

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF  
CLAY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

A Regular Session of the Clay Community Schools Board of Trustees was held at East Side Elementary School, 936 East National Avenue, Brazil, IN 47834, on Thursday, September 10, 2009. Forrest Buell, Dottie King, Tina Heffner, Ted Jackson, and Terry Barr were present. Jennifer Kaelber and Brian Atkinson were absent.

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Jackson, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm. Mr. Jackson led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mrs. Heffner offered the prayer.

**II. Consent Agenda**

**A. Claims**

**B. Board Meetings**

Regular Session Minutes for August 13, 2009

Special Session Minutes for August 27, 2009 and September 1, 2009

Executive Session Certification for August 13, 2009

**C. Field Trips**

None at this meeting

Dr. King moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, and Mrs. Heffner seconded. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

**III. Comments from Patrons**

**Becki Coltharp**, representing the football parents at Northview, spoke regarding Nicole Gonzales, the athletic trainer who serves Northview. Ms. Coltharp expressed her concerns that several football players have been injured over the past couple of years. She asked if Ms. Gonzales was eligible to do anything other than pass out ice and wrap injuries. Ms. Coltharp cited instances of players that ended up being diagnosed with broken bones after being told to "suck it up" and "learn to take the pain". She asserted that her own son had been ridiculed by the coaches for not being able to do weight lifting because Ms. Gonzales was not available to provide taping for him that was required because of wrist injuries. She would like for consideration to be given to having someone else at football games, and she suggested the possibility of a local doctor volunteering to be available during football games. She doesn't want kids to be damaged for life.

Mrs. Barr asked if Ms. Coltharp had spoken with the coaches. Ms. Coltharp replied that the coaches had referred her to Ms. Gonzales. Mrs. Barr then asked if Ms. Coltharp had spoken with the Northview principal, and she had not.

**IV. Old Business**

None at this meeting

## **V. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Schroeder noted the following:

- The new student management system, called Power School, has presented a learning curve for all involved. He believes it is going to be a fantastic program once everybody gets used to it.
- The number of students enrolled is up. The ADM count will not be taken until September 18, and it is hoped that enrollment will be near last year's count or even a little more.
- Dr. Schroeder thanked everyone--the transportation staff, food services staff, secretaries, custodians, maintenance staff, principals, assistant principals, teachers, and central office staff--for getting the school year off to a good start.
- A Learning Technology competitive grant was secured in the amount of \$196,487. Dr. Schroeder offered special thanks to Kathy Knust and Bill Milner for their work over the summer on the grant.
- Dr. Schroeder addressed the claim that the members of the new holding corporation had met prior to the board appointing them. He clarified that the meeting was legal. According to Jeff Qualkinbush, attorney from Barnes and Thornburg, the meeting was not out of the ordinary.
- Groundbreaking ceremonies are scheduled for the elementary schools for the following times: September 30--Staunton Elementary, 9-9:30; Meridian Elementary, 10-10:30; East Side Elementary, 11-11:30; October 1--Van Buren, 8:30-9; Forest Park Elementary, 9:30-10; Clay City Elementary 10:45-11:15.
- Bids were opened for Bid Pack 4 today. There will be a special session on September 24 to award the bids.
- Negotiations teams have met three times and will meet again in October after waiting on the ADM count for final numbers before talking about salary and fringe benefits.

## **VI. Board Member Comments**

**Forrest Buell** stated that he had asked questions at the last special session board meeting in September and had not received many answers. He just recently received answers from Ted Jackson. However, those answers raised more questions for him.

