

**BARTHOLOMEW CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL CORPORATION
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 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, October 23, 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
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 6:30 p.m.

RECOGNITIONS:

TIF\$ for Education (Dr. Roberts and Mayor Lienhoop)

Dr. Roberts introduced and thanked Mayor Jim Lienhoop and the City of Columbus for graciously working alongside BCSC with Tax Increment Financing (TIF) dollars. Mayor Lienhoop thanked BCSC for the continued partnership and presented the school corporation with a \$1M check. The Mayor stated this is the eighth year the City of Columbus and BCSC have partnered together to provide programs related to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), i-Grad, Information Technology Pathways through Ivy Tech, and the continuation of the Transitional Planning Program. He expressed how important the continued partnership is to the City of Columbus and shared appreciation for the efforts into these four programs to continue to provide a welcoming, fun, safe, and educational system that attracts people to the City of Columbus for children and their families.

PRESENTATIONS:

Best Practice – Schmitt Elementary (Mrs. Kaity Day/Dr. Jake Shaffner)

Principal Mrs. Day introduced her staff and shared a demographic snapshot of the school. She noted that the 702 Pre-K – 6-grade students are eager to learn, innovative, and hard-working.

Mrs. Day and her team presented the importance of getting books into the hands of children at an early age and shared the ways early literacy impacts children with language development that continues as the child grows with vocabulary, social and emotional awareness, memory, and problem-solving skills. These skills can determine a student's success beyond graduation. The Science of Reading is incorporated into the student's day through phonemic awareness, phonics, fluent text reading, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Literacy Coach Mrs. Jill Bless shared the Curriculum and Instruction resources available for teachers and noted that there are many components available for teachers to interact with students. The district-adopted HMH (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) curriculum has provided many resources for teachers to work together to find and create ways to help students get excited about reading and writing. She shared that both HMH and Smekens provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate to create exciting writing units for students. The second graders at Schmitt Elementary were part of the IREAD-3 pilot program. The data received helped teachers prepare those students for third grade. The Book Buddies program and Title Intervention are two pieces used to constantly and creatively evaluate students.

The teachers build student interest in books by providing reading opportunities through diverse classroom libraries. The PTO at Schmitt and many other community partners provide funds for the classroom libraries. Mrs. Kate Edgren, UDL Coordinator, noted that any opportunity the teaching staff has to celebrate with a book they do so, often giving books for birthdays or celebrating the arrival of a new baby within the home. The goal is to share reading with the whole family and gift giving of a book gets books into the family home.

There are other amazing events to help provide reading opportunities at Schmitt. The 5th-grade students do a mock Caldecott in the spring and participate in World Read Aloud Day. The writing clubs give a chance for students to write with other students.

Dr. Shaffner noted the benefits of the book swap program, Family Nights, and the upcoming Trunk and Treat event for students and their families.

Mrs. Day reviewed data noting that 100% of the 3rd-grade students in the Book Buddies program passed IREAD and Title Team data from the 2022-2023 school year addresses all

components of the Science of Reading. She shared that almost 70% of those students showed over a year's worth of growth in their reading proficiency by the Spring of 2023. She noted the many volunteers in the Book Buddies program and shared that the Imagination Library is a great opportunity for many families who have children under the age of 5 to receive a free book each month.

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

In the previous adoptive series there was not a specific writing component to help expound on writing skills.

Currently, eighteen 3rd-grade students at Schmitt Elementary are in the Book Buddies Program.

Teachers participate in Professional Development during staff meetings and are very eager to create and learn on their own. They often share podcasts and talk about their resources with other teachers.

70% of the Schmitt Elementary population is Free and Reduced.

There were five schools within BCSC who piloted the IREAD 3 program for second graders. This data is helpful for evaluating incoming 3rd grade students.

2023-2025 Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement (Dr. Chad Phillips/Mrs. Amy London, CEA)

Dr. Phillips reviewed the process and the timeline for reaching the Collective Bargaining Agreement and Mrs. London recognized by name the work of those who served on the committee. The Tentative Agreement for 2023-2025 includes teacher salary increases of 8.3% retroactive to the start of the 2023-2024 contract year and a 3% increase in 2024-2025. Dr. Phillips reviewed the changes the increase would make in the salary schedule and provided examples which included the referendum payments. Mrs. London noted other compensation changes in the agreement to include an increase of 8% to Appendix B/C contracts in 2023-2024 and a 3% increase in 2024-2025. She shared that the tentative agreement proposes teachers be paid \$30 an hour for events outside of regular school hours.

