

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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January 1, 2020

**MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE
KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Kalamazoo Public Schools will be held on **Thursday, January 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 1220 Howard Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Jennie Hill, Secretary
Board of Education

- ❖ Please contact the Superintendent's Office in advance of the meeting if auxiliary aids or services for individuals with disabilities are needed.
- ❖ Official minutes of Kalamazoo Public Schools Board of Education open meetings are available for inspection within eight working days of the meeting at the Superintendent's Office, 1220 Howard Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education Meeting
1220 Howard Street
January 9, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.

A G E N D A

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. Attendance**
- IV. Announcements and Recognitions**
- V. Election of Officers**
- VI. Committee Reports/School Reports**
- VII. Correspondence**
- VIII. Consent Calendar Items**
 - A. Minutes**
December 19, 2019 Regular Meeting
 - B. Business and Financial Reports**
 - C. Personnel Items**
Personnel Changes
 - D. Other**
- IX. Persons Requesting to Address the Board (3 minutes individual limit)**
- X. Reports and Recommendations**
 - A. Resolution for Regional Millage Renewal
- XI. Other Business**
- XII. Comments by Trustees/Superintendent**
- XIII. Closed Session (if needed)**
- XIV. Next Regular Board of Education Meeting: Thursday, January 30, 2020**

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
1220 Howard Street
December 19, 2019 – Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order

President Sholler-Barber called the December 19, 2019 regular Board of Education meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 1220 Howard Street.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Attendance

Board members present: Ken Greschak, TiAnna Harrison, Jennie Hill, Jermaine Jackson, Tandy Moore, Jason Morris, and Patti Sholler-Barber. Interim Superintendent Gary Start was also present.

IV. Announcements and Recognitions

Director of Marketing and Communications Susan Coney presented Parkwood Upjohn Elementary School Turnaround students: Josiah Lee (unable to attend), first grade; Mi'Quise Kent (unable to attend), second grade; Canaan Spears, third grade; and Maliah Brenner, fifth grade.

Also in attendance and introduced by Ms. Coney were Mr. Matthew Murray, principal of Parkwood Upjohn Elementary School, and staff members Kari Strand, Beth Hoekstra, Denise Jordan, and Marie Williams. The students' parents and family members in the audience were also recognized.

President Sholler-Barber asked permission from her board members so that she could read a statement into the record.

Disposition: Voice vote: motion carried, 7-yes, 0-no, 0-abstentions.

Over the past few days, there has been shock, dismay, anger, and frustration over misperceptions that Kalamazoo Public Schools is not supportive of the LGBTQ+ community. This stems from a poorly worded communication to a local news organization, which asked about our diverse classroom libraries program. On behalf of the Board of Education, I sincerely apologize.

Not only do I apologize, let me affirm that we are and will remain a school district committed to inclusion, compassion, and acceptance.

This evening we will hear more about the diverse classroom libraries program. This program sprung from the realization that our classroom reading materials were not sufficiently reflective of our students.

The initial focus of that project was to increase the number of books 'by, for and of' people of color. This is a positive step given the racial makeup of our district. However, early this week it was communicated that we were limiting our definition of diversity, and more specifically, we were excluding LGBTQ+ literature based on the reaction of only a few parents. It was

always our intention to broaden the program after the initial phase of adding more racial inclusive literature to the classrooms.

I want to assure everyone that KPS has not removed any of the over 300 books with LGBTQ+ themes from its school libraries.

KPS officials have already met with a representative from OutFront Kalamazoo, an LGBTQ+ advocacy group, about providing training and resources to help KPS support its students. District representatives have also connected with experts in LGBTQ+ literature at Western Michigan University to help us with our efforts to expand the classroom libraries.

Please know it is not and has never been our intent to harm our students intentionally or by omission. We remain committed to having learning materials that are representative, reflective, and inclusive in an age-appropriate manner for our entire student population and to create safe learning spaces for all.

Thank you for your attention.

Board Comments

Trustee Moore stated that she wanted to expand these diverse libraries by adding more books to accommodate more diversity in our district.

Trustee Morris stated that he appreciated this community and their commitment to caring about KPS students.

Trustee Greschak stated that he was shocked when he read the letter because he knew it didn't reflect the values of the district. He noted that the document miscommunicated the intent and focus of the board and the district. Trustee Greschak explained that the intent of the diverse library project was to support students of color and to continue to move in the direction of more diversity. He recommended that there be a resolution from the board in support of students in the LGBTQ community and other diverse communities.

President Sholler-Barber stated that KPS has a chance to do better and expand the diverse classroom libraries. She noted that KPS would work with community experts to explore additional literature that is in the best interest of its students.

