

**BARTHOLOMEW CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL CORPORATION
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021 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, Indiana on Monday, October 25, 2021, 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. Public attendance at and participation in the meeting was conducted virtually.

On call of the roll, the members of the Board were shown to be present or absent as follows:

Present: Dr. Jill Shedd, President
 Dr. Julie Bilz, Vice President
 Mr. Pat Bryant, Secretary
 Mr. Rich Stenner, Member
 Mr. Todd Grimes, Member
 Ms. Nikki Wheeldon, Member

Absent: Ms. Kathy Dayhoff-Dwyer, Member

Administration: Dr. Jim Roberts, Superintendent
 Mr. Chad Phillips, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services
 Dr. Gina Pleak, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
 Dr. Laura Hack, Director of Elementary Education
 Mr. William Jensen, Director of Secondary Education
 Dr. Brett Boezeman, Director of Operations
 Mr. Charles Edwards, Director of Title Services
 Dr. George Van Horn, Director of Special Education

Attorney: Mr. Chris Monroe, School Attorney

REGULAR SESSION

Ms. Wheeldon provided Reflections.

The business meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Dr. Shedd, President, called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

2021 Lease Rental Bond and Additional Appropriation Hearing (Mr. Phillips)

Dr. Shedd gaveled out of the regularly scheduled Board of School Trustees Meeting, and opened the Public Hearing, at 6:37 p.m.

Mr. Phillips explained the process of the Lease Rental Bond. He noted the bond is a structure that schools often use to borrow funds for renovation projects.

The second hearing was for an additional appropriation. Mr. Phillips noted a public hearing is needed any time the district needs to expend additional funds after the budget has been board approved for the year.

The floor was opened for public comment. There were no questions or comments from the public.

Dr. Shedd gaveled out of the Public Hearing and back into the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees at 6:38 p.m.

WHO/WHY

Southside Elementary School - Best Practice Presentation (Mr. Backmeyer/Ms. Jackson/Ms. Wolf)

Principal, Mr. Jeff Backmeyer shared how IXL, an online skill-based program, is personalizing student growth at Southside Elementary. He, alongside Assistant Principal, Ms. Cathy Jackson, and UDL Coordinator, Ms. Laura Wolf, presented information on the program, and the many ways it benefits both students and teachers. The platform recommends skill practices and provides remediation, and/or enrichment according to the need(s) of the student. The program supports teachers through Real-Time Diagnostic, skill recommendation, and provides alignment with the Indiana State Standards and the adopted math and language arts curriculum. Ms. Jackson noted the data gathered on each student follows the student year-to-year, and school-to-school within the corporation.

The program offers personalized guidance for each learner, and motivational tools to help students reach their milestones. The teachers and staff work hard with the students who score in “red” areas to identify their learning needs. A particular way that the teachers and students work together on the platform is through the Group Jam tool. This tool allows an entire classroom to work together with their teacher on a particular skill at the same time. The teacher can gauge the entire class's understanding of the topic in real-time. Students can work on this program at school, and at home, and begin to feel a real sense of accomplishment. Parents can monitor their student’s progress through quarterly progress reports.

The following information was given in response to questions from the board:

Students can demonstrate the action and expression of the UDL framework through engagement and goal setting. The younger grade level students strive to receive virtual award badges.

Teachers often assign homework to be completed on IXL. Students can log in at home, and practice teacher-assigned skill sets.

All elementary schools within the corporation have access to the IXL platform. It has been available in the school corporation for 4 years.

This program allows teachers to see learning gaps and adjust to address the individual learning needs of the student.

The school corporation utilizes title funds, annual textbook rental fees, and operational funds to fund and support IXL.

The primary grades show academic progress quarterly. Several curriculum methods can be used with this program to address the needs of the students both at school and at home.

