



**Doyle Center for Professional Development  
7273 Wing Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48301**

**MINUTES FROM THE STUDY SESSION, REGULAR MEETING AND CLOSED SESSION  
OF THE BLOOMFIELD HILLS SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**October 28, 2024  
6:00 p.m.**

**I. Call to Order**

**A. Call to Order**

Meagan Hill, President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**B. Attendance**

Tareq Falah, Vice President, took attendance, and the board members constituting a quorum were:

Meagan Hill, President  
Tareq Falah, Vice President  
Paul Kolin, Treasurer  
Michelle Southward, Trustee  
John VanGemert, Trustee

Members of the district's administration present include:

Todd Bidlack, Assistant Superintendent of Learning Services  
Rebecca Catherincchia, Executive Administrator  
Sarah Fairman, Executive Director of Learning Services  
Karen Huyghe, Director of Communications  
Jacob McDermott, Director of Maintenance and Operations  
Keith McDonald, Deputy Superintendent  
Kandice Moynihan, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services  
Rick West, Superintendent

**II. Study Session**

**A. Pine Lake Cooperative Agreement Report**

Kelly Hyer and Chris Frey of West Bloomfield Parks & Recreation Commission provided an annual update as part of the cooperative agreement entered into for Pine Lake Park. The Township provided an overview of the master plan to date, and a summary of the public feedback to the survey which indicated building playgrounds and developing trails were the top responses.

The Township presented their long-term and phasing plan for the twenty-one acre property, which is projected to take at least until 2029. Trail construction, ballfield expansion, parking lot repairs, and playspace. The current lease agreement is for twenty years. The Township has asked BHS to consider an additional five years so the master plan can be executed. Superintendent West indicated he would be amenable to discussing with the Board Finance and Operations Committee the possibility of bringing a first amendment to the cooperative agreement for board action at an upcoming meeting.

## **B. Board Committee, Liaison, and Representative Reports**

### Board Intern Program Committee Update:

Ayah Maskoun and Adeline Sherman spoke on behalf of the Board Intern Program sharing their perspectives of a lack of cross connection between buildings as an area for improvement. A suggestion was made that BHHS could begin a volunteer program modeled after the IA district-wide, which would encourage collaboration between upper and lower levels, especially in the area of co-curricular activities and offerings. The students shared that they would like to focus their efforts on increasing student knowledge about what the high school offers and to create stronger relationships with the elementary and middle schools. Ideas were shared surrounding communication on offerings, creating a volunteer program, and considering interest based workshops for younger students.

The students shared points of pride which included students who are part of Neurology Youth Advocacy Association about the importance of brain health, started by students at BHHS. The students also shared there is a club called Student Wing aimed to involve high school students with civic engagement and government, and most recently signed 50 students up to vote in the election. Two club bands called BH Factor and Raspberry have been out performing at local community events, representing creativity and passion within our district.

The board members asked what could be done to support their initiatives. The administration noted they would review the proposal to ensure feasibility and to avoid any duplication of efforts. Next steps include Superintendent West setting up a meeting with the students for further discussion.

### Curriculum and Instruction Committee Update:

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee met on October 14, 2024 and reviewed the fall assessment calendar, and discussed how the data is being used to identify students who would benefit from Tier I and Tier II supports including extended day learning. Learning Services is in the process of completing contracts and giving families information for services through Hoot Reading, Brainspring, Sylvan Learning Center and Varsity Tutors.

There was also discussion regarding aging musical instruments and the request for music staff to prepare an inventory of replacement needs over the next five years.

Learning Services has recommended a textbook adoption for AP Psych for the 2024-25 school year, as the current materials are outdated, and do not adequately prepare students for the assessments. The committee reviewed a summary of curriculum review, rationale, budget and textbook adoption timelines.

Finance and Operations Committee Update:

The Finance and Operations Committee met on October 17. Jennifer Chambers and Christy Mannino from Plante Moran presented the committee with an overview of the 23-24 audit results and presentation planned for the October 28 Board meeting. The district will receive an unmodified audit opinion of the financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2024 and an unmodified opinion of the federal programs audit. No audit findings or control deficiencies were identified.

Wellness center purchases, doors at Bloomin' East, and requests for additional funding for the dilapidated section of Way Elementary's roof were discussed. The roof repairs are a sinking fund expenditure. These items will be presented for board approval.

