

BETTENDORF COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BETTENDORF, IOWA

Unofficial Minutes of the December 7, 2020, Regular Meeting
of the Board of Education
(pending Board approval)

1. Call to Order.

The Board of Directors of the Bettendorf Community School District, in the County of Scott, State of Iowa, met in open session according to Iowa law for their regular Board meeting at the Administration Center, 3311 18th Street, Bettendorf, Iowa, on December 7, 2020. President Rebecca Eastman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and the Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Colleen Skolrood, Board Secretary, verified that the meeting notice had been posted and mailed to the media as required by law.

Members present: Directors Castro, Champion, Doerder, Eastman, Holland, Lynch, Pyevich
Members absent: None

Other officials present: Dr. Michelle Morse, Superintendent; Brietta Collier, Director of Finance; Jill Matherly, Director of Human Resources; Celeste Miller, Director of Communications; Dave Hlas, Director of Student Services; Curt Pratt, Director of Operations; Jillian Dotson, Director of Curriculum Instruction; Tammy Chelf, Thomas Edison Student Services Coordinator; Lisa Reid, MS Principal; Jayme Olson, NA Principal; Brian Walthart, PN Principal; David Farmer, Treasurer; Mary Heeringa, BEA Representative; Ethan Geifman, Student Representative; Colleen Skolrood, Board Secretary.

2. Approve the Agenda.

Motion by Director Holland, seconded by Director Lynch, to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: 7 Directors Castro, Champion, Doerder, Eastman, Holland, Lynch, Pyevich

Nays: 0

Motion carried 7-0

3. Communication.

3.01 **President's Statement.** Any member of the audience may address the board with comments about items of interest or concern. Please state your name and address and please limit your comments to three minutes. Iowa law prohibits discussing specific employees or their job performance. Please refer to policy 213.E1 - Public Input At Board Meetings.

President Eastman read the following letters that were e-mailed to Celeste Miller from BCSD parents:

1. My name is Scott Schalk. I am the school counselor at Hoover and have 3 sons in the district. I would like to advocate for staying in the hybrid learning model for 3rd quarter. The analogy I see is when we implement behavioral interventions at school. Often at the first signs of success with an intervention we start to think "hey this is working well!" and unfortunately start to become lax in our implementation of the very things that are causing us to have success. Inevitably the problem behaviors start to re-surface and we ask ourselves, "What's the deal here?". Well the problem is nearly always that we have pulled the rug out from under ourselves too early and we

must go back to implementing the intervention with more fidelity in order to regain the progress we were seeing before. The hybrid model IS the intervention and it IS working, thus I believe we should continue implementing it as is to continue to reap its benefits. Thank you."

2. Melissa Zumdom, 3328 S. Hampton Dr., Bettendorf. My kids need to be in school. 100% of the time. Homeschooling has not been successful. Parents cannot keep doing this.
3. Jennifer Beecher, 4614 Amesbury Drive, Davenport. I am writing in regards to the upcoming Return to Learn planning for the 3rd quarter. I would like to see all students return to 100% in school learning. The reasoning for this is that by the school district's authority and guidance, this should be a logical decision. Per the previous meeting it was presented that:

- Covid is not being transmitted through the school setting
- There is a socio-economic disadvantage in the current learning arrangement

Additionally multiple sources are now finding that student learning is declining. As the previous weeks have shown, should there be an increase in absenteeism for students or staff, planning could be done to resort back to the hybrid or online models.

While families are struggling, students are also being failed by this system. Having challenging courses, such as foreign languages, with minimal instruction makes success difficult when students have not been prepared for the additional effort it takes to succeed in such a format. Students do not understand what is missed on their assignments, system issues show completed assignments missing or late, and managing schedules is difficult. Furthermore, students who previously were successful are becoming disengaged due to these struggles.

Regardless of the learning environment, students and adults are continuing to congregate outside of school if they wish to do so. While 8 hours per day may be controlled, the rest of the time parents will decide the degree of isolation for their family. If parents feel their home is safer and more educational, they can continue to keep their children at home.

Please allow parents to make the decision for themselves and allow for children to return to school 100% where they can best be educated.

4. Mike & Laurie Harrison, 2609 Avalon Drive, Bettendorf. My wife and I would like to pass on our concerns to the board as they vote on the learning model for the 3rd quarter. We have two high school daughters and are highly in favor of continuing the hybrid model for the 3rd quarter. Both of us are involved in the education field and have seen first hand the dangers of this pandemic. My wife is an academic advisor at St. Ambrose and I am an elementary teacher in the Davenport district.