Dr. Buell then read the following prepared statement: "One of the Administration's evaluators for Principal Candidate was absent due to illness. Due to the number of applicants, I believe Dr. Schroeder should have asked for a Board Member to replace Mrs. Knust. #1 How many applicants applied? #2 Is there a tape or record available for Board members to hear or read the interviews? #3 How did Dr. Schroeder conduct the interviews? Were questions and answers different for different applicants? #4 What qualities does the selected applicant have above other applicants? #5 Was our Board President present during the interviews? Did he tell Dr. Schroeder whom to select or whom not to select? I vote to cancel action on this agenda item tonight until our Board gets truthful answers. Our Superintendent and President don't have the authority or right to decide whether to cancel or not to cancel a Principal's hiring!" Dr. Buell claims that he has trouble knowing when Dr. Schroeder's answers are true and when they are not true, so he wanted Mr. Jackson to answer these questions. Mr. Jackson took credit

for the answers, but they were the same as Dr. Schroeder's answers. Now Dr. Buell doesn't know whether to believe Mr. Jackson.

Dr. Buell believes the selection of the interim principal at Clay City Elementary should have been presented as a public regular monthly meeting agenda item. It was put in with the budget hearing at a special session, and there was no public there anticipating the hiring of the interim principal. Dr. Buell added that, on the basis of all that turmoil and the answers that Dr. Schroeder and Mr. Jackson have provided, he now has more questions. As he sees it, the fact that Mr. Jackson provided the same answers as Dr. Schroeder sets up the possibility of Dr. Schroeder controlling the board president's answers at a public meeting without the public or other board members being aware of it. Dr. Buell thinks this is a dangerous way of conducting the public's business.

Dr. Buell would like to know which board member responded to Dr. Schroeder's questions as to how the board wanted him to handle the selection of the interim principal. He asserted that a board member told Dr. Schroeder to have the committee select an applicant and the school board would vote that applicant in. He stated that the only information the school board had was the name of the successful applicant: They did not know where she came from, where she lived, what her past was, and the board did not have the names of any of the 26 applicants. It is Dr. Buell's opinion that the board rubber-stamped the committee's selection. On that basis, Dr. Buell believes this case should be re-opened. He believes this will have a tremendous effect on her success and the Clay City people getting the proper educational service from her. He offered his opinion that the Clay City people are very upset.

To conclude his comments, Dr. Buell asked if closing Lankford Street near Clay City Elementary (at the beginning and end of the school day) was against the law or if it needed approval from some road official before such closing took place. He also wanted to know if it was approved by the school board and if the school board was responsible for this action.

**Terry Barr** offered thanks to Mary Ray and her staff and students for setting up East Side Elementary for the board meeting. She also thanked the staff, faculty, and parents for getting the school year off to a good start. She believes that, for the most part, all faculty, staff, administration, and board members work together for the best for our students.

**Ted Jackson** noted that he had attended a cross country meet this evening at Clay City Jr/Sr High School, which brought back some good memories for him. In response to Dr. Buell's comments, Mr. Jackson is glad that Dr. Buell used the term "our board" because the board functions as a whole. Everyone brings different qualities and personalities to the board. Mr. Jackson wanted to publicly state that he is not a micro-manager and never will be. He stated that the board was asked how to proceed with the selection of the principal and no one on the board expressed interest in being involved in that selection committee. It has not been practice for the school board to be involved in hiring principals, with the exception of at the secondary level during the second or third interviews. In all his years on the board, he does not recall being involved in an

elementary principal being hired. His answers to Dr. Buell did come from information received collectively as a board, both prior to the last meeting and general information given to the board in executive sessions and through e-mail regarding the number of applicants and such. He was not present for any of the interviews. He was not on the selection committee. To date, he has not received anything negative regarding the new principal at Clay City Elementary; however, he has heard positive things from the public, parents and a couple of teachers. Mr. Jackson wants Dr. Buell to know that he can come to Mr. Jackson at any time. If Dr. Buell had these questions prior to this vote to hire the principal, he could have contacted Mr. Jackson or Dr. Schroeder for answers prior to the board meeting. Mr. Jackson added that Mrs. Kenworthy was hired at a public meeting. It was a special session, which is a public meeting. Mr. Jackson clarified that the board can choose to have discussion on an item prior to having a motion or a second and then a vote. A board can also choose to have a motion, then a second, then discussion. It has been done both ways on this board, but for the past few years, the board has chosen to have a motion, a second, and then discussion. When Dr. Buell asked whether there would be discussion at the meeting during which Mrs. Kenworthy was being approved, Mr. Jackson did not say that there would be discussion after the vote. Rather, he said that there would be discussion after the second, which follows Robert's Rules of Order. Mr. Jackson would like for Dr. Buell to know that it is concerning to him that Dr. Buell does not trust Dr. Schroeder, especially since the primary responsibilities of the board are to hire the superintendent and set policy as a board. Now that Mr. Jackson knows that Dr. Buell is lacking trust in him as well, that is concerning to Mr. Jackson. He would like the public to know that he will do what he can to hold up the trust of the board.

