



Fruitport Community Schools
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Monday, April 21, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Location:

Fruitport Community Schools Central Office
Board of Education Meeting Room
3255 E. Pontaluna Rd.
Fruitport, MI 49415

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:17 p.m. by Board Vice President, Kris Cole.
- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance at the meeting.
- III. **ROLL CALL:** Present – Tim Burgess, Kris Cole, Steve Kelly, JB Meeuwenberg, Josh Mueller, and Kathy Six. Absent - Dave Hazekamp.
- IV. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Item 25-52. MOTION by Six, SECOND by Meeuwenberg to approve the agenda, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

V. **PRESENTATIONS:**

Above and Beyond Award Recognition: Abbey Postlewait was presented with Above and Beyond Award recognition. She received a certificate with the following information that the Board of Education was presented with and an Above and Beyond pin.

“Abbey exemplifies the spirit of service, innovation, and community connection that defines the Above and Beyond Award. Her extraordinary efforts have directly impacted students, families, and the broader Fruitport community. Over the past year, Abbey has initiated and led numerous impactful projects, including a summer school supply fundraiser that raised over \$1,700—thanks to her ability to

engage local business support. She played a critical role in launching the inaugural Show Up & Glow Up event, securing sponsors and organizing a community resource fair with over 30 organizations.

Abbey has been a champion for student well-being through direct attendance interventions, meaningful caregiver engagement, and the creation of a mindfulness education series. Her programming offered accessible, hands-on strategies to reduce stress while supporting emotional regulation for both students and families.

She has secured over \$3,000 in Donors Choose grants, outfitting calming spaces, hygiene kits, a lending library, and even securing a washer and dryer for student use. Abbey's outreach has resulted in partnerships with numerous local businesses, bringing valuable resources—from feminine products to clothing drives—to support student success.

Her leadership in student-focused initiatives, such as the popular Fashion Club and mentoring programs, has provided vital opportunities for student connection and creativity. Abbey's work is tireless, intentional, and rooted in compassion. Her efforts not only go above and beyond expectations—they redefine them. It is with great appreciation and admiration that we recommend her for this well-deserved recognition.”

VI. COMMUNICATIONS:

- Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) - College Bound Champion Site - The District and Board President received communication from the Michigan College Access Network congratulating Fruitport High School for being recognized as a College Bound Michigan Champion Site for Michigan College Month in the 2024-2025 school year! This achievement is a testament to the team's hard work. Under the leadership of Jennifer Finnerty and Marissa Higgs, at least 80% of the high school's seniors applied to at least one (1) college during the Michigan College Month (October 2024).

VII. SUPERINTENDENT/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

- **May 2025 Bond Proposition** - Superintendent Kennedy continued to discuss highlights of the May 2025 Bond Proposition for those in attendance at the Board meeting. The Superintendent also reviewed the District's May 2025 Bond Website that provides transparent information for the community about the proposed bond project. Superintendent Kennedy also shared a second informational postcard mailer that was sent to homes in the community.

- **Michigan Statewide School Facilities Study: District Level Report** - The Board was provided with a copy in their Board packet of the Michigan Statewide School Facilities Study and the district level report for Fruitport Community Schools. The Board discussed the study and the district level report for Fruitport.
- **Update on Severe Weather Damage and Progress at Beach Elementary** - John Winkas provided the Board with an update on progress being made to repair damage to Beach Elementary School from the severe weather and high winds that damaged the building and surrounding grounds recently.
- **National Merit Finalists Scholar Announcement** - The Board was provided with an overview of the process to announce National Merit Finalists and scholarships associated with the honor and recognition. The Board discussed the continuing academic performance and achievement of our students. In particular, the Board discussed Elijah Hulka and Lydia Shi moving on in the process and being named National Merit Finalists.
- **Update on the MAISD District Integration Process** - Allison Camp provided an overview of the MAISD District Integration Process and discussed notes that were prepared by MAISD staff highlighting the continuous improvement efforts that are ongoing within the District. Many of these efforts are supported by staff from the MAISD. Allison provided the Board a copy of an infographic that highlighted the continuous improvement process.
- **Update on Director of Special Education Position and Director of Food Service Position** - The Board was provided with an update on the recommendation to hire Olivia Zienert as the Director of Special Education within Fruitport Community Schools and the Eastern Service Unit. The Board was also informed that Chartwells, the third party vendor that supplies food service management services to the District, has hired a new interim food service director to support Fruitport. Leslie Coleman, the assistant food service director at Oakridge, and a Fruitport resident and parent of children in the District, has been assigned to manage food service programs in the District.

VIII. REMARKS FROM THE PUBLIC:

- Brantley Mellem, a student at Fruitport High School, addressed the Board of education to share that he would be attending the Youth in Government Conference on National Affairs. The Conference on National Affairs (CONA) is a national debate conference for high school students across the United States. CONA is held at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Students are selected by their home state to write and debate proposed

solutions to national and international problems. It takes place at the end of June and beginning of July each year, and up to 25 students are selected at the spring Michigan Youth in Government conference to represent Michigan. Brantley has been selected as one of the students to represent the State of Michigan.

- Cecil Colthrop, 275 Lake St., Fruitport, MI 49415, addressed the Board of Education. Cecil provided comments on the May 2025 Bond proposal, while asking the Board to discuss how a tax neutral bond proposal could authorize the money to support the project. The Superintendent and Board Vice President provided responses to Mr. Colthrop's questions regarding the financial implications of the bond proposal and discussed this with those in attendance at the meeting to help better understand the bond proposal.
- Catherine Adams, 6039 N. Bear Den Trail, Muskegon, MI 49444, addressed the Board of Education on behalf of Indivisible on the Lakeshore - West Michigan. Ms. Adams discussed concerns pertaining to the reduction or elimination of Medicaid funding, and the impact that this would have on funding for schools. As a former special education administrator, Ms. Adams shared the impact that she knows reductions in Medicaid funding would have on special education programs and services in schools. Ms. Adams also encouraged those in attendance at the Board meeting to join the more than 2,000 members that are now a part of the Indivisible on the Lakeshore - West Michigan advocacy group. More information can be found on the group's Facebook page.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

Item 25-53. MOTION by Six, SECOND by Kelly to approve the Consent Agenda as listed below:

1. Approval of Bill Listing in the amount of \$604,632.66
2. Acceptance of March 2025 General Fund Financial Report
3. Acceptance of March 2025 Investments Report
4. Approval of Personnel Report (includes confirmation of new hires, resignations, retirees, and transfers)

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

X. GENERAL BOARD BUSINESS:

1. Update Regarding Hard Cap Adjustments (PA 152) - No action taken

The Board discussed the annual cost limitations for public employer contributions to medical benefit plans for the calendar year 2026 that were recently released by the

Michigan Department of Treasury. The limits for 2026 equal the 2025 limits increased by 2.9 percent. The 2.9 percent is the percentage change in the medical care component from the period of March 2023-February 2024 to the period of March 2024-February 2025. The adjusted hard caps will take effect on January 1, 2026.

2. MAISD FY2026 Original Budget, Process, and Overview - No action taken

The Board discussed the MAISD FY2026 original budget process. Budget documents were discussed with the Board and were included in the Board packet. These documents will be reviewed with the Board's delegate at the MAISD budget review meeting, and have been provided to the Board in advance of that meeting.

3. MAISD Biennial Election - June 2, 2025 - No action taken

The Board discussed and considered the biennial election resolution provided to the District by the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD). The Board will need to adopt the final resolution between May 12, 2025 and May 27, 2025 to participate in the election process of board members to the two (2) upcoming vacant MAISD board seats. The Board discussed the vacant seats and the process for electing board members to those vacancies on the Board at the MAISD.

XI. BUSINESS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Report of committee meeting held on April 14, 2025

JB Meeuwenberg reported on a Committee meeting that was called to order at 5:38 p.m. on April 14, 2025. Kris Cole, Dave Hazekamp, Jason Kennedy, JB Meeuwenberg, and Mark Mesbergen were present. The Committee discussed the MAISD FY2026 original budget process and overview, and the annual cost limitations for public employer contributions to medical benefit plans for the calendar year 2026 that were recently released by the Michigan Department of Treasury. The Committee was provided with an update on progress being made to repair damage to Beach Elementary School from the severe weather and high winds that damaged the building and surrounding grounds recently. Also, the Committee discussed the need to consider a biennial election resolution at the April Board meeting, before adopting the final resolution between May 12, 2025 and May 27, 2025 to participate in the election process of board members to the two (2) upcoming vacant MAISD board seats. The Committee discussed the district level report of the Michigan Statewide School Facilities Study for Fruitport Community Schools, and it discussed three bids that were received to replace windows at the administration building, the former site of RAM Electronics. The meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

2. Purchase of Windows for Administration Building - 259 N. 3rd Ave, Fruitport, MI

Item 25-54. MOTION by Meeuwenberg, SECOND by Mueller to approve the bid from White Lake Glass in the amount of \$37,500 to replace the windows at the site of the new administration building at 259 N. 3rd Ave., Fruitport, MI, as discussed.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

XII. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Report of committee meeting held on April 14, 2025

Steve Kelly provided a report of the committee meeting that was called to order at 5:07 p.m. on April 14, 2025. Dave Hazekamp, Jason Kennedy, and Kathy Six were present. The Committee discussed the April 2025 Personnel Report. The Committee also discussed an update on the posting and hiring process for the Director of Special Education position within Fruitport Community Schools and the Eastern Service Unit, and was provided an update on the replacement of the food service director by Chartwells. The Committee discussed a leave of absence request from Shettler teacher, Alexandra Gartland for purposes of child care. The Committee discussed updates to the Early Childhood Center Agreement and Handbook, and the Non-affiliated Support Staff Agreement and Handbook. It also discussed the annual cost limitations for public employer contributions to medical benefit plans for the calendar year 2026 that were recently released by the Michigan Department of Treasury. The meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

