

**BARTHOLOMEW CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL CORPORATION
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2023 MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees of the Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation was held in the Terrace Room of the Administration Building, Columbus, Indiana, on Monday, September 25, 2023, 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: Mrs. Nikki Wheeldon, President
Mr. Rich Stenner, Vice President
Mr. Todd Grimes, Secretary
Mr. Jason Major, Member
Mr. Logan Schulz, Member
Mr. Pat Bryant, Member
Mr. Dale Nowlin, Member

Administration: Dr. Jim Roberts, Superintendent
Dr. Chad Phillips, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services
Dr. Gina Pleak, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Dr. Brett Boezeman, Director of Operations
Dr. Laura Hack, Director of Elementary Education
Mr. Charles Edwards, Director of Secondary Education
Mrs. Jessica Vogel, Director of Special Education

Absent: Mrs. Megan Shaff, Director of Title Services

Attorney: Mr. Michael McIver, School Attorney

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

Mrs. Wheeldon, the President, opened the board meeting at 6:31 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

2024 Budget Hearing (Dr. Phillips)

Mrs. Wheeldon gaveled out of the regularly scheduled board meeting and into the Public Hearing at 6:32 p.m.

Dr. Phillips reviewed the budget and noted the changes that had been made since the Budget Workshop presentation. He noted the Debt Service and Referendum Debt budget lines have been changed to reflect the increase in annual service fees. The third change was a \$860,000 increase to the Operating Referendum Fund to reflect the actual projected amount for teacher retention salary increases. Dr. Phillips noted that the Operating Referendum Fund budget now reflects the actual projected amount spent for teacher retention salaries. This change displays a clearer representation of teacher salaries and benefits and should avoid needing to do an additional appropriation later in 2024. Dr. Phillips reviewed the source of funding options available for curricular materials and noted that the \$250,000 transfer to the Education Fund for curricular materials is not included in the appropriation amount since the expenditure appears in the Education Fund budget. The transfer is included in the levy calculations for the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF).

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

The dollars that are collected above the budget can be allocated for what the board decides and does not threaten funding for current classified and certified staff members.

The accruing of cash in the Operating Referendum Fund is to make sure funds are available if the Operating Referendum is not renewed by the public at the end of the 8-year period. This allows the district to fulfill contract obligations for the last school year of those 8 years.

The expected Operating Referendum revenue for 2024 is expected to be approximately \$9.7M.

The interest earned dollars in the Rainy Day Fund is receipted into the Operations and Education Funds.

Dr. Phillips noted that the estimated ADM count is up from the September Budget Workshop presentation. This increase is due to the addition of kindergarten students and students that were mislabeled in the system. This indicates that the Education Fund revenues will likely be higher than estimated. He noted that the students were added after the budget had to be advertised and had no impact on the posted Education Fund budget. He noted that there are no other changes to the Education or Operations Funds Budgets since the Budget Workshop presentation.

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

Adjustments have been made to the academic department budgets to compensate for the loss of textbook rental revenue.

The 2024 Budget reflects a 5.1% increase over the 2023 Budget.

The salary projections to move teachers into their current experience threshold would be at least \$7M for the first year. This cost does NOT include raises for all teachers and only reflects adjusting salaries to reflect all teaching experience.

Dr. Phillips noted that the next step in the budget process would be to request Board approval at the October 23, 2023 Board meeting.

Public Comments regarding the 2024 Budget were heard from: Megan Hearne, Eric Grow, and Megan Johnson.

Mrs. Wheeldon gaveled back into the regularly scheduled board meeting at 7:15 p.m.

WHAT

1) School Board Member Reports

Mr. Grimes noted that the Bartholomew Consolidated School Foundation (BCSF) will sponsor a dine-to-donate night at Jagger's Restaurant on Tuesday, October 3. The proceeds of this event will help fund the BCSC Robotics Program. He noted that he, Mr. Nowlin and Mr. Schulz attended the ISBA/IAPSS Fall Conference and noted the number one priority for the 2024 legislation session will be teacher retention. He shared that Dr. Roberts was recognized as the 2024 IAPSS President-Elect.

Mr. Stenner provided a Business Advisory meeting update. He shared that Dr. Boezeman and Dr. Phillips delivered the BCSC Long Range Facility Planning presentation and noted several comments were received from those in attendance.

Mr. Major provided a Columbus Redevelopment Commission update. He reviewed the 2nd Street Gateway Project and provided an update on the Central TIF District, the Riverfront Project, and noted that the housing study will be completed in June 2024. He shared that the Health Trust members continue to review benefits costs to minimize any additional costs to participants.

