

**BARTHOLOMEW CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL CORPORATION
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, MONDAY, July 19, 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, July 19, 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.

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
 Ms. Nikki Wheeldon, Member
 Mr. Todd Grimes, Member
 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

Mr. Rich Stenner offered reflections.

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

Dr. Shedd, President, called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

WHO/WHY

Columbus North Track and Field – State Medalists (Mr. Brian Lewis/Mr. Rick Sluder)

Columbus North Athletic Director, Mr. Brian Lewis thanked the School Board for acknowledging the accomplishments of the student-athletes. He introduced and recognized the athletes who medaled at the IHSAA State Meet. These athletes included Tucker Smith, Shot Put State Champ; Reese Kilbarger-Stumpff, 1600M Runner-Up; Mackenzie Barnett, Brianna Newell, Lily Baker and Julie Klaus, 4x800M Relay Team 3rd Place; and Emily Herndon, Shot Put 4th Place. He commended Coach Rick Sluder for his hard work and the effort put forth into the betterment of each student-athlete.

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

Dr. Roberts noted the 2021-2022 Reopening Plan was first released in draft form on Thursday, July 8, and after receiving feedback a revision was released on Friday, July 16 to the public. Dr. Roberts reviewed the proposed plan and cited several informational resources that were utilized. Those resources included the local medical community, the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the feedback of internal/external stakeholders. He noted BCSC will adjust the guidelines as needed, according to the spread of the virus.

Dr. Roberts shared and reviewed the following proposed guidelines: Face coverings will be optional for staff and students but recommended for those at risk and not vaccinated. Due to a federal mandate, face coverings will be required on school buses. Parents and caregivers should use the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) guidelines for at home screenings prior to sending children to school, classroom spacing of 3 feet will be recommended, and contact tracing will be conducted for individuals within 6 feet. Dr. Roberts noted that last year lockers were not utilized in order to cut down on student gatherings. Based upon recent feedback, lockers will be allowed this coming school year, but will be managed in order to limit opportunities for large group gatherings.

Additional proposed guidelines are as follows: All BCSC students and staff will be reminded to frequently wash their hands and use the hand sanitizers that will be accessible throughout the buildings; individuals testing positive for COVID-19 will need to report the results to their building school nurse; there will be a quarantine of 10 days, instead of the prior 14 days, for individuals identified as close contacts. A time of quarantine is not necessary for those providing proof of being fully vaccinated and free of COVID-19 symptoms. The recommended plan also states sanitizing schedules and procedures will be utilized for the cafeteria, restrooms and locker rooms; visitors, parents and caregivers may enter the building, but will not be able to join students for lunch; the cafeteria will be used for lunch with individually plated lunches being served and alternate spaces for eating utilized; the water fountains and filling stations will be regularly sanitized, but a personal water bottle is recommended for all staff and students; student field trips will be analyzed and reviewed on a case by case request; all athletics and extracurricular activities will continue to follow IHSAA and ISSMA guidelines; and the seating capacities for all fall events will be determined at a later date by county guidelines.

Dr. Roberts shared the following website <https://covid19communitytaskforce.org>. He noted the resource is available for individuals to review the local daily COVID-19 measurements. These metrics have and will continue to be used to help determine the 2021-2022 Reopening Plan. He also reviewed the Indiana State Metrics and noted the most recent data showed Bartholomew County to be in the best possible score range (designated as “blue”). He acknowledged the spread of the COVID-19 Delta variant and the recent release of the face coverings guideline from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH). He noted the logic in the recommendations, and shared the challenges in identifying vaccinated individuals.

Dr. Roberts acknowledged the extra efforts made during the 2020-2021 school year to provide more than one learning option for students. Because of the large amount of interest and popularity, BCSC has invested in a full-time virtual option for the 2021-22 school year. Columbus Virtual Pathway (CVP) is an online educational pathway for students grades K-12. Students attending CVP will be enrolled at a BCSC school and have the support from the Director of CVP, Mr. Josh Giebel.

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

The most current data available guides the recommendations being made today.

Governor Eric Holcomb's Executive Order, in regards to mandating masks, expired on July 1, leaving any decision regarding masks to be made on the local level.

Dr. Roberts noted the mitigation strategies were deployed well last year and that same effort will continue for the 2021-2022 school year. He shared that we will remain flexible over the next year, review the plan regularly, continue to dig into the data, and re-evaluate as needed. He shared regular conversations will be ongoing with the local health department, the Columbus Educators Association (CEA), and the COVID-19 Task Force.

The opportunities will be better this year for social distancing. The dollars received through the ESSER III Grant will allow the hiring of additional teachers. A smaller number of individuals in the classroom will create additional work space for students.