To conclude board member comments, Dr. Schroeder noted that he takes special care, and if anyone has questions, he suggests that they talk to the two people (Carolyn Kumpf and Kim Tucker) that served on the committee with him. He believes they will verify that whatever he said was 100% true.

Dr. Buell had one final question: Will the interim principal at Clay City Elementary be paid mileage? Dr. Schroeder responded by stating that she would be paid mileage if she is representing the school corporation, but she will not be paid mileage to travel to and from work.

## **VII. New Business**

### **A. Public Hearing on Additional Appropriation of Bond Proceeds Received by the School Corporation**

Mr. Jackson opened the public hearing on additional appropriation of bond proceeds received by the school corporation. Mr. Brad Bingham of Barnes and Thornburg explained that as part of this financing project, the school corporation will receive the proceeds of the bond sale in exchange for obtaining some property owned by the school corporation. However, the expenditure of these funds is not provided for in the current budget tax levy. An additional appropriation of those funds must be made before the funds can be spent. By law, a public hearing must be held to allow taxpayers to appear and express their views. No one spoke. The public hearing was closed.

## **B. Resolution Approving of Additional Appropriation of Bond Proceeds Received by the School Corporation**

Mr. Brad Bingham of Barnes and Thornburg referred board members to the resolution included in their board packet that formalizes this appropriation. It acknowledges that the holding corporation will be acquiring from the school corporation East Side Elementary School, Forest Park Elementary School and Jackson Township Elementary School. The school corporation will use the proceeds it receives from this transaction to fund the projects at Meridian Elementary, Staunton Elementary, and Van Buren Elementary. The resolution makes an additional appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$14 million which will be funded by the proceeds less the sale of these properties, along with interest earnings on that money. The resolution authorizes additional action to be taken in the performance of the resolutions as specified.

Mrs. Heffner moved to approve the resolution. Mrs. Barr seconded.

Under discussion, Dr. Buell stated that he still objected to the way the current building program was put together. He believes it would be much less expensive to do one school per year. He asserts that he has never been told of any educational values that will be better. He believes that the corporation is spending for bricks and mortar, not for education. He would like to know how much educational value the corporation is getting.

Mr. Jackson commented that, as the corporation has gone through this process, the board has had differing opinions as to how to finance it. As for Dr. Buell's preference to do a little at a time over a longer period of time, Mr. Jackson noted the public concern of fairness to all students and the issue of rising construction costs that could increase the total cost. As far as the educational issues, Mr. Jackson stated that the fund from which construction costs are paid is the Debt Service Fund, which is set aside for this type of expenditure. Most of the education dollars come out of grants and the General Fund. He noted that it is hard to put a value on bricks and mortar as it relates to education.

Dr. King added that, when this process started, time was spent brainstorming and the various groups of parents, administrators, teachers, and board members did talk about educational value. Although it will always be difficult to prove the educational value of a building, she believes that students will have a sense of being treated equitably. She would rather pay for bricks and mortar on schools than on jails.

Dr. Buell interjected that, having already stated that he has problems knowing whether Mr. Jackson's statements are true or not true, he is concerned that Mr. Jackson is defending the building project. He reiterated his concern that he has never been shown any educational value.

