs for the bus garage. Her goal is to form a committee to see what those needs would be, and to also contact a financial person to get a bigger picture of the project. She said the ISD's agreement with Nottawa goes through June of 2029 utilizing their transportation facility, but may want to partner with others later as an option.

The department is continuing to build systems with policies and procedures, looking at the evaluation system and current software. The focus next year is on the hiring process being more interactive and including different scenarios. She would also like to modify the current process to make it easier for employees and benefits to be comparable... starting with the Ad Team, then Cabinet. Also for the hiring process, utilizing marketing staff to share the ISD's story by doing what is already in place and increasing Facebook awareness.

Mr. Fries suggested marketing for the next school election in a few years that will promote CTE. Try to reach voters who may not have students in school. Dr. Belote said the 'mobile lab' will be at the St. Joseph County Fair this year promoting CTE for the county, along with visiting local high schools, etc.

Dr. Belote gave an overview of Early Childhood stating two new childcare locations were added, Burr Oak Learning Center and Nottawa schools. Budgets are being reviewed for potential funding cuts by the federal government. What makes sense as Michigan pushes for universal preschool and meeting timelines.

Ben Daugherty, Director of Technology, said his department is continuously working on cybersecurity. The consortium continues to do well with the security 'phishing' tests. He said they are switching to MySecure this year districtwide. The goal is to incorporate securing everything, interns on up, continue phishing with staff to test security, and incorporate training with staff.

He is preparing staff as they advance, like interns, as some have reached capacity on knowledge, but want to learn more and fill gaps. He is working with Amanda Miller, ILD Director, on AI. Google has AI with Gemini which we use and data from Gemini stays within the ISD.

Dr. Belote gave an update on ILD saying the department is expanding their professional learning network and supports, working with all of the districts. Also, 31n is monitoring referral rates and looking for efficiency to streamline the process. Jim Harris, who is participating in the department's Engaged Learners Journey, will also present at the fall School Board Association (SBA) program on "Exploring the Impact of Technology on Mental

Health of Young People”.

Pam Panozzo-Jones, Director of Special Education, provided data from the last three years of special education eligibility in the county. The information is shared with local superintendents and she will be sharing it with the ISD department chairs. Pathfinder is moving away from using Edmentum as part of the curriculum. They will be partnering with local schools to try to align with what curriculum they use. Planning on a combination of hybrid curriculum and utilizing CKLA curriculum, blending general ed and special education curriculum with the local districts. The department will bring this information to the next board meeting for feedback.

She is meeting with local superintendents to work on a least restrictive countywide environment. Looking at local concerns, what is going well and where there may need to make improvements, and provide an action plan. Is working on strengthening partnerships and a universal understanding... Least Restrictive to Center-Based.

Mr. Fries made a motion, supported by Mrs. Danberry, to adjourn the meeting. Ayes: Danberry, Fries, O'Dell. Nays: None. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

Minutes were recorded by Theresa Sussdorf, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

Board approved 8-18-25