



**GENEVA COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 304  
227 NORTH FOURTH STREET, GENEVA, ILLINOIS  
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District Number 304 met in a regular session on Monday, November 12, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. at the Geneva Middle School South, 1415 Viking Drive, Geneva, Illinois

**1. CALL TO ORDER (Bylaws 0163 & 0164)**

- 1.1 Roll Call
- 1.2 Welcome
- 1.3 Pledge
- 1.4 Reminder to sign attendance sheet

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Grosso.

Board members present: Taylor Egan, Policy Committee Chair Leslie Juby, Finance Committee Chair Dave Lamb, Mike McCormick, Vice President Kelly Nowak, Mary Stith, President Mark Grosso. Late: None. Absent: None.

The President welcomed everyone, reminded them to sign the attendance record, and lead them in the Pledge of Allegiance.

District staff present: Doug Drexler, Associate Principal Geneva High School; Laura Sprague, Communications Coordinator; Dr. Dean Romano, Assistant Superintendent Business Services; Dr. Andy Barrett, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning; Dr. Adam Law, Assistant Superintendent Personnel Services; Dr. Kent Mutchler, Superintendent.

Others: George Petmezas, Amy Price, Betty Mayer, Julie Tokers, William & Elizabeth Jones, Mary Cortes, Paige Theall, Mary Jean Bankmann, Terry Koontz, Rose Educate, Lauren Klis, Susan Rago, Katy Savarese, Valeni Chitwood, Tom Chitwood, Laurie Reattoir, Brooke Blaszynski, Anne Kruhalec, Sharon Stewart, Rebecca Holzhauser, Jennifer Webster, Dan Lindberg, Alyssa Chudzick, Cindy Whitley, Kerri Heilman, Debbie Mickelsen, Lynn Moravick, Alexia Ellett, Stephanie Anthony, Jennifer Jacob, Jill Holmes, Kelly Hecht, Nancy Dantino, Pat Fordonski, Jeff Schimmel, Lisa Cameron, Grace Lyons, Caitlin Movrek, Douglas Clark, Mary Warnke, Steve & Cathy Medear, Martin Scobey, Elizabeth Blaszynski, Katie Augustine, Michele Callahan, Dale Rathunde, Karen Rathunde, Mary Lindberg, Kim Kopec, Brooke Bean, Lisa Rios, Kristine Collins, Matthew Bruno, Therese Davison, Gabriella Galenti, Melissa Busch, Roxanne Curtis, Jen Snodgrass, Sara Walls, Chris Willadsen, Beth Willadsen, Grace DeVita, Barb Jensen, Jean Ellberg, Julie Walker, Christine Voreis, Julieann Shourie, Jessica Breugelmans, Michelle Johnson, Patricia Sullivan, Daniel Peterson, Jason Levin, Meagan Provencher, Judy Richter, Jen Uhlmann, Jenny Waldchen, Kathy Jaffer, Lisa Paul, Stephen Paul, Jessica Parker Littlefield, John Burns, Jason Santo, Cathy Fuller, Peg Young, John McCormick, Cyndy Mueller, Meg Panizzi, Todd Augustine, Therese Augustine, David Anson, Lucas Anson, Shannon Baird, Hannah Paschke, Cheryl Giesen, Dan Giesen, Allisa Thomas, Colleen Olechowski, Marlee Young, Kristin Mazzaor, Chris Mortenson, Courtney Hall, Lora Fleck, Peggy Franz, Joe Franz, Anna Geismann, Michael Roman, Karen Roman, Christi Mondy, Leslie Bauman, Julia Benway, Tina Barber, Jo Ann Corbett, Susan Loughman, Jeannine McConnell, Russell & Marguerite LeFevre, Patricia Burns, David Gartrell, Cari Reddick, Jean Corkery, Kim Altmayer, Tina Schertzer, Shayla

