SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES

**FEBRUARY 8, 2022**

Members of the Board of School Trustees met in executive session at 6:30 p.m. on this date in the Seymour Central Service Center Executive Board Room pursuant to Indiana’s Open Meetings Law for the purpose of discussion with respect to any individual over whom the governing body has jurisdiction: to discuss, before a determination, the individual's status as an employee, a student, or an independent contractor and the assessment, design, and implementation of school safety and security measures, plans, and systems. No topics were discussed other than those listed on the public meeting notice. All members were present.

President Juergens called the Regular Board meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. All members were present.

Board members and members of the public stood for the Pledge of Allegiance, a Moment of Silence, and the Corporation Vision Statement.

Mr. Harpe made a recommendation to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Browning motioned to approve and Mrs. Franke seconded. Motion carried; 7-0.

Mrs. Franke moved and Mr. Klosterman seconded a motion approving the consent agenda which included the minutes of the January 11 board meeting, monthly reconciliation summary, claims and payroll, fund report, monthly appropriation report, student enrollment update, personnel recommendations, professional leave requests, Overnight Baseball Trip to Richmond Tournament, and SHS Baseball trip to IU Baseball Game.

The personnel report included the following:

**Retirement**

Audrey Huber School Nurse Corporation January 7, 2022

Richard Schuley Science Teacher/Department Head SHS May 27, 2022

**Resignations:**

Jennifer Robbins Kindergarten Instructional Assistant Brown February 4, 2022

Hilda Morgan FT Evening Custodian SMS February 4, 2022

Barry Stuckwisch Bus Driver Transportation February 7, 2022

Cody Kiewitt Maintenance Technician Corporation February 11, 2022

Amanda Hoene Study Hall Monitor SHS February 11, 2022

Kalynda Hoevener Science Teacher SMS February 18, 2022

**Termination:**

Kenneth Ellison FT Evening Custodian SHS Gym January 11, 2022

Robin Scales Title 1 Instructional Assistant Jackson January 13, 2022

**Appointments:**

Karli Hall Temporary Special Ed Preschool Teacher Jackson 01/10/22 – 05/27/22

Sylvanna Hankins Part-Time Special Ed Instructional Asst. Redding January 19, 2022

Destinee Ross Special Ed Instructional Assistant SMS January 19, 2022

Carol “Elaine” Dunn Part-Time Cook (5hrs/day) 6thGC January 24, 2022

Margaret Campbell Full-Time Evening Custodian SMS January 24, 2022

Deborah Clifford Temporary 3rd Grade Teacher Jackson 01/27/22 – 03/18/22

Kenny McKain Bus Driver Transportation January 31, 2022

Alexandria Davis Part-Time Evening Custodian SHS February 1, 2022

Jason White Title 1 Instructional Assistant Jackson February 7, 2022

Samantha Sandlin Title 1 Instructional Assistant Jackson February 7, 2022

Clara Nebel Title 1 Tutor – St. John’s Lutheran School February 8, 2022

Patrick James Downey Jr. Sub Bus Driver Corporation February 9, 2022

Pamula Motsinger Part-Time Cook (5 hrs/day) Jackson February 9, 2022

Linda Brock Part-Time Cook (3.5 hrs/day) Redding February 14, 2022

Chata Toppe Temporary Elementary Teacher Redding 04/04/22 – 05/27/22

Angie Lucas Temporary Math Teacher SHS 04/06/22 – 05/27/22

Will Rinehart Volunteer Tennis Coach SHS 2021-2022 Season

Dave Emerson Volunteer Golf Coach SHS 2021-2022 Season

Angie Schepman First Steps Evaluator - PreK Teacher (5 days) Summer 2022

Kristin Keltner First Steps Evaluator - OT (5 days) Summer 2022

Kathy Sunbury First Steps Evaluator - PT (5 days) Summer 2022

Susan Roy First Steps Evaluator - SLP (5 days) Summer 2022

**Leave of Absence:**

Amanda Neal Special Ed Instructional Assistant SHS 12/21/21 – 02/02/22

Ryan Culbreth Teacher SMS 01/20/22 – 02/11/22

Ann Fields Elementary Teacher Brown 01/24/22 – 02/24/22

Martha Ponsler Instructional Assistant Brown 03/17/22 – 04/18/22

Kelsey Thias Elementary Teacher Redding 04/04/22 – 05/27/22

Brittaney Hendrix Special Education Teacher Brown 05/05/22 – 08/08/22

Kayla Elliott Elementary Teacher Jackson 05/17/22 – 05/27/22

**Transfer:**

Marie Mullins Title 1 to Kindergarten Instructional Asst. Jackson February 9, 2022

Katie Leitzman Assistant to Director of Federal Programs SCSC July 1, 2022

**Permission to Post/Hire/Transfer prior to the March 8, 2022.**

Motion carried; 7-0.

**COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS**

**SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS:**

Mrs. Altemeyer introduced Mrs. Katie Leitzman as the new Director of Federal Programs beginning July 1st.

Mr. Harpe announced that Seymour Community Schools was once again recognized as a United Way Top 10 Contributor. He is proud that the staff is answering the call to the needs of our community.

Mr. Reasoner is working on a matching grant that would allow us to update corporation radio communications.

Mr. Nauman announced the bond sale went through. We will be able to do all the approved construction work.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS:**

There were none.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

There were none.

**DONATIONS & GRANTS**

Mrs. Ahlbrand made a recommendation to accept the 2022 American Rescue Plan Special Education Grants:

* 619 Preschool ARP Grant - $24,834.00
* 611 ARP Grant - $332,678.00.

Mrs. Franke motioned to accept and Mr. Tormoehlen seconded. Motion carried; 7-0.

Mrs. Ferguson requested permission to apply for the Teacher Residency Grant. The funds would be used to pay a small stipend for student teachers in the areas of Special Education and English Learners. Mrs. Franke made a motion to approve and Mr. Joray seconded. Motion carried; 7-0.

Mrs. Leitzman made a recommendation to accept the 2021 Title IV Grant allocation of $61,469.43. Mr. Tormoehlen motioned to approve and Mr. Joray seconded. Motion carried; 7-0.

Mrs. Leitzman requested permission to accept the 2021-2023 Title IIA Grant allocation of $147,751.53. Mr. Klosterman moved and Mrs. Franke seconded. Motion carried; 7-0.

**CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

Mr. Reasoner provided updates on the current building projects.

Mr. Nauman made a recommendation to approve the following contract allowances, change orders, and claims:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| King’s Trucking | 5th/6th Building Additions & Renovations | Change #1 | $54,191.61 |
| T&G Construction | Ag Science Building – Building Addition | Change #4 | $1,175.00 |
| Boyle Construction | 5th/6th Building Additions & Renovations | Allowance #2 | $4,730.00 |
| King’s Trucking | 5th/6th Building Additions & Renovations | Allowance #1 | $11,398.00 |
| VPS Architecture | 5th/6th Building | Invoice 16 | $4,290.66 |
| VPS Architecture | Ag Science Building | Invoice 14 | $1,102.43 |
| VPS Architecture | High School Building | Invoice 15 | $16,553.20 |
| Skillman Corp | 5th/6th Building | Invoice 202005.6R2 | $2,201.25 |
| King’s Trucking | 5th/6th Building | App #3 | $90,674.65 |
| King’s Trucking | 5th/6th Building | App #4 | $279,130.53 |
| Boyle Construction | 5th/6th Building | App #3 | $33,227.16 |
| Boyle Construction | 5th/6th Building | App #4 | $98,459.24 |
| Gibson-Lewis of Indy | 5th/6th Building | App #3 | $5,700.00 |
| Gibson-Lewis of Indy | 5th/6th Building | App #4 | $184,772.62 |
| Heflin Industries Inc. | 5th/6th Building | App #1 | $223,054.99 |
| Heflin Industries Inc. | 5th/6th Building | App #2 | $202,996.69 |
| James Babcock, Inc. | 5th/6th Building | App #3 | $19,950.00 |
| James Babcock, Inc. | 5th/6th Building | App #4 | $37,287.50 |
| Bruns-Gutzwiller, Inc. | High School Building Project | App #1 | $73,816.90 |
| JL Walter & Assoc. | High School Building Project | App #1 | $286.919.00 |
| JL Walter & Assoc. | High School Building Project | App #2 | $246,287.50 |
| Complete Masonry | High School Building Project | App #1 | $126,350.00 |
| Hoosier Glass | High School Building Project | App #1 | $16,435.00 |
| Performance Contracting | High School Building Project | App #1 | $14,040.00 |
| Performance Contracting | High School Building Project | App #1 | $95,556.70 |

Mr. Joray motioned to approve the contract allowances, change orders, and claims. Mrs. Franke seconded. Motion carried; 7-0.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Mr. Joray made a motion to immediately end the mask mandate and adopt a policy that is used by a northern Indiana school that states:

* Masks will be optional in all of the school buildings and facilities.
* If the positive number of cases in any building rises about 2% of the building’s population, including students and staff, everyone in that building will be required to wear masks during the school day for 14 days.
* Individuals who test positive for COVID must quarantine.
* Close contacts will be identified using a 3-foot measurement.
  + Individuals who are identified as close contacts will be contacted by school personnel.
  + Individuals who are identified as close contacts will not be required to quarantine if they do not have symptoms, but should monitor their symptoms for 14 days.
  + If an individual identified as a close contact becomes symptomatic, they should not attend school and should notify the school. They will be required to quarantine.
* Masks will continue to be required on school buses per the federal mandate.

