

**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, July 8, 2021. Ryan Keller, Michael Shaw, Lynn Romas, Charley Jackson, Andrea Baysinger, Tom Reberger, and Amy Burke Adams were present.

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.

At this time, Mr. Reberger shared that the Board would like to amend the agenda and move Item IV. Old Business to the next item to be discussed.

IV. Old Business

A. 2021-22 CCS Reentry Plan Draft

Superintendent Fritz shared that, with the expiration of the governor's mandate for masks and a few other things, options had opened up for school corporations around the state. He stated that the administration wished to avoid making multiple changes to the reentry plan prior to the start of school. Superintendent Fritz had heard hints of additional flexibility that may be coming to school corporations, one of those being the CDC mask mandate for buses, which may be relaxed as well. He then noted that there would be a special session board meeting on July 29 (a special session is held each year at the end of July to approve new hires before the start of school), so any adjustments to the plan would be made between now and July 29, when the administration will seek formal approval of the reentry plan.

Referencing the 2020-21 roadmap, Superintendent Fritz pointed out that the roadmap had served a very valuable and useful purpose; it had allowed students to stay in school for all but a couple of weeks around the end of November/early December and had helped out a lot.

The desire of the administration, as well as the Board, is to return to a more traditional school setting, as much as possible. There are still some COVID-19 concerns; therefore, some of the precautions that had previously been in place will remain.

Superintendent Fritz then presented an overview of the draft plan, as follows:

- Post signage regarding importance of frequent handwashing and other recommended hygiene practices;
- Provide hand sanitizers in Clay Community Schools facilities and on buses;
- Conduct enhanced cleaning throughout the day;
- Conduct routine air filtration inspections and cleanings;
- Face coverings (masks) are optional in the schools, as per the governor's executive order of July 1, 2021;
- Face coverings are required on school buses, as per the CDC mandate (there are hints that may be lifted, possibly in early September);

- Clean and disinfect buses on a daily basis;
- Practice three feet of social distancing in classrooms, when possible;
- Seat students facing the same direction in classrooms;
- Utilize assigned seats and seating charts in classrooms and on buses (to aid in contact tracing, if needed);
- Visitors in schools and classrooms may be limited, but it will be pretty much as it was prior to COVID-19;
- Large community events will be at the discretion of administration, as per local, federal, and state mandates, but overall will remain pretty much a normal routine;
- Provide guidelines and protocols to parents and employees for COVID-19-related symptoms and illnesses;
- Information from the CDC and our Department of Health will be put out to inform parents and let them make those decisions as to what they want to do for masks and so forth for their own children;
- Encourage students and employees to stay home if they are ill or symptomatic;
- As a school corporation, the belief is that the choice for vaccinating students needs to be left to the parents; therefore, Clay Community Schools has not, nor will it, be offering vaccinations against COVID-19 illnesses on campuses.

The hope is for a more traditional school year and a return to a sense of normalcy. Superintendent Fritz acknowledged that last year was an extremely difficult year for families, for students, for educators, for everyone. Superintendent Fritz is also hoping for more flexibility in the next couple of weeks. The final draft is to be brought back to the Board for approval on July 29.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Claims

B. Board Meetings

Regular Session Minutes for June 10, 2021

Executive Session Certification for June 10, 2021

C. Field Trips

Northview High School Girls and Boys Cross Country teams to Taylor University, August 27 and 28, 2021, requiring overnight stay

D. Personnel

A. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

- | | |
|------------------|------|
| 1. Certified | None |
| 2. Non-Certified | None |

B. RETIREMENTS

- | | |
|------------------------------|------|
| 1. Certified | None |
| 2. Non-Certified | None |
| 3. Place on Retirement Index | None |

C. RESIGNATIONS

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------|----------------|
| 1. Certified | | |
| a. Math Teacher | NCMS | Lauren Barnett |
| 2. Non-Certified | | |
| a. Instructional Assistant | CCE | Brian Jones |

b. Instructional Assistant	NCMS	Nadia Kester
c. Secretary	NCMS	Kim Reynolds
d. Bus Driver	TRANS	Earl Payton
e. Instructional Assistant	ME	Kristen Beasley
f. Instructional Assistant	VBE	Hayley Johnson
3. ECA Resignations	None	
4. ECA Lay Coaches	None	