Spezzano, Nancy Yi, Heidi Force, Melanie Pohlman, Martha Paschke, Cameron Myatt, Julie Myatt, Gail Fritz, Jill Nippert, Lauren Dunne, Anthony Riam, Don Rago, Mel Rooney, Colette Matejcak, Bob Blaszyński, Erin Shermer, Lavin Key, Samantha Stewart, Michael Massoth, Steve & Carol Young, Laura & Marie Debraki, Amy Engelman, Audrey Young, Jennifer Gustafson, Katy McCullough, Paul Merrington, Kim Edwards, Sarah Srikutov, Tracy Wolniakowski, Kristen Rodenbostel, Richard Babica, David Johnson, Diane Chapman, Patricia Burens, Kris Mather, Rob Falls, Mark Bucholz, Lauren Theall, Mark Obermeyer, Tiffany Minderman, Ben Sylvester, Camille Lutz, Jon Wassell, Lara Crowley, Jennifer Piton, Jean Zimmer, Kelly Guzniczak, Kristin Foley, Mary Seegers, Margaret Weisich, Jacqueline Forbes, Tom Sheridan, Ellie Lebron, Tracey Leon, Pam Cabeen, Margaret Kelly, Tim Cuzzie, Julie Morrison, Laurie Fritch

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Bylaw 0168.1)**

2.1 Regular Session, October 22, 2018

2.2 Executive Session, October 22, 2018

Motion by Nowak, second by McCormick, to approve the above-listed minutes, items 2.1-2.2. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Egan, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

**3. RECOGNITION, AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS**

3.1 GHS Course Catalog Initial Presentation (Policy 2220) – Doug Drexler

Mr. Drexler shared that planning for the 2019-2020 school year has begun. The high school is recommending one new course, as well as relatively minor modifications to six existing courses. These changes will better enable the high school to meet the continually evolving needs of students. The recommendations for 2019-2020 are not likely to require changes in staffing, space, or materials.

The proposed new course is Ceramics III. The existing courses have become popular, and there is student demand for more advanced skills in this area. The six classes with modifications are Studio Art, 2D Design, Advanced Studio Art, Concert Choir, Viking Ensemble and Physical Science. These courses will be brought back at the next meeting for possible approval.

Board comments, questions, concerns: What is the sequence for physical science? (The typical sequence for students is starting with Earth Science, then Biology, and in the past it was either Chemistry or Horticulture. We recognized there was a need for Chemistry, but there was a math barrier for some students, so it's more of a fundamental Chemistry.)

3.2 2019-2020 School Calendar Draft (Policy 8210)

Dr. Barrett shared that the Calendar Committee has been meeting to look at the 2019-2020 school calendar. There is a shared understanding of what the committee needs to consider. This includes the most beneficial instructional time, neighboring districts and cooperatives, the unit district philosophy, elementary and middle school trimester structure, semester balance at Geneva High School, appropriate time for parent/teacher conferences and State requirement.

Dr. Barrett shared four drafts that are being considered. The next steps will be to get feedback from stakeholders, narrow the options, regroup with the committee, return to the Board with drafts and then formal adoption of the calendar.

Board comments, questions, concerns: Who is on the committee? (Faculty and administration.) How long has this committee been meeting? (It's been ongoing.) We knew we had an imbalance of semester days. Is this what led to these discussions? (Yes.) It's been thirteen years that we looked at our calendars and coordinated with Mid-Valley and the Fox Valley Career Center due to students missing up to seventeen days of school because our calendars did not coordinate.

3.3 2018 Tentative Tax Levy Presentation

Dr. Romano shared the tentative tax levy with the Board. The levy process began in September, and one change this year is the adoption of a tentative levy. There are three components that we look at. They are the tax levy, cashflow and the budget. The factors that are used to determine the levy are the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV), tax rate and formula used to calculate the tax rate. The District

submits a proposed levy to the County, but in order to ensure that we do not lose revenue relating to the “tax cap” formulas, we will ‘balloon’ levy, or levy a larger amount than what we will receive. The proposed capped funds for 2018 would be 4.99%. However, we are estimating a tax extension increase of just 2.91%. The idea behind the ‘balloon’ levy is to make sure that we don’t cut ourselves short with new construction funds available to the district. The District is estimating to receive a maximum of about \$2 million in new revenue with an estimated total of just over \$87.3 million. The next step in the levy process by law is for the final proposed levy to be developed and approved by the Board in December.