Trustee Harrison made a motion to have the resolution Trustee Greschak recommended go to the curriculum, evaluation, and policy committees to give this issue the time that it needs. She noted that after those committee meetings there would be a meeting of the whole board to discuss their recommendations

President Sholler-Barber stated that the committees would meet in January. She noted that she hoped there could be a resolution at the January 30 board meeting.

MOTION: Moved by Trustee Harrison, supported by Trustee Hill, to discuss a resolution in support of students in the LGBTQ+ community at the January committee meetings.

Disposition: Roll call vote: motion carried, 7-yes, 0-no, 0-abstentions.

Trustee Moore stated KPS would still move forward working with community agencies at the same time.

V. School Reports/Committee Reports

Committee Reports

Teaching and Learning Council, *Patti Sholler-Barber, representative*, stated that the committee had met on December 13 and had received a presentation of innovative teaching grants by KPS teachers. She noted that KPS teachers were continually looking for new and innovative things to do with students in their classrooms.

Evaluation/Accountability, *Jennie Hill, chair*, stated that the committee had met on December 18 and had discussed Diverse Classroom Libraries.

Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Services Cindy Green and Coordinator of English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Library Services Angela Justice presented the following report on Diverse Classroom Libraries:

Ms. Green stated that KPS serves children from a variety of backgrounds. She noted that this includes many different factors. For this project, they started with the area of ethnic/cultural identification. 39% of KPS student population is African American, 13% Hispanic, 37% white, 9% multi-racial, and 2% other ethnicities combined. It is apparent that the majority of our students are students of color.

Ms. Justice explained that conversations for diverse classroom libraries began in 2017 during the planning stages of the Mirrors of Me conference KPS hosted at Western Michigan University in August of 2017. While the number of published books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds is increasing, it is still not reflective of the ethnic/cultural make-up of the students we serve in Kalamazoo Public Schools. Because of this, the desire to increase motivation and engagement around literature among all students was put into action. KPS was tasked with curating diverse classroom library sets to help students of color see themselves represented in the books they were reading and to help students who are not of color see images of persons of color in quality literature. We were tasked with locating books that either depicted persons of color or were written by persons of color. The purpose of this work was to motivate and engage our students around high quality literature that was not necessarily tied to curriculum but books that students could enjoy from a selection within their classroom. It was also important to showcase books that were reflective of athletics, hardships, struggle, and celebration. The second purpose for these classroom libraries was due to findings from the instructional rounds from the Higher Impact Learning Project (HIL). As participants in the HIL project, a common finding was classrooms did not have equitable classroom libraries meaning some classrooms had more books than others did. We felt it was important not to rely solely on teachers to manage this, but as a district, to gift our students with classroom libraries.

Ms. Justice stated that after being tasked with this initiative, a timeline was established that included a vetting process and professional development. This initiative began with compiling lists of books that depicted characters of color and/or books that were written by authors who were persons of colors. In May of 2018, teachers were invited to make recommendations about the appropriateness of the books through curriculum writing. They were asked to make notes related to content, age/grade level appropriateness, illustrations, content, and the overall quality of the literature. Teachers also determined if the book could be used as a class read aloud, text set, curriculum connection, or appropriate to include in a library for students to self-select. Finally, teachers were asked to share concerns of the book if they had any. The students that participated in

this process were asked to share if they thought students in their grade level would enjoy reading the book. Ms. Justice shared the selection criteria that central office administrators and principals used to determine if the book was placed into the classroom libraries.

Vetting Process

- 2017-2018 - developed lists of books to read and make recommendations.
- May 2018 - invited teachers to read and make recommendations of potential diverse literature.
- Summer 2018 - Read and recommended approximately 1,000 books (35 PEEP to grade 9 classroom teachers, 4 literacy coaches, 5 students, and 1 librarian).
- Summer/Fall 2018 - vetted the recommended books (6 central office administrators and 2 principals).
- Current - vetting books for middle school ELA classes, strategic reading classes, and special education classrooms.

In reviewing the titles along with teachers, it became clear, that some well-known vendors did not have the quality of books for which KPS was looking for. They found that several of the books went against the purpose of this work, which was and still is to motivate and engage students around high quality diverse literature. Ms. Justice noted that six central office administrators and two principals were tasked with determining if the books were authentic to the cultures represented, exhibited bias, showcased stereotypical behaviors or illustrations, presented exaggerated illustrations, and if the experiences of the characters or the characters themselves were being exploited or celebrated. The goal for this portion of the work was to have persons who either identified with the culture personally or had close relationships with the culture to read and recommend if the books were appropriate. Any book that was questionable was not included in the libraries. This is a process we often follow with many of the books that are shared with students. An example of this was with two of the all grade read selections. *Out of My Mind* is a story about a young girl with cerebral palsy. We asked student services to read the novel to determine if it was appropriate and if it celebrated the strength of the character. *Hold Fast* was another example. This story is about a family who had to live in a shelter. This book was shared with representatives from the Gospel Mission and our own homeless liaison to monitor for appropriateness and to make sure the characters were not being exploited because of their circumstances. This is necessary and appropriate because our goal is to help children celebrate who they are. Ms. Justice noted that the following portion of the report is related to professional development.

