



**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 special session on Sunday, March 15, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. at the Coultrap Educational Services Center, 227 North Fourth Street, Geneva, Illinois.

**NOTICE AND AGENDA  
SPECIAL MEETING**

Sunday, March 15, 2020  
11:00 a.m. @

Coultrap Educational Services Center  
227 North Fourth Street, Geneva, IL

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- 1.1 Roll Call
- 1.2 Welcome
- 1.3 Pledge
- 1.4 Reminder to Sign Attendance Record

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Vice President Egan.

Board members present: Vice President Taylor Egan, Policy Committee Chair Leslie Juby, Finance Committee Chair Dave Lamb, Mike McCormick, Alicia Saxton, President Mark Grosso. Late: None. Absent: Larry Cabeen.

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

District staff present: Shonette Sims, Assistant Director for Learning & Teaching; Dr. Dean Romano, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services; Dr. Andy Barrett, Assistant Superintendent for Learning & Teaching; Dr. Adam Law, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services; Dr. Kent Mutchler, Superintendent.

Others: Brenda Schory.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**3. DISCUSSION & PLANNING OF COVID-19**

Dr. Mutchler thanked everyone for all their hard work in light of the recent events. Since the governor chose to close schools, it has taken a lot of control out of our hands. We had a lot of calls yesterday with different agencies regarding this. He spoke with ISBE this morning and went over talking points. We need to stay focused on the issues at hand. In an emergency, people have a lot on their minds. We are going to cover several topics to see where you want to go as a board in the following weeks with messages. We have also prepared a presentation, if you as a board would like to see it.

- 1. March 17-30 are defined as Act of God Days. This means employees will be paid as normal if they are on the payroll. There can be some variations based on agreements.

2. ISBE is recommending districts encourage the continuation of learning. E-learning will not count as learning, and Act of God Days will not be made up. The reason for this is equity, because not all districts are not set up to do remote learning.
3. They are not clear on special needs requirements and timelines on these issues or timelines for regular classes, Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act or other described timelines. Districts should make plans for keeping timelines and keeping students safe in residential placements. This could require getting students home on short notice, should those facilities close.
4. ISBE is recommending having administrators reporting to buildings daily if possible. This is a local decision.
5. More information will be forthcoming about holding Board meetings during Act of God Days. They are discouraging crowds and encouraging social distancing.
6. School buildings may be used for special purposes, including polling places or special meetings, even involving students. The only building that is set up to be a polling location is Western Avenue.
7. ISBE is encouraging meals for students in need, if possible, and as required under the federal food service program, which we are not part of.
8. These act of god days are counted under TRS, but we are unclear of IMRF.
9. We need to rely on information at the state level, because we are closed by the state.
10. Tomorrow will count and will be a school improvement day. We will be sharing information with our staff on ways to continue education for our students.

Dr. Barrett shared with staff on Friday a PowerPoint that he and Mrs. Sims narrated together, along with FAQ's about different options for remote learning. It's important to acknowledge with the Board and community, that we know that what happens in school cannot be replicated via remote learning. We need to maintain connection with students, need a sense of normalcy, provide intellectual engagement, and reinforce importance of school, learning and content. Everyone should make sure they are taking care of their own health. In this moment, all we can do is our best. Things are changing by the minute. What will make this the most successful is if we can all give each other a little grace. Our plan for our day of professional development tomorrow is focusing on tools and resources that teachers can use to connect with their students and support them to reach learning goals. We have a PowerPoint template to share with staff and a lot of discussion. The last thing we wanted to do is tell everyone here is something new you have to learn. Our professional development will focus on the tools we have and how teachers can use them. We have talked to this group a lot about online resources. We want to make sure that we follow the guidelines of not having too many people together tomorrow.

Dr. Mutchler shared that monitoring the groups to allow team collaboration is what we are really looking at. The Department of Education is going to have a website available for continuing education for anyone to access. We have different tools that are already out there that we will use. Dr. Barrett said the minute this all started, the teachers were already doing things and sharing resources. Staff is taking this on without being told.

Board comments, questions, concerns: Is there an initial thought on how this might look for K-8? (We have worked a lot with Mike Wilkes on how to get some of this information to our families. Technology can be a device to get information to our families but may not be where the remote learning is done.) Are there plans for the preschool? (Yes.) Is this remote learning like what homeschooled students do? (Somewhat. We recognize that the things kids get with their teachers and peers cannot be replicated, but we can maintain some normalcy.) With the importance of being in school, the only mental health services students get are in the schools, what about students that get services every day and how are we going to help them? (The mental health services are linked to our website. We don't have social workers working with families from a therapeutic standpoint. It's anything related to the school. The State defined these days as Act of God Days, which means that they need to continue with the therapy or counseling they receive outside of school, but we cannot expect our staff to be aware of non-school related issues.) What about students that don't have services outside of school? (We have resources on the webpage.) If there was a way to identify the children of the teachers, healthcare workers and first responders, do we have resources to tell them where to go to get childcare for their kids? (We don't have anything in place for this, but we could work on something for them to see if it's possible.) I realize this is

not our job, but we need to try to help them. ISBE also suggested that there be an administrator at each building, is that so that we can have food available? (We have been discussing this and we may distribute food from this building or alternate.) So, ISBE is saying e-learning is not a day of learning and that Act of God Days cannot be made up? (Correct. They are recommending we have something in place for learning. No days will be made up, because not every district is equipped to offer e-learning.) We are out two weeks? (For now. They will keep evaluating the situation.) Will we still end school on the same date? (Yes.) Free/reduced lunches, when will messaging be going out about this? (We will talk about this tomorrow and work with Sodexo.) There are businesses in the community that are offering free meals for kids during this time. So, it's safe to say that that we will be providing lunch to those in need? (Yes.) Thank you to all administrators who sat in on the COVID-19 Task Force. There is so much to do when closing a district. The remote learning is a huge piece of the puzzle. I feel good about where we are as a district. This is such a big cause for fear and concern, so keeping a lifeline between students and teachers is important. We need to reinforce this. The task force will continue to meet and talk with surrounding districts, but the State is really driving this. We will do what we can to keep things moving for students. There has been great collaboration as a district. Communication is very important so please keep the board informed.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

At 11:34 a.m., motion by McCormick second by Egan, and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED April 6, 2020 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ PRESIDENT

SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ RECORDING  
Bonnie Johnson SECRETARY