Board comments, questions, concerns: This highlights some of the challenges of funding the district primarily through local property taxes. What is the ten-year rolling average for the Consumer Price Index (CPI)? (1.6%) Another component that’s important to highlight is that new construction is outside of this formula. We don’t have a surplus. What we have is funds to start the next school year. Do you anticipate any changes to the levy before it comes back for approval? (Not really.) Could you tell us again what the 30% in reserves is for? (There’s a common ‘Best Practices’ out there that looks for a level of reserves equal to three to four months of operation. It’s important to have these funds for any emergencies that arise.) Is that 30% as of the end of the fiscal year? (Yes. When you look at cash flow, you want to look at your low and high points. For us, this is May and June.) There haven’t been any short-term loans or bridge loans in the last several years.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Per Board Policy 0167.3, Section C, Attendees wishing to speak at the Board meeting must register their intention to participate in the public portion(s) of the meeting upon their arrival at the meeting. Complete the form found in the Welcome to Our Meeting brochure (print legibly) and give it to the Presiding Officer or the Recording Secretary before the meeting is called to order.*

Teachers and community members spoke on the current teacher negotiations.

#### **5. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

*Policy Committee, Finance Committee, Boundary Task Force, Communications Task Force, Facilities Task Force, Technology Task Force, Joint PTO, Geneva Academic Foundation, Geneva All-Sports Boosters, Geneva Music Boosters, Geneva High School Theater Boosters, GEARS, K-12 Discipline Committee, Geneva Coalition for Youth, PRIDE, Fox Valley Career Center, IASB/Legislative, IASB Kishwaukee Governing Board*

Board members responded to the public comments with their own comments related to teacher negotiations. One Board member stated that they love Geneva teachers and that they fought for a position on the Board because of their love for Geneva schools. They wanted to be a part of making the district stronger and shaping the future generation of Geneva. Having spoken to many teachers before beginning their term, it was apparent that experiences of past negotiations left this district with a level of distrust on both sides. Being naive, they believed that their ability to collaborate, analyze and approach issues factually would help guide them through the future negotiations smoothly. It’s apparent that this team, and it is a team, is broken. As adults, we should all have the skillset to departmentalize and to come to the table to focus on business. The job that they came into so proudly has made them feel more disconnected and restless than they have ever felt. The respect that we are asked to show our employees is a two-way street. This Board has the unique job of serving not only community members with children who attend our schools, but every Geneva tax payer. This Board wants this district to be competitive with surrounding districts. One that rewards for education. One that teachers continue with throughout their career. They want a financially stable district and one that is prepared for everything that comes their way while supporting the ever-changing needs of our students, sustaining the jobs of our teachers and protecting the interests of our residents.

Another Board member echoed that they too love Geneva teachers. Their own children attended Geneva schools, and two of them are now teachers themselves. We know from experience that carrying a public campaign on either side leads to a negative climate, both in our community and to me, but also within our building community. This impacts district staff that have nothing to do with these negotiations, yet they will feel the effects of it regardless. They are appreciative of being a part of a Board that agrees on the issue of limiting their comments yet balances them with the need to let the community know that they are elected officials. We stand by our press releases, because they

were designed by us. We believe in our teachers. We believe in fair and equitable pay. Their sole agenda as a Board member was to come in and support the district and the community. For the record, they respect and admire everyone of their fellow Board members for their focus on children, staff and the community. This is one of the most highly functioning Boards the district has had. The Board is committed to working on a contract until it is done and acceptable by both parties.

Another Board member shared that, like their fellow Board members they have spent years volunteering their time and talent for better education for students across Illinois and specifically in Geneva. They understand and take very seriously their responsibilities of their position as an elected Board member. They work hard to represent all of their constituents. They value education and have deep respect for educators. When our teachers informed us of overcrowding, we responded by adding mobile classrooms, a cost-effective solution for our taxpayers. When we heard about higher case loads due to more social emotional issues within our student body, we responded by adding more staff and evaluating programs. When we heard rumblings that professional development wasn't as effective as it could be, we empowered our teachers to determine the best programs and betterment of their craft. When we were approached about expanding programs, such as all-day kindergarten and coursework at the high school, we responded by adding approximately 40 new teachers in the past four years. When the economy took a downward turn, we addressed our outstanding debt service to help our taxpayers, while keeping our commitment to have no reduction in force. We have kept our buildings safe and clean. We have provided much needed technology upgrades to make our students competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And, we have dealt with the chaos that comes out of Springfield all while showing a deep commitment and respect to our teachers. Despite what you may have heard, the Board and the GEA agree on more than we disagree on, and we have spent months trying to collaboratively find a way to achieve those mutual goals. We are so much better when we work together. We hope that we can continue to move forward with the best interests of all involved.

