

**MILAN AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday March 12, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Milan Area Schools Board of Education was called to order in the Milan Area Schools District Board Room located at 100 Big Red Drive, Milan MI, 48160, by President Cislo at 7:00 p.m. on March 12, 2025.

Board Members Present: Cislo, Prior, Faro, Gutierrez, Burdette, Heikka, Meray (7:03p.m.)

Board Members Absent: None

Signed in Staff: Bryan Girbach, Ryan McMahon, Krista Hendrix, Anne Foor, Aaron Shinn, Kristyn Pierfelice, Jennifer Bookout, Kristen Schwartz, Lon Smith, Jim Brousseau, Jessi Kishiyama, Margaret Durkee, Sara Beckman

Signed in Guests: Kelly McMahon, Zachary McMahon, Hailey McMahon, Michael Foor, Virginia Heikka

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment: None

Motion by Faro supported by Gutierrez to approve the minutes of the special meeting of February 26, 2025. All Ayes. Carried 7-0

Motion by Burdette supported by Gutierrez to approve the minutes of the special meeting closed session of February 26, 2025. All Ayes. Carried 7-0

Motion by Prior supported by Gutierrez to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 26, 2025. All Ayes. Carried 7-0

Motion by Heikka supported by Burdette to approve the bills/reimbursement of expenses. All Ayes. Carried 7-0

Motion by Faro supported by Heikka to approve the purchase of a 71 passenger bus from Midwest Transit Equipment as detailed in Attachment A. All Ayes. Carried 7-0

The Board held a conversation with Ryan McMahon, Assistant Superintendent, as part of the Superintendent Selection Process

Motion by Faro supported by Heikka to authorize the Personnel and Leadership Committee to enter into negotiations with Ryan McMahon to become the next superintendent of the Milan Area Schools, subject to an employment contract approved by the Board. All Ayes. Carried 7-0

Public Comment: None

Student Board Member Comments:

- Heikka shared that MAS spring sports are underway, and encouraged the community to support our boys golf, girls soccer, baseball, softball, track and field, water polo, and tennis teams. She further noted that team schedules are available via Facebook and other online platforms.

Assistant Superintendent Comments were heard on the following topics:

- Distribution and Explanation of Building Internal Reviews and Comprehensive Needs Assessments (CNA)

Superintendent Comments were heard on the following topics:

- Congratulations to MHS Productions Seussical the Musical Cast and Crew
- MMS Productions Dates for Wizard of Oz
- Spring Sports
- March 28th Staff Professional Development Day
- Follow-up on May 4th Big Red Chat

Board Member Comments:

- Prior wished good luck to the boys' swim team as they head to States for preliminaries, and expressed confidence that they will make it to the finals. She encouraged the community to volunteer and support spring sports teams. She also expressed excitement about the upcoming school play and her plans to attend. Additionally, she thanked Mr. Adams for serving as MC at the GMACF Gala on March 1st, recognizing the significant support GMACF provides to special activities in the school district. Finally, she acknowledged concerns she's heard from community members about changes in funding at the state and federal levels, and assured the community that she is monitoring the situation closely, with updates from Mr. Girbach. She emphasized the board's commitment to making informed decisions in response to these changes.
- Heikka echoed good luck wishes to the boys' swim team and noted the long tradition of success in the Milan swim program. She shared her experience attending the "Paddock vs. Symons" staff basketball game, praising the joy and excitement of the event. She also wished good luck to all spring athletes, acknowledging nerves around tryouts but encouraging them to have fun. Heikka expressed deep concern about the potential impact of federal and state budget cuts, particularly the reduction of Department of Education staff, which could significantly affect vulnerable students. She encouraged the community to contact their representatives about these proposed cuts, stressing the importance of protecting education and student services.
- Faro discussed the Michigan House's recently passed K-12 school aid budget, which includes reductions amounting to \$5 billion in cuts. He detailed specific anticipated cuts, including \$1 billion from at-risk funding, \$900 million from school lunches, \$600 million from Great Start Readiness Programs (GRSP), \$79 million from ISD operations, \$50 million from bilingual education, and \$40 million from vocational education. He expressed deep concern over how swiftly these cuts were approved and questioned the reasoning behind them, given their potential to significantly impact students statewide. He assured the community that the board will continue to monitor legislative developments and encouraged constituents to reach out to their representatives. He also welcomed Nancy Tetens as the interim principal of Paddock Elementary School, beginning March 17. Additionally, he noted the upcoming teacher contract negotiations and the need to coordinate with the MEA to establish a school calendar for the next academic year.
- Burdette shared his first experience attending a Big Red Board Chat on March 4, and thanked the community members who attended for sharing their invaluable feedback. He also attended the high school wind ensemble's performance at the MSBOA Band Festival

at Woodhaven High School, expressing his admiration for the students and Mr. Lopez. Lastly, he encouraged attending the high school's production of *Seussical*, and highlighted how heartwarming it was to see high school performers engaging with young children by signing autographs and taking photos.

- Gutierrez echoed concerns regarding the proposed state and federal budget cuts, noting that many people have formally and informally inquired about the board's response, and acknowledged the uncertainty and shock surrounding the proposed changes. She reassured the community that the board is engaged in regular discussions with colleagues across various networks. She expressed confidence in Mr. McMahon's ability to navigate these challenges, citing his extensive experience and expertise in school funding. Looking ahead, she noted the upcoming spring break and wished students, staff, and families a restful and safe break.
- Meray praised the MHS production of *Seussical*, noting the students' continuous ability to exceed expectations with each performance. She encouraged the community to attend the show and extended her best wishes to all spring sports athletes, reminding students to enjoy the experience in addition to striving for excellence. Meray then expressed gratitude to district staff for their hard work thus far and acknowledged the challenges posed by the many staff transitions. She thanked staff for their work in preparing for parent/teacher conferences. Lastly, she reiterated concerns over the proposed cuts to the Department of Education staff, describing them as deeply irresponsible, with no clear strategy for how to support students in the wake of the cuts. She also urged the community to contact representatives to demand accountability and advocate for students' needs.
- Cislo affirmed the board's commitment to addressing changes and challenges at the state and federal levels. He acknowledged the role of various organizations in helping navigate these transitions and thanked the community for their support of the sinking fund. He expressed appreciation for the feedback received throughout the superintendent selection process and thanked Mr. Faro, Ms. Gutierrez, and Mr. Burdette for leading the recent Big Red Board Chat regarding the superintendent selection. He then recounted a conversation with a community member while attending *Seussical*, who expressed gratitude for his student's positive experiences and outcomes from being an MAS student. Cislo also described the joy he observes in the Rotunda after each play, emphasizing how such moments capture the essence of the Milan school community. He commended Mr. Girbach for fostering this culture over his 17-year tenure and praised Mr. McMahon's presentation and dedication to the district in an era when many superintendencies are open. He concluded by expressing his excitement to have Mr. McMahon as the next superintendent.
- Prior expressed gratitude to the FFA and National Honor Society students, along with their advisors, Mr. Federer and Mr. Hoskins, for their volunteer work at the GMCF Gala. She praised their professionalism and dedication, noting that some students stayed for six hours, greatly contributing to the event's success.

Time of Adjournment: 8:48 p.m.