D. TRANSFERS

1. Certified		
a. Title One Elementary Counselor	TITLE I	Christy Casassa
b. Title One Elementary Counselor	TITLE I	Mike Gugino
2. Non-Certified		
a. Cafeteria Manager	SE	Anita Walker
b. Assistant Cafeteria Manager	CCHS	Kyra Stemler

E. EMPLOYMENT

1. Certified		
a. Special Education Teacher	ME/SE	Shaylyn Ehrlich
b. Band Teacher	NCMS	Rachel Martin
c. 8 th Grade Math Teacher	NCMS	William Patton
d. Assistant Principal	NHS	Bryan Strain
e. English Teacher	NHS	Luke Carr
2. Non-Certified	None	
3. Supplemental	None	

F. EXTRA-CURRICULAR

1. Extra-Curricular Certified		
a. Jr. High Girls Track (Spring 2021)	CCHS	Clay Huffman
b. 8 th Grade Volleyball	CCHS	Kyndall Boyll
c. 8 th Grade Girls Basketball	CCHS	Kyndall Boyll
d. HS Assistant Cheer Coach	CCHS	Christina Rea
2. Extra-Curricular Non-Certified	None	
3. Extra-Curricular Lay Coach		
a. HS Girls Cross Country	CCHS	Melanie Laswell
b. Jr. High Cross Country	CCHS	Steve Cooper
4. Supplemental		
a. Softball (\$500.00 to be paid from ECA)	NHS	Steve Clark
b. Softball (\$600.00 to be paid from ECA)	NHS	Lindsay Clark

G. CHANGES

1. Certified	None
2. Non-Certified	None
3. ECA-Lay Coaches	None

H. VOLUNTEERS

1. CLASSROOM	None
2. ATHLETICS/ECA	None

I. TERMINATIONS	None
J. NON-RENEWAL	None

Mr. Keller moved to approve the consent agenda. Dr. Shaw seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

III. Comments from Patrons

Christa Pierce, Carrie Siples, Brian Baumgartner, and John Shepherd shared their concerns in regard to students wearing face coverings, the process for contact tracing, what the plans are if numbers increase, and the level of authority the CDC has to require masks on buses. Nathan Propst presented his understanding of Critical Race Theory and his concerns about it becoming a part of the school curriculum. Tammy Emmert spoke regarding boys using girls restrooms and vice versa as well as other issues associated with transgender identification by students; she asked that the school corporation not allow this agenda to be pushed into this community.

Following Comments from Patrons, Superintendent Fritz shared that he appreciated the comments that had been made this evening. He noted that a school attorney would be at a future meeting to explain the school corporation's legal requirements as a school system in regard to the topic of restroom use.

As for Mr. Propst's comments in regard to Critical Race Theory, Superintendent Fritz thanked him for those comments. He then stated that he knew this had been a trying time for parents and families due to COVID-19 turning the world upside down. It had been difficult times for school systems as well, with many demands, many mandates, and many requirements.

Superintendent Fritz had heard many things about Clay Community Schools that he didn't know about, such as the school corporation requiring masks, not the governor, which was not accurate. He also had heard that he wanted to close the schools last year, which was obviously not true; he wanted to keep the schools open, and the school corporation was able to do that with in-person learning. In addition, phone calls had been received at Central Office about the school corporation requiring vaccines, which couldn't have been further from the truth. Superintendent Fritz had also heard recently that he was wanting to bring the mask mandate back, and he assured those in attendance that, as an American citizen, he did not want to do that.

