BARTHOLOMEW CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL CORPORATION
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2020 MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees of the Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation was held at the Administration Building, 1200 Central Ave, Columbus, IN 47201, on Monday, August 24, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., pursuant to notice having been duly given to the media and to all members of the Board in accordance with the rules of the Board.

The members of the Board were shown to be present or absent as follows:

Present:  
Mr. Jeff Caldwell, President  
Dr. Jill Shedd, Vice President  
Mr. Pat Bryant, Secretary  
Mr. Rich Stenner, Member  
Mr. James Persinger, Member  
Mrs. Kathy Dayhoff-Dwyer, Member  
Dr. Julie Bilz, Member

Administration:  
Dr. Jim Roberts, Superintendent  
Ms. Teresa Heiny, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources  
Dr. Laura Hack, Director of Elementary Education  
Mr. William Jensen, Director of Secondary Education  
Dr. Gina Pleak, Director of Title Services  
Dr. George Van Horn, Director of Special Education

Absent:  
Mr. Chad Phillips, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services  
Dr. Brett Boezeman, Director of Operations

School Attorney:  
Mr. Chris Monroe

REGULAR SESSION

Mr. Stenner shared reflections.

Following the pledge of allegiance and determination of quorum the meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

Mr. Caldwell referenced the Mission and Vision statements as well as noted the high expectation objectives.
2020 BCSC Teacher of the Year Award (Ms. Heiny)

Ms. Heiny presented the Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation’s first Teacher of the Year Award. She reviewed the process and criteria used to determine a representative for each building and gave reasons why BCSC felt the importance of having a yearly award. The 2020-2021 award winner is Central Middle School, English Language Arts Teacher, Mrs. Mindy Summers.

Ms. Heiny explained the criteria needed for each individual’s portfolio. Each building applicant needed to complete three letters of support, a student engagement piece and a piece tied to their home school’s criteria. Ms. Heiny shared Mrs. Summers’ student engagement piece from her portfolio, as well as a letter from a former student and a parent.

Mrs. Summers shared her appreciation for the award and thanked both the school corporation as well as her family for their support. She concluded by saying that the world, now more than ever, needs education and she is so thankful and happy to be on the frontlines.

Those individuals on the 2020 Teacher of the Year Committee, including Ms. Heiny, were Blake Manuel, Darin Sprong, Susan Scott, Jolinn Bodkins and School Board Member Dr. Jill Shedd.

Dr. Roberts thanked Ms. Heiny and the team for their efforts in establishing and identifying the school corporation’s first Teacher of the Year Award.

Recognition of Central Middle School – SRO Greg Ross (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts shared the timeline of events that occurred at Central Middle School on Wednesday, August 19. Dr. Roberts commended Officer Greg Ross, Central Middle School’s SRO, on the close attention he gives daily to the activity going on and in, as well as around, the BCSC buildings. On this particular day, Officer Ross addressed suspicious activity in the school parking lot. Unfortunately, the individual had two firearms, but fortunately Officer Ross was paying close attention to the activity. Officer Ross quickly intervened on behalf of the students and staff. Dr. Roberts shared we are blessed as a school corporation to have a partnership for five school resource officers from the Bartholomew County Sheriff’s Department and the City of Columbus. On behalf of the school corporation and the community, Dr. Roberts thanked Officer Greg Ross as well as Officer Julie Quesenbery for their service.
Public Comments:

1. Barb Wills residing at 5700 W. SR 46. Ms. Wills thanked the school board for working extremely hard to offer multiple learning options to students and trying to appease as many as possible. She stated she left the July 20 school board meeting encouraged that masks would be required and COVID-19 indicators would be clearly displayed. She would like to see BCSC updating the number of cases in each building more often, as well as the number of students and staff that have been quarantined. She also requested clear criteria as to what would indicate buildings being able to stay open or when there would be a transfer to eLearning.

2. Bekki Wills residing at 5700 W. SR 46. She stated that she is currently a junior at Columbus North High School and attending online through the Bridge Program. She feels the system is not performing as promised. She feels that teachers do not have time for questions and it is multiple hours before she gets a response from a teacher. She would like to see the system rectified by placing all students online. She feels this would provide the same guidelines for teachers per student as well as be a safer environment health wise.

3. Austin Hover residing at 8202 Saxon Court. He has two children that attend BCSC. He shared he understands the requirement for students to wear masks to minimize the risk of exposure, but stated his concerns when masks are removed during lunch time. He also showed his support for in-person learning. He shared he wants his children in school and that eLearning is not working for his family. He stated that he can teach them life lessons, but not subjects he has not been educated to teach. He concluded by saying his children need to be learning in-person from their educated teachers.

4. Teresa Lovins residing at 4365 N. Riverside Drive. She commended the school board and administration for their efforts in getting the students back into school. She shared she has observed and has concerns that students are leaving the buildings without their masks, not properly social distancing in the classroom and common surfaces within the buildings are not being frequently wiped down. She also shared her concern as to whether there would be sufficient room in the classrooms as the Bridge students begin to return to the buildings.