Returning to 100% in person learning for the 3rd quarter does not seem to be a wise option. With the holidays approaching, there most likely will be an increase in the positivity rate again and we don't see how the students and staff could social distance properly with everyone in the building at the same time. Waiting for the 4th quarter

would allow for the holiday spike in positivity to decrease and allow for some individuals to possibly receive the vaccination.

One of our daughters is a senior and we would love to have her back full time to enjoy the full extent of her senior year but not at the expense of the health of herself and family.

Thank you for listening to our concerns.

5. Conrad Keibler, *4522 Stone Haven Drive, Bettendorf*. I have kids at Paul Norton and Bettendorf Middle School. I am writing you today to share my concerns regarding your discussion tonight on what learning model will be implemented in the district for third quarter. As we enter the second week after the Thanksgiving holiday, we don't yet know what the impact on the community will be from travel and gatherings that happened.

As a district you had Dr. Katz present to the board previously and he stated that having students in school was best for them, especially when social distancing was able to be maintained. With this in mind, I hope that you will continue with the hybrid model as it allows students, teachers, and staff to be the safest they can be, while engaging students socially and keeping them attached to the physical school environment. Bringing students back 100% does not allow for the mitigation strategies that have kept students and staff healthy thus far. As we approach the end of 1st semester changing what has been working does not feel like the best choice for the Bettendorf school community. I recognize that this is a hard decision and one that has strong feelings on both sides. I hope that fourth quarter allows us to follow science and health department recommendations and return fully in person, which would be a reason to celebrate.

6. Kurtis H., *2305 Westberry Court Bettendorf*. In my personal opinion, I don't agree with going 100% in person during third quarter. 19% of the Scott county population is positive (which is debatably more than less because of the holiday grace period of no testing.) and Bettendorf High School is thinking of going 100%?! These are peoples lives on the line and you're doing this for what? I've never seen such blatant disregard for public health. My mother works in home health and has watched people suffer for months due to the ignorance of these kinds of decisions. I find it ridiculous that we're even in school let alone continuing athletic activity. I hope you take this message into consideration and take it into account during this upcoming meeting

Have a wonderful afternoon.

7. Tracy Book, *1815 Elmwood Ln, Bettendorf*. I am sorry to say I am working and not able to attend the meeting tonight! I hope I have expressed my feelings about the importance of returning to school for our kids!

I feel that we all should have the choice of how to raise and parent our children. I feel that it's very appropriate for parents, particularly in this climate, to choose how we protect our children and families. I think there are those of us that are seeing this virus and it's spread from a very different point of view. Myself and my coworkers and friends have been on the front lines of COVID since March. We have seen

people become quite ill and as well, we have seen a large portion of people (98%) recover. I am not heartless, I am a realist. I fear that we are doing grave damage to our children's education, academic and emotional well-being. The vast majority of students are not "exposed less" by staying home from school... in fact they are probably being exposed more, and in more varied ways. Parents are being forced to leave their kids home alone... or taking them to friends or families homes... we have all seen the news clips of kids doing school work on restaurants, or worse, not doing it at all! When we ask to make a choice about our children's education and to speak out for those that do not feel they have a voice or choice, I feel that I have to take this opportunity to speak for the kids and parents that can't or won't. I have heard loud noise and aggressive words from a group of parents that not only wish to make choices for their children, but wish to question my parenting choices, what I know to be true from 9 plus months of patient care in the hospital with COVID and make sweeping statements and suggest decisions about my child's educational opportunities. I have read, specifically, that this group of "home school parents" plan to speak up that, in spite of their choice to keep their kids home, they believe school should remain closed for those who wish to attend. Please explain to me how this is their business? If parents wish to make a choice to keep their children home, then we, too should have the choice to send our kids to school. Please know we are making informed decisions and want only the best for our kids. And for me, and many people I know, school (full time school, to be honest) is best!!

Thank you for doing what's right for our kids!!

- 3.02 **Board Shared Communication.** Director Holland thanked parents for taking the time to fill out the Return to Learn Survey in hopes that they might be heard.

Director Lynch reported the IASB Delegate Assembly approved five legislative priorities for the upcoming session. They are preschool, mental health, school funding policy, supplemental state aid, and COVID-19 remediation.

Director Castro noted 79 years ago Japan attacked Pearl Harbor launching us into World War II.

President Eastman encouraged all those who have not been on the district's YouTube channel to take the time to watch the videos and see all the amazing things taking place despite all the COVID chaos around us.

