

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

A regular session of the Clay Community Schools Board of Trustees was held in the Board Room of the Central Administrative Office, 1013 S. Forest Avenue, Brazil, IN, 47834, on Thursday, August 10, 2023. Ryan Keller, Michael Shaw, Lynn Romas, Tom Reberger, Amy Burke Adams, and Cheryl Schopmeyer were present. Andrea Baysinger was absent.

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 Rayle offered the prayer.

II. Comments from Patrons

None

III. Consent Agenda

A. Claims

B. Board Meetings

Regular Session: Thursday, July 13, 2023

Special Session: Monday, July 31, 2023

C. Field Trips

None

D. Personnel

A. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

1. Certified

a. FMLA

NHS

Ariel Leek

b. FMLA

ME

Jamie Dickerson

2. Non-Certified

a. FMLA

Trans

Mark McIntire

b. Classified Employee Not Eligible for Leave

CCHS

Kyra Stemler

B. RETIREMENTS

1. Certified

None

2. Non-Certified

None

3. Place on Retirement Index

a. Service Appreciation Stipend (30-days)

FPE

Becky Chrisman

C. RESIGNATIONS

1. Certified

None

2. Non-Certified

a. Bus Driver (eff. 7/25/23)

Trans

Karen Harper

b. IA (eff. 8/1/23)

MES

Jessica Hayes

c. IA (eff. 8/1/23)

JTE

Kelly Fisher

d. Bus Driver (eff. 8/1/23)

Trans

Scott Wilson

3. ECA Resignations

None

4. ECA Lay Coaches

None

D. TRANSFERS		
1. Certified	None	
2. Non-Certified		
a. IA (from VBE Custodian)	FPE	Hayley Clark
E. EMPLOYMENT		
1. Certified		
a. English Teacher	NCMS	Lauren Swearingen
b. Math Teacher	NHS	Natalie Scherle
c. Special Services Teacher	NHS	Kristie Bledsoe
2. Non-Certified		
a. Bus Driver (eff. 8/14/23)	Trans	Shayne Thompson
b. IA (29hr)	MES	Chelsea Dighton
c. IA (29hr)	CCHS	Jacinda Tucker
d. IA-Title I (29hr)	VBE	Destiny Boots
e. IA (29hr)	MES	Samantha Drake
f. IA (29hr)	ESE	Rebecca Warner
g. IA (29hr)	ESE	Savannah Hodges-Coomer
h. Bus Mechanic (260-day/eff. 8/4/23)	Trans	Scott Wilson
3. Supplemental	None	
F. EXTRA-CURRICULAR		
1. Extra-Curricular Certified	None	
2. Extra-Curricular Non-Certified	None	
3. Extra-Curricular Lay Coach		
a. JH Cross Country	CCHS	Jason Paul
b. Varsity Volleyball	CCHS	Bradi Oberholtzer
c. 8th Grade Volleyball	CCHS	Ashley Weber
4. Supplemental	None	
G. CHANGES		
1. Certified	None	
2. Non-Certified	None	
3. ECA-Lay Coaches	None	
H. VOLUNTEERS		
1. CLASSROOM	None	
2. BAND		
a. Band (Volunteer)	NHS	Brandon Bailey
3. ATHLETICS/ECA		
a. Cross Country & Track Coach (Vol)	CCHS	Macy Tucker
I. TERMINATIONS	None	
J. Suspension Without Pay	None	
K. NON-RENEWAL	None	

Mr. Keller moved to approve the consent agenda. Mrs. Schopmeyer seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

IV. Old Business

None

V. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Rayle noted the following:

- Welcome to the new hires: Lauren Swearingen, Natalie Scherle, Kristie Bledsoe, Shayne Thompson, Chelsea Dighton, Jacinda Tucker, Destiny Boots, Samantha Drake, Rebecca Warner, and Savannah Hodges-Coomer.
- Extended thanks to Central Office staff, Chief Clarke, and all CCS employees for a great start to the school year.
- Shared appreciation to Dianna Knox and Leslie Cesinger, Instructional Specialists, for their hard work getting administrators and teachers going at the start of school. He also extended thanks to the transportation department for getting things worked out and having a smooth run on the second day of school.
- He asked everyone to keep Mr. Brad Ennen in their prayers for the loss in his family.