Another Board member shared that they have seen the email blasts that the GEA has been sending out. What they say is that the Board is not bargaining in good faith. This couldn't be further from the truth, and teachers should ask your leadership what we have been doing the last few days. We are probably a lot closer than anyone thinks. We are having productive conversations and meetings. We are very optimistic that we can reach an agreement.

At 9:01 p.m., the Board took a break.

At 9:08 p.m., the Board resumed their meeting.

## **6. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Policy 1210)**

No report.

## **7. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATION**

### **6.1 Approval of 2018 Tentative Tax Levy**

Dr. Romano shared that the administration is requesting the Board's approval of the 2018 Tentative Tax Levy as presented. A final proposed tax levy for the 2018 tax year will be brought to the Board of Education for approval at their December meeting and then filed with the County Clerk.

Motion by Lamb, second by Nowak, to approve the above-listed tentative tax levy, item 6.1. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Egan, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

### **6.2 Public Hearing, ISBE Waiver Application Renewal: Driver Education Fee**

6.2.1 President Convenes Public Hearing at 9:10 p.m.

6.2.2 Overview of Waiver Application

6.2.3 Comments/Questions from the Board of Education

6.2.4 Comments/Questions from the Public

6.2.5 President Closes Hearing at 9:13 p.m.

6.2.6 Approval of ISBE Application for Five-year Renewal of Previously Approved Waiver:  
Driver Education Fee

Dr. Romano explained that the Illinois State Board of Education and the State Legislature have a program whereby school districts may apply for waiver or modification of the State Board rules and/or School Code mandates, and the hearing is one of the requirements of the application process. The required notices of the public hearing had been made as required; i.e., publish a notice on the District's website at least 14 days in advance of the hearing; publish a notice in a newspaper of general circulation at least 7 days in advance of the hearing; provide written notice 7 days in advance to the applicant's exclusive bargaining agent(s) affected by the request. Notices of a public hearing were also sent to the state legislators representing the applicant's area. The waiver application renewal sought an additional five-year approval to change the amount of the fee charged by the district to students who participate in the driver education course from "not to exceed \$50/\$250" to "not to exceed \$500", which is more reflective of the actual cost to provide the instruction. The administration recommended Board approval to submit the application for renewal of waiver or modification of State Board Rules and/or School Code Mandates regarding driver education fees, as presented.

Motion by McCormick, second by Egan, to approve the above-listed waiver, item 6.2. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Egan, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

6.3 Safe Routes to School

Dr. Romano shared that the City of Geneva has notified the District of its desire to submit an application for the 2019 Illinois Safe Routes to School Program (SRSP). This grant would provide funding for the city to make improvements that support walking and biking environments for students. To complete this process, the District is required to adopt the resolution supporting the request and the designated project being proposed.

Motion by Stith, second by Juby, to approve the above-listed, item 6.3. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Egan, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

**8. WORK-STUDY TOPICS & FUTURE ACTION CONSIDERATION**

7.1 Board Meeting/Presentation Schedule

This document continues to be updated, and we hope that the public will check it regularly for topics.

**9. INFORMATION**

8.1 FOIA Requests

**10. CONSENT AGENDA (Bylaw 0166.1)**

9.1 Personnel Report: Resignations, Retirements, Leave Requests, Changes in Assignment/FTE, New Hires (Policies 1520, 3120, 4120)

Family and Medical Leave Certified Staff

Rottmann, Melissa, WAS/HES, Reading Specialist, 1.0 FTE, effective 10/29/18-12/3/18

Fairfield, Kathryn, FES/GHS, Speech Language Pathologist, 1.0 FTE, effective 4/15/19-5/31/18