- 3.03 **Superintendent's Report.** Dr. Morse thanked staff, parents and guardians for all they have done these last couple of weeks in remote learning. She thanked staff for their flexibility and creativity as we shifted from hybrid to remote learning. The district is returning to the hybrid learning model on Thursday, December 10.

We will formally recognize this student in our upcoming board meeting, but Patrick Hurd, a junior at Bettendorf High School, is one of thirteen students across the nation selected to participate in the Summit for a More Equitable and Just Tomorrow.

- 3.04 **Director of Finance Report.** Brie thanked the Bettendorf Community Schools Foundation partner. At their meeting last week, they awarded over \$4,000 to several of our district buildings. In addition, a Facebook fundraiser that directly affects the

Foundation is going on right now. It is a great cause to support.

- 3.05 **BEA Report.** Mary Heeringa said they held their monthly BEA meeting. They are excited to have three BEA members helping in our District Staff Oversight Committee.

While there continues to be worries about the high positivity rate in our county, staff is looking forward to seeing our students back in a hybrid setting on Thursday. She said today's positivity rate is more than double what it was on October 5 when the decision was made to remain in a hybrid model for second quarter. The BEA recommends continuing with the hybrid model for all grades for the third quarter. She said they want the students back, but we have to do it safely.

- 3.06 **BESA Report.** Melissa wanted to thank paraeducators and secretaries for all their dedication and flexibility. She said it has not always been easy, but they continue to work together.

She noted that the district went to 100% online due to an inability to adequately cover our staff who were out sick. She invited members of the community to apply to be guest staff as an additional support.

- 3.07 **Student Board Representative's Report.** Ethan Geifman thanked all the teachers for doing their best in the online learning model. He said most students are excited to go back to school in the hybrid model.

- 3.08 **BHS STUCO Donates \$10,000 to Riverbend Foodbank.** This year the Riverbend Foodbank had to cancel the usual Student Hunger Drive due to the pandemic. Our students never skipped a beat and knew that they still wanted to help whether they had the competition and recognition or not. They spent weeks soliciting at Hy-vee, have collected donations from family members, and organized a donation drop off at the school. They plan to continue collecting donations for this cause, but we are proud to say that we are able to write a \$10,000 check to the Riverbend Foodbank for the holidays.

4. Consent Agenda.

Motion by Director Holland, seconded by Director Champion, to approve the consent agenda as printed.

Ayes: 7 Directors Champion, Doerder, Eastman, Holland, Lynch, Pyevich, Castro

Nays: 0

Motion carried 7-0

- 4.01 Approval of November 16, 2020 Annual Board Meeting Minutes and November 16, 2020 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- 4.02 Approval of December 7, 2020 Bills Recommended for Payment
- 4.03 Approval of Administrative Recommendations – Personnel
Certified Approval to Hire
Pallavi Dadhwal/GW/3rd grade/1.0 FTE/BA,0/ \$19,772 prorated from 1/6/2021/
Pending licensure and verification/Replacing Andrew Sass/Effective 1/6/2021
- 4.04 Approval of BHS 2nd Quarter Early Graduates
- 4.05 Approval of the Arconic Donation of \$7500.00 for 4th-grade science kits from Arconic

- 4.06 Approval of a Donation from the Bettendorf Lil Dawgs Softball of \$2600.00 to our Bettendorf High School Softball team.
- 4.07 Open Enrollment Requests (Info Only)
FOR INFORMATION ONLY. The following students have been approved for open enrollment.
Into Bettendorf
1 - from Pleasant Valley
2 - from Davenport

5. Informational/Action Items.

- 5.01 **At-Risk Program Update and Budget.** Tammy Chelf, Program Administrator, gave an update on At- Risk Programming. Brie Collier, Director of Finance, discussed the Modified Supplemental Amount.

ACTION: Motion by Director Holland, seconded by Director Doerder, to approve the 2021-2022 At-Risk Budget as presented.

Ayes: 7 Directors Doerder, Eastman, Holland, Lynch, Pyevich, Castro, Champion
Nays: 0
Motion carried 7-0

- 5.02 **Policies.** Jill Matherly gave an update on the board policies listed below. The changes made were minor per IASB recommendations.

- Policy 412.1, Classified Employee Compensation
- Policy 412.2, Classified Wage and Overtime Compensation
- Policy 412.4, Classified Employee Tax Shelter Programs
- Policy 413.1, Classified Employee Resignation
- Policy 413.2, Classified Employee Retirement
- Policy 413.3, Classified Employee Suspension
- Policy 413.4, Classified Employee Dismissal
- Policy 413.5, Classified Employee Reduction in Force
- Policy 413.5, Classified Guest Employee

ACTION: Motion by Director Holland, seconded by Director Pyevich, to approve the policies as presented.

