

HARPER CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
EDUCATE • EMPOWER • EQUIP
Students for Life

BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA
6:00 PM – September 9, 2024, Meeting
Harper Creek Administration Building
7454 B Drive North, Battle Creek, MI 49014

<https://youtube.com/live/S3yQghO7TYk?feature=share>

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Beau Bess at 6:00 PM.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Bess led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.
- III. Roll Call: Mrs. Allwardt called the Roll. Present members – Mrs. Allwardt, Mr. Bess, Dr. Borders, Mr. Halverson, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Waterson. Student Board members – Sam Cook, Alex Stiltner, and Arabella Stanley.
- IV. Review and Approval of Agenda: There were no modifications to the agenda.
- V. Communications
 - A. President's Remarks: Mr. Bess welcomed everyone to the meeting. In addition, he welcomed the new student Board members; eleventh grader Alex Stiltner, eleventh grader Sam Cook, and twelfth grader Arabella Stanley. Also, Mr. Bess mentioned the preparations and events of Homecoming week including the PowderPuff football game on Thursday. The Middle School Carnival on Friday and the parade and football game. This week is fun for the whole community.
 - B. Administration: Mr. Ridgeway also discussed the Homecoming events including the parade at 5:00 PM. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the Battle Creek Area Joint Board meeting to discuss legislative updates on Monday, September 23, 2024, at 5:30 PM at Lakeview High School. Next, Mr. Ridgeway stated that Count Day will be on October 2, 2024. Also, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the van leases that include two two-passenger vans. Another item Mr. Ridgeway communicated was the nepotism notification; Stacy Hendon, Transportation Director notified Mr. Ridgeway that her daughter is working as bus aid. The position is vital for the safe

transport of students. Lastly, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that he will be attending the Superintendent Conference next week in Lansing.

- C. Board Secretary: There is nothing to report at this time.
- D. Student Board Member Report: New member Sam Cook discussed the new cell phone policy at the high school. He stated that students are more engaged and lively at lunch and in classes. He stated that students are more engaged with teachers and can see the long-term benefits of this policy.

VI. District Updates

- A. Curriculum: Mrs. Williams discussed the State Assessment results from the spring of 2024. Also, Mrs. Williams discussed the Student academic goals that the district would need to vote on as an action item to qualify for grant money to pay for the NWEA test, administered three times a year to track student growth. The Board will be made aware of progress at mid-year and end of the year. Also, Mrs. Williams stated that the NWEA testing fall window opened on September 4, 2024, for all students in grades K-8th. In addition, Mrs. Williams discussed the continuing support for our math and ELA curriculum implementation. Lastly, Mrs. Williams discussed supporting teachers, making course corrections, teacher identity, and engagement strategies were all important in the PLC process and in state assessment results.
- B. Facility: Mr. Robinson discussed the new District Supervisor from DM Burr, Deryck Cunningham. Mr. Robinson believes he will bring a new energy. Another item Mr. Robinson addressed was the completion of the crosswalk. The crosswalk is being used by students and it improves the safety of crossing the street. Also, Mr. Robinson discussed that the District's new courier truck has arrived and is in use. Lastly, Mr. Robinson discussed the new doors at the administration building and the secured vestibule project. The doors are in and the vestibule is awaiting the camera system.
- C. Finance: Mrs Obermyer submitted monthly financial reports. Mrs. Obermyer stated that last week the District received a clean audit with zero findings. The variance was less than 1%. \$630,000.00 was added to the fund balance. The balance is now at 15.3%.
- D. Technology: Mr. Maynard updated the Board on the phone system that experienced issues last week. The system is working currently but the definite cause was not determined. Mr. Maynard stated that new servers and storage arrived. The tech department is working on identifying a time to get them installed and begin the configuration.

The process will be an ongoing process to migrate data from the existing systems onto the new ones. Lastly, Mr. Maynard discussed the notification/clock project that will begin at the middle school.

- VII. Comments Related to Agenda Items: There were no comments related to agenda items.
- VIII. Consent Agenda - All items on this consent agenda were previously considered by the Harper Creek Board of Education and are recommended by Central Office, and will be acted upon in a single roll call vote of the Board. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a board member so requests, in which event the matter shall be removed from the consent agenda and considered as a separate item.
- A. Approve the General Fund checks, School Services Fund checks (Food Service), and Student/School Activities Fund Checks, in accordance with the list discussed.
1. Approve August 12, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes
 2. Approve September 5, 2024, Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion by Mr. Smith, supported by Mrs. Wallace.

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the consent agenda as follows:

Approve the General Fund checks, School Services Fund checks (School Lunch), and Student/School Activities Fund checks, in accordance with the list discussed.

Approve the following minutes as reviewed:

- Approves August 12, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes
- Approves September 5, 2024, Budget Meeting Minutes

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Bes Y, Dr. Borders Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mr. Smith Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs Waterson Y, Mr. Halverson Y.

Motion Carries: 7-0.