Selection Criteria:

Guidelines for choosing books for the diverse classroom libraries included determining if:

- The book exemplifies good storytelling;
- The book avoids offensive expressions, negative attitudes, or stereotypical representations;
- The events, situations, and objects depicted are historically accurate;
- The book is explicit and precise about the cultural roots of the group being depicted;
- The book does not set different cultures or groups in opposition to each other;
- The story accurately reflects the values inherent to the culture being depicted; and
- The story acknowledges the diversity of experiences within a particular cultural group.

Websites used to further guide the selection criteria:

www.diversebooks.org; www.socialjusticebooks.org; and www.latinosinkidlit.com.

Ms. Justice stated that the professional development for teachers regarding the diverse classroom libraries began in 2019 for teachers in grades two and three. With the challenges of finding adequate staffing when teachers are not in the classroom, the pull-out professional development sessions were cancelled and moved to have 1.5 hour professional development sessions that were held after school for teachers. These were held on different dates from February to April. In August 2019, teachers in grades kindergarten, one, four, and five received training on the diverse classroom libraries during the back-to-school professional development sessions. In October 2019, an after school make-up session was offered for teachers who missed previous sessions.

The professional development for teachers related to the following areas:

1. Activating and building background knowledge. Teachers explored and discussed the concept of windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors. They also viewed and discussed a 2009 Ted Talk, *The Danger of a Single Story* by Chimamanda Adichie.
2. Connection to the literacy essentials with understanding motivation and engagement, read aloud, and vocabulary. Teachers participated in a read aloud with the presenters, took notes, asked questions, and discussed the text. The purpose of this was to show teachers how they could engage their students with the use of this literature. This turned out to be very beneficial because teachers shared things they did not know about some cultures and were able to ask questions about what they did not know.
3. Book exploration where teachers were able to view some of the books within their collections.
4. Teachers received classroom sets after completion of their professional development.

Ms. Justice explained that K-5 classrooms have received their classroom libraries. The number of titles for each grade level is as follows: Kindergarten - 50, 1st grade - 91, 2nd grade - 56, 3rd grade - 72, 4th grade - 56, and 5th grade - 72. Because of additional funds for Washington Writers' Academy and The Woodward School for Technology and Research, each of the grades were able to receive additional books that are a part of a series and are books specifically about real people. The total number of titles for K-5 classrooms is 397.

Ms. Green stated that we were very fortunate to live in the Kalamazoo community with the supports we receive for our children. Many people have been working very hard behind the scenes to make this project come alive. Our first funding source came from the Western Michigan University High Impact Leadership Grant. This grant provides leadership and literacy supports to elementary schools on the west side of the state. KPS has seven schools in Cohort A, which started in the 2017-18 school year, and three schools in Cohort B, which will start in January 2020. When the Partnership grants became available in 2018, district administrators wrote a competitive grant for books in the classroom library sets. The award provided books at Washington and Woodward as well as our middle school strategic reading and special education classrooms. In the spring of 2018, we asked our voters for diverse classroom libraries in the bond request. Thank you very much Kalamazoo community as you passed this bond overwhelmingly with the support for more books in the hands of children. In addition, Title I funds have been used to purchase books and Title II funds have been used to train teachers. Finally, we have two local businesses who have supported this project; National Flavors and Edward Garment. We appreciate our community supports.

Current School Libraries:

- Disabilities in multiple areas including sight, hearing, learning, movement;
- Family structure;
- Housing including movement, conditions;
- Refugee status;

- Situations for children;
- Books specific to LGBTQ+ in elementary include “Prince & Knight,” “Real Sisters Pretend,” “Julian is a Mermaid,” “In Our Mothers’ House,” and “The Misadventures of the Family Fletcher;”
- Librarians and library aides went through training regarding the books and were given resources to contact for questions; and
- Middle schools have over 50 LGBTQ+ titles and high schools have over 250 LGBTQ+ titles.

Ongoing Project:

- Middle School Strategic Reading & Special Education Classrooms;
- Middle School English Language Arts (ELA);
- Other areas;
- Complexities;
- Individual needs are addressed;
- Student gains; and
- Professional development for teachers.