VI. New Business

A. School Update

Throughout the 2023-24 academic year, the Board will receive monthly updates from a designated school. Commencing in August, Mr. Dustin Jorgensen, Principal at Forest Park Elementary, had the honor of inaugurating this series. Mr. Jorgensen shared photos and data to showcase the student's learning and growth throughout the year in Math and English/Language Arts. He also shared a spreadsheet from the DOE that showed the special education percentage for every school in the state. Forest Park Elementary has a percentage of 42% and is ranked 43rd highest in Indiana. He wanted everyone to keep in mind that the schools listed above FPE were not traditional elementary schools like his, but rather residential facilities, preschool-only programs, and alternative schools. He was proud to show the board the growth of learning throughout the year for all students in his building and the dedication to students that the FPE staff have every day.

B. Request for Permission to Advertise the 2024 Budget, 2024 Capital Projects Plan, and the 2024 School Bus Replacement Plan

Mrs. Adams moved to approve the request for permission to advertise the budget in local newspapers and on the Clay Community School website. Mr. Romas seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. It was noted the board was not authorizing the budget at this time, just giving permission to advertise. There will be a series of hearings and the opportunity for public comment and final action in October.

C. Request for Permission to Solicit Bids for Buses

Mrs. Schopmeyer moved to approve the request for permission to solicit bids for buses through the Central Indiana Education Service Center (CIESC). Mr. Keller seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

D. NCMS Boiler Update

Prior to the NCMS boiler update, Mr. Hammond extended appreciation to Cathy Rodgers and the transportation team for the preventative maintenance they did over the summer. He explained they lost a lift in the garage and had it not been for them pushing to get things done, they would have been in trouble. He moved to the NCMS boiler situation that presented two original boilers that have gone down. He explained that one of them could be fixed by the maintenance department, which could run the building by itself. However, he asked permission to bid for the other boiler that will need to be replaced. Mrs. Adams applauded Mr. Hammond on his proactive approach to the supply chain issues that they have seen when it comes to ordering big-ticket items.

Dr. Shaw moved to approve the request to bid for the NCMS boiler. Mrs. Adams seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

E. Permission to Partner with Equitable Education Solutions to Create a Learning Prioritization Plan

Information was included in the packet regarding the request to partner with Equitable Education Solutions to develop an updated strategic plan. The partnership would result in a concise, comprehensive action plan that addresses instruction and learning outcomes, enhance the current systems in place, and suggests measures to sustain the improvement efforts. Through the partnership, EES will also help develop and implement the corporation's branding efforts. Mr. Keller asked for an explanation of what branding efforts they would provide. Dr. Rayle explained EES has a group that specializes in media and marketing by creating commercials, etc., to play at sporting events or other forms of media to showcase the corporation.

Mr. Romas moved to approve the partnership with Equitable Education Solutions. Dr. Shaw seconded, and the motion was approved by a 5-0-1 vote. Mrs. Schopmeyer abstained.

F. Adult Meal Prices

Mr. Keller moved to approve the increase of adult meal prices for the 2023-24 school year. Mr. Romas seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. The new price for adult breakfast will be \$3.00 and the new price for adult lunch will be \$5.00.

G. Corporation Cars

At the July 13 board meeting, board member Amy Burke Adams requested a report about the possibility of purchasing corporation vehicles for use by members of the administrative team. Director of Business Affairs John Szabo, presented information regarding the financial aspect of purchasing corporation vehicles. He shared with the board a graph of miles driven and how much was reimbursed from 7/1/2021-6/30/2022 and 7/1/2022-6/30/2023 at the Indiana mileage rate of \$0.49/mile. The graph included the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Extended Services, Instructional Technology, and Director of Special Services.