5. Amy London residing at 5045 Somerset Lane. She spoke on behalf of the Columbus Educators Association (CEA), as their president. On behalf of CEA she shared their thanks for the availability of the COVID-19 case numbers, as well as the collaboration efforts of the school board and administration with CEA members. CEA conducted a survey with their members and Ms. London shared the results of the three hundred and fourteen teacher members who participated. Almost half of those teachers agreed students were wearing their masks, but almost all the teachers had concerns with social distancing. Ms. London shared CEA social distancing concerns as well as concerns of the large number of teachers teaching in more than one program. She concluded that there are things going well and there are some teachers who are having success in the classroom, but CEA would like to request that the board work to see that all teachers in the school corporation are represented.
6. Tracy Kiser residing at 2771 Bluebell Court East. Ms. Kiser spoke on behalf of the “Show Your Work Transparency Now Group”. She asked, on their behalf, for a commitment for openness in regards to showing the work behind the metric reporting as well as final decision making. She also added that the group supports the teachers in their petition for information as well. She asked Dr. Roberts and the school board to provide transparency that fosters trust, as well as specific metrics and triggers that contribute to decision making.

7. Ross Thomas residing at 2246 Franklin St. He shared his concern in what he thought to be a vague definition of potential spread. He stated that he trusted the school corporation, but felt BCSC lacked straightforwardness in regards to the COVID-19 indicators. He also expressed his concerns for protocols and asked if there was guidance in place to enforce the wearing of masks, as well as social distancing. He also asked for a process for teachers and staff to express their concerns for what is not going well and for them to be able to do so anonymously.

8. Leeann Jackman-Wheitner residing at 6054 Meadow Ridge. She stated that she is a community member, with two BCSC graduates, who cares about education. She spoke with concern in regards to communication to the shift of having the COVID-19 Task Force manage the numbers. Her concern is to whether the thresholds presented in July were even going to be valid at this point. She also expressed her concerns for teachers. She feels there is a challenge for proper social distancing in the classroom, as well as the added complication of multiple weekly student roster changes. She shared her gratitude for the BCSC students to have the option of switching back and forth between Bridge and in-person, but feels this creates multiple challenges for the teachers. She feels as a community member teachers need a better way to publicly communicate their concerns to administration and the school board.

9. Amanda Reed residing at 3355 Grove Parkway. She stated that her family decided to move to Columbus because of BCSC’s high academic ratings. At this point she feels there are several inequities across the elementary level in regards to Bridge. Her daughter was told by her teacher that in-person students were the first priority and her six-year old son has yet to get a call from his special education teacher. She believes that BCSC is not properly resourced. She praised BCSC for the good experience her family had with eLearning in the spring, but stated that we can’t continue to do this to our kids. We as a community and school corporation have to support our teachers, collaborate and provide them with the resources they need to help our students.

WHAT

1) Board Commendations – there were no reports shared.

2) School Board Member Reports

Dr. Roberts updated the board on the August 13 Districting and Facilities Committee Meeting. He shared that Dr. Boezeman went through the same presentation that he
presented to the school board at the August 10 board meeting. The presentation included the list of summer projects that have been completed and an update on the projects that are ongoing.

3) Cabinet Reports – there were no reports shared.

HOW
4) Reopening Plan (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts gave an update on the reopening plan. He shared the following enrollment numbers.
Current Enrollment: 11,444

- Traditional (in-person) – 8,242 (72.0%)
- Bridge – 2,657 (23.2%)
- Columbus Virtual Pathway (CVP) – 545 (4.8%)

He also explained the different learning options that have been made available to students as well as the challenges of allocating the resources needed to teachers and staff.

Dr. Roberts addressed mask compliance and stated it is a metric measure that will be followed. Each of the building principals have been asked to take a snap shot of time weekly. Those time frames from each of the buildings are averaged by elementary and secondary levels. The mask compliance percentages on Friday, August 21 were as follows:

- Elementary = 96.8%
- Secondary = 96.9%

Dr. Roberts gave an update on physical distancing. He shared there are specific challenges within the classroom as every effort is being made to stay within the three to six foot distance, which is the acceptable recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics. He shared there is work to be done in this area and presented a weekly plan of action. He shared this week as well as next week the administration will be reviewing school buildings, departments, and classrooms and will address the physical distancing barriers. He stated that by Friday, September 4 updated information will be provided, as well as the improvements that have been made to address the physical distancing barriers.

Dr. Roberts presented the current daily metrics and walked through how they are determined as well as managed. He shared as the indicators are managed and reviewed the updated data is made available to the public twice a week on the COVID-19 Community Task Force website. As the indicators are managed, task force members continue to meet and have discussions. Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation is part of the COVID-19 Task Force. Dr. Roberts stated, as we moved into the 2020–2021 school year, it seemed appropriate to have the COVID-19 Task Force manage and report the data. The data is received from the local and state health departments and Columbus Regional Health. The indicators help BCSC
determine the community spread and whether or not school will remain in-person or move towards eLearning. Dr. Roberts stated the COVID-19 Task Force and BCSC work together, but at the end of the day BCSC makes the determination to keep schools open or go to eLearning.