Ms. Green shared that this was an ongoing project. We knew from the start that it would take multiple years and would be a process that takes time. We did not have a set amount at first to start, but quickly pulled funding sources together. We wrote grants to cover the diverse library project from multiple sources. We sought funding from the bond and continue to reach out to others for collaboration with the project. Books need to be readily available for students to read so there is enjoyment with literature. Our next steps are to provide diverse classroom library sets into the middle school strategic reading and special education classes. In addition, we are working on a new English Language Arts curriculum and resources at the middle school in which we will include diverse libraries. Teacher training will be developed and implemented. There are many areas to cover and explore. As we move forward, we work through the challenges, which include time, funds, and commitment. In the end, students are better with lots of books to read and increased student achievement in all areas.

Board Discussion

Trustee Moore asked how the selection process would change.

Ms. Green stated that they looked for books by authors of color and illustrations with children of color. She noted that the lead district librarian would ask for help and assistance in selecting additional diverse books.

Trustee Moore asked if KPS had received books that were representative of LGBTQ+ and with children of color.

Ms. Justice stated that they did not receive books that featured LGBTQ+ children and children of color.

Trustee Harrison stated that she had attended the Mirrors of Me conference. She noted that KPS decided not to focus on books that showed hardship and struggle but to focus on things to celebrate. Trustee Harrison stated that she supports this program because when she was young the school library did not have books that celebrated people that looked like her.

Ms. Justice stated that KPS wanted to help its students feel good about who they are. She noted that they wanted students to say that they can identify with characters in their books despite their circumstance.

Trustee Hill stated she had also attended the Mirrors of Me conference and that it had inspired KPS to start this project. She noted the importance that all kids could have a book that reflects what they look like. Trustee Hill shared that teachers are provided professional development to understand these diverse libraries.

Trustee Moore stated that there are many more books featuring cars, trucks, and animals than those featuring a character of color. She noted that she supports the initial intent of this program. Trustee Moore stated that KPS needs to explore different suppliers and seek out additional diverse books.

Trustee Harrison stated that Ms. Justice had read over 1,000 books for this project. She thanked her for planting the seed of literature for children of color.

President Sholler-Barber stated that KPS had been addressing the needs of more authors of these diverse books for the past five years.

Mr. Start thanked everyone for being here tonight. He thanked Cindy Green and Angela Justice for their presentation. He noted that he had been involved in the writing of the first letter and that there was no intent to offend anyone and that he was sorry for that. Mr. Start shared that the second document was clearer as to KPS intent.

VI. Correspondence

Secretary Hill reviewed the correspondence received for the period of December 4 through December 17, 2019. (File #11.)

VII. Consent Calendar

President Sholler-Barber presented the Consent Calendar items: VII.A.1. December 4, 2019 Advance Meeting Minutes, VII.A.2. December 5, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes, and VII.A.3. December 5, 2019 Closed Session Minutes; VII.B. Purchase Recommendation 2020-17; and VII.C. Personnel Changes.

Purchase recommendation:

- 2020-17 in the amount of \$24,612.80 from the 2018 bond for the purchase of an elevator power unit to replace the power unit to the three-story elevator at Kalamazoo Central High School.

MOTION: Implied to approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

Disposition: Voice vote: motion carried, 7-yes, 0-no, 0-abstentions.

VIII. Persons Requesting to Address the Board

President Sholler-Barber shared the public participation guidelines:

- According to Board Policy 1.2, speakers should each begin their comments by stating their name, address, and connection to/interest in the Kalamazoo Public Schools and, if applicable, the organization that they represent.
- Speakers should be courteous and professional. The chairperson of this meeting may terminate public comments that are profane, vulgar, or defamatory. Speakers should refrain from identifying individuals when offering criticism.
- Speakers have three minutes each and must stop speaking promptly when signaled.

- Speakers may not address confidential student or personnel matters, but may submit such concerns to the board in writing.
- Speakers are reminded that the board will not respond to public comments, but that the administration may or may not follow up with speakers at some point regarding speaker comments.

Amanda Miller, Mattawan, introduced herself as the president of the KEA. She stated that she supports expanding diverse library sets. Ms. Miller shared that classroom libraries need to be more diverse and include all students.

Dawn Wright, 1905 Skyler, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of two at Parkwood Upjohn Elementary School. She noted that she had also attended the Mirrors of Me conference and was excited that there were so many people willing to speak out on diverse libraries. Ms. Wright stated her son has a disability and that there are no reflections of him in his library.

Julie Carbajal, Kalamazoo, thanked KPS for integrating diverse books in classroom libraries. She noted that her daughter was biracial and appreciates that her daughter can see herself in books. Ms. Carbajal stated that LGBTQ children do not see representations of themselves in books. She noted that books may be the only place they see themselves.

Jill Terwilliger, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as having a student at Kalamazoo Central High School. She stated that she appreciated the apology from the district but that it was now hard to trust their decisions. Ms. Terwilliger stated that KPS cannot make the argument for books for one population and say it doesn't matter for another.

