

BETTENDORF COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**BETTENDORF, IOWA**

Unofficial Minutes of the February 4, 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 February 4, 2020. President Adam Holland 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: Mike Raso, Superintendent; Brietta Collier, Director of Finance; Celeste Miller, Director of Communications; Dave Hlas, Director of Special Services; Curt Pratt, Director of Operations; Jillian Dotson, Director of Curriculum; Sean McGinn, Director of Technology; Karen Allison, HH Principal; Caroline Olson, MT Principal; John Cain, GW Principal; Jayme Olson, NA Principal; David Farmer, Treasurer; Mary Heeringa, BEA Representative; Emma Teach, Student Representative; Colleen Skolrood, Board Secretary.

2. Agenda Approval.

Motion by Director Castro, seconded by Director Champion, to approve the agenda as presented.

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

Nays: 0

Motion carried 7-0

3. Commendations & Special Invited Guests.

3.01 Grant Wood Staff: Principal, John Cain along with Heather McCoy, Jordann Lehman, Deb Drobushovich, Stephanie Cleveland and Deb Daniels shared the purpose of their 2020 Grant Wood PLC summit team trip to Phoenix, AZ.

3.02 Inquiry Institute Presentation - 5th Grade Herbert Hoover Teachers attended Curiosity Across the Curriculum in Charleston, SC in January and shared what they learned.

3.03 Before and After School Programming. Grant Wood, Neil Armstrong and Mark Twain presented information on their before and after school programs.

3.04 First State Female Wrestling Championship. Congratulations to Ella Schmit on winning the school's first state female wrestling championship. Ella took 1st place at the Iowa High School girl's state meet on Saturday, January 25th.

4. Comments & Suggestions from Audience.

4.01 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.

Minde Ward, 2525 E. Crest Ave., Bettendorf, addressed the board regarding the Bettendorf High School Principal. She asked the board to take harsh disciplinary action given that this has become a growing problem.

5. Consent Agenda.

Motion by Director Lynch, 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

5.01 Approval of January 21, 2020 Regular Board Minutes, January 22, 2020 Board Workshop Minutes and January 23, 2020 Disciplinary Hearing Minutes

5.02 Approval of February 4, 2020 Bills recommended for Payment

5.03 Approval of Administrative Recommendations – Personnel

Classified Early Retirement

**Vera Betts**/BHS/Secretary B/Effective 06/30/20

**Kevin Caldwell**/BMS/Custodian Supervisor/Effective 06/30/20

**Julie Cowley**/BMS/Paraeducator/Effective 06/30/20

**Cindy Franklin**/BMS/Secretary A/Effective 06/30/20

**Terry Goodall**/BHS/Secretary A/Effective 06/30/20

**Joan Honson**/BHS/Paraeducator/Effective 06/30/20

**Cindy Kothenbeutel**/Admin/Administrative Assistant/06/30/20

**Dean McCrea**/BMS/Custodian/Effective 06/30/20

**Joyce McCutcheon**/MT/Paraeducator/Effective 06/30/20

**Betsy Messmer**/BMS/Secretary A/Effective 06/30/20

Kathy Ouellette/BHS/Secretary A/Effective 06/30/20

Danell Randall/Admin/Administrative Assistant/06/30/20

**Classified Resignation**

**Rosa Anderson**/Admin/Administrative Assistant-Accounts Payable/Effective 02/04/20

**Cheryl Hageman**/Operations/Bus Driver/Effective 01/22/20

Classified Letter of Assignment Modification

**Haley Bierman-Holloway**/MT/Paraeducator/Same rate of pay/From 3.0 to 4.0 hours per day/Student Need/Effective 02/05/20

Classified Recommendation to Hire

**Carlos Cedeno-Perez**/GW/Youth Mentor/\$15.71 per hour/5.75 hours per week/New Program/Effective 01/21/20

**Jessica Walker**/BMS/Paraeducator/\$16.74 per hour/5.75 hours per day/Replacing Hailey Laughlin/Effective 02/05/20

**Kristine Wilkins**/HH/Paraeducator/\$16.74 per hour/3.0 hours per day/New Position-Overage/Effective 02/05/20

Certified Early Retirement

**Jay Fitzgerald**/BHS/Physical Education/Effective 6/30/20

**Connie King**/BHS/Language Arts/Effective 6/30/20

**J. Craig Lennon**/BMS/Art/Effective 6/30/20

**Diane Lichtenberg**/BHS/Physical Education/Effective 6/30/20

**John Miller/NA/Physical Education/Effective 6/30/20**

**Patricia Topping/NA/2nd Grade/Effective 6/30/20**

**Judith Wade/BMS/Family and Consumer Science/Effective 6/30/20**

Certified Approval to Hire

**Robert Gill, Jr/BHS/Physical Education/1.0 FTE/BA+30,13/\$31,874/ 84 day contract/Open long-term position/Effective 2/3/20**