Ayes: 7 Directors Eastman, Holland, Lynch, Pyevich, Castro, Champion, Doerder
Nays: 0
Motion carried 7-0

- 5.03 **Herbert Hoover Schematic Design.** Curt Pratt, Director of Operations, shared the schematic design for Herbert Hoover's secure entrance and office addition and building renovation with the addition of three classrooms.

ACTION: Motion by Director Holland, seconded by Director Lynch, to approve the Herbert Hoover Schematic Design as presented.

Ayes: 7 Directors Holland, Lynch, Pyevich, Castro, Champion, Doerder, Eastman

Nays: 0
Motion carried 7-0

- 5.04 **Honors Math Committee Update.** The Honor Math Committee formulated four different program options. The Committee's consensus was to go with option #2. This option will maintain honors math at grades 6, 7 and 8 and accelerate four years of math standards across three years of honors math courses.

This option will allow parents and students to self-select honors option. The Committee will:

- Host informational meetings
- Clarify the honors program and expectations
- Provide parents information to help them make an informed decision
- Monitor student progress and suggest changes as necessary

- 5.05 **Revenue Purpose Statement.** Iowa School districts must have voter approval of a revenue purpose statement stating how funds will be used in their district beyond the term of the current law. If not renewed, the district must reduce any debt service levy, reduce any Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL), reduce any Public Education and Recreation Levy (PERL), and THEN the district could use funds for school infrastructure and any lawful State Penny purpose.

The renewal allows the district to more effectively generate long-range facilities plans, borrow against future sales tax revenues over a longer timeframe (if necessary) and share costs of the Special Election with other districts.

This is NOT a property tax or increase in taxes to our community but a distinction of how we intend to spend the tax already collected through the state one cent sales tax.

- 5.06 **Return to Learn Planning Update.** Dr. Morse noted the goal for the Return to Learn plan was to deliver a comprehensive learning and instructional model that will ensure the health and safety of our students and staff during the 2020-2021 school and keep our schools open. Our priorities are high quality educational programs, student and staff health and safety and being able to stay open.

Dr. Morse reviewed the 3rd quarter survey results. With an 18.6% positivity rate, according to the Iowa Department of Education's Reopening Plan for schools, we have moved from the substantial uncontrolled zone to the substantial controlled zone for safely reopening schools. Over the last week, Dr. Morse has held forums with staff, talked to parents, students and Dr. Katz.

Dr. Morse is recommending the district remain in the hybrid learning model for 3rd quarter with a 100% online option for families who do not want to participate in the hybrid learning model. In our Pre-K-5th grades we will continue to bring our most at-risk students back additional days. Administrators will continue to re-evaluate the possibility of bringing all Pre-K-5th grade students back in early to mid-February.

ACTION: Motion by Director Holland, seconded by Director Pyevich, to approve the Superintendent's recommendation of adopting a hybrid model for 3rd Quarter as well as offering a fully remote option with the following amendments:

- Pre-K-2nd grades to return on January 4, 2021 100% in person
- Grades 3-5 shall return on January 19, 2021 so long as staffing continues to be available
- Grades 6-8 shall return on February 1, 2021 so long as staffing continues to be available
- Grades 9-12 shall return on February 16, 2021 so long as staffing continues to be available
- Anyone not comfortable with 100% in person attendance will have the online option available

Ayes: 3 Directors Castro, Pyevich, Holland
Nays: 4 Directors Doerder, Lynch, Champion, Eastman
Motion denied 3-4

ACTION: Motion by Director Lynch, seconded by Director Champion, to approve the 3rd Quarter Return To Learn Plan as presented.

Ayes: 4 Directors Doerder, Lynch, Champion, Eastman
Nays: 3 Directors Castro, Pyevich, Holland
Motion carried 4-3

Director Castro said he feels like our district is an outlier and we have examples of kids being back in school. He is also worried about the mental health of our students.

6. Future Events and Informational Items.

- January 4, 2021, BOE meeting, 6:00 pm
- January 19, 2021, BOE meeting, 6:00 pm
- February 1, 2021, BOE meeting, 6:00 pm

7. Adjournment.

Director Castro motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Rebecca Eastman, President

ATTEST:

Colleen Skolrood, Secretary