PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING

CALL TO ORDER-President Paul Gayler called to order the public hearing on the 2022 budget.

Dr. Snyder announced that any member of the public can comment about the budget. There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT-Mrs. Hummel moved to adjourn the September 21, 2021 public budget hearing, Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with a vote of 4-0.

BOARD MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER- President Paul Gayler called the September 21, 2021 meeting of the Board of School Trustees to order at 4:00 p.m. Board Members present were Mr. Miller, Mrs. Hummel, and Mr. Varner. Others in attendance included Dr. Jayson Snyder, Superintendent, Dr. Robby Goodman, Assistant Superintendent, Josh Yoder, Director of Business Services, Jeff Palmer, Director of Buildings and Grounds and Tim Shelly, Board Attorney. Not in attendance was Mr. Eash, School Board Vice President.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT-Dr. Snyder stated that today will be the first reading of both new and updated board policies. All of these new and updated policies come as recommendations from NEOLA legal services. They were reviewed by Mr. Hesser as Middlebury Community Schools legal counsel. This year we also had a policy review committee, so thank you to Dr. Goodman, board member Mrs. Hummel and board member Mr. Eash, for helping us review all of these policies. It was a lot of time. Thank you to Warrick and Boyne for helping us review these policies as well. I'll quickly review just some highlights as a first reading. Board members have had these packets for a few weeks to review. And just a few things of note, there is a replacement policy based on legal updates related to non-discrimination and anti-harassment in the workplace. Specifically, this looks at discrimination based on disability. There is employment of professional staff related to anti nepotism. So relatives of staff members may be employed but cannot be supervised directly by a relative. This is for professional and support staff. Another update would be nursing mothers. So this is based on federal law, the school as an extension of the board, will take necessary steps to support any staff member who decides to breastfeed by providing additional unpaid break times as needed for employees on corporation premises. This is not a change in practice. As I understand we've made this accommodation before, but now it will be added to board policy. Updates related to promotion, placement and retention of student grade levels. There are revisions to policies related to inventory of property records and for accounting systems and capital assets. Revised policies related to food service programming, and then there is a revised policy related to bus drivers and cellular device usage. So this new policy will prohibit bus drivers from operating or even holding a cellular device while operating a motor vehicle. And the exception to that would be the use of a cellular device to call 911 for an actual emergency
situation. Again, these are just some highlights board members have been provided all the details related to these updates and the additions and the revisions to the policies. Again, thanks to board members Hummel and Eash and our legal counsel from Warrick and Boyne. This is just a first reading for informational purposes. And we will revisit this at a later date.

EXPRESSIONS FROM PATRONS – The following patrons expressed concerns as noted:

Dana Clark- Director of Human Resources for Middlebury Community Schools. I started right at the beginning of Covid and have worked alongside all of our Middlebury schools employees, as well as parents during this pandemic. Every day last year I spoke with parents, coaches, teachers and staff who were struggling and just wanted the kids to be in school. Our district had to make a choice and chose masks. By doing that we are choosing the kids. Today we have 121 kids that are close contacts, 54 are in quarantine at home because they are home based exposure. 25 of those are at home because their exposure was unmasked. 42 were able to stay in school. If we were mask optional, we would just today be sending 42 kids home for 10 days. I am so proud to part of a school system that is doing what is right for our kids and keeping them in school.

Kirk Hertsel-Praised Dr. Snyder and the school board for making tough decisions. Concerns about masking not being about Covid. Talked about alternatives to public education.

Tim Luken-Former teacher at Middlebury Community Schools as well as Co-President of the Middlebury Teacher’s Association. In my time at MCS I have not always agreed with every decision that the board has made. However, I quickly realized that I was looking through things through the teacher’s side of things. The board has to look at making tough decisions as they affect the community, teachers, staff, students and parents as well as looking out for the financial health of the school. I applaud the board for making tough decisions and for always putting the students first.

Jenny Dibley-Spoke about changing the start time of the board meetings.

Amy Aparicio-I am a Spanish teacher at Northridge High School. The negativity this year has been very difficult. However, I love teaching and at the end of the day I remind myself that we are here for the students. I remember they are watching every adult around them and hope that I am being a positive influence on them. I am thankful to work for a great school district and let’s keep putting the students first.

Lane Detweiler-Questioned mask mandate being tied to funding. Spoke about dislike of masks and questioned quarantining. Concerns at the high school.

Dr. Snyder responded-Confirming that there is no funding attached to the decision for temporary mask requirement.

