

**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 9, 2020**

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

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

Superintendent Owsley, Principals Rosentreter, Cooper, and Sandretto attended the meeting. Micki Romanus, Amanda Yeager, Casey Sholtis, Dave Ambrose, Daniel Winningham, Officer Stinnett, Mike Bertagnolli, Tracy Moore, Jenny Hailstone, Keri Kaylor, Ruth Gill, Adam Tallman, and Tracy Petersen also attended the meeting.

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

Motion made by Dobrino, seconded by Schmidt for Roll Call Vote to Adjourn to Closed Meeting at 6:01 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, absent; Alepra, yes; Carter, absent; Hatlee, absent. Motion carried.

Secretary Carter and Member Hatlee joined the meeting remotely at 6:02 p.m.

Motion made by Dobrino, seconded by Schmidt for Roll Call Vote to return to Open Session at 7:37 p.m. Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, absent; Alepra, yes; Carter, yes; Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes. Motion carried.

The Pledge of Allegiance was repeated.

Recognition of Public

Amanda Yeager addressed the Board regarding the opening of school, school administrator, and grades. Mrs. Yaeger gave a packet of paperwork to the Board to be entered in the file. She read a statement which included stating that she has 4 children in the district, praised the teachers, but wants in person learning so professionals can teach. She does not like the zoom and computer learning. She compared District 7 to Edwardsville stating that they are a much larger school than ours and they are open when we are not. President Hayes responded that the Board is taking her request under advisement.

Tracy Moore addressed the Board regarding her special needs student. Mrs. Moore and her husband both work and her son has an IEP that contains the special education he is not getting with remote learning. She was asking for help, maybe a tutor, or what can be done as she is not able to teach a special needs student.

Jenny Hailstone addressed the Board to comment on their decision. However, the Board had not given any new decision at this time. They will discuss remote learning/in-person learning during New Business agenda item. She stated that she sees other students from other schools getting to participate in things and ours are not. She asked: Is there a task force? Did the Board take into consideration how other schools that are in session are doing? She stated that we are under the 8% Guidelines from the Health Department. She wants students to be able to participate in sports.

Keri Kaylor addressed the Board regarding why there is not an Alert Now to notify of a Special board meeting. She asked about books because her son only was given one. She questioned the number of minutes teachers spend online with students per class. Principal Rosentreter answered that question stating that the minutes are between 15 and 30 as it is not recommended to keep a student's attention online for 60 minutes.

Ruth Gill addressed the Board regarding her daughter's depression and anorexia she is dealing with not being able to be with her friends, etc. Her daughter needs the social contact. She also needs the face to face education.

Union Report

Casey Sholtis gave the Union Report which was to thank the Tech Department for all the help with Remote Learning.

New Business

Superintendent Owsley read the following letter in answer to the evaluation of Remote Learning vs. In-Person Instruction:

As promised, members of the CUSD#7 School board and Administrative Team have come together to re-evaluate the district's decision to begin the school year remotely. On August 11th, what was to be the first day of school, our district had 43 positive COVID-19 cases within the 62033 and 62009 zip code. As of September 6th, this number has risen to 86 confirmed cases. The doubling of cases took place while students were not in attendance. We've seen several area schools return to in-person instruction with many of them having to shut down for exposures or positive tests. Area schools are also sending many students home for being "symptomatic"; one district described it as "hundreds" while trying to best follow the guidelines of the IDPH.

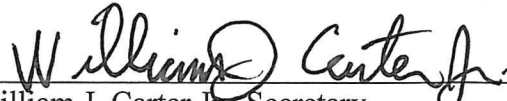
While remote learning is not perfect it is consistent. The board of Education and the Administrative team believe the consistency being provided by remote learning is far more effective than an in-person plan where students will be brought in to school and pulled out of school on a regular basis. We also believe this consistency makes it easier on our families when trying to handle day care needs for their children.

The district fully understands that COVID-19 will be an ongoing concern for the remainder of the school year. The district also fully understands that students will need to return to in-person learning at some point during the year. The Board of Education and Administrative team would like to see a "leveling off" or a decrease in positive cases within our district. The district would like to explore a possible return to in-person learning in early October. As has always been the case, we will continue to monitor COVID-19 numbers within the district, consult with the MCPHD, and listen to stakeholders within our district. The safety of our students, staff, and families will continue to drive our decisions. We will continue to monitor the situation on a regular basis and are anxious to get our students back into our buildings.

Motion made by Alepra, seconded by Hayes to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. Hatlee, yes; Dobrino, yes; Hayes, yes; Schmidt, yes; Tiburzi, absent; Alepra, yes; Carter, yes. Motion carried.



Mark Hayes, President



William J. Carter Jr., Secretary