Dr. Phillips reviewed the health plan design changes and noted there would not be any employer/employee changes to Health/Dental premiums for 2024 and any premium increase in 2025 would be split 50% employer/50% employee. The health trust members voted unanimously to not increase the premiums. He shared that the district will contribute an additional \$200,000 for plan year 2024 to contribute to plan reserves if they decline in 2024. If reserves decline by \$155,000 or less, the remaining amount will be distributed to the HSA for employees enrolled in Option 1 (HSA). The vision exam requirement for the wellness incentive was removed.

Mrs. London shared other non-compensation changes to include bereavement for those with power of attorney, executor of estate, or sole survivor, an increase in association leave days to 15, and a change to new teacher placement guidelines, allowing for placement no higher than the higher salary of current BCSC teachers. Dr. Phillips reviewed changes to Appendix B/C and

noted the successes that have occurred from 2017-2025 including a consistent increase in teacher salary and Health/Dental reserves remaining stable.

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

The number of health care claims received drives the premium costs.

Teachers are surveyed in May and then again at the start of the school year to gather concerns and questions. The proposed contract is supported by CEA and covers the majority of the requests received by members.

WHAT

1. School Board Member Reports

Mr. Stenner thanked those volunteers who serve on the Business Advisory Committee.

Mr. Major provided a City of Columbus Redevelopment Commission update and thanked Dr. Phillips and the Health Trust committee for their work and collaboration with the Health Trust review.

2. Cabinet Reports

• First Reading of NEOLA Policy Revision Recommendations – Special Update July 2023 (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts reviewed the policies and noted that these policies will be the focus of the next Public Works Session on Monday, November 13 at 5 p.m.

• Fall 2023 Average Daily Membership (ADM) Report (Dr. Phillips)

Dr. Phillips shared the latest average daily membership count to be 11,375.9, compared to 11,431 students a year ago. He shared that the 55-student decrease is better than the 116-student decline that was projected by a recent demographic study. The total elementary enrollment is down 3 students. He noted that it is important to note that the elementary schools do not include Pre-K in the count since there is no state funding associated with those students. The Kindergarten class was larger than expected and is higher than the average of the grade 1-6 cohorts. There were 904 outgoing 8th graders and just 845 incoming 7th graders leaving both middle schools down a total of 67 students. Dr. Phillips noted that this year the high schools are up 14 students with CNHS continuing to see growth every year.

Dr. Phillips shared that since 2002 the district has seen an average growth of 0.6% per year in fall ADM counts and seen a net gain of 1,318 students during that time. He noted that part of this increase comes from the state's decision to move from counting each kindergarten student as a half student to a full student which went into effect for the 2015-2016 school year.

Dr. Phillips noted that the demographic studies have been accurate and shared that if the enrollment follows the study's BASE estimates there would be a slight decline in enrollment over the next decade. This would put the 2032-33 enrollment about where it was in the year 2015.

- **2023 Q3 Financial Report (Dr. Phillips)**

Dr. Phillips shared that the Education Fund revenues are up 6.2% (\$3.9M) from 2022. He noted that building the budget begins before the official ADM count date. The fall 2023 count was estimated at 11,358 and it appears the district will be about 15 students higher than that estimate. He shared that the result will likely close out the 2023 calendar year with about \$2.5M in additional revenues.

The Operations Fund revenues are up 6.5% (\$1.2M) as a result of increased interest earned and indirect cost payments for federal grants and the Operating Referendum revenues are up 8.4% (\$423k) as a result of higher assessed values from 2022 to 2023. He noted in 2022 there were only 12 payrolls through June and this year there were 13 payrolls. The education fund salaries and benefits are up 6.2% (\$3.2M) over 2022.

The tentative bargaining agreement will result in the need for an additional appropriation of \$1.7M for the current year 2023. Dr. Phillips noted an additional appropriation request for the Education Fund will be made at the November meeting. This is due to the Non-English-Speaking Grant (NESP) being folded into the Education Fund for 2023-2024 but not budgeted in 2023.

