

DECEMBER 21, 2023 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Pledge of Allegiance

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda of the December 21, 2023, board meeting was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Regular Board meeting of December 7, 2023 were approved as presented.

Reports: Superintendent – Mr. Timothy Brown

1. Mr. Brown thanked all the teachers and staff for all their hard work during the successful first semester. Mr. Brown also expressed his appreciation to the cafeteria staff, administrators, and Board Members for the Staff Appreciation Breakfast this morning. With the recent release of the state report on cursive handwriting instruction, Mr. Brown provided a summary of those area schools currently teaching cursive handwriting. Mr. Schwartz will be forming a study committee next semester to consider adding cursive handwriting instruction next school year. A recommendation will be provided to the Board.
2. Mr. Brown informed the Board that Cowan will receive an Early Literacy Achievement Grant in the amount of \$3,969.50. This grant is designed to reward schools and teachers for improving students' foundational reading skills, as documented by IREAD-3 data. The funds can only be paid to staff responsible for the delivery of literacy and reading instruction through grade three. This money will likely be distributed to those staff members next month.
3. Mr. Brown let the Board know that we are still waiting on our final budget order for 2024. The projected tax rate is \$1.0365. Mr. Brown reviewed tax rates for the last ten years as we consider future projects.
4. Mr. Brown showed the Board a proposed layout for the Culinary Arts classroom at the high school. The design and engineering agreement with Barton Coe Vilamaa for this space is up for approval later in the meeting. Prior to starting the project, a preliminary plumbing system check will be conducted over the holiday break. The Board also discussed potential timetables for future projects.
5. Mr. Brown and the Board reviewed our policies for the 2024 property and casualty insurance and went over the increase in cost from 2023.
6. Mr. Brown reminded the Board that the travel and meal reimbursement policy, reviewed at the last board meeting, is up for approval later in the agenda. After approval from the Board, this information will be put with our professional development form.
7. Mr. Brown and the Board went over the first reading of a special policy update from Neola. The Board participated in specific policy decision-making. These policies will be up for a second reading and approval at the next board meeting.
8. Mr. Brown reviewed the proposed 2024-2025 school calendar and shared that potential approval was later in the agenda. Pending IDOE approval, Cowan will have six scheduled two-hour delay days in the calendar for staff professional development.
9. Professional leave requests approved by the Superintendent as of Tuesday, December 19, 2023, were presented.

Opportunity for Public Comments

(No negative comments toward Corporation employees are permitted during the public meeting. Alleged misconduct by a Corporation employee is to be addressed in an Executive session of the Board following meeting with appropriate members of the Administration.)

None

Business Office Recommendations

Treasurer's Report and Approval of Claim Docket

The claims #23691 to #23746 and the payroll of December 8, 2023 as listed in Appendix #2317 were approved for payment.

The Board approved the architectural and engineering agreement with Barton Coe Vilamaa as outlined in Appendix #2318.

The Board approved the order for a new pitching machine for the baseball team as shared in Appendix #2319.

Donations

The Board accepted the donations received by the corporation as listed in Appendix #2320.

Personnel

Resignation

The Board accepted the resignation of Lesleigh Denniston as an Elementary Teacher effective December 22, 2023.

The Board approved the resignation of Katie Monroe as an Instructional Aide/Technology Aide at the Jr/Sr High School effective December 21, 2023.

The Board approved the cancellation of the Winter Guard Program due to lack of student interest.

Employment

The Board approved Brandie Wilber as an Elementary Custodian.

The Board approved Hannah Owen as the Elementary Math Bowl coach for the 2023-24 school year.

Volunteer

The Board approved Tommie Humbert as a volunteer basketball coach for our 5th and 6th grade girls' basketball teams.

Policy Update

The Board approved the Travel and Meal Reimbursement Policy as presented in Appendix #2321.

Calendar Approval

The Board approved the 2024-2025 school calendar as presented in Appendix #2322.

Overnight Trip

The Board approved an overnight stay in Rochester, Indiana for our wrestling team to attend team state on Friday, January 5, 2024.

Opportunity for Board Communication:

Mr. Alan Wright thanked Mr. Brown for his opening day message about everyone being held accountable in the school corporation. This is making a difference. Mr. Wright also thanked Mr. Paul Hansard for his work to ensure the safety of our students with the semis along the road in Oakville.

Mrs. Kim Campbell thanked the cafeteria staff and administration for all their work on the staff appreciation breakfast this morning. Everyone seemed to enjoy it!

Adjournment

The December 21, 2023 regular board meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.