These particular positions turned in a total of 18,703.8 miles for the last school year, multiplied by \$0.49 is a reimbursement total of \$9,164.86. He noted there are quite a few other positions in the corporation that also get reimbursed. Mr. Szabo shared a hypothetical reimbursement example. He said if you turn in a mileage claim for 500 miles, you will receive a check for \$245. For 500 miles, you can estimate that you would use somewhere between 16 (30 mpg) and 33 (15 mpg) gallons of gas/fuel. Theoretically, you would spend between \$53 - \$176 on gas/fuel. The remaining money received is meant to help recover the costs of normal wear and tear. In this example, which again is hypothetical, there is approximately \$70 left over to contribute to the normal wear and tear of a personal vehicle. He moved on to the vehicle cost analysis with the assumption of four vehicles being purchased for the following areas: Central Office, Extended Services, Technology, and Special Services. Mrs. Adams then asked to go back to the previous slide for clarification. She stated if she understood correctly, if someone turns in a sheet for reimbursement for 500 miles, they receive a check for \$245, and the most they use in gas is \$176, the corporation is paying them \$70 to put 500 miles on their tires and engine in their personal car. She states that she cannot get a rental car for \$69 and put 500 miles on it. She says that is asking the staff to take a personal and financial hit. She understands that the reimbursement rate is set by the state and how it works, but when the corporation is asking staff to use their personal vehicles for their business she feels they could do a better job at supplying vehicles. She says there was a time in her 12 years with the corporation, there were vehicles for staff. She says it was in the budget then and they let some staff take the vehicles home because they were on call 24/7 depending on their position. She goes back to the \$70 left for employees, saying it is a heck of a buy for the corporation, but a big blow for that staff member who is using their personal vehicle. Mr. Szabo adds that 500 miles is very high and they typically do not have many employees that are turning in that many miles at a time. He circles back to the assumption he was asked to make was that the corporation buys four vehicles. The vehicle's cost in range from \$75,000 - \$110,000. He said he estimated \$17,500 for each car multiplied by three, and then \$35,000 for a truck. He added that there is obviously some fluctuation there, he just pulled prices off of local dealership websites for this analysis. The estimated annual fuel cost would be around \$3,500-\$5,000. The estimated insurance premiums would be around \$4,000-\$6,000. Other considerations include additional mileage reimbursement will still be present for other employee groups. In this exercise, it only shows vehicles purchased to offset the mileage cost of a few employees. There are many more employees that request reimbursement for mileage; these costs (approximately \$23,000 in FY23) would still remain. Mr. Szabo adds that the current system may not be perfect, but the best way to ensure proper compensation for expenses incurred while traveling is to document mileage properly using the State Board of Accounts claim form. Mrs. Adams shared her thoughts about having an assigned car to the central office staff that is kept at the office for the weekends, evenings, or during the day for employees that need to go to a conference outside of the county. She mentioned the CCS Police Department needing vehicles also. She knows they are frugal with money, but she believes they do have the money to buy vehicles for certain positions. Mr. Reberger stated he has been in this corporation for 43 years and does not ever remember the corporation owning vehicles for use outside of the maintenance department. Mrs. Adams replied they bought him one while he was the Director of Extended Services years ago. Mr. Reberger disagreed, and Mrs. Adams explained they bought it from the dealership down south because they didn't want to spend the \$500 stipend when they were giving out stipends for employees to use their corporation vehicles. Mr. Keller asked if they were free to move on since there was no action

required. Mrs. Adams added the need to look into updating the maintenance vehicle fleet and purchasing vehicles for the CCS Police Department.