The Operations Fund salaries and benefits are up 10.7% over 2022. This is due to both the 6% raise for classified staff in July and the fact that we are also seeing fewer unfilled positions on the operations side. The expenditures outside of salaries and benefits are up \$2.9M over 2022 due to the timing of purchases for equipment, buses, completing facility projects and that both natural gas and electric are also running ahead of last year's expenses. He noted that some buses were delivered earlier than expected. This expenditure was budgeted for 2024, but hit in 2023, resulting in the need for an additional appropriation of just over \$161k. As noted in prior quarters, teacher retention salaries are up due to a larger number who qualify for the referendum retention pay increases. The teacher retention stipends and associated benefits will require an additional appropriation of \$375k for the current 2023 budget year. He shared that other operating referendum expenditures are as expected with no notable variances.

Dr. Phillips reviewed current cash balances as follows: The Education Fund is up about \$1.3M over 2022 due to higher revenues; the Operations Fund is down \$2.9M compared to 2022 due to the timing of capital expenditures; the Operating Referendum Fund is up \$377k compared to 2022 and collects more revenues than expenditures each year per budget; Health and Dental are up \$1.1M due to lower claims; and the Debt Service balance is also down about \$1.1M, which is a result of newer debt replacing older debt. He shared that other expenditures and transfers to operations are as expected.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following individuals signed in to provide Public Comment:

Karla Kregg – Columbus, IN, Mary Mills – Columbus, IN; and Kevin Leonard – Columbus, IN.

HOW

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

- a. Minutes of the Executive Session of September 25, 2023, Public Work Session of September 25, 2023, and the Regular School Board Meeting of September 25, 2023
- b. Policy 8510 Revision (Dr. Roberts)

Dr. Roberts provided additional detail and requested approval of items 3) a-b.

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

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 the 2024 Budget (Dr. Phillips)
- h. Resolution Authorizing the 2024 Tax Anticipation Warrants (Dr. Phillips)
- i. Resolution to Transfer from the Education Fund to the Operation Fund (Dr. Phillips)
- j. Resolution to Authorize the 2024 Reductions (Dr. Phillips)
- k. Resolution to Adopt the 2024 Capital Projects Fund Plan (Dr. Phillips)
- l. Resolution to Adopt the 2024 Bus Replacement Plan (Dr. Phillips)
- m. Approval of the 2024 Health and Dental Premium Rates and Plan Changes (Dr. Phillips)
- n. Permission to Receive Bids for Sports Lighting and Scoreboards (Dr. Boezeman)
- o. Permission to Award Bids for Northside Middle School Chiller Installation (Dr. Boezeman)
- p. Permission to Award Guaranteed Maximum Price Amendment - Educational Improvements Project (Dr. Boezeman)

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

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. Bryant.

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

BOARD INPUT AND REVIEW

Mr. Grimes thanked Mayor Lienhoop and the City of Columbus for their generous contributions and partnership with the district. He congratulated the fall athletic teams for a successful season, thanked the Schmitt Elementary staff for their presentation, the community members who provided public comment, and Dr. Phillips for his thorough presentations. He congratulated the CEA leaders and the administration for a successful contract and noted the impact it will have on staff and the community.

Mr. Schulz thanked the presenters, those who provided public comments, the book buddies volunteers, and the continued investment of the board and administration in the district.

Mr. Nowlin noted the TIF dollars and acknowledged what that says about the community and the work the administration has done with the City of Columbus. Mr. Nowlin noted his visit to Richards and shared the number of ways they deal with special needs, English learners, and the diversity of students.

Mr. Major shared that his daughter is a senior at CEHS and acknowledged all of the seniors who participated in their last game, match, or meet.

Mr. Stenner thanked Mr. Phillips for the thorough presentation of the 2024 Budget and thanked all teachers for doing an amazing job for the students.

Mrs. Wheeldon thanked all individuals who participated in the agreement negotiations. She noted that everyone did a fantastic job, was prepared, and had the teachers at heart.

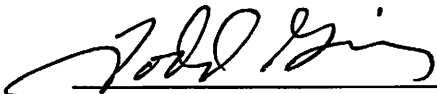
NEXT BOARD MEETING

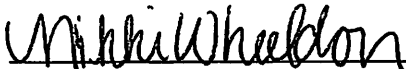
Public Work Session, October 30, 2023, 5:00 p.m.
Administration Building, Boardroom

Special Board Meeting, October 30, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
Administration Building, Terrace Room

Regular Scheduled School Board Meeting, November 13, 2023, 6:30 p.m.
Administration Building, Terrace Room

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.


Secretary

Attest: 
President