Mrs. Heffner stated that, as a new board member who was elected last year, she took the time to talk to different people within the corporation, the administration, teachers, and students. She has found that communities have supportive of what is being done. They are the taxpayers and the majority is in support. If they weren't, they would be

here stating that they were not in support. She has found everyone to be trustworthy, and she has no problems at all in the approach that the building project has taken. She believes this is the best way to go at this point in time and is in full support of this and of the corporation.

Mrs. Barr is glad to see the corporation moving ahead. She is very glad to see children moved out of the modulars, to see all of the elementary schools equal, and to see all children being treated the same and in the same type of building. She added that a building doesn't make a school any more than a house makes a home. This is something positive. Education occurs in the classroom between a teacher and a student. As she sees it, the issue could have been debated endlessly while waiting for a total consensus in the county. However, what would have happened is what has happened in the past: Nothing.

The motion was approved by a 4-1 vote with Dr. Buell opposed.

### **C. Obsolete Items**

Dr. Schroeder stated that the old semi trailer used by the Northview Band and playground equipment at Van Buren needs to be declared as surplus. He recommends approval.

Mrs. Barr moved to approve the recommendation. Dr. King seconded, and the motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

### **D. Goals, Strategies and Activities 2009-2011**

Dr. Schroeder explained that the Goals, Strategies and Activities 2009-2011 document had been presented in April of 2009 for review and had been revised on 7/30/09. The draft has also been presented to principals and discussed with the Classroom Teachers Association. Approval is recommended.

Mrs. Barr moved to approve the Goals, Strategies and Activities 2009-2011. Mrs. Heffner seconded.

Under discussion, Mrs. Heffner asked if this information could be obtained at central office. Dr. Schroeder stated that it could, and he added that the last version of this document had been placed on the corporation web site.

Dr. Buell then read from a prepared statement:

"Who planned this list of seven goals and strategies listing how to lower drop out students' numbers and suspensions and expulsions in our Corporation?"

Attack this three way strategy up front as Strategy 1. A drop out number, suspension and expulsion numbers will NOT materialize until these numbers are made first on the strategy list. It will not materialize until the other six strategies are placed in a supplement listing to Drop outs, suspensions, and expulsions become #1 on this list! This will serve to make each strategy successful; functionally and financially. If these students remain in Strategy 7 their problems will never be solved.

The process of establishing this listing is:

1. Identify the three groups listed above for #1 need. Notify this information to our School Board monthly.
2. Determine the cause of each individual student's placement currently existing in Strategy 1. Notify board members monthly.
3. School Board should help establish a plan from staff and public to attack these numbers and causes. Our School Board should accept this responsibility.
4. Our School Board, and possibly staff and public committees should establish the other six strategies, listed tonight in this agenda item, as to the greatest assistance needed to achieve strategy 1, (listed above) and to decide the financial backing for each of these six strategies.

Our School Board should solicit a Public Committee to serve with constructive input, continually addressing the drop out numbers as #1 strategy status."

Mr. Jackson presented statistics from the Department of Education web site regarding the drop-out rate. The state graduation rate average for 2007-2008 was 77.8%. Northview's rate was 80.4% and Clay City's rate was 87.9%. Both county schools are already above state average, so he challenged the administration to set the goal a little bit higher and continually try to improve.

The motion was approved by a 4-1 vote with Dr. Buell opposed.

#### **E. Report on H1N1 Flu**

Lynn Stoelting shared what has been done as precautions. A letter is going home to parents with information on how to prevent the spread of the flu. Community meetings will be held and have been set up through St. Vincent Clay Hospital. As far as vaccinations for students, that will be done through the Clay County Health Department or through Preferred Health in Terre Haute through a Title I Grant for students in Title I schools. It will only be done with parent permission. School nurses have been instructed on how to handle children with symptoms of the flu. The Scrubby Bear program for kindergarten, first and second grade students is in the works. Programs with older students to promote good hand-washing and sneezing and coughing into a tissue, handkerchief or their sleeve are being planned. Medically fragile students will be encouraged to talk to their doctor to determine what is best for them should a flu outbreak occur. Kim Funk, Jeff Bell, Jeff Fritz, Gail Williams, Karen Phillips and Tim Rayle will serve on a committee to address more detailed procedures to be followed in the case of a flu outbreak. Tom Reberger has already given the custodial staff procedures for additional cleaning and disinfecting to be done in the schools. ISU student nurses will be helping with the hand washing programs.