Ed Genesis, Kalamazoo, introduced himself as a community leader. He shared his concern for a KPS policy that decides what students have to go to an alternative school. Mr. Genesis noted that he works with Michigan United and would like to work with the board, KPS, and Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS) to see that our youth are secure, safe, and supported.

Kathy Fasson, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a Kalamazoo resident and former KPS bus driver. She stated that she would like to see more training for KPS bus drivers to help deal with student behavior on the buses. Ms. Fasson would like to see bus drivers be involved with KPS, KDPS, and the school community.

Domonique Ray, 3005 Heatherdowns Lane, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of four KPS students. She noted how important it was to see yourself in books and that she was disappointed that it had taken so long to get diverse libraries in KPS classrooms. Parents need to make sure we are doing what we should be doing at home.

Leatrice Fullerton, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of two children in KPS and an employee of the DISABILITY network of Southwest Michigan. She thanked the board for having the foresight to create diverse libraries. Ms. Fullerton noted that she did not see herself represented in literature when she was in school. She explained that children who aren't from these diverse groups would benefit by being exposed to these characters in literature. Ms. Fullerton offered help to train and lend expertise to KPS.

George White, Kalamazoo, stated that he agrees that discrimination should not be tolerated. Mr. White noted that KPS needs to provide increased programs that meet the needs of all its students.

Cormac Roth, Kalamazoo, introduced himself as a senior at Kalamazoo Central and KAMSC. He noted that he appreciated the statements made by the board at tonight's meeting to clear up the miscommunication from the first statement. Mr. Roth explained the importance of representation in literature of all students in the KPS district.

Kristen Lownds, Kalamazoo, shared that she wanted to raise her children in a district with children from all walks of life. She noted how thrilled she was to see the new books in her child's classroom. Ms. Lownds stated that we need to teach children that everyone matters and help them expand their empathy of all people.

Christine Babcock, Kalamazoo, thanked the board for their intention of creating a space where children can see themselves represented in the books they read. She noted that visibility matters to students of all races and ethnicities. Ms. Babcock stated that she attended Western Michigan University and that Kalamazoo had been a source of hope for her and the LGBTQ+ community. She recommended that the board provide the addition of books regarding intersections of diversity within the next year.

Greg Baldino, Kalamazoo, introduced himself as an author of two books on LGBTQ+ literature. He noted that reading stories to children that include marginalized identities increases empathy, improves self-image, and doubles the reader's likelihood to engage in pro-social behavior.

Craig Isser, Kalamazoo, introduced himself as a library assistant at Kalamazoo Central High School. He stated that through literature children can have the opportunity to see themselves represented through the illustrations and content in books. Mr. Isser shared that our community is layered with people of different race, gender, and sexual identity. He asked that KPS please include more books to better represent every child.

Heather Lamb, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as an English teacher at Kalamazoo Central. She noted that as a disabled teacher she was very sensitive to the removal of conversations with people with disabilities. Ms. Lamb stated that she appreciated the attempt to address the harm done in the first statement by releasing the second statement; however, the second statement only addressed the issue of LGBTQ+ exclusion when the initial statement also included exclusion of disability and socio-economic issues.

Rex Moriarty, Kalamazoo, stated that in school he did not have access to books depicting transgender characters. Mr. Moriarty noted that he was bright as a child but never received the help he needed to be successful in college. He explained that if he had had books representing how he was feeling at an earlier age his struggles may have been prevented. Mr. Moriarty shared that you cannot pick and choose diversity.

Jill Hermann-Wilmarth, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a queer, lesbian mother to a child at Loy Norrix High School. She noted that she is impacted by the way students in KPS learn and think about the ways of people in the world. Ms. Hermann-Wilmarth stated that research shows that students in K-5 have the ability to talk about LGBTQ+ topics in a respectful way and are open to learning. She shared that LGBTQ+ students that do not see themselves represented in literature are more likely to face violence and less likely to stay in school.

Sara Carroll-Muniz, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a KPS parent and teacher. She stated that she was excited about the diverse classrooms library initiatives in KPS. Ms. Carrol-Muniz noted her concern for books in the classroom versus books that were in the library making it harder for

students to access. She stated a need for education in diverse literature among administration and teaching staff.

Emily Kastner, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of two students at Parkwood Upjohn Elementary School. She stated how important it was that KPS was intentional about building inclusive classroom libraries. Ms. Kastner shared that it was also important for KPS to find professionals and advisors who are qualified and have experience with children's literature to help them with their selection of age appropriate literature.

Abby Leonard, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a nurse in Kalamazoo. She wanted the board to understand the negative impact on the community in removing a book from the diverse classroom library. Ms. Leonard requested that the board send out a letter of correction, apologize for their error, and correct the definition with accurate information.