Schedule D Resignation

**Jay Fitzgerald/BHS/Lunchroom Supervision/Effective 6/30/20**

**Connie King/BHS/Yearbook Sponsor/Effective 6/30/20**

**Connie King/BHS/Newspaper Sponsor/Effective 6/30/20**

**J. Craig Lennon/BMS/Club Sponsor, Art/Effective 6/30/20**

**J. Craig Lennon/BMS/Team Leader, Allied Arts/Effective 6/30/20**

**Diane Lichtenberg/BHS/Team Leader, PE/Effective 6/30/20**

**Diane Lichtenberg/BHS/Head Varsity Volleyball Coach/Effective 6/30/20**

**John Miller/NA/5th Grade Intramural Coach/Effective 6/30/20**

5.04 Approval of BHS 2nd Quarter Early Graduate (Additions)

Allen Douglas and Cole Van Wychen

5.05 Approval of Requests for Open Enrollment

FOR INFORMATION ONLY. The following students have been approved for open enrollment.

Into Bettendorf, 19/20

Alana Farrey, grade 7, sibling (PV)

Aiden Sheldon, grade 8, continuation (Dav)

Colten Sheldon, grade 6, continuation (Dav)

Out of Bettendorf, 19/20

Londen Clay, grade 1, continuation (Dav)

Mylie Fay, grade 6, good cause (PV)

Jett Herrera, grade 10, new move (PV)

Kalo Watson, grade 2, continuation (Dav)

6. Shared Communication & Committee Reports.

6.01 Board Shared Communication & Committee Reports.

Director Castro attended the STEM Expo at Bettendorf Middle School and said it was really impressive. He also noted the retirement of six teachers and said that kind of experience is hard to replace. He recommended doing exit interviews with each one.

Director Doerder toured Bettendorf Middle School and gained a better understanding of how things work there. She attended a ParentLink meeting and received good feedback from the parents who were in attendance. She also attended the local legislative forum where she advocated for education funding, special education funding, and calendar start date. The Wellness Committee will be meeting next week. She encouraged anyone who has ideas on ways to promote health and wellness to email her. Lastly, she noted it is Through with Chew Week in the State of Iowa.

Vice President Champion attended the STEM Expo at Bettendorf Middle School. He also visited the high school for a general facility tour and encouraged board members to do the same. He noted there are a lot of areas in the building that are getting old and in need of repairs. One thing he noticed on his walk through was that there were no students walking

around without passes and said it appears the allocation of the extra security guard is working. He attended Annie, which was put on by BMS students, and said they did a great job. He reported the Policy Committee met last Monday. They are going to put a pause on policies for a month or two because there is a lot going on in the district and they would like all necessary stakeholders to be involved.

Director Lynch attended the STEM Expo at middle school and said it was a lot of fun. He attended the legislative forum and said it was very informative. He reported his visit to Neil Armstrong was also very informative.

Director Eastman attended the 7<sup>th</sup> grade awards and gave a shout out to her nephew on receiving the Wayne Cheramy award. She checked in with the PTA at Neil Armstrong and said they have a ton of activities coming up and are doing a lot of wonderful things. She has received great feedback from principals and community members regarding the superintendent search.

Director Pyevich read from a prepared statement. His statement can be found at the end of the board minutes.

President Holland thanked Brie Collier and Celeste Miller for all their efforts throughout the superintendent search process.

6.02 Student Representatives' Report.

The Student Council is planning a blood drive for February and they are working on reaching their goal of 120 signups.

6.03 BEA Report.

Mary Heeringa reported the BEA has their monthly BEA meeting tomorrow and Round Table next week. She sent a survey out to staff regarding trainings that will take place on March 28<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. It is open to all staff. The training is free and lunch will be provided.

7. Discussion Items.

7.01 Preschool Financial Presentation.

Director of Finance, Brie Collier reviewed the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Spending and Carryover Summary.

