

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF
CLAY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

A regular session of the Clay Community Schools Board of Trustees was held at the Central Administrative Office, 1013 S. Forest Avenue, Brazil, IN 47834, on Thursday, April 8, 2021. Ryan Keller, Michael Shaw, Lynn Romas, Charley Jackson, Andrea Baysinger, Tom Reberger and Amy Burke Adams were present.

Prior to the Call to Order, Director of Business Affairs Mark Shayotovich shared information in regard to bank proposals. He noted that a request had been sent out about a month ago to local banks. Because Fifth Third had closed their local branch, a switch to another local bank was required. It was Mr. Shayotovich's intent to make that transition by the beginning of summer. From the four local banks that had been solicited, two proposals had been received, one from First Financial and one from First Farmers. Mr. Shayotovich will review the proposals and come back to the Board in May with a recommendation, with the transition to occur in May and early June.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Board President Tom Reberger led those in attendance in the pledge, and Superintendent Fritz offered the prayer.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Claims

B. Board Meetings

Regular Session Minutes for March 11, 2021

C. Field Trips

None at this meeting

D. Personnel

A. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

1. Certified

a. FMLA

CCE/SP SERV Brittany Smitley

b. FMLA/Maternity

NHS Aubrey Moss

c. FMLA

FPE/Sp SERV Stacey Thompson

2. Non-Certified

a. FMLA

CO

Cori Moody

b. FMLA

NHS

Jami Klimis-Wythe

c. Not Eligible for Leave

FPE

Rebecca Miller

d. Not Eligible for Leave

ESE

Peggy Irwin

e. Not Eligible for Leave

VBE

Jaime Harden

f. Not Eligible for Leave

VBE

Christina Modesitt

B. RETIREMENTS

1. Certified

a. Teacher (end of 2020-2021)

NCMS

Katherine L Scherb

b. Teacher (May 25, 2021)

VBE

Debbie Metz

2. Non-Certified

a. Head Cook

SE

Nancy Moody

b. Cook	SE	Mary Catherine Wetnight
c. Instructional Assistant	NCMS	Barbara Lynch
d. Instructional Assistant	FPE	Nancy Withers
3. Place on Retirement Index	None	
C. RESIGNATIONS		
1. Certified	None	
2. Non-Certified		
a. 6-hour Cook	JTE	Holly Nevins
b. Instructional Assistant	ESE	Ashley Wegner
c. Custodian	ME	Ryan Rogers
d. 5-hour Cook	NHS	Barbie Tarr
3. ECA Resignations		
a. Football Head 7 th Grade Coach	NCMS	Richard Dyar
4. ECA Lay Coaches	None	
D. TRANSFERS		
1. Certified	None	
2. Non-Certified	None	
E. EMPLOYMENT		
1. Certified	None	
2. Non-Certified	None	
3. Supplemental	None	
F. EXTRA-CURRICULAR		
1. Extra-Curricular Certified		
a. Head Varsity Volleyball	NHS	Scott McDonald
2. Extra-Curricular Non-Certified	None	
3. Extra-Curricular Lay Coach	None	
4. Supplemental	None	
G. CHANGES		
1. Certified	None	
2. Non-Certified	None	
3. ECA-Lay Coaches	None	
H. VOLUNTEERS		
1. CLASSROOM	None	
2. ATHLETICS/ECA		
<u>Clay City Jr/Sr High School</u>		
a. Caden Cannon – Volunteer, Baseball		
b. Brady Shoemaker – Volunteer, Baseball		
<u>Northview High School</u>		
c. Aundrea Kearschner – Girls basketball		
d. Duane Potts - Football		
I. TERMINATIONS		
	None	

Mr. Keller moved to accept the consent agenda items. Mr. Jackson seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

III. Comments from Patrons

None at this meeting.

IV. Old Business

A. LAN Hardware and Network Software/Hardware Bids

Mrs. Adams moved to approve the recommendation to accept the bid from CDWG for switch and transceiver hardware in the amount of \$452,292.37 and the bid from Roeing for wireless access point and wireless LAN controller in the amount of \$309,745.00. Mr. Keller seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

Following the vote, Mr. Reberger pointed out that, if the school corporation receives E-Rate funding, the school corporation's part of the total bid of \$762,037.37 would be approximately \$200,000.00. The project is to move forward only if the school corporation receives E-Rate funding.

V. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Fritz noted the following:

- Clay County has been going between the "blue" and "yellow" category for COVID-19 positivity rates and is back in the "yellow" category this week. The school corporation roadmap color category is based upon the Clay County classification. Overall, everything is going smoothly.
- Northview High School teacher Michelle Ruhe was congratulated for being chosen as the school corporation's newest Golden Apple Award winner. In response, Ms. Ruhe offered her thanks to Lynn Romas as the principal who hired her 24 years ago and to Kathy Knust who left for Central Office and opened up the position for her.

At this time, an adjustment was made to the agenda: Item VI. F. Therapy Dog Presentation was moved to the first item in New Business.

VI. New Business

F. Therapy Dog Presentation

Prior to the presentation, Superintendent Fritz noted that consideration for the implementation of a therapy dog at Van Buren Elementary may be brought to the Board at a future meeting. He also noted that Neola has a very comprehensive therapy dog policy that the Board will be asked to adopt over the summer. He added that the implementation of a therapy dog would not be for this upcoming school year, it would be a year away.

Van Buren Elementary K-2 transitional teacher Brooke Kraemer and transitional instructional assistant Kim McCurrey then provided information through a PowerPoint presentation regarding the use of a therapy dog in the school. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation will become a part of the official minutes.

Following the presentation, Mr. Keller asked if the dog would belong to Ms. Kraemer. She responded by stating that it would. He then wanted to know if the dog would stay with Ms. Kraemer over school breaks and weekends, which she verified it would. Van Buren Elementary Principal Gail Williams interjected that Ms. McCurrey would be Ms. Kraemer's back-up, as needed. Mrs. Williams noted that school fundraisers were being conducted that would pay for the dog's training, but Ms. Kraemer would be the one paying for insurance. It will be her dog, at Van Buren. Another question from Mr. Keller: Would the liability for the dog go to Ms. Kraemer or the school corporation? Ms. Kraemer's response was that she would have insurance. Superintendent Fritz then responded to the issue of the school corporation's liability, stating that Neola's policy would address some of that, and the school corporation would do what needed to be done on its end for additional coverage.

Mrs. Adams shared her positive experiences with the use of therapy dogs in her previous employment; she couldn't think of anything negative about that program. She believed they would see benefits beyond their expectations.

Mr. Romas shared his point of view that another positive result may be that a dog in the school would help students who had a fear of dogs would lose that fear.

Mr. Keller concluded discussion by asking if Ms. Kraemer could come back to the Board after she has some documented evidence as to how the program is working and the benefits to students, which she agreed she would.

A. Update to the CCS 2020-21 School Year Roadmap

Superintendent Fritz explained that this was basically an update to the athletic roadmap for North Clay, Northview, and Clay City to be applicable to spring athletics. The changes have been reviewed and approved by the local health department.

Mrs. Baysinger moved to approve the updated 2020-21 School Year Roadmap. Mr. Jackson seconded.

Under discussion, Mr. Jackson asked what would determine the point at which the school corporation could do away with the masks. Superintendent Fritz responded by stating that right now it was still the governor's order for the masks to be in place for public schools. He did not expect the governor to lift that before the end of the school year. It is the intention to require masks for summer school as well, unless the governor lifts that requirement. The school corporation also works very closely with local health officials and will see what their recommendation is.

The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

B. 2021 Summer School

Prior to Assistant Superintendent Dr. Tim Rayle providing information, Superintendent Fritz noted that the summer school program is a very robust and very aggressive plan, and some really nice incentives are being provided to get people to work the summer school program this year to assist in addressing the learning loss.

Dr. Rayle then provided an overview of the program. A copy of the 2021 Summer School proposal will become a part of the official minutes.

Regarding rates of pay for summer school employees, Director of Business Affairs Mark Shayotovich explained that, by contract, summer school teacher pay is set at Step 2 for the hourly rate; however, next month the Board will be presented with an MOU to be recommended for approval that would bump the teacher pay to Step 6, which would be almost \$50.00 an hour. This investment is what the administration considers necessary and the investment they want to make; thanks to the federal government, they made the funds available for this, as well as a lot of other items.

Mrs. Adams asked to clarify that this bump in pay was just for this summer school, which Superintendent Fritz agreed was correct.

Mr. Keller wanted to know if there was just one session of summer school. Dr. Rayle's response was that the first piece they were working on was the June session. However, elementary principals have talked about another session before school starts for students in grades K-1. But for now, yes, it is one session. Superintendent Fritz noted that, in addition to the summer school classes addressing learning loss, there will be classes that are typically offered every year, such as P.E. and instruction for students that didn't pass I-READ 3. There are also schools that are doing remediation right now, so summer school is not the only remediation being done.

Next, Mr. Keller asked if some remediation programs were a requirement, and if so, what could be done if parents said it just wasn't possible for them to do that in the summer. Dr. Rayle stated that some elementary students might face the possibility of being retained, particularly in the case of I-READ 3. He added that parents typically do an excellent job of getting students to summer school. Students that have not passed I-READ 3 do not necessarily have to be retained, but they would have to pass third-grade reading in fourth grade.

Mr. Keller then wanted to know if students attended summer school at their own school or if there was a central location to which all students would go. The answer from Dr. Rayle was that I-READ 3 would be held at Meridian Elementary. In the north, classes would be held at Northview and possibly at North Clay. In the south end, students would be at Clay City.

Another question from Mr. Keller was whether buses were provided for transportation. Dr. Rayle shared that they are working on that, and right now, there is not a definitive plan for what that is going to look like. In the past, there had been pick-up points. Director of Extended Service Jesse Trunnell added that they will most likely pick up from schools; parents will also provide transportation.

Mr. Keller's next question was in regard to whether there would be coordination with the YMCA's child care program in regard to getting students to summer school. Dr. Rayle stated that typically they do, but they had not done that yet. He noted that typically they would run the elementary summer school classes at Forest Park, but because of the numbers being looked at this year, he is not sure that is going to happen. Mr. Trunnell

added that students who are already at Forest Park for the Y program would be bused to whatever school was holding summer school classes.

Mr. Jackson asked to clarify with this hypothetical situation: if he lived in Staunton, but Staunton did not provide this opportunity and his child had to go to Van Buren, how would his child get to Van Buren? Mr. Trunnell responded, stating that Mr. Jackson would be responsible for getting his child to Staunton in order to be transported to Van Buren. Students would not be picked up at their homes, as of right now.

Superintendent Fritz pointed out that the school corporation had to look at the number of bus drivers it would take to go to every student's house compared with the number of bus drivers that would be willing to do summer school. He didn't believe they could get every bus driver, nor could they afford to pay every bus driver, for the number of students that would be going to summer school. They have also talked about pick-up points, such as Poland or Center Point or Bowling Green or Cory, to where there might be several students there.

An additional question from Mr. Keller: Could some of the money being allocated to the school corporation from the federal government in addition to the normal budget be used for transportation? In his opinion, if we are asking these students to come to summer school to cover this learning loss and there is money specifically designated for learning loss, it is almost the school corporation's responsibility to provide door-to-door transportation. As a parent, he would not be comfortable sending his child down the road to a central pick-up spot. Superintendent Fritz's response was that the concern would be to get the amount of bus drivers needed to do what Mr. Keller was asking.

Mrs. Adams pointed out that the school corporation usually has summer school anyway, so some will attend for learning loss, but others will attend for normal, extra services. She was pleased to be touching the literacy issue early because the longer it goes, it affects all the subjects. By catching the reading early and shoring it up through summer school, she believed that to be a great service to this community.

Mr. Jackson shared this concern about transportation: At the end of the day, if there are drop-off points and bus drivers drop kids off, what if the parents aren't there? Mr. Trunnell stated that bus drivers would not leave a child with no one there. Meridian Elementary Principal Karen Phillips, who has previously overseen summer school programs, shared that past practice has been for the bus driver to radio Transportation Supervisor Cathy Rodgers. Mrs. Rodgers would then contact Mrs. Phillips, and Mrs. Phillips would go to where the student was and stay until the student had been picked up, as a back-up so the student wasn't left alone.

Mr. Reberger emphasized that summer school is not a punishment; rather, it is an opportunity, and that is what the school corporation wants the students, and particularly the parents, to understand.

Mr. Romas moved to approve the 2021 Summer School Program. Mr. Keller seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

C. Extra Duty Pay for Bus Drivers

Mr. Jackson moved to approve the extra duty pay (a one-time stipend of \$150.00 for drivers and bus aides who drive/ride an average of six routes per week, for COVID-19-related issues). Dr. Shaw seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

D. Central Office Summer Hours

The recommendation was to approve the request to allow central office 260-day certified and classified employees to operate on a forty-hour, four-day work week beginning Monday, June 7, and continuing through Friday, July 23, 2021, with the office being open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and closed on Fridays.

Mr. Keller moved to approve the Central Office summer hours. Mrs. Adams seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

E. Title I Grant Application

Mr. Reberger moved to approve applying for the Title I Grant. Mr. Jackson seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

G. Request to Accept Donation of Chairs and Chair Caddie for NHS

Dr. Shaw moved to approve the request to accept a donation of chairs and a chair caddie from Rob York for Northview High School. Mr. Jackson seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

Following the vote, Mr. Reberger commented that Rob York is good to Clay Community Schools. He is a local business leader, and he does a lot for the schools that people don't know about unless they're directly involved. Mr. Reberger wanted to thank him for that.

H. Consideration to Name the Meridian Elementary Principal

Mrs. Baysinger moved to approve naming Ms. Amy Hardey as the next Meridian Elementary principal with a 200-day contract and salary and benefits as addressed in the CCS Administrator Handbook. Mrs. Adams seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

Karen Phillips, the current principal, was recognized by Superintendent Fritz and thanked for her years of service to Meridian Elementary.

I. Consideration to Name the CCS Director of Human Resources

Mr. Jackson moved to approve naming Mr. Chris Ross as the next Clay Community Schools Director of Human Resources with a 260-day contract and salary and benefits as addressed in the CCS Administrator Handbook. Mr. Romas seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

VII. Board Member Comments

Ryan Keller stated that he was proud to be on the school board, and he offered congratulations to the new administrators.

Michael Shaw offered congratulations to Michelle Ruhe and new administrative hires Amy Hardey and Chris Ross as well as thanks to Karen Phillips.

Lynn Romas congratulated Michelle Ruhe for what he deemed to be a wonderful experience for her and noted that it was extremely hard to win that award. Referencing administrative classes he had taken with Karen Phillips, he congratulated her for extremely successful career at Meridian. He also congratulated Amy Hardey and Chris Ross for being named to their new positions.

Charley Jackson thanked Karen Phillips for her years of service and for doing a great job and congratulated Chris Ross and Amy Hardey. He thanked Rob York for all of his donations and for what he has done for this community and added his congratulations to Michelle Ruhe.

Andrea Baysinger noted that her family had been a part of Meridian Elementary since 1975 when she started kindergarten, with her mother retiring after working as an instructional assistant for nearly 40 years. She offered her congratulations to Karen Phillips on her retirement and kudos to Amy Hardey for being named the new principal. She also congratulated Chris Ross and Michelle Ruhe.

Amy Adams added her congratulations to Michelle Ruhe for being named a Golden Apple award winner. She also congratulated Karen Phillips on her retirement and Amy Hardey and Chris Ross on their promotions. Thanks were offered to all staff for another successful and safe school year in a very unpredictable and fluid time.

Tom Reberger concurred with everything that had been said and added the comment, "We have a great school family, and we look out for each other." He then made a comment about Karen Phillips, sharing that he knew if he got a call from her, it was a problem because she took care of everything.

VIII. Future Agenda Items

None at this meeting.

IX. Adjournment

Having exhausted all agenda items, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

The meeting was audio recorded and copies may be requested by contacting the Central Administration Office.