Nina Marion, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of two students at Linden Grove Middle School and one student at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Westwood Elementary School. She noted that she did LGBTQ+ advocacy for a major employer in town. Ms. Marion shared that 10% of the population in Kalamazoo being LGBTQ+ is real in this community. She explained that a larger percent of the population have parents and siblings that are LGBTQ+.

Alayna Boucher, 6186 Tanager Court, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a student at Loy Norrix High School. She noted that she was part of the LGBTQ+ community. Ms. Boucher shared that KPS needed more diversity overall in books as she doesn't see herself in many books. She also noted that she does not see mental health disorders such as anxiety or depression in books in her library at school.

Sarah Davis, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of four students in the KPS district. She stated that elementary students have about 25 minutes a week in library classroom time. Ms. Davis noted that this limited time makes LGBTQ+ literature not readily available to students. She read a list of questions that she had and stated that she would send them to the board.

Kim Dunham, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of a KPS student. She noted that she and her wife's position had been respected and embraced at the school. Ms. Dunham shared her concerns regarding the statement released by the district. She explained that by making LGBTQ+ literature available to only those who speak-up prevents her daughter's classmates to learn about what it means to have two moms. Ms. Dunham shared that this diverse library initiative needs to include all children.

Megan Maddock 729 Fairview Avenue, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a queer special education teacher at the secondary level. She stated that in the selection criteria presentation this evening she did not see any mention of selecting only books by or about people of color. Ms. Maddock shared that KPS students are mostly children of color and that they struggle to see themselves in literature. She noted that the visibility of these students and all of their intersections matter.

David Gakodi, Kalamazoo, introduced himself as a student at Kalamazoo Central. He stated that as a young child he read books about white people and occasionally someone of color was a secondary character in the book. Mr. Gakodi shared that this made him feel lost. He explained that he felt better about himself when he read books with characters that looked like him.

Rebecca Macleery, 1425 Grand Ave, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent. She stated that racism was traumatizing our community. Ms. Macleery noted that we need to create a culture in our schools that promotes empathy and understanding.

Kevin King, Kalamazoo, introduced himself as a public librarian. He stated that he appreciated the board's apology and the steps they plan to take to make this right. Mr. King shared that you cannot pick and choose diversity. He explained that there is diversity that cannot be seen or quantified. Mr. King noted that there are queer kids, disabled kids, and kids from different socio-economic backgrounds in all classrooms. He shared that a proper education should include the understanding of the realities of life.

Jen Stroven, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a parent of two children at Parkwood Upjohn Elementary School. She stated that it was hard to trust the Board of Education after the recent statement regarding the diverse classroom libraries. Ms. Stroven shared that she and others had firsthand accounts that suggested that the statement put out by the district was intentional by letting personal bias get in the way. She suggested that the board use community expertise and involve them in the drafting of the proposed resolution.

Brooke Lindley, 2440 Mount Olivet, introduced herself as the director of advocacy at OutFront Kalamazoo. She shared that it was their mission to create a just, inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment for all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. Ms. Lindley stated that she had been in touch with KPS about providing trainings to show that KPS can be inclusive. She noted that KPS was committed to continue to work with OutFront Kalamazoo to provide training to staff, educators, and the Board of Education on what gender identity and sexual orientation means and how those two things are completely separate. Ms. Lindley provided letters to the board with further explanation.

Tracy Chappell, 1218 Fletcher Avenue, Kalamazoo, introduced herself as a teacher in KPS. She thanked the board for addressing this issue and for the additional professional development staff had received this past fall. Ms. Chappell stated that she is not clear if an elementary teacher could read the LGBTQ+ books to their students.

Shawn Brueshaber, Kalamazoo, introduced himself as a community member. He stated that he was proud to be in this community and appreciated all the comments at tonight's meeting. Mr. Brueshaber explained that he was a cisgender white male and wanted to share that there are white people who are in support of what had been said tonight. He noted that KPS must be strong to move this issue forward.

IX. Reports and Recommendations

1.2 Public Participation During a Meeting of the Board of Trustees – Second reading.

Policy

While balancing legitimate privacy interests of students and staff, the Board of Trustees welcomes community input at public meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Specifics

- 1. Persons requesting to address the board will be asked to complete a sign-in sheet by the end of the public comment period. The portion of that sign-in sheet requiring completion will include: name, school district in which the person resides, and connection to/interest in the Kalamazoo Public Schools. The optional portion will be held private and will*

include: mailing address, email address, phone number, topic about which they will be speaking and, if authorized and applicable, the organization they represent.