New Hires Support Staff

Fagiano, Betty, TRAN, Bus Driver, 9-months, effective 11/14/18

Fowler, Matthew, ALL, On-call Custodian Substitute, 9-months, effective 10/31/18

Adams, Susan, WAS, Classroom Assistant, 9-months, effective 11/7/18

Walker, Beth, GHS, Library Assistant, 9-months, effective 11/12/18

Halka, Brittany, GMSS, Special Education Assistant, 9-months, effective 11/12/18

Sanchez, Sheri, TRAN, On-call Bus Monitor, 9-months, effective 11/12/18

Resignations Support Staff

Peterson, Bridget, GELP, Special Education Assistant, 9-months, effective 10/26/2018

Shepke, Scott, GHS, Building Technician, 12-months, effective 11/9/18

Smith, Don, TRAN, 9-months, effective 10/5/18

Anderson, Dean, TRAN, Bus Driver, 9-months, effective 10/31/18

Bedenbaugh, Kenneth, CO, Building Services Coordinator, 12-months, effective 11/16/18

Reappointments/Reclassifications Support Staff

Gajsiewicz, Gary, All, Full-Time Custodian/Painter, 12-months

Family and Medical Leave Support Staff

Avalos, Senaida, CO, Payroll, 12-months, effective 10/15/18 Intermittent

9.2 Gifts, Grants, Bequests: MB Financial-\$400, Johnson Controls-\$300, Scariano, Himes &

Petrarca-\$300, Whitt Law-\$500, donations to fund the Leadership Breakfast on November 14<sup>th</sup>

Motion by Egan, second by Nowak, to approve the above-listed, items 9.1-9.2. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Egan, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

#### **11. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON BOARD OF EDUCATION ACTION**

None.

#### **12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

*Policy Committee, Finance Committee, Boundary Task Force, Communications Task Force, Facilities Task Force, Technology Task Force, Joint PTO, Geneva Academic Foundation, Geneva All-Sports Boosters, Geneva Music Boosters, Geneva High School Theater Boosters, GEARS, K-12 Discipline Committee, Geneva Coalition for Youth, PRIDE, Fox Valley Career Center, IASB/Legislative, IASB Kishwaukee Governing Board*

The Board was informed after the last meeting that someone found the fact that the Board attends two dinners meetings a year, as part of our professional development, laughable. This was offensive. There is a strong culture in our district, as you heard from many of our teachers this evening, valuing education. This doesn't stop at the Board. This Friday is another opportunity for the Board to attend a day long training at a conference in Chicago. We schedule inhouse training during retreats several times a year, attend workshops and symposiums all over, and attend advocacy events at the State level. To your point about where is everybody to help improve and reform education in the State of Illinois, we can't believe that given how many people we can get to some of our meetings that we don't have more of them attending on a more regular basis. In addition to the required training that the Board is required to have, out of about 6,000 Board members in the State of Illinois, there are fewer than 150 that have been recognized by IASB for significant hours spent doing professional development. Three of them are sitting right here. This Board has been recognized time and time again for how well they function.

It was shared with the audience that when the Board knows there will be a big crowd, they will change the venue. It would be nice if those that attended tonight could attend more of our meetings when often there is no one there.

#### **13. NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **14. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER MATTERS PERTAINING TO COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATING MATTERS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC BODY AND ITS EMPLOYEES OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES [5 ILCS 120/(c)(2)]; STUDENT DISCIPLINARY CASES [5 ILCS 120/2(C)(9)]. (Bylaw 0167.2)**

At 9:21 p.m., motion by McCormick, second by Egan, to go into executive session to consider matters pertaining to collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives; student disciplinary cases. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Egan, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, and Grosso. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

At 10:41 p.m., the Board returned to open session.

#### **15. POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

##### **14.1 Disciplinary Action – Student A**

Motion by Stith, second by McCormick, to find Student A eligible for expulsion through the end of the 2019-2020 school year and to accept the Administration's recommendation that the student be placed in lieu of expulsion at an alternative educational setting and/or the MVSEC Safe School program for the same period of time, pending successful completion of that program. I also move that the Board

direct the Superintendent to draft a written expulsion decision documenting the Board's findings in closed session. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Egan, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:43 p.m., motion by Stith, second by Lamb, and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED November 29, 2018 \_\_\_\_\_ PRESIDENT  
(Date)

SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_ RECORDING  
SECRETARY