Strategic Planning Committee Update:

The Strategic Planning Committee met on October 15. The majority of the meeting was spent reviewing plans for the district's safety week planned for October 21-25, which is part of a national movement.

In response to inquiries the board is receiving, the superintendent shared that students have the right to wear keffiyehs, and that it is the administration that is responsible for providing oversight on dress codes and bullying.

**III. Reconvene**

**A. Call to Order**

Meagan Hill, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**B. Attendance**

Tareq Falah, Vice President, took attendance, and the board members constituting a quorum were:

Meagan Hill, President  
Tareq Falah, Vice President  
Paul Kolin, Treasurer  
Siva Kumar, Trustee  
Michelle Southward, Trustee  
John VanGemert, Trustee

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **IV. Special Recognition**

##### **A. Celebrating Success: College Board National Recognition**

Dan Hartley, Principal of Bloomfield Hills High School recognized Emmanuel Adewumi, Alexis Albert, and Gabriela Yi, for being recognized as a College Board National Program Scholar. The College Board National Recognition Program highlights sophomore and junior students who perform well in standardized tests including the SAT and AP exams, have strong grade point averages, and identify as Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, or Indigenous or Native.

#### **V. Administrative Appointments**

##### **A. Administrative Appointment of Susan Simms, Supervisor of Wing Lake Developmental Center**

Todd Bidlack, Assistant Superintendent of Learning Services, presented the recommendation to appoint Susan Simms as the Supervisor of the Wing Lake Developmental Center. Paul Kolin moved the Board of Education to appoint Susan Simms as the Supervisor of Wing Lake Developmental Center with an effective date of November 11, 2024. The motion was seconded by Tareq Falah.

Ayes: Meagan Hill, Tareq Falah, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

#### **VI. Superintendent's Report**

Rick West spoke about recent celebratory events including Men's Tennis Team winning State Championship; Band-O-Rama which showcases the musical talents of all band students from grades five through twelve; Re-Leaf Michigan which is a grant funded program and initiative donated twenty-five trees to the Nature Center; Make a Difference Day centered around donations through Read to a Child in support of Walt Whitman Elementary School in Pontiac, and the upcoming Bloomfield Hills High School Open House for rising freshmen and open to the community from 12-2pm on November 3.

The community was encouraged to register for Soup with the Superintendent on November 20 at 12pm at Booth, as well as join in for some seasonal sounds at the Music and Mingle event on December 20 at 10am at the Senior Center.

Bloomfield Hills Schools is bringing back the Distinguished Service Award, which is given annually to recognize extraordinary contributions and service by district staff members, community members, parents, Board members and alumni. The award will be given to a maximum of three individuals and presented at the Board of Education meeting this Spring. Teachers of the Year will be pulled from this pool of nominees - so everyone is encouraged to please nominate teachers, staff, and community members over the next month to be recognized. More information can be found on the district's webpage and in the weekly newsletter.

BHS hosted the Oakland Schools business office residency, as part of a countywide initiative to develop and grow the professional of school business officials. Kandice Moynihan and Christin Silagy were asked to put together a full day training on grants, which was well attended by the districts who are putting staff through the program.

**VII. Board President’s Report**

Meagan Hill announced that livestreaming for the board meeting would resume in the coming weeks, due to replacing outdated equipment and infrastructure as part of the bond work.

The district was commended for being one of the districts in Michigan who participates in America’s Safe Schools Week. The activities, communications, and resources provided to help raise awareness about creating safe and positive educational environments for our students and staff were all appreciated by the board and the families.

Carolyn Noble represented BHS at the Michigan Association of School Boards Delegate Assembly on October 24, which is an annual convening of school boards across the state who help to decide MASB’s positions on a wide variety of issues affecting education.

There are three trustee spots on the ballot on November 5 for four year terms beginning January 1, 2025. Siva Kumar will not be running again, and Dr. Michelle Southward and John VanGemert are seeking re-election for a second term.

**VIII. Public Comment**

No requests for public comment were received.

**IX. Consent Agenda**

**A. Consent Agenda**

Tareq Falah moved the Board of Education to approve the recommendations detailed in the Consent Agenda, as presented. The motion was seconded by John VanGemert.

**B. Request to Approve Minutes from the Study Session and Regular Meeting of September 23, 2024**

The Board was moved to approve minutes from the Study Session and Regular Meeting of September 23, 2024, as presented.