- 2. The presiding board officer will invite persons to come to the podium in the order in which the sign-in sheets were completed.*
- 3. If after 30 minutes everyone who has completed a sign-in sheet has not had the opportunity to address the board, the public comment period will be tabled and resume before adjournment.*
- 4. Speakers have three minutes each and must stop speaking promptly when signaled.*
- 5. Speakers may not address confidential student or personnel matters, but may submit such concerns to the board in writing.*
- 6. Speakers are encouraged to provide the board with a written copy of their comments and other appropriate supporting documentation, which will be copied and distributed as needed to appropriate staff/personnel.*
- 7. The public is required to exercise common courtesy during the meeting and must follow rule of order. The presiding board officer may terminate public comments that are profane, vulgar, or defamatory, especially if these comments result in a disturbance or breach of peace. Personal attacks against an employee or board member that are totally unrelated to his or her duties are prohibited. If a person engages in disruptive conduct or is out of order, the board presiding officer will strike his or her gavel and warn the person to discontinue their behavior. Further disruptions will result in the person being asked to leave. Refusal to leave will result in being escorted out of the building. (MCL 380.1808)*

MOTION: Moved by Trustee Morris, supported by Trustee Jackson, to approve the recommendation as presented.

Board Discussion: None

Disposition: Roll call vote: motion carried, 7-yes, 0-no, 0-abstentions.

X. Other Business

None.

XI. Comments by Trustees

Trustee Harrison thanked the members of the community who had come out to participate at tonight's board meeting. She noted that she had learned a lot from the community comments. Trustee Harrison shared that the diverse library classroom project was important to her as a black woman. She looked forward to the proposed resolution being inclusive of all students in KPS.

Trustee Moore thanked the community members who had come out tonight and spoken at the podium. She also recognized those who had emailed the board as well. She noted that if anyone didn't have enough time to speak at tonight's meeting to please email their statement to the board. Trustee Moore explained that the focus tonight was on the diverse classroom libraries and the overall need to provide a better representation of all KPS student identities and their families. She

stated that the statements had come from the district and administration, not from the Board of Education. Trustee Moore asked the administration for more clarity as to when these trainings would happen and does KPS have the funding sources to purchase more books for our diverse classroom libraries.

Trustee Jackson stated that he appreciated the community coming out and sharing their thoughts and their hearts, he shared that they had been heard. He explained the need to be diverse across the board and to include everyone in our collections in our school libraries. Trustee Jackson noted that he had grown up reading literature with no reflection of himself in the characters. He looked forward to including more diverse books into the classroom and libraries.

Trustee Morris thanked everyone who had spoken at tonight's meeting. He noted that he had a lot to learn and was humbled by this experience. Trustee Morris shared that we have to do more for all KPS students. He explained that it was not just about inclusion, being seen, or recognized, it's about life and death.

Trustee Hill apologized as a board member for having hurt feelings and noted that KPS could do better as a board and learn about all diversity. She stated that she agreed that it was a challenge to figure this all out but that we could do this together.

Trustee Greschak thanked everyone for coming to tonight's meeting. He noted that he had heard that the board had lost the community trust. Trustee Greschak explained that it took decades to build trust and only moments to lose it. He stated that the board is up to this challenge.

President Sholler-Barber thanked the community for caring about KPS students. She expressed her gratitude for the sharing that was done at the microphone at tonight's meeting. President Sholler-Barber shared that the board was listening and that this had been a huge learning experience.

President Sholler-Barber stated that there had been some wonderful things going on in the district this past week. She noted that Kalamazoo Central had had their annual Stuff the Bus food drive, which helped feed the Kalamazoo community; Loy Norrix High School Peacejam students were in front of Macy's all day Saturday ringing the bells for Salvation Army; Women Who Care; Interfaith & Action in the Community (ISAAC) family and friends breakfast; Community in Schools ugly sweater party; and the amazing Teaching and Learning Services presentations on innovative grants.

Comments by the Interim superintendent

Mr. Start thanked everyone for speaking at tonight's meeting and noted that he had learned a lot. Mr. Start shared that the administration will get this work done.

Mr. Start said that the Stuff the Bus raised food and money for Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes which helped feed our children and families. He stated that Kalamazoo Central collected the equivalent of 45,372 pounds of food for Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes. Mr. Start shared that our kids care and our staff care about our kids.

XII. Closed Session (if needed)

President Sholler-Barber did not call for a closed session and adjourned the meeting at 10:17 p.m.