Approximately 200 total students were vaccinated in the high schools this past spring.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Megan Johnson – 883 Countryside Lane, Columbus

She shared her concerns with parent/School Board communication. She asks that parents be able to be part of discussions regarding equity, sexuality and gender identity. She asked for defined transparency for these concerns. She stated she represented parents and teachers who desire students to have an unbiased education. She concluded noting she looked forward to reviewing the curriculum with School Board members.

Angie Grimes – 3324 Woodland Parkway, Columbus

Mrs. Grimes is a mother of five. She shared reasons why she does not feel vaccines should be administered at the high school level. She also shared her concerns on how vaccine conversations and information have been communicated to the students. She shared details of a vaccine conversation that occurred in the classroom involving her daughter. She asked the School Board to help prevent situations like this from happening again.

Justin Stott – 6530 W SR 46, Columbus

He thanked the School Board for allowing him to speak publicly. He noted the importance of showing children the need to be involved in their community and not be afraid to speak up when they have concerns. He shared his concerns with contact tracing and students losing learning days. He stated he understood the need to contact trace, but felt the contact guidelines need to be reviewed on the state and federal level.

Autumn Streeval – 391 N 675 W, Columbus

Ms. Streeval is the mother of two children. She noted her children are not eligible for the vaccine at this time. She shared her appreciation of the time and effort that went into the plan to reopen schools. She feels it is better and safer when all children are wearing masks, and this is just one small measure that would help students return to in-person learning. She asked the School Board to please consider a mask mandate and the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Dr. Tamara Iorio – 4410 Osprey Drive, Columbus

Local pediatrician, Dr. Iorio, spoke to advocate for her patients that are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine. She expressed her concern of unvaccinated adults being around the students. She feels that the more unvaccinated adults in buildings the more chance of an increase in spread.

Dr. Amy Hale – 2717 Riverside Drive, Columbus

Dr. Hale thanked the School Board and administration for their efforts over the last year. She requested the School Board reconsider the mask mandate. She feels since she does not have a choice to vaccinate her child a universal masking policy needs to be in place to protect students and staff.

WHAT

1) Board Commendations:

Mr. Grimes gave commendations to the C4 teachers and students for their hard work this summer. The C4 program was represented at the Bartholomew County Fair. Students and staff members passed out information and provided awareness of the available C4 programs. He also shared commendations for the following programs and the teachers: Ms. Sara Searcy, the C4 Agriculture teacher, held a student officers retreat at the FFA Headquarters in Franklin; Mr. Darin Johnson, the C4 Architecture teacher, worked with several students each week this summer on a build for Exhibit Columbus; several C4 students, under the leadership of teachers Ms. Jen Steinwedel and Ms. Stacey Horn, participated in the International HOSA (Future Health Professionals) leadership conference. Mr. Grimes gave commendations to the students who placed on the international level: Matthew Liu, Esha Aras, Sreepadaarchana Munjuluri, and Hilary Yang.

Mr. Stenner gave commendations to the staff and residents of Four Seasons Nursing Home. The residents helped fill 50 backpacks for BCSC students.

Dr. Shedd congratulated and shared commendations to Mr. David Miller. Mr. Miller is the Dean of Students at Columbus East High School, Assistant Athletic Director and Assistant Football Coach.

He will be honored and named to the 2020 Indiana High School Football Hall of Fame Class as a player. He will be inducted into the Hall of Fame in May of 2022.

Dr. Roberts congratulated Columbus North student, Tucker Smith. Tucker was named the 2021 Gatorade State High School Track and Field Player of the Year.

2) Board Member Reports

Mr. Grimes reported that the Bartholomew Consolidated School Foundation's Annual Letter Campaign awarded \$10,000 to 17 student scholarships.

3) Cabinet Reports

Q2 Financial Report (Mr. Phillips)

Mr. Phillips presented the 2021 second quarter financial report and noted 2021 is running as expected. He reported the Education Fund revenue to be down from the prior year, which is due in part to receiving cash flow at different times during the last six-month period. The Operational Fund revenue is up compared to 2020 due to property tax distribution being delayed in the third quarter of last year. He noted the Referendum Fund revenue is exactly where it would be expected to be at this time of the year. The Education Fund expenditures ran slightly higher due to the following: paying of COVID-19 related stipends to all employees; pay out of retirees in May; and hiring of permanent subs to help with eLearning. He noted he expects to be requesting board approval of an additional appropriation at the end of the third quarter. This appropriation will cover the expenditures listed above, a 9% support staff increase, and account for any bargained teacher increase beyond what was budgeted and approved last fall. Mr. Phillips noted there are several support staff employees paid from the Operations Fund expenditures. He also anticipates requesting approval for an additional appropriation for those support staff positions and benefits.