**C. Request to Approve Disbursement Reports**

The Board was moved to approve the disbursement reports, as presented.

**D. Request to Approve Financial Reports**

The Board was moved to approve the financial reports, as presented.

**E. Request to Approve Personnel Action Items**

The Board was moved to approve the personnel actions, as presented.

Ayes: Tareq Falah, Meagan Hill, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

**X. Special Reports**

**A. Annual Financial Audit Presentation**

State law requires the Board of Education to have its financial statements audited each year. The Board engaged Plante Moran, PLLC as its independent public accounting firm to audit the District's financial statements. Jennifer Chambers from Plante Moran conducted the audit of the district's books for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024. The district will receive an unmodified audit opinion of the financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2024 and an unmodified opinion of the federal programs audit. No audit findings or control deficiencies were identified. The presentation and financials are linked to the public agenda package which can be accessed on the Board of Education's webpage.

**XI. Board Business**

**A. Request to Accept and File the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Financial Report**

Siva Kumar moved the Board of Education to accept the Financial Statements for Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2024, as audited and presented by Plante Moran. The motion was seconded by Michelle Southward.

Ayes: Tareq Falah, Meagan Hill, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

**B. Request to Approve Purchase of AP Psychology Textbooks**

Siva Kumar moved the Board of Education to approve the AP Psychology textbooks in the amount of \$49,674.96, as presented. The motion was seconded by Michelle Southward.

Ayes: Tareq Falah, Meagan Hill, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

**C. Request to Award Contracts for Bloomfield Hills High School Wellness Center Fitness and Weight Equipment**

Tareq Falah moved the Board of Education to approve the purchase of weight and exercise equipment for the newly constructed Wellness Center at the Bloomfield Hills School. The purchase of this equipment is to Design2Wellness through the Omnia Partners Consortium for \$256,384.03, and the 2020 Bond Funds will be utilized for the purchase.

Ayes: Tareq Falah, Meagan Hill, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

**D. Request to Approve Change Order for Way Elementary Roofing and Repairs**

Siva Kumar moved the Board of Education to approve the change order and contract to Schena Roofing for roof decking repairs for Way Elementary to be scheduled for Summer 2025 in the amount of \$125,440, inclusive of 10% contingency and increased bond cost, to be paid from the Sinking Fund. The motion was seconded by Michelle Southward.

Ayes: Tareq Falah, Meagan Hill, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

**E. Request to Approve Purchase of Doors for Bloomin' East**

John VanGemert moved the Board of Education to award the contract to Pontiac Ceiling and Partition for Bloomin East doors in the amount of \$52,938 funded from the Sinking Fund, resulting from additional state fire marshal requirements. The motion was seconded by Michelle Southward.

Ayes: Tareq Falah, Meagan Hill, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

**F. Request to Approve Amendments to Oakland County School Board Association's Bylaws**

John VanGemert moved the Board of Education to approve the amendments to the Oakland County School Board Association's bylaws, as presented. The motion was supported by Siva Kumar.

Ayes: Tareq Falah, Meagan Hill, Paul Kolin, Siva Kumar,  
Michelle Southward, John VanGemert

Nayes:

Motion Passed: 6/0

**XIII. Closed Session**

**A. Closed Session per MCL 15.268 Sections 8(a) and (k)**

Siva Kumar moved the Board of Education to convene a closed session in accordance with MCL 15.268 Section 8(k) to consider security planning to address existing threats or prevent potential threats to the safety of students and staff, and Section 8(a) to discuss the evaluation of the Superintendent. The motion was seconded by Michelle Southward. Meagan Hill conducted a roll call vote, with the six trustees present in favor. The motion passed 6/0.

The board members and Todd Bidlack, Rebecca Catherincchia, Sarah Fairman, Karen Huyghe, Keith McDonald, Kandice Moynihan, Patrick Sidge and Rick West of the administration went into closed session at 8:30 p.m. At 9:35 p.m. Section 8(k) was concluded and members from the administration were excused, with the exception of the Superintendent. The Board of Education reviewed and discussed the informal quarterly evaluation presented by Rick West under Section 8(a), before adjourning for the evening at 10:10 p.m.

**XIV. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned from the closed session at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Noble, Secretary  
Bloomfield Hills Schools  
Board of Education

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