XIII. President Sholler-Barber announced the next regular Board of Education meeting date: Thursday, January 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betse Klepper, Recording Secretary
On behalf of Jennie Hill, Secretary
Board of Education

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOL
Office of the Superintendent

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Gary L. Start, Interim Superintendent

DATE: January 9, 2020

SUBJECT: Personnel Changes

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the board approve the following employment changes:

- I. Employment
 - A. Professional/Management
 - Katherine J. Cape, Fifth Grade Teacher, Spring Valley Center for Exploration, 1/6/2020
 - Russell A. Lardie, Elementary Physical Education Teacher, Spring Valley Center for Exploration (0.7 FTE) and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Westwood Elementary School (0.3 FTE), 1/6/2020
 - Kenneth B. Martin, Jr., Clinical Social Worker, Student Services, 1/27/2020
 - Kristi-Ann Michaels, Speech Pathologist, Student Services, 2/3/2020
 - B. Classified
 - Alexis N. Plair, Achievement & Academic Behavior Support Specialist, 1/6/2020
- II. Promotions/Key Transfers
 - A. Professional/Management
 - B. Classified
- III. Leaves of Absence
 - A. Professional/Management
 - B. Classified
- IV. Terminations
 - A. Professional/Management
 - Kelly L. Dopheide, Fourth Grade Teacher, Arcadia Elementary School, 2/1/2020, Retirement
 - B. Classified
- V. Termination from Leave of Absence
 - A. Professional/Management
 - B. Classified
- VI. Return from Leave of Absence
 - A. Professional/Management
 - B. Classified

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Gary L. Start

DATE: January 9, 2020

SUBJECT: Resolution for a Regional Millage Renewal

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the board adopt the attached resolution to request that the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency place a regional enhancement millage renewal proposition on the May 5, 2020 ballot.

RATIONALE: The regional millage renewal is an important hurdle that must be addressed to continue our path to success. This millage generates \$4.6 million annually for Kalamazoo Public Schools and is essential for the district to maintain relative financial stability. Without this source of revenue, significant cuts to programs and services will be significant.

The district continues to be heavily dependent on the state of Michigan for operating revenues. Unfortunately, financial support by the state has not improved since the millage was originally adopted in May 2005. In fact, in many respects, it has gotten worse. As a result, the regional millage continues to be a critically important source of revenue for Kalamazoo Public Schools.

Kalamazoo Public Schools' voters have been consistently supportive of funding for education. Previous enhancement millage propositions were overwhelmingly approved in Kalamazoo. Placing this renewal on the ballot gives district voters another opportunity to continue support for the education of our students within existing property tax rates.

School District of the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan (the "District")

A _____ meeting of the board of education of the District (the "Board") was held in the _____, within the boundaries of the District, on the _____ day of _____, 20____, at _____ o'clock in the ____m.

The meeting was called to order by _____, President.

Present: Members

Absent: Members

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member _____ and supported by Member _____:

WHEREAS:

1. Section 705 of the Revised School Code authorizes a school district to request that the question of a regional enhancement property tax be submitted to the voters by the intermediate school district at the next regular school election, or at a special election if the request is made more than 180 days prior to such election date; and

2. This Board determines that it is in the best interest of the District to place a regional enhancement millage renewal question before the voters at a special election to be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, in accordance with Section 705 of the Revised School Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. This District requests Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency, to submit a regional enhancement property tax millage renewal proposal for 1.5 mills for three (3) years, 2020, 2021 and 2022, to the voters at a special election to be held in each of the constituent districts located within the Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency on Tuesday, May 5, 2020.

2. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee is hereby authorized to deliver a certified copy of this resolution and its attachments to the Secretary of the ISD Board on or before Wednesday, January 15, 2020.

3. The regional enhancement property tax question to be submitted to the voters is set forth on Exhibit A attached hereto and is approved and incorporated herein by reference.

4. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Ayes: Members

Nays: Members

Resolution declared adopted.

Secretary, Board of Education

The undersigned duly qualified and acting Secretary of the Board of Education of School District of the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan, hereby certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board at a _____ meeting held on _____, 20__, the original of which is part of the Board's minutes. The undersigned further certifies that notice of the meeting was given to the public pursuant to the provisions of the "Open Meetings Act" (Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended).

Secretary, Board of Education

JJS/ssw



EXHIBIT A

KALAMAZOO REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY REGIONAL ENHANCEMENT MILLAGE RENEWAL PROPOSAL

This proposal will allow the intermediate school district to continue to levy regional enhancement millage that expired with the 2019 levy. Pursuant to state law, the revenue raised by the millage will be collected by the intermediate school district and distributed to local public school districts based on pupil membership count.

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency, Michigan, be increased by 1.5 mills (\$1.50 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 3 years, 2020, 2021 and 2022, to provide operating funds to enhance other state and local funding for local school district operating purposes; the estimate of the revenue the intermediate school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2020 is approximately \$12,543,252, which funds will be disbursed as required by statute to the following school districts: Augusta Academy, Climax-Scotts Community Schools, Comstock Public Schools, Evergreen Academy, Forest Academy, Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools, Gull Lake Community Schools, Kalamazoo Covenant Academy, School District of the City of Kalamazoo, Lakeside Charter School – Kalamazoo, Oakland Academy, Paramount Charter Academy, Parchment School District, Portage Public Schools, Schoolcraft Community Schools, Vicksburg Community Schools and Youth Advancement Academy?