Update: COVID-19 Plan of Action for 2021-2022 (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts reviewed data, both from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), and shared the update of the COVID-19 Task Force numbers. He explained the color-coded COVID-19 maps and highlighted where Bartholomew County stands in regards to positive test cases. He noted the BCSC metrics and reviewed the current numbers reported since the first day of the 2021-2022 school year. Dr. Roberts shared that, out of 549 positive test cases reported, 480 are students and 69 are staff members. He noted there have been 2,705 close contacts reported, with 4.9% of those individuals later testing positive.

Dr. Roberts referenced the numbers that were reported when the district went to eLearning on November 9, 2020. Those numbers were 106 positive test cases (70 students and 36 staff members).

Dr. Roberts noted that the school district recently adjusted the COVID-19 close contact guidelines. He shared the adopted guidelines from the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) for both masked and unmasked individuals who have been exposed at school. Those masked individuals may remain at school as long as they are asymptomatic. An unmasked student or staff member will need to follow the steps specific for an unmasked individual. These newly adjusted guidelines are posted online at www.bcscschools.org.

The following information was given in response to questions from the board:

As the district began to see a decrease across the school corporation in positive COVID-19 cases, a decision was made to adjust the mitigation strategy for close contacts. This adjustment began the Monday following Fall Break. There have been 34 positive COVID-19 cases within the school corporation since students returned from Fall Break.

Before any mitigation strategies are adjusted, several meetings are held to dialogue with local medical professionals at Columbus Regional Hospital and the Bartholomew County Health Department.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Jason Major, Columbus

Mr. Major requested additional resources be provided for students who are home on quarantine. He noted the challenges his daughter has had with her foreign language assignments while being out on quarantine and requested a virtual option be available for quarantining students.

2. Eric Grow, Columbus

Mr. Grow made a call to the community to get involved by giving more effort and time to school concerns. He also expressed a need for open and effective communication with the school board.

WHAT

1) Board Commendations:

Mr. Grimes gave commendations to the five BCSC Student Resource Officers (SROs). He acknowledged their great efforts in guiding the students and keeping each of the buildings safe.

Ms. Wheeldon gave commendations to the athletes who are part of the Columbus North Cross Country teams and wished them well at the IHSAA State Finals.

2) Board Member Reports:

Mr. Grimes reported that Dr. Shedd, Mr. Stenner, and himself attended the ISBA (Indiana School Boards Association) Conference. He thanked the school corporation for the opportunity to attend the informative and personalized learning sessions.

Mr. Grimes shared a reminder of the upcoming BCSF sponsored “Brighter Future for All 5K”. This fundraiser will be held on Saturday, November 13. All proceeds will support the BCSF General Fund.

Dr. Bilz gave an overview of the Health Trust Meeting. She shared that both the Q3 Financial Report and vaccination incentives were reviewed. She noted reports were heard from MJ Insurance, SIHO Insurance Services, BCSC Health Center, and a wellness update was provided by BCSC Health Services Director, Kelli Thompson.

Dr. Shedd reported on a Friday, October 22 Business Advisory Group meeting. She shared that an overview of the final draft of the Strategic Plan was presented, conversations of the proposed calendar revision were held, a COVID-19 update was given, and previews of the November meeting were shared.

3) Cabinet Reports:

Q3 Financial Report (Mr. Phillips)

Mr. Phillips summarized the 2021 Q3 Financial Report and gave an ADM (Average Daily Membership) count update. He presented a visual report for the top three tax-supported funds through the end of the third quarter. He explained the decrease in the miscellaneous revenue of the Education Fund was due to a drop in the interest income for the year. He shared how the new state support amount, which went into effect July 1, allowed the 2021 revenues to surpass the 2020 revenue total. He noted the increase in the ADM (Average Daily Membership) count. The increase in the student count will generate additional revenue for the Education Fund.

The revenue for the Operations Fund increased almost 100% due to transfers from the Education and Miscellaneous Funds. Property tax collections for the school corporation have remained flat.