H. Corporation Cell Phones

At the July 13 board meeting, board member Amy Burke Adams requested a report about the current administrative team member's phone plans. Director of Technology Bill Milner explained there are currently 18 phones on the current plan for several positions in the corporation, 4 cell phones and the rest are hotspots. He explained that teachers and other staff currently use their personal phones for school email when they are not at work to access email on their desktop computers. He said that they do have a security feature on the email system that allows the technology department to help monitor spam emails and viruses that could come in. Mrs. Adams stated that one of the things the corporation prides itself on is communication, and with cell phones being very affordable, she doesn't see why it couldn't be possible for each administrator and principal to have a separate phone for work-related use. She feels like it is not necessary for principals to share their personal phone numbers with parents. Mr. Milner explained the corporation does have an app that connects to each phone in the corporation. Once the app has been downloaded, the employee could log in and have access to use the school phone through the app as they would the actual desktop phone. While using this app, the phone number that would be shared would be the phone number of the school they work at. He said they can place and receive calls from this app without using their personal phone number. Mrs. Adams offered the idea of reimbursing administrators and teachers for the use of their personal phones, but would rather issue them another phone for work-related use. Mr. Milner said he would check on pricing for phones and plans. Mrs. Adams asked Mr. Milner if he remembered having a work-related phone many years ago. He replied he did, but did not like having to carry around two phones. He stated he already carried his personal phone and had that cost, so it wasn't a big deal to him to use his personal phone for work-related use because it was not costing him any extra. Mrs. Adams shared concerns regarding employees having personal information including bank accounts and passwords on personal phones while also using them for work-related issues. She thanked Mr. Milner for his information and wanted to keep in mind providing a flat reimbursement fee or providing administrators with corporate-issued cell phones for work-related use.

I. ILEARN Results

Assistant Superintendent Brady Scott shared highlights from the 2023 Spring ILEARN.

Individual School Summary

Elementary School Results

- Grades 3-5 English/Language Arts
 - All schools scored above state average except for Forest Park which did not achieve state average at all three grade levels. Van Buren was 1% below state average as well.
- Grades 3-5 Math
 - All schools scored above state average with the exception of Forest Park which did not achieve state average for any grade level and Meridian 5th grade was even with the state average.
- Grade 4 Science
 - All schools scored above state average with the exception of Forest Park which was below and Meridian which equaled the state average.
- Grade 5 Social Studies

- All schools scored above state average with the exception of Forest Park which was below state average.

Middle School Results

- Grades 6-7 English/Language Arts scored above state average
- Grade 8 English/Language Arts – North Clay Middle School was slightly below state average (-4%)
- Grades 6-8 Math - All scored above state averages
- Grade 6 Science - All schools scored above state average

Surrounding School Corporations Comparison

English/Language Arts

- Clay Community Schools met or exceeded state average for all grade levels 3-8.
 - CCS was in the **top three** of all county comparisons and was second in two grades and first in three grades.

Math

- Clay Community Schools exceeded state averages for all grade levels 3-8.
 - CCS was in the **top three** of all school corporations and was first in 5th grade math.

Mr. Scott concluded that while scores were above state average, there are areas for improvement; he shared that any decrease in performance will be an area to continue monitoring moving forward into the 2023-24 school year. He shared that Clay Community Schools students continue to score above and lead most neighboring districts and it is truly a positive representation of the work done by the amazing teachers of Clay Community Schools. He says they can not rest on this performance and they must continue to look for areas of improvement to continue to grow.

J. Acceptance of Wabash Valley Community Foundation Grant Funds

Mrs. Schopmeyer moved to approve the acceptance of Wabash Valley Community Foundation Grant funds. Mr. Romas seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. The funds received from the grant are used to support personnel expenses related to the adult education program. These funds are requested by CCS on an annual basis and are used to offset the cost of the coordinator of the adult education program, Elizabeth Coley.

K. Wabash Valley Grant Application

Clay City Jr/Sr High School requested approval to apply for a Wabash Valley Community Foundation Grant for up to \$9,500. If selected as a recipient of this grant and approved the money would go toward purchasing and updating weight room equipment in the Clay City High School weight room.

Dr. Shaw moved to approve the request to apply for the WVCF grant. Mr. Keller seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

VII. Board Member Comments

Amy Burke Adams was thankful for a smooth start to the school year and to Dianna Knox and Leslie Cesinger for making CCS look great at their conference.

Lynn Romas stated he attended the teacher meeting at Northview and felt the excitement in the room for the beginning of the school year. He also thanked those that gave reports.

Michael Shaw thanked all CCS employees for dedicating their careers to the corporation and applauded Mr. Jorgensen on his presentation.

Ryan Keller shared his appreciation to everyone for a great start to the school year.

Tom Reberger stated the corporation does have a family atmosphere and they are proud of that.

VIII. Future Agenda Items

None

IX. Adjournment

Having exhausted all agenda items, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

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