Listing several topics about which he could talk a person into boredom, Superintendent Fritz included U.S. History as one of those topics, particularly the founding of our country and particularly the Revolutionary War. He then spoke about what had been a couple of hot topics in recent days that dealt with our history and dealt with our curriculum. One was the Critical Race Theory movement, and the other was the 1619 Project. He assured those in attendance that those were not part of the school corporation's curriculum. Superintendent Fritz shared that two weeks ago he had spoken with Dr. Katie Jenner, the new Indiana Secretary of Education. The new Secretary of Education is an appointed position by the governor; previously, it had been an elected position. At that time, Superintendent Fritz had asked Dr. Jenner specifically

about both the 1619 Project and Critical Race Theory initiatives. Dr. Jenner had assured Superintendent Fritz that neither was a part of state standards. He pointed out that Clay Community Schools had had no dialogue on these programs at all until a couple of weeks ago when Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita had made it a topic of discussion around the state. However, the school corporation has had and continues to have extensive dialogue on what Superintendent Fritz believes is a win for students and a win for the kids in Indiana—a new civics education class. As part of H.B. 1384, in two or three years Indiana middle school students will be required to take one semester of a civics education class. He is very much in favor of this because it includes concepts that every citizen should know. They are developing learning standards, and there is a civics education commission forming at the state level. He is looking for good things to come out of that, and he wanted to thank state representatives for doing that. He deemed it to be welcome news for Clay Community Schools, although he has not seen everything in it yet.

As a citizen and as an educator, Superintendent Fritz is proud and appreciates this United States of America that we are very blessed to live in – the greatest country in the world. He is proud of our heritage and our constitution. As for mistakes in our history, he acknowledged that there absolutely were mistakes, just like all in this room. He does not pretend Clay Community Schools is perfect; it is not, and neither is its superintendent. Mistakes are made, but they are addressed, some having been addressed with parents in this very room and sometimes with a simple phone call and a handshake. Some things slip through the cracks, but the administration does work to address those issues that are brought to their attention. Sometimes everyone doesn't always agree, but it doesn't make anyone right or wrong, and sometimes they have to agree to disagree. As Attorney General Rokita's recent document stated, concerns should start at the classroom level with the teacher, then move to the building principal, then Central Office, then the school board. He stressed that many, if not most, issues could be resolved at the classroom or building level.

Superintendent Fritz next stated that he greatly admires and appreciates the men and women who serve our country, both those in uniform and those in blue, some who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Because of these great Americans, we are blessed to live in the greatest country in the world. He reiterated that he loved to talk about and loved to teach U.S. History. He shared that he is still invited into classrooms from time to time to do so, and he deemed that to be one of the favorite things about his job that he gets to do. He also gives talks in the community and area churches about our founding fathers and the founding of our country. He doesn't pretend to be an historian, and he doesn't pretend to know everything that goes on within classroom walls, but he does make a lot of visits to the school corporation's buildings and classrooms. Superintendent Fritz believes he has a pretty good feel and a pretty good pulse on this district.

At this point, Superintendent Fritz shared examples of history lessons that are embedded in some of the corporation's schools and are taught in classrooms in different buildings throughout the corporation and, hopefully, reinforce the philosophy of his office and the philosophy of Clay Community Schools.

His first example was of a class that conducts analysis of important U.S. documents called the “100 Milestone Documents”. They include the Articles of Confederation (our first constitution), the Declaration of Independence (our birth certificate), the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, the Virginia Plan, and Washington’s farewell address, just to name a few. In this class, they spend a great deal of time talking about the writing of the Constitution and the ingenious efforts used to get it ratified. In another school, they talk about the Founding Fathers – the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence. Another lesson mentioned was the true story of the bulletproof George Washington, and yet another was about Benjamin Franklin. The last lesson referenced by Superintendent Fritz was recognized as being a part of that school’s character education program and one that is taught as history as well. Character traits such as honesty, loyalty, patriotism, courage, respect, work ethic, and many more are taught within this lesson.

Noting that there was a rich heritage in this country, Superintendent Fritz stated that many aspects of our country’s history are taught here. Unfortunately, some circles paint all schools – all school corporations – all school leaders – with the same broad brush. Many issues and many programs are initiated or mandated at the federal or state level. Because of this, he encourages people to reach out to their elected representatives. He assured those in attendance that he did so and that the elected representatives knew him by his first name. Regarding issues of concern, and appreciation as well, he urged patrons to contact Senators Todd Young and Mike Braun, US House of Representatives member Larry Bucshon, Indiana Senator Jon Ford, and Indiana House of Representatives members Alan Morrison and Bob Heaton. He added that our voices together can make a difference.