Aaron Scholl-Less than 10% of students are using the religious exemption. I did not think the decision to mask was for the best however after seeing that small percentage, it was the best decision for the majority of the students. Thoughts about putting pressure at the state level to end masking and remove contact tracing.
CONSENT AGENDA –

- Minutes from the August 24, 2021 School Board Meeting
- Claims
- Donations
- Personnel

EMPLOYMENT:

Northridge High School
CERTIFIED: Lisa Milanese, Special Education Department Co-Chair
(Split 50%/50% with Jessica Brewer) Effective Date: September 8, 2021

Northridge Middle School
CERTIFIED: Gabriel Beck, 7th Grade ‘A’ Team Boys Basketball Coach
  Replacing: Shawn Baker Start Date: October 4, 2021
CLASSIFIED: Steve Merkle, 12 Month Custodian
  Replacing: James Snyder
  Start Date: September 22, 2021
CLASSIFIED: Joey Rowan, 7th Grade ‘B’ Boys Basketball Coach
  Start Date: October 4, 2021

Middlebury Elementary School
CLASSIFIED: Minyi Forte, Cafeteria Worker, 3.5 hrs/day
  Replacing: Jolinda Dodson Start Date: 9/22/21

Orchard View Elementary School
CLASSIFIED: Mary Wengerd, Mixed Ability Paraprofessional, 6.5 hrs/day
  (pending passed ParaPro Test)
  Replacing: Laura Pletcher Start Date: September 23, 2021

York Elementary School
CLASSIFIED: Sarah Tarnowski, Temporary Media Assistant, 7.5 hrs/day
  Replacing: Paige Palmer Start Date: October 1, 2021

Administration/Transportation
CLASSIFIED: Bart Rich, Maintenance/Bus Mechanic
  Replacing: Ryan Spencer Start Date: September 22, 2021
CLASSIFIED: Sara O’Haver, Substitute Bus Monitor/Bus Driver Trainee
  Start Date: September 22, 2021
CLASSIFIED: Christy Northam, Substitute Bus Monitor/Bus Driver Trainee
  Start Date: September 22, 2021

RESIGNATION:

Northridge High School
CLASSIFIED: Mike (Steven) Miller, Assistant Baseball Coach
  Effective Date: September 7, 2021
Northridge Middle School
CLASSIFIED:  Tonia Amaya, Cafeteria Worker, 7 hrs/day
Effective Date: September 10, 2021

Jefferson Elementary School
CLASSIFIED:  Dawn Yoder, Cafeteria Monitor
Effective Date: September 8, 2021

York Elementary School
CLASSIFIED:  Paige Walters, Speech Language Pathologist
Effective Date: October 15, 2021
CLASSIFIED:  Linda Puckett, Building Secretary
Effective Date: October 1, 2021

Administration
CLASSIFIED:  Autumn Gray, Technology Administrative Assistant
Effective Date: September 30, 2021

TRANSFER:
Northridge Middle School
CLASSIFIED:  Erica Beachy, Cafeteria Worker, 6 hrs/day, to:
Cafeteria Worker, 7 hrs/day
Replacing: Tonia Amaya
Effective Date: September 12, 2021
CLASSIFIED:  Cathy Heign, Cafeteria Worker, 4 hrs/day, to:
Cafeteria Worker, 6 hrs/day
Replacing: Erica Beachy
Effective Date: September 16, 2021
CLASSIFIED:  James Snyder, Custodian at Northridge Middle School, to:
Custodian at Northridge High School
Replacing: Calvin Holds
Effective Date: September 13, 2021

EMERGENCY LEAVE:
Jefferson Elementary School
CLASSIFIED:  Juanita Friesen, Building Secretary
September 17, 2021 – 8 hours

Middlebury Elementary School
CERTIFIED:  Kelly Jantzi, Special Education Teacher
September 17, 2021 – 1 day
CERTIFIED:  Lori Hochstetler, Math Coach
September 20, 2021 – 1 day
September 21, 2021 – ½ day
CLASSIFIED:  Crystal Christner, Speech Assistant
September 17, 2021 – 5 hours
Mr. Varner moved to approve the consent agenda as presented, and Mrs. Hummel seconded the motion. Motion approved 4-0.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF TRANSPORTATION ATTRACTION & REFERRAL BONUSES-**

Dr. Snyder stated that we are recommending the approval of monetary attraction bonuses that will assist our transportation department in the recruitment of new bus drivers. This would be a $2,000 bonus that will be paid in two installments out of our transportation budget, half at the time of new employment after training and half at the conclusion of the current school year. Additionally, in order to show appreciation for our current drivers and also provide them with the opportunity to help with our driver shortage, while benefiting financially, we are going to offer a $2,000 referral bonus. If a current Middlebury Community Schools driver successfully refers someone who has been hired to be a driver, this referral bonus would also be paid out of the transportation budget, half at the time that the new driver starts and half at the conclusion of the current school year. Attraction and referral bonuses will be offered until the conclusion of the current calendar year which is December 31, 2021. It is a challenge everywhere to recruit bus drivers.