Mrs. Wheeldon provided a Public Works Session update. She shared that the Board met to discuss policies 5420 and 8410. The Board reviewed policies regarding curriculum and book adoption and how changes will be processed between now and January to stay current with state statutes.

2) Cabinet Reports

2023-2024 Teacher Retention Report (Dr. Pleak)

Dr. Pleak shared that the 2023-2024 teacher retention rate is 91%. The rate is determined by the number of teachers who worked the first student day of the last school year compared to the number of teachers who worked the first student day of the current school year. There were 762 teachers on staff the first student day of the 2022-2023 school year and 694 returned for the 2023-2024 school year. She noted that 9% of the district teachers chose another direction.

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

The employee exit surveys provided the following data: 10 teachers retired, 15 (2%) went somewhere else to teach, one individual is deceased, a little over a percent moved out of the state and

less than a percent left BCSC to be a stay-at home parent, to change their occupation, it was a mutual decision, or for a personal reason.

The national average retention rate is 84%.

The last recorded retention rate on the IDOE website was 77% and that was data collected for the 2021-2022 school year.

The district percentage rate with the Operating Referendum is a goal of 90%.

Outside of retirees, those individuals leaving the district typically have less than 5 years teaching experience.

The retention rates are posted on the BCSC website.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following individuals provided Public Comments: Meagan Hearne, Mary Mills, Mark Niemoeller, Chuck Doup, Lisa Ingellis, Steve Jasper and Eric Grow.

HOW

3) Requests for Approval - Old Business (Dr. Roberts)

- a. Minutes of the Public Work Session of September 11, 2023, and the Regular School Board Meeting of September 11, 2023 (Dr. Roberts)
- b. Revision of Policy 5420 – Reporting Student Progress (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts requested approval of items 3) a-b.

Mr. Stenner made a motion to approve Old Business items 3) a-b and the motion was seconded by Mr. Schulz.

Upon a call to vote, the motion passed unanimously.

4) Requests for Approval - New Business (Dr. Roberts)

- c. Field Trips and Professional Leaves (Dr. Hack/Mr. Edwards)
- d. Supplemental Contracts (Dr. Phillips)
- e. School Fundraisers (Dr. Hack/Mr. Edwards)
- f. Claims and Payroll (Dr. Phillips)
- g. Resolution to Adopt Amended Health Trust Agreement (Dr. Phillips)

Mr. Nowlin made a motion to approve New Business items 4) c-g and the motion was seconded by Mr. Major.

Upon a call to vote, the motion passed unanimously.

h. Approval of Cummins Grant Agreement for STEM (Dr. Hack)

Dr. Roberts shared additional information and requested approval of item 4) h.

Mrs. Wheeldon and Mr. Major abstained from the vote due to their employment with Cummins.

Upon a call to vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5) 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 Mr. Major.

Upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5) Additional Human Resources (Dr. Pleak)

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

Mr. Schulz made a motion to approve the Additional Human Resources Recommendations, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Nowlin.

Upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

BOARD INPUT AND REVIEW

Mr. Stenner thanked the presenters and speakers and noted how fortunate the district is to have Dr. Phillips preparing the budget.

Mr. Major recognized the 100 students who attended Bartholomew County Youth Leadership and those individuals who organized and coordinated the event. He commended CNHS students Alaney Parker and Amelia Maddox for doing an excellent job performing the national anthem at the recent soccer game. He requested that student input be considered in conversations regarding book banning and censorship and that there be a greater awareness of health hardships that students (specifically peanut allergies) may encounter.

Mr. Nowlin commended Dr. Phillips for his patience and expertise in leading the Board through the budget process.

Mr. Schulz noted that the budget will be online tomorrow. He thanked Dr. Phillips for the additional information on the budget, Dr. Pleak and her staff for the outstanding pace of retaining a 91% teacher retention rate, and those who provided public comments.

Mr. Grimes commended CEHS senior Gavin Foley for singing the national anthem at the Mill Race Marathon and noted the efforts of Mrs. Christina Newell, CSA Lincoln principal Mr. Brett Findley, and those involved in the inaugural Elementary Cross-Country season. He commended the district for the many opportunities and choices available for BCSC students.

Mrs. Wheeldon acknowledged the district bargaining process and thanked CEA President Amy London for representing the needs of teachers and those individuals who provided input during the sessions.

NEXT BOARD MEETING


Public Work Session, October 23, 2023, 5:00 p.m.
Administration Building, Boardroom

Regular Board Meeting, October 23, 2023, 6:30 p.m.
Administration Building, Terrace Room

Strategic Planning Session, October 30, 2023, 6:30 p.m.
Administration Building, Boardroom

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

 Secretary

Attest:  President