Mr. Klosterman seconded the motion. Mr. Joray then read the following statement, “It is my opinion that we need to adopt this policy. Most of us would agree that Covid is probably not going anywhere. Most of us would agree that it has become politicized to where it has divided people into groups. The bottom line is that there is a lot of competing medical evidence that cloth mask, and the way kids wear them, do not work. There is also evidence that these mask mandates have caused harm to children. A recent story in USA Today, headlined “Pandemic first graders are way behind in reading. Experts say they may take years to catch up,” highlighted that first graders are especially at academic risk. Education experts say first grade is “the reading year” and “pivotal for elementary students.” We can go to concerts, dinner, ballgames[,](https://nypost.com/2021/09/14/broadway-reopens-with-big-shows-like-hamilton-and-wicked/) but being in the same room as the population least at risk for a poor COVID-19 outcome is forbidden. The CDC’s own February 2021 double-mask study reported that masking may impede breathing – which can trigger a variety of other problems including acute anxiety attacks in susceptible individuals. These harms are even more likely to occur to children, particularly smaller children. According to ABC news affiliate WPBF, Jaclyn Theek, a clinic director and speech-language pathologist at the Speech and Learning Institute in North Palm Beach, **stated** that she had seen a 364 percent uptick in the total count of referrals for children with speech delays in 2021, implying that mask-wearing may very well be fueling unprecedented harm to healthy childhood development. In Sweden, where schools were not closed, and children were not masked, teachers were at lower COVID-19 risk than the rest of the population.

Another thing that bothers me is the hypocrisy in the mandate. We can sit around this board table without masks on, but hold the least likely to get it, get extremely sick, or give it to someone else to different standards. We also create a policy that even if a child refuses to wear a mask, there is no penalty, or accountability. If a parent feels their child is safer with a mask, then that’s up to them, but if a parent feels that their child is being hindered medically, socially, or any other way, then they should have the choice of not having their child wear a mask.

In closing, I have seen up to 200 kids a day, get off the bus, and come into the boys and girls club. Maybe a handful look to have masks that at least fit their face. I’ve even seen some with food, mucus, dirt, and other items in their mask. Someone explain how that’s healthy. We (boys and girls club) have not had a mask policy for the 2 years that this has been going on. We also never had any outbreaks. Let’s not wait for the federal or state to tell us we don’t have to wear masks anymore. Let’s start here with our locally elected board members, and get back to the business of education.

If this board decides to vote this down, because of safety issues, I hope you at least have the resolve to then require all staff and kids to wear properly fitted N95 masks that do provide some protection, and I also think you should wear them too.”

Mrs. Franke said she respected the physician’s recommendations on wearing masks in school to cut down on the amount of quarantines and keep the students in school.

Mr. Juergens said he respected the opinions shared. He asked to see the information that Mr. Joray had quoted and the current policy that is used in Seymour.

Mr. Tormoehlen agreed with Mrs. Franke in that they received a petition from 31 local doctors in September that encouraged mask wearing.

Mr. Browning added that while it may not be a perfect policy in place, there is an exit strategy once the county goes back to yellow. He then said he would be in favor of looking at the policy over the summer to make any recommended changes at that time.

Motion failed; 1-6 with Mr. Joray as the only in favor vote.

**NEW BUSINESS - FIRST READ ITEMS**

Mrs. Ferguson presented the 2022 Kindergarten round up dates – April 5 and April 7. Each school will host a day.

Mr. Prange provided a list of summer school programming and when they would be offered.

Mrs. Townsend requested permission to seek quotes for new serving lines at Brown, Jackson and Redding. She will have a recommendation at the March meeting.

Mr. Manns made a recommendation to purchase a Nevco Softball LED Scoreboard for $23,666.28. Mr. Browning motioned to waive the first read and Mr. Joray seconded. Motion carried; 7-0. Mr. Browning then motioned to approve the purchase and Mrs. Franke seconded. Motion carried; 7-0.

Dr. Mendez made a recommendation to approve the 2023 8th Grade Trip to Washington D.C. He said it’s an outstanding trip that ties in with the Socials Studies curriculum. Mrs. Franke motioned to waive the first read in order to lock in this year’s price. Mr. Tormoehlen seconded. Motion carried; 7-0. Mrs. Franke motioned to approve the trip and Mr. Tormoehlen seconded; 7-0.

Mr. Nauman requested permission to seek bids for school photos. He will return later this spring with additional information.

Mr. Nauman presented the renewal agreement with Indiana University that provides clinical experience opportunities for their students.

**IMPORTANT EVENTS**

* Regular School Board Meeting – Tuesday, March 8, 2022
* Spring Break – March 21-25, 2022
* Regular School Board Meeting – Tuesday, April 12, 2022
* Senior Scholars Dinner @ The Pines – Sunday, May 1, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.
* Regular School Board Meeting – Tuesday, May 10, 2022
* Employee Retirement Celebration & Dinner @ The Pines – Thursday, May 26, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Browning moved and Mr. Joray seconded a motion to adjourn. As there was no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

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