He noted the 1.3% increase in salaries on the expenditure side of the Education Fund and added that the staff salaries began pulling payroll from this fund in August. Teacher increases and retro pay will not pay out until November. The Operating Referendum Fund is tracking as expected. The Operations salaries are up nearly 8% from 2020. He noted that this is due to the 9% increase that began in July for support staff and the return to full staffing levels. Mr. Phillips shared the additional increase in expenditures was for technology and higher expenditures for small CPF projects. The cost for technology continues to increase as updates are needed.

Mr. Phillips shared several ways the school corporation is benefiting from the referendum revenues. He noted the school corporation would have spent 8.5% less in salaries for 2021 had it not been for the referendum dollars.

The following information was given in response to questions from the board:

Budgeted projects are often completed in June and July while students are out of the buildings.

All student devices are on a 4-year rotation and are recycled as needed. The older model Chromebooks are still functioning, but are slowly becoming unable to update.

We are looking to order a demographic study in January 2022. The demographer will go school by school using our district maps.

HOW

4) Requests for Approval (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts reviewed the following items for the Board.

- a. Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting of September 27, 2021, Minutes of the Public Hearing Meeting of September 28, 2021, and Minutes of the Special School Board Meeting of October 19, 2021
- b. Supplemental Contracts (Dr. Hack/Mr. Jensen)
- c. Field Trips/Professional Leaves (Dr. Hack/Mr. Jensen) – No requested field trips

- d. School Fundraisers (Dr. Hack/Mr. Jensen)
- e. Claims and Payroll (Mr. Phillips)
- f. Refinance of Central Middle School Bonds: Resolution authorize execution of Amendment of Lease (Mr. Phillips)
- g. 2021 Lease Rental Bond: Adopt Resolution authorizing execution of Lease (Mr. Phillips)
- h. 2021 Lease Rental Bond: Adopt additional Appropriation Resolution (Mr. Phillips)
- i. 2021 Lease Rental Bond: Adopt Resolution to Assign Construction Bids to Building Corporation (Mr. Phillips)
- j. 2021 Lease Rental Bond: Adopt Resolution approving Supplement to Master Continuing Disclosure Undertaking and Issuance of Bonds (Mr. Phillips)
- k. Adopt the 2022 Budget Resolutions (Mr. Phillips)
- l. Revisions to the 3-Year Calendar 2021-2024 (Dr. Pleak)
- m. BCSC/CEA Collective Bargaining Agreement and Administrator Contracts
- n. Approval for the Health/Dental Plan Premiums for the 2022 plan year (Mr. Phillips)

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

Mr. Bryant made a motion to approve the reviewed items and Mr. Grimes seconded the motion.

Upon a call for the vote, Items 4) a-n were unanimously approved.

5) Request for Approval of Human Resources Recommendations (Dr. Pleak)

Dr. Pleak requested approval of the Human Resources Recommendations as presented.

Mr. Grimes made a motion to approve the Human Resources Recommendations and the motion was seconded by Ms. Wheeldon.

Upon a call for the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

BOARD INPUT/REVIEW

Mr. Grimes thanked Mr. Major and Mr. Grow for their public comments. He commended Southside Elementary and its staff for the efforts that went into the Best Practice Presentation. He acknowledged both the CNHS Girls and Boys Cross-Country teams and wished them the best in the IHSAA State Finals.

Ms. Wheeldon thanked the individuals serving on the 3-year calendar committee and the efforts of those who worked to adjust the close contact guidelines. She shared her appreciation for being able to return to in-person board meetings.

Mr. Stenner thanked those who presented and those who provided public comments. He also shared his appreciation for the work that went into the establishment of the new contract between the CEA (Columbus Educators Association) and the school corporation.

Dr. Bilz commented on the renovations and efforts being done on the Pollinator Park at Blackwell Park. She encouraged the community to visit the area.

Dr. Shedd shared her appreciation for the Southside Best Practice Presentation. She also shared her excitement for the teacher and administrator contract approval.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Strategic Planning Session, October 29, 2021, 9:00 a.m., Administration Building Terrace Room.

The next regular School Board Meeting will be on Monday, November 15, 2021, 6:30 p.m. in the Terrace Room of the Administration Building.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

_____ President

_____ Secretary