IX. Information and Discussion

- A. School Safety: Mr. Ridgeway stated that the safety committee debriefed after the home football game. Students are not allowed to bring backpacks to the game and this will be communicated at the entrance to to students. Mr. Ridgeway discussed the notification/clock project that will start soon. Also, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the phone systems that were down last week, but now are

operational. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the safety committee debriefed after the tragedy in Georgia. They discussed reunifications and lockdown drills.

- B. New Hires: Mr. Ridgeway recommends hiring Heath Otto for High School Social Studies at a BA 20 at the first pay in January and long-term sub until then.
- C. Communications and Marketing Vendor: Mr. Ridgeway discussed a more robust communication utilizing communication and marketing outside vendor and a part-time communications internal position. Mr. Ridgeway discussed this approach stating that the gain would be people with expertise in several areas versus one person carrying the load.
- D. Harper Creek Center for Academic Achievement: Mrs. Meeker, director of Harper Creek Center for Academic Achievement, presented the idea of expanding the program to include more students. HCCAA has added a special education teacher which makes the growth of the program possible. Students from other districts could be accepted into the program using student release and not school of choice. Mr. Ridgeway recommends that the Board approve the Harper Creek Center for Academic Achievement expansion with students released from other districts on a case-by-case basis.
- E. Student Achievement Goals: The district is required to have a student achievement goal approved by the board to qualify for grant money to pay for the NWEA test, administered three times a year to track student growth. Mr. Ridgeway and Mrs. Williams wrote a goal to be simple and easy for all to understand. The proposed goal is as follows:
 - F. 80% of students DK-8th will show a minimum of one year's worth of growth as measured by the NWEA test from fall to spring. The Board will be made aware of progress at mid-year and end of the year.
 - G. Band Trip to New Orleans: November 4 – 8, 2024 – The high school band has planned a trip with Bennett Travel to visit New Orleans. The students will travel by charter bus. Students will visit the New Orleans Tour and Cemetery, the WWII Museum, a swamp tour, and a Steamboat Dinner Cruise. The band will perform while touring different locations.
- X. Comments From the Audience:

- A. Parker Arnold – spoke on inclusion for all students. Mr. Arnold stated that an inclusive curriculum that represents diversity, staff training, and mental health resources are needed for students. Mr. Arnold also stated that inclusive policies should be adopted.
- B. Kaylah Eddy – spoke on the inclusion of all children as an educator she stated that our mission to Educate, Equip, and Empower is for all students.
- C. Amy Smith- spoke on the role of a teacher is to create bonds and relationships with students. She stated that inclusive messages are necessary for students and staff.

D. Mr. Bess read a statement:

At Harper Creek Community Schools, we are committed to promoting inclusion, respect, kindness, and civil dialogue. We recently received a resignation from a teacher regarding placement of a flag in his classroom and we have accepted that resignation. As school board president, I'd like to say we appreciate his years of service and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

As a school board, we respect freedom of expression and exchange of ideas in a civil, thoughtful manner. We do not shy away from difficult issues in our schools. Our board policy says these conversations about difficult subjects should be driven by students with the knowledge and consent of their parents. Such conversations should relate to the curriculum and topics they are being taught in the classroom. As a board, we believe this policy creates the safest environment for our students.

Our board wants to take this opportunity to thank our superintendent for his handling of this matter. We support him and his handling of this situation with professionalism, compassion, and thoughtfulness as he has sought to ensure our board guidelines and policies are properly enacted.

Beau Bess

Board President

Harper Creek Community Schools

XI. ACTION

A. New Hires:

Motion by Mr. Smith, supported by Dr. Borders.

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the following New Hires:

Heath Otto, High School Social Studies Teacher, BA20, University of Olivet (long term Sub 9/3-12/31 then BA20 starting first pay in January).

As discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mr. Smith Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Dr. Borders Y, Mr. Bess Y.

Motion Carried 7-0.

B. Harper Creek Center for Academic Achievement:

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mr. Smith,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the Harper Creek Center for Academic Achievement expansion to allow new out-of-district students to be accepted into the program as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mr. Bess Y, Mr. Smith Y, Dr. Borders Y.

Motion Carried 7-0.

C. Student Achievement Goals:

Motion by Mr. Smith, supported by Dr. Borders,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the Student Achievement Goals as presented: 80% of students in grades DK-8 will show a minimum of one year's worth of growth as measured by the NWEA test from fall to spring as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Waterson Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Bess Y, Mr. Smith Y, Dr. Borders Y, Mrs. Wallace Y.

Motion Carried: 7-0.

D. Band Trip to New Orleans – November 2024:

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Dr. Borders,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the band trip to New Orleans November 4-8, 2024 with Bennett Travel.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Waterson Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Bess Y, Mr. Smith Y, Dr. Borders Y, Mrs. Wallace Y.

Motion Carried: 7-0.

XII. Items for the Next Meeting: Open lunch report and band trailer information

XIII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 PM.

This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Education in public for the purpose of conducting the School District's business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time for public participation during the meeting as indicated on the agenda.