Dr. Roberts presented additional information on positive COVID-19 cases, both in-person as well as those students and staff working remotely. He stated that only two of the nine positive cases, since the beginning of school on Monday, August 10, have actually been in a school building.

Without question or apology Dr. Roberts stated it is his desire to have students in the buildings for in-person education. He emphasized the priority for a safe and secure environment and the need to make changes, if necessary, to uphold these standards. He indicated that it would be easier for all teachers and staff to go to eLearning. He shared appreciation for all employees and thanked them for their effort, sharing that keeping school open takes tremendous effort and everyone in the school corporation is working as hard as they ever have to make it happen. He concluded by stressing the importance of needing community help. If BCSC is to continue with an in-person option, community help is needed. The actions taken outside of the BCSC buildings are just as important as the actions taken inside.

The following information was shared in response to questions from the Board.

Ms. Dayhoff-Dwyer asked if an e-alert could be given if a school/class has a COVID-19 case. She believes we need to share the information up front to help with panic and rumors. Dr. Roberts shared the concern with releasing information in regards to a student or staff member that could possibly identify the student. Mr. Caldwell asked for timely information to be given to inform the appropriate people within the school corporation of COVID-19 positive cases.

Dr. Julie Bilz thanked the community for their questions. She asked if there might be a way to share the positive internal case numbers within buildings. She also expressed her concern with social distancing in classrooms as well as cleaning procedures. She acknowledged classes are only two weeks in and efforts will continue to be made to work through the public concerns. She agreed with Dr. Roberts, it would be easier to go to eLearning, but acknowledged the school board’s desire to try to give students more learning options.

Mr. Persinger inquired about a mask mandate policy and consequences for not wearing a mask. Dr. Roberts stated that there is not a new specific policy or one that has been rewritten in regards to masks. Dr. Roberts responded that student guidance is given like any other behavior at the start of the school year. The guidance has been provided through the progression and takes time.

Dr. Roberts clarified the hospitalization numbers, as well as responded to how positive cases in the classroom will be handled. The Indiana State Board of Health states that once there are two positive cases in any one classroom that particular classroom would be sent home.
Mr. Bryant inquired about what the board would need to do to make sure that teachers can speak to board members. Mr. Caldwell shared policy and how board members can appropriately listen and teachers can speak their concerns. The board committed to look at this specific policy and discuss the concerns that were presented.

Dr. Roberts shared under certain circumstances both elementary and secondary levels could have teachers with both Bridge and in-person students. Dr. Hack also spoke that there are partnerships between teachers, as well as several situations where teachers are working out details according to the needs or the grade of the student. She shared we are two weeks into the Bridge pathway and are still working out details with teachers and providing resources for them to build student relationships and develop lessons. She also added more and more students are moving from Bridge back to the traditional classroom.

**HOW**

5) Requests for Approval: (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts reviewed the following items for the Board.

a. Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting of August 10, 2020  
b. Supplemental Contracts (Dr. Hack/Mr. Jensen)  
c. Field Trips/Professional Leaves (Dr. Hack/Mr. Jensen)  
d. School Fundraisers (Dr. Hack/Mr. Jensen)  
e. Claims and Payroll (Mr. Phillips)  
f. Teacher Appreciation Grant Policy / Policy 3220.01 (Ms. Heiny)  
g. Temporary location change for regular school board meetings (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts shared additional information on the reviewed items and requested approval.

Ms. Dayhoff-Dwyer made a motion to approve the reviewed items and Mr. Pat Bryant seconded the motion.

Upon a call for the vote, Items 5) a-g were unanimously approved.

6) Request for Approval of Human Resources Recommendations:

Ms. Heiny requested approval for the Human Resources recommendations as presented.

Ms. Dayhoff-Dwyer made a motion to approve the recommendations, Mr. Persinger seconded the motion.

Upon a call for the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.
BOARD INPUT/REVIEW

Ms. Dayhoff-Dwyer thanked those who reached out to the board members and shared that they are happy to see students back in school. She also thanked CEA for their presentation.

Dr. Bilz thanked the community for their public comments and thanked the teachers and staff members for their continued hard work.

Mr. Persinger shared he would like to see a vote to revise Policy 3112, specifically noting to eliminate B & C.

Dr. Shedd thanked those individuals that provided public input. She recognized that school has only been in session ten days. She appreciated the work that has been done and continues to be accomplished by teachers and staff. She acknowledged many items that were presented as concerns have already been addressed and others will continue to be addressed.

Mr. Caldwell concluded by emphasizing the learning options the administration team has offered and acknowledged there are gaps, but those gaps will continue to be worked through.

Next School Board Meeting: Regular Board Meeting, September 14, 2020, 6:30 p.m., Administration Building Terrace Room.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

__________________________________Secretary

Attest: __________________________________President