Mr. Miller moved to approve the transportation attraction and referral bonuses as presented, Mrs. Hummel seconded the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DONATIONS TO SCHOOLS-**

Dr. Snyder presented the donations. We are recommending the approval of multiple donations. We have a donation from Weiland Designs in Goshen for $4,800 worth of furniture for the Aspire center at North Ridge High School. We also have two donations to Jefferson Elementary from the Jefferson PTO. One of these is for $794.32 to be used for student birthday books. The other is for $2,000 to be used for the purchase of new supplies for the Learning Lab at Jefferson Elementary. We also had a donation of $3,080 from Joel Pladson and the other employees at Starfleet trucking. Employees collected money at Starfleet trucking and they are wanting to donate this to be used to purchase school supplies for elementary students who might have a financial need. The money would be split equally between our four elementary schools to purchase supplies that would then be provided directly to the students. Additionally, we have a $4,000 donation from the community foundation in Elkhart County. This is for band materials and band lessons from Elkhart municipal band foundation. This is at Northridge High School. And then finally we had a $4,000 donation from Pepsi bottling to Northridge High School as part of an athletics rebate. So a lot of donations and we definitely appreciate the generosity from Weiland Designs, the Jefferson Elementary PTO, the employees at Starfleet trucking, Pepsi bottling and the community foundation of Elkhart County.

Mrs. Hummel moved to approve the donations as presented, Mr. Miller seconded the motion. Motion approved 4-0.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS-None**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF FIELD TRIPS-Dr. Goodman reviewed the list of field trips with board members.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE-Dr. Snyder would like to mention that this Friday's home football game against Northwood has been selected as the channel 46 Game of the Week. So I know that's a rivalry game this Friday at home. We'd also like to wish Karisa Dyer good luck. She is a sophomore on our girl’s golf team who qualified for the regionals on Friday at Noble Hawk golf course. Best of luck to Karisa!”
ANNOUNCEMENT OF TRAVEL – Dr. Goodman reviewed the list of travel with board members.

EXPRESSIONS FROM BOARD MEMBERS –

Mr. Varner-Pass
Mr. Miller-Pass
Mrs. Hummel-I wanted to just really focus on gratitude. I think the past couple of weeks have been rough for a lot of us and thinking about what we're grateful for often can help us regain perspective. I first wanted to thank the administrators and staff at the schools, we had the opportunity to do the annual touring of the schools. And it was so much fun. It was, I think, very fulfilling and much needed. So to see the kids laughing and the joy, not just with the students, but the teachers. They really are our rock stars. It was a lot of fun to get to see what they do each and every day. And then, kind of similar, last Friday, I was able to go on the field trip with the kindergarteners from Orchard View to Roberts Farm. That was that was a trip, literally, so much fun. These little kindergarteners, we did a tricycle race, they beat me, but it was a good time. But just really thankful for some of those experiences and seeing that some of the tough decisions we're making are having a positive impact.
Mr. Gayler-I would say as well that the tours of the schools were outstanding, we have amazing teachers and staff who have really gotten creative in these tough times with their teaching and engaging the kids. Coming from somebody who honestly doesn’t understand education as well as not having the patience and talent to be a teacher, it really is amazing. The teachers that we have, the staff, the cafeteria staff were all being positive influences with the kids. That is really what we need right now. A big thank you to all of the schools we visited, it was a great experience.

OTHER BUSINESS—None

ADJOURNMENT –

Mrs. Hummel moved to adjourn the September 21, 2021 school board meeting and move to executive session, Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with a vote of 4-0 at 4:42p.m. The next scheduled school board meeting will be on October 5, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. at the Administration Center.

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Paul Gayler, President

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Mitch Miller, Secretary

__________________________________________
Gregg Eash, Vice President

__________________________________________
Kate Hummel, Member

__________________________________________
Michael Varner, Member