Superintendent Fritz referenced a comment made by Board President Tom Reberger last month, in which he said it was not “you against us” and it’s not “us against you”. The board members and the superintendent live and work here, raise their families here, pay taxes here, buy cars and groceries here, and go to church together. Most likely, all have very similar value systems.

Next, Superintendent Fritz shared thoughts of his from when he had been on vacation recently. His thoughts had been about the men and women who serve on the Board, which he believed to be a pretty good cross-section of the community. The Board members include a retired law enforcement officer, former teachers with around 150 years in public education, a former athletic director and several coaches, at least four with agricultural backgrounds having grown up farming with their dads, and many more that work in a lot of community organizations. There are two members of the medical profession and at least four with small business owner experience. One works in higher education. He assured the patrons in attendance that this Board is very involved and ask him tough questions and challenge him.

Superintendent Fritz then stressed that it was very important to understand that the Clay Community Schools curriculum is approved by the Clay Community Schools curriculum committee. The curriculum is approved by the committee before it ever goes to the school board. This committee is made up of teachers, administrators, students – both from Clay City High School and Northview High School, and parents – several parents.

The committee members are provided detailed information, they have detailed discussions, and they align the school corporation's curriculum with state standards, which they have to. Superintendent Fritz reiterated that parents are directly involved in the Clay Community Schools curriculum committee, which initially approves the curriculum for Clay Community Schools before it ever comes to the Board. Parents are actually also involved at the building level as well. They work as volunteers. Some parents are teachers and administrators and support staff. Some parents are very involved in PTOs and band and sports boosters.

Superintendent Fritz asked those in attendance to please understand that Clay Community Schools cultivates safety, opportunity, prosperity, and the will to succeed, which was something many grew up knowing as the American dream. He then noted that at each board meeting he welcomes new hires to our school family; he uses the phrase "school family" not in a trivial manner, but rather he uses it sincerely. All employees bring great value to the school system, as well as all 3,873 students that are served each and every day.

It is his sincere hope this has helped explain some of the school corporation's positions and answered some of the patrons' concerns.

V. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Fritz noted the following:

- A welcome to the school family was extended to new hires Shaylyn Ehrlich, Rachel Martin, William Patton, Bryan Strain, and Luke Carr.
- A special session is to be held on Thursday, July 29, at 6:30 p.m.
- Superintendent Fritz is looking forward to the 2021-22 school year. While acknowledging there will be challenges, he anticipates a much more normal school year than what it was last year.

VI. New Business

A. Administrator Handbook Revision

Mr. Jackson moved to approve including the updated middle school and high school principal and technology director information that had been inadvertently omitted in the CCS Administrator Handbook revision. Mr. Romas seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

B. Residential Placements Resolution

Mrs. Baysinger moved to approve the Resolution to Authorize the Superintendent and Business Manager to Sign Agreements for Alternative Services and Private Residential School Placements. Mrs. Adams seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

C. Hamilton Center MOU

Mr. Keller moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hamilton Center. Mr. Jackson seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

D. Textbook Rental and Class Fees for the 2021-22 School Year

Mr. Romas moved to approve the proposed textbook rental and class fees for the 2021-2022 school year. Mrs. Baysinger seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

E. Virtual Academy Recommendation

With schools moving to a more traditional setting, the anticipated enrollment in the virtual academy had decreased dramatically. Because of that, changes to the program for 2021-22 are being requested. Superintendent Fritz deemed this to be very positive news as the vast majority of students move back to in-person learning.

Mr. Jackson moved to approve the changes to the virtual academy. Mrs. Adams seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

A copy of the approved changes will become a part of the official minutes.