Director of Special Services, Dave Hlas discussed the preschool program. There are currently zero students on the waiting list. There are five district preschool classrooms for five hours a day. Neil Armstrong has one program, and Mark Twain and Grant Wood each have two programs. The reason the programs are five hours a day is to maximize student contact time as well as allow teachers time to assess all students using Gold Curriculum. Since preschool students are dismissed earlier than the K-5 students, preschool teachers help at their building with MTSS time and provide interventions to other grade levels.

7.02 Discussion of 2020-2021 PPEL Plan and Facility Planning.

Director of Operations, Curt Pratt, Director of Finance, Brietta Collier and Director of Technology, Sean McGinn reviewed the current facility projects, future purchases and long range planning regarding facilities, technology and budget.

Paul Norton Project Update

Design Development documents were completed for the Paul Norton Secure Entry Addition/Renovation project on January 20th, 2020. Construction is to begin on Friday, June 5, 2020 and completion is expected on Thursday, August 20, 2020.

Thomas Edison Project Update

Thomas Edison Project Proposals for the Thomas Edison project were due Friday, January 31, 2020. They received proposals from 8 firms.

2020-2021 PPEL Expenditure Plan

Total Operations \$1,793,724  
Total Information Technology \$1,017,000  
Less SAVE Project(s) (\$400,000)  
Total Proposed PPEL \$2,410,72

Director Collier reviewed the Capital Projects Cashflow Projections and the Summary of Annual Spend by Category.

7.03 Discussion of the First Reading of Policy Primers.

The Policy Committee discussed the Corporal Punishment Policy at their last meeting. The policy is reflective of State law and mirrors what IASB recommends. The Committee recommended keeping the policy the same, while continuing to focus on the trainings that the district is providing.

*Policy 104* - Adopt new IASB version. Much of the content remains the same but has been reformatted. Some rewording to be more inclusive of everyone involved in the district including employees and volunteers, not just students.

*Policy 302.7* - Adopt new IASB version. Policy has been simplified and the board keeps the discretion of reimbursing professional activities the Superintendent engages in. Reimbursement for civic and community organizations can be instead worked into the Superintendent's employment contract.

*Policy 303.8* - Adopt new IASB version. Same reasons as 302.7.

*Policy 402.2* - Adopt new IASB version. Includes an update for mandatory reporter training that now must occur every three years, not five.

*Policy 402.2E1* - Policy will link to the Iowa DHS mandatory reporting web-page. This way the policy is updated as changes in DHS policy and State law occur.

*Policy 402.2E2* - Form within the policies being deleted. The link provided in 402.2E1 will also provide the most current up to date for from Iowa DHS.

*Policy 402.2R1* - Delete this policy as it contains redundant information/regulations.

7.04 Discussion of 2020-2021 School Calendar.

Highlights:

- Full two weeks for winter break;

- BHS will be adding 10 minutes to each day (start at 8:10 instead of 8:20);
- Spring Break is the same week as the neighboring districts and Scott Community College;
- Because of having less PT conference time, the High School will have their extra PD day on Monday, August 17;
- There is a Work Day at the end of each term to help the transition from one term to the next as well as provide time to complete Portrait of a Graduate Competencies Student Reports;
- 177 student days which will provide the following instructional hours at each level (State minimum is 1080 hours):
  - BHS – 1118 hours 15 minutes (2019-20: 1107 hours)
  - BMS – 1132 hours 25 minutes (2019-20: 1144 hours 25 minutes)
  - Elementary – 1133 hours (19-20: 1145 hours)
- Last day for students is Thursday, June 3, teachers Friday, June 4

The calendar will be shared with parents, students, and staff for additional comments. The Committee will meet prior to the February 18 board meeting to review the comments and make any necessary changes.

8. Action Items.

8.01 Approval of the 2020-2021 PPEL Plan.

Motion by Director Castro, seconded by Director Doerder, to approve the 2020-2021 PPEL Plan.

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

Nays: 0

Motion carried 7-0

8.02 Approval of the Proclamation of School Counselors Week.

Motion by Director Champion, seconded by Director Castro, to approve the 2020 Proclamation for School Counselors Week.

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

Nays: 0

Motion carried 7-0

9. Management Report.

9.01 Superintendent's Report. The Jefferson sale was finalized today. Superintendent Raso will be meeting with administration on February 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss staffing. He will be a Super Sub on Thursday for 8<sup>th</sup> grade science.

9.02 Director of Finance's Report. