

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education
Community Unit School District #7
High School Cafeteria
612 Broadway Street
Gillespie, Illinois 62033
September 23, 2020**

President Hayes called the special meeting of Community Unit District #7 School Board to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Hatlee, present; Dobrino, present; Hayes, present; Schmidt, present; Tiburzi, present; Alepra, present; Carter, present

Superintendent Owsley, Principals Rosentreter, Cooper, and Sandretto attended the meeting. Micki Romanus, Amanda Yeager, Jennifer Brown, Officer Stinnett, Mike Bertagnolli, Rick Fulton, Adam Tallman, Theresa Carter, Jennifer Parker, Amy Gerdes, Jerry and Jody Reid, Frank Barrett, Jami Schmid, Dana Tieman, Lorraine Strutner, Melissa Bussmann, Tracy Petersen, Chris Best, Michelle Smith, Jodi Dunn, and Amber and Matt McDaniels also attended the meeting.

Motion made by Carter, seconded by Hatlee to approve the agenda as presented. Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes; Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, yes; Alepra, yes; Carter, yes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Hatlee, seconded by Alepra for Roll Call Vote to Adjourn to Closed Meeting at 6:02 p.m. for the following:

- A. Discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the District, pursuant to 105 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)
- B. Discussion of collective negotiation matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives pursuant to 105 ILCS 120/2 (c)(2)

Dobrino, yes; Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, yes; Alepra, yes; Carter, yes; Hatlee, yes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Carter, seconded by Alepra for Roll Call Vote to return to Open Session at 7:23 p.m. Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, yes; Alepra, yes; Carter, yes; Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes. Motion carried.

The Pledge of Allegiance was repeated.

President Hayes read CUSD #7 School Board Meeting Rules for public address and stated that the Board of Education follows Roberts Rules of Order.

Open Action

Motion made by Tiburzi, seconded by Dobrino to accept the retirement of Paraprofessional Sharon Heyen effective October 1, 2020, and post for the vacated position. Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, yes; Alepra, yes; Carter, yes; Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes; Hayes, yes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Carter, seconded by Schmidt to employ Amanda Manley as a 3-Hour Cafeteria Worker, pending certification and background check. Tiburzi, present; Alepra, yes; Carter, yes; Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes; Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes. Motion carried.

New Business

Regarding the Agenda Item of “Transition from Remote Learning to Hybrid learning Plan”, Superintendent Owsley read the following statement:

“After careful consideration, I’ve asked that the Board of Education, while not required, take formal action on a move from Remote Learning to our Hybrid Learning Plan. I am recommending that CUSD #7 open our buildings and begin our Hybrid Learning Plan beginning October 5th. This will allow time for parents to prepare their students to wear a mask, if they haven’t already done so, and to solidify day care if needed. This reinstatement of in-person learning will also re-instate athletics and all extra curriculars per IDPH and IHSA guidelines. As promised, Remote Learning will continue to be an option for those parents who do not feel as if it is time for their student to return. Teachers will be charged with the difficult task of teaching those who are in-person and those who choose to continue to learn remotely. The Administrative Team and the Board of Education understand what a monumental task this will be. We have absolutely no doubts we have the right people in place to make this happen.

During our period of Remote Learning I’ve heard parents who are struggling to educate their students and I’ve also heard from those who feel Remote Learning is doing amazing things for their child. Our goal has been and will always be to serve all our students. I would also like to caution all students and parents that the “school” that they will be returning to will look very different than the one they left. The scheduling of classes has changed, the way students will be allowed to transition from one class to the next has changed, and hallways will offer one-way traffic only; all in hopes of keeping our students safe. To remain consistent with guidelines issued by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health, all visitors, staff members, and students will be required to wear a mask while inside the school building and/or on the bus and at any other time when social distancing is not possible. These masks must securely cover the mouth and nose. Board Policy 4:180-AP1 spells out the consequences for anyone who refuses to wear a mask while inside of the building.

The decision to start the year remotely and to continue remotely has been asked to me many times. Simplicity can often be confused with a lack of transparency. CUSD #7 students have been learning remotely because it’s the safest method of learning for our students, staff, and community members. The district did not want to pick and choose which IDPH guidelines they were going to follow and which ones they’d simply ignore.

As we move toward our Hybrid Plan I want to make it clear that everyone should remain ready to transition back to Remote Learning at a moment’s notice. We’ve seen this need from our neighboring districts. This could be caused by an outbreak (defined as two or more positive cases in one class), a high percentage of our students and/or staff having to be quarantined, or simply not having enough substitutes to cover our classes.

The ability to remain in person will depend on everyone within our community. We ask that you continue to wear a mask, social distance to the best of your ability, and if you are sick or are exhibiting symptoms we ask that you stay home. CUSD #7 will continue to follow IDPH guidelines; if a student is ill or has symptoms they will be sent home, as will any other students who reside with them. The student's ability to return to school will be based solely on the IDPH exclusion chart that can be found on the district’s website. According to this chart, if your child has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, congestion/runny nose, loss of sense of taste or smell, nausea, fatigue, muscle or body aches they will be sent home. Any of these symptoms alone will require that the child and anyone who lives with them to be sent home. They may not return to school until they have a negative COVID-19 test and their symptoms have improved, have an alternate diagnosis from a doctor and their symptoms have improved, or they must remain home for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and be fever free for 24 hours. If a person is within close contact of a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case, they must stay home for 14 calendar days after the last exposure to the COVID-19 case.

As previously stated, COVID-19 is going to be an ongoing issue for all school districts in our country. I want to thank everyone for their concerns, well-wishes, and suggestions as we navigate through this issue together. The safety of our students, staff, and community members will continue to be our focus. We all look forward to the seeing our Tigers, Indians, and Miners back in our buildings on the 5th!”

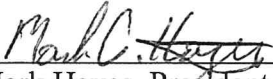
Motion made by Schmidt, seconded by Carter to transition from Remote Learning to Hybrid learning Plan. Alepra, yes; Carter, yes; Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes; Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, no. Motion carried.

Superintendent Owsley stated, “Because we know there will be many questions regarding our return to in-person learning the Administrative Team, building nurses, and Leaders of our teachers’ union have begun creating an informational packet for all district parents. This packet will include the IDPH Exclusion chart, information from our building nurses, information about the self-certification process, what a normal day for an in-person and remote learner will look like, safety protocols and guidelines that will be followed, an expectation chart for students/parents/staff, protocol for returning to remote learning if needed, and a frequently asked questions section. It is our goal to have this information available to parents to pick up on September 30th.”

Amanda Yeager addressed the Board to thank them for returning back to in-person schooling.

Jerry Reid addressed the Board thanking them for allowing him to address them. He explained that he has one child this is doing fine with remote learning and one child that is struggling with remote learning. He stated that he did not like that he was not allowed to make the decision for remote learning.

Motion made by Carter, seconded by Hayes to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m. Carter, yes; Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes; Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, yes; Alepra, yes. Motion carried.



Mark Hayes, President



William J. Carter Jr., Secretary