F. Graduation Waiver Request

Mr. Romas moved to approve the request from Curriculum and Grants Coordinator Kathy Knust for a graduation waiver to address an outdated elective course. Mr. Keller seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

G. CCS Policy Handbook (Neola) – First Reading

Superintendent Fritz explained that information had been shared with the Board on an ongoing basis regarding the new CCS Policy Handbook (Neola). He described the transition to the Neola board policy platform as being important in order to keep the policy handbook updated on a regular basis and have the policies vetted by school attorneys. This was a first reading, so no vote was necessary. The CCS Policy Handbook is to be brought back for a second reading at the July 29 special session board meeting.

H. Request to Purchase John Deere Gator for Clay City High School

Mr. Jackson moved to approve the purchase of a 2021 John Deere Gator for Clay City High School utilizing a donation from the Clay City VFW for the purchase. Dr. Shaw seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

I. Ernie Simpson Scholarship

Director of Business Affairs Mark Shayotovich read a memo that he had sent to the Board in which he recommended approving a \$5,000.00 donation from Mrs. Christie Simpson, mother of Mr. Ernie Simpson, for the purpose of establishing the Ernie Simpson Memorial Scholarship at Northview High School, with future funding to be generated through a fundraising event to be determined at a later time.

In the memo, it was noted that each year a \$1,077.00 scholarship would be awarded to a Northview High School football player who best embodied the values, leadership, and work ethic Mr. Simpson lived by each day and worked tirelessly to instill in the students he taught, the athletes he coached, and the many people he led. The scholarship recipient is to be chosen by the Ernie Simpson Memorial Scholarship committee, which will consist of 1) the current NHS head football coach (currently Mr. Mark Raetz); 2) the

current NHS principal (currently Mr. Chris Mauk); and 3) Mrs. Christie Simpson, or designee of Mrs. Simpson. The scholarship recipient must meet the following minimum criteria: 1) must be a graduating senior at Northview High School; 2) must play for the Northview High School football team all four years of high school; 3) must embody the values, leadership, and work ethic of Mr. Simpson; 4) must be an established school and team leader; and 5) the award must be used to attend a 2-year or 4-year college or a professional trade school.

Dr. Shaw moved to approve the \$5,000.00 donation from Mrs. Christie Simpson for the purpose of establishing the Ernie Simpson Memorial Scholarship at Northview High School. Mr. Jackson seconded, and the motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

VII. Board Member Comments

Ryan Keller congratulated the new hires and welcomed them to Clay Community Schools. Also, he thanked Superintendent Fritz for his words of wisdom at tonight's meeting; he appreciated it as a school board member and also as a parent and community member. He then thanked Mindy Godsey for all of her hard work on Neola.

Michael Shaw offered a "ditto" to Mr. Keller's comments. He thanked all in attendance at the meeting for coming and assured them that their voices had been heard. He reiterated a comment made earlier, that the Board was with them, not against them.

Lynn Romas agreed with Dr. Shaw's comments and with Mr. Keller's comment about Mrs. Godsey's work on Neola. He added his congratulations to the new hires and commented that being a teacher was a very rewarding experience. Mr. Romas concluded his comments by thanking Superintendent Fritz for his comments.

Charley Jackson welcomed all new hires and added his thanks to Mrs. Godsey and Superintendent Fritz for all their hard work. He also thanked the VFW at Clay City for their donation. Mr. Jackson shared that he appreciated all of the parents coming in this evening with all their concerns and agreed with another Board member that the Board was behind them 100%.

Andrea Baysinger commented regarding what she deemed to be a great crowd; she hoped it was standing room only every month. As a parent and community member, she encouraged all to come to school board meetings so they could stay informed as to what was going on month to month.

Amy Adams agreed with Mrs. Baysinger that it was a pleasure seeing all who had attended the meeting, and she encouraged them to attend future board meetings and share their thoughts and concerns. New hires were welcomed by Mrs. Adams. She ended her comments with her hope that everyone was having a restful, relaxing, fun, and safe summer.

Tom Reberger concurred with everything that had been said. He added that it had been nice to conduct a meeting like this and end with everybody smiling.

VIII. Future Agenda Items

None at this meeting.

IX. Adjournment

Having exhausted all agenda items, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m. The meeting was audio recorded and copies may be requested by contacting the Central Administration Office.