#### **F. Health Insurance Information and Rate Approval**

Mike Fowler presented an overview of the two health plans in the corporation. The plan for certified (teaching) staff has no in-network deductible and no co-insurance; the plan pays 100% with some slight co-pays. The plan for non-teaching and administrative staff is a high deductible plan coupled with a health savings account that either has a \$2,000

or \$4,000 deductible. The employer pays \$1,100 to \$3,000 towards the deductible. Health insurance will be with Anthem and premiums increased 9.94% for both groups. Vision insurance is with Anthem and increased 12%. Dental insurance is with ISTA and increased .40%. The annual rates for this year for the single plan on teaching are \$9,133 and for the family plan on teaching they are \$26,067. For the single plan with a \$2,000 deductible for non-teaching the annual rates are \$6,710. Mr. Fowler pointed out that it costs those on the teaching plan \$2,422 to avoid a \$2,000 deductible. On the family plan for non-teaching with a \$4,000 deductible the rates are \$18,457 per year. A teacher is paying \$7,610 to avoid a \$4,000 deductible. The school corporation contributes \$1,000 for a single plan towards the deductible and \$3,000 for a family plan towards the deductible. Financially speaking, there is no circumstance where a teacher is better off financially under their plan than those on the non-teaching plan. \$179,000 has been saved by the school corporation over the past two years by going to the high deductible health savings account for non-teaching staff members. Mr. Fowler explained that by the year 2011, if increases continue at the rate that "trend" is (14%), an employee on the teaching family plan would pay as much as the salary of a teacher earning a salary at the rate of BS 0.

Mr. Fowler recommends that the rate sheets in the board packet be approved, that the corporation continues to contribute \$1,100 to the single plan health savings account and \$3,000 for the family plan health savings account as well as \$800 for retired administrator's health savings account, that the contributions be made in four installments, and that Mr. Fowler be allowed to enter into contracts with Anthem.

Mrs. Barr moved to approve the recommendation. Dr. Buell seconded, and the motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

#### **G. Advertise for Buses and Fuel**

The request is to advertise for 3 conventional 66-passenger buses and 4 conventional 78-passenger buses as well as fuel. Approval is recommended.

Mrs. Heffner moved to approve the recommendation. Dr. King seconded, and the motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

#### **H. Expanded Criminal History Check Contracts**

Dr. Schroeder explained that Indiana law requires more stringent criminal history checks than the previously required limited criminal history checks. The new law became effective on 7/1/09 for new employees who have direct ongoing contact with students. Reports must be completed within 90 days of employment. Dr. Schroeder recommends that contracts with Certified Backgrounds and Indiana Safe Schools be approved to conduct the Expanded Criminal History Checks.

Mrs. Barr moved to approve the contracts with Certified Backgrounds and Indiana Safe Schools. Dr. King seconded, and the motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.



**I. ECA Eligibility Criteria, Student and Athletic Handbook Change: First Reading**

Jeff Bell and Jeff Allen were in attendance to explain the proposed change to the Clay City Jr/Sr High School and North Clay Middle School extra-curricular (ECA) eligibility requirements for students in grades 6, 7, and 8. The change would move eligibility determination from the end of the six weeks grading period or semester grading term to the middle of the six weeks term. Students at this level are not regulated by the IHSAA. This is a first reading on the policy, so no vote was taken.

**J. Transportation and Maintenance Site and Building Proposals**

Information was presented on the options available for the transportation and maintenance departments. Option 8, which would involve purchasing the City Coal Yard property, is being looked at and is the least cost of any of the options. Permission is requested to allow the school corporation attorney to draw up a contract to be presented to the seller. The contract would be brought back to the board at a subsequent meeting for approval. Stipulations in the contract would include demolition of existing buildings on the property and clean-up of the property to EPA standards. Due to the cost, the corporation would be required to use an architect and would have to put the project out for competitive bids. Enough money has been moved into the Rainy Day Fund to cover the cost of this project without touching teacher pensions or going into debt. When asked what a ballpark time frame would be Dr. Schroeder stated that he would like to have it done by the end of next summer.