Mr. Phillips gave a breakdown of the Operating Referendum expenditures and noted there will be a large number of teachers who will qualify for the referendum increase this fall.

Operating Referendum Fund Expenditures:

- Teacher Salary Increase
490 teachers averaged \$3,657 in experience increases
218 teachers received a one-time stipend of \$556
- Support Staff Hourly Rates
949 support staff averaged \$667 in additional pay thru July 1, 2021
- Safety and Security
\$150,000 towards School Resource Officers
\$400,000 to update bus fleet

Mr. Phillips concluded by reviewing month-end cash balances. He highlighted the Education Fund, and noted it is tracking at a similar rate to the prior year, but added a significantly less amount has been borrowed in 2021. The Operations Fund balance remains healthy and the cash flow is tracking the same as the previous year. Mr. Phillips noted that after a few corrections were made to the Health and Dental Funds, they both are now on a positive trend. He noted the Health and Dental Fund balances do include the transfer that is listed as an approval item in the packet.

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

We received the first dollars from the Operating Referendum in May 2021. We asked the county to give us an 80% early distribution. The first Operating Referendum Fund dollars that we received from property taxes was in May and the second distribution occurred in June.

Facilities Review (Dr. Boezeman and Mr. Funk/CSO)

Mr. Jim Funk from CSO Architects presented an overview of the latest district wide improvements. These improvements were made to the following: athletic facilities, T & M Building, roofing and HVAC improvements to several buildings, all playgrounds brought up to ADA compliance, and many improvements made to BCSC facilities to ensure safety and security. He explained the assessment process used for determining the need for facility improvements, and shared data and project recommendations. The proposed 2021 Facilities Improvement recommendations are as follows:

HVAC Improvements

- Temperature Control Requirements
- Classroom HVAC Replacements
- Central Plant Improvements

Schmitt Elementary HVAC Replacement

- HVAC Improvements Project
- General Improvements Project

Parkside Elementary Improvements

- HVAC Improvements Project
- General Improvements Project

Roofing Replacements

- ISC
- Clifty Creek Elementary
- Smith Elementary

Solar Array Installations

- Parkside Elementary

CEHS Softball/Baseball/Stadium Improvements

- New Varsity Softball Field
- Baseball Field Improvements
- Stadium Visitor Grandstands Replacement
- Visitor Side/BB/SB Concession/Restroom Improvements
- General Improvements

He noted available funding for these projects and added Build America Bond Rebates and CARES Act Funds are already allocated to BCSC through federal programs and have no local tax impact. The bond total of \$13,415,000 is the amount requested to be funded through local property

taxes. Mr. Funk concluded by explaining what the next steps would include. If the board approves the recommendations, the process would begin with two required pre-determination hearings.

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

A structural inspection is completed of each facility. Conversation with the building principal, custodian, and others, as well as a visual determination while evaluating the outside of the structure, helps assess building needs.

Regarding classroom vent units, history has taught that the horizontal vents do not last long and the vents do not humidify well. Some changes have been made with updated technology, and a switch to vertical units help to blow the air throughout the room.

Filters are changed every year. Different levels of filters can be accommodated. Air comes from the outside and does not mix with other classrooms.

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 June 14, 2021
- 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. COVID-19 2021-2022 Reopening Plan (Dr. Roberts)
- g. Adjustment of School Meals Prices 2021-2022 (Dr. Boezeman/Mrs. Nancy Millspaugh)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BOARD INPUT/REVIEW

Mr. Grimes acknowledged Columbus North High School athlete, Tucker Smith. He shared his pre-meet ritual of eating three cans of Chef-Boyardee Spaghetti and Meatballs. He thanked all of those in attendance, and noted that their input is valued. He noted that seldom or even regularly will the board make decisions that will please everyone. He also shared the more the board hears from stakeholders the more accurate decisions the board will be able to make.

Ms. Wheeldon acknowledged her responsibilities as a School Board member by referencing the Indiana School Board Member Code of Ethics. She shared the first responsibility listed is “By Thinking always in terms of children first”. She believes students should be in school, and noted that is the reason she voted in favor of the Reopening Plan. She shared the decision was not an easy one for the School Board.

Mr. Bryant thanked all the parents and individuals who spoke. He noted that the board considers each concern, and shared this decision was not easy.

Dr. Shedd thanked all who attended and their public comments. She shared the board is always mindful of doing the best for the children.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

There will be a Strategic Planning Session on Friday, July 30, 9:00 a.m. in the Terrace Room of the Administration Building.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be on Monday, August 9, 6:30 p.m. in the Terrace Room of the Administration Building.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

_____ President

_____ Secretary