2. Request for Parenting Time / Child Care Leave of Absence

Item 25-55. MOTION by Kelly, SECOND by Six to approve the leave of absence request from Shettler Teacher, Alexandra Gartland, for the purposes of child care, as discussed

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

3. Updates to Wage, Salary, and Benefits Handbooks

- a. Early Childhood Center Agreement Handbook
- b. Non-affiliated Support Staff Agreement Handbook

Item 25-56. MOTION by Kelly, SECOND by Six to approve updates to the wage, salary, and benefits agreement handbooks for staff at the Early Childhood Center and for the District's non-affiliated support staff, as discussed.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

XIII. STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Report of committee meeting held on April 14, 2025

Superintendent Kennedy provided a report of the committee meeting that was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on April 14, 2025. Tim Burgess, Dave Hazekamp, Josh Mueller, and

Jason Kennedy were present. The Committee was reminded of two (2) student disciplinary hearings that have been scheduled for April 21, 2025, and it discussed a request to conduct a student reinstatement hearing for a middle school student that has previously been expelled from the District. The Committee discussed the notes that were prepared by MAISD staff highlighting the continuous improvement efforts that are ongoing within the District, and it discussed the continuing academic performance and achievement of our students, namely high school students Elijah Hulka and Lydia Shi being named National Merit Finalists. The Committee discussed a policy update from Thrun Law Firm pertaining to a new policy, Michigan Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA), Policy 4113, it discussed concerns pertaining to school climate surveys and the response of the District, and it discussed a federal update on the anti-discrimination obligations that Districts are required to certify to continue to receive federal financial assistance. The Committee also discussed the movement of Fruitport High School from Class B to Class A for the 2025-2026 school year, and potential impacts on athletic programs as a result of this reclassification. The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

2. Resolution to Appoint a Student Reinstatement Committee

Item 25-57. MOTION by Burgess, SECOND by Kelly to approve the resolution to appoint a reinstatement committee for the purposes of considering the reinstatement of a student to Fruitport Community Schools, as discussed.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

3. Thrun Law Firm Policy Update: March 2025 - Policy 4113

Item 25-58. MOTION by Burgess, SECOND by Mueller to approve the second reading of Thrun Law Policy 4113, Michigan Earned Sick Time (ESTA), and to adopt the policy, as discussed. This action includes the approval of both the policy and the employee notification, also as discussed.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

XIV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Josh Mueller shared that Fruitport Youth Wrestling has concluded and that the program had twenty-seven (27) state qualifiers this year. Josh shared that fourteen (14) wrestlers earned medals, with five (5) wrestlers finishing as state champions. The program finished in 10th place out of the three hundred and fourteen (314) teams that competed in the state tournament. Josh shared that the program continues to grow and experience success.

JB Meeuwenberg shared that the musical was once again an outstanding performance.

Kathy Six shared that she attended the Fruitport Track and Field Invitational. She shared that her grandson competes as a member of the Track and Field Team at Oakridge, so she attends many events. She was impressed with the Track and Field Invitational.

Kris Cole shared that the STEAM Along the Lakeshore event will take place on May 3, 2025. This is being hosted by the Lakeshore Museum in Downtown Muskegon. Kris also shared that he was impressed with the Track and Field Invitational that took place at Fruitport. Kris shared that teams continue to express interest in attending events at our facilities due to how well they are run and due to our facilities. He shared that he believes that there is a waiting list of schools who want to participate in our invitational.

XV. AGENDA ITEMS for FUTURE MEETINGS & SCHEDULING OF ANY SPECIAL MEETINGS

1. The Business and Finance Committee will meet on May 12, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.
2. The Personnel Committee will meet on May 12, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.
3. The Student Affairs Committee will meet on May 12, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.
4. The Board of Education will meet on May 19, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

XVI. REMARKS FROM THE PUBLIC:

- Brantley Mellem, a student at Fruitport High School, addressed the Board of Education to share that the high school choir, under the direction of Mrs. Petersmark, received straight #1 ratings across the board. He shared how proud he was of the entire choir, Mrs. Petersmark, and the work that has gone into receiving the straight #1 ratings from those in the program. Brantley also shared that he would be one of four members attending the International DECA Competition in Orlando, Fl. The DECA competition will take place on April 26-29, 2025 in Orlando.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Item 25-59. MOTION by Kelly, SECOND by Meeuwenberg to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0; 1 absent.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Kelly, Board Secretary

Jason Kennedy, Acting Recording Secretary