The request is to have the contract drawn up. If it is favorable, it would be brought back to the board for approval. Architects and contractors would then be hired and a plan would be brought back to the board for approval.

Mrs. Barr moved to approve the recommendation. Dr. King seconded.

Under discussion, Dr. Buell asked if the building trades class could be a part of this. Mrs. Knust explained that the building trades class has specific goals and proficiencies that go along with building an entire house. Also, work would have to be done during the school year, and it is hoped that the transportation building would be finished before the next school year starts. Mr. Jackson suggested that if the building is started by next spring, perhaps there would be some aspect of it that would benefit the building trades class.

The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

**VIII. Personnel**

Dr. Schroeder pointed out that contracts were being submitted at this meeting for approval. It is a formality.

**A. Leaves of Absence**

**1. Certified** None

**2. Non-Certified** None

**B. Retirements**

	<b>1. Certified</b>		
	a. Teacher (December 2009)	NCMS	Carolyn Dix
	<b>2. Non-Certified</b>	None	
	<b>3. Place on Retirement Index</b>	None	
<b>C.</b>	<b>Resignations</b>		
	<b>1. Certified</b>	None	
	<b>2. Non-Certified</b>		
	a. Instructional Assistant	ES	Tammy Sue Childress
	<b>3. ECA Resignation</b>	None	
<b>D.</b>	<b>Transfers</b>		
	<b>1. Certified</b>	None	
	<b>2. Non-Certified</b>	None	
<b>E.</b>	<b>Employment</b>		
	<b>1. Certified</b>		
	a. Teacher (Physics)	NHS/CCHS	Kirsten McClure-Snow
	<b>2. Non-Certified</b>		
	a. Title I Nurse (25 hrs/week)	ME	Carey Yocom
	b. Custodian (6 hrs/evening)	SE	Lisa Fields
	<b>3. Extra-Curricular Certified</b>	None	
	<b>4. Extra-Curricular Non-Certified</b>		
	a. Volleyball (6 <sup>th</sup> grade)	NCMS	Linda Payton
	<b>5. Extra-Curricular Lay Coach/Lay Sponsor</b>	None	
	<b>6. Volunteers</b>	None	
<b>F.</b>	<b>Changes</b>		
	<b>1. Certified</b>		
	a. Dr. Allen is recommending switching the boys and girls Middle School track coaches...Paul Harbour will be the boys M.S. track coach and Nathan Hopf will be the girls M.S. track coach in the spring.		
	<b>2. Non-Certified</b>	None	
	<b>3. Lay Coach</b>	None	
<b>G.</b>	<b>Termination</b>		
	<b>1. Certified</b>	None	
	<b>2. Non-Certified</b>	None	
<b>H.</b>	<b>Information Only</b>		
	1. Sarah Kissinger will be employed on a supplemental contract as one of our GED teachers. She is currently employed as a 2-period math teacher at North Clay Middle School.		
<b>I.</b>	<b>Classroom Volunteer</b>	None	

Mrs. Heffner moved to approve the personnel items. Dr. Buell seconded, and the motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

**IX. Future Agenda Items**

**Mrs. Barr** would like to once again discuss the issue of moving board member comments to the end of the school board meeting.

**Dr. Buell** offered a second to Mrs. Barr's suggestion.

**Mr. Jackson** mentioned that, regarding public special sessions, he would be e-mailing the board with some possible dates for an October meeting. He will find the meeting place in Brazil. Also, he would like the administration to consider temporary maintenance staff during the building project.

**X. Adjournment**

Mrs. Heffner made a motion to adjourn and Dr. Buell seconded. With a 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

The meeting was audio and video recorded and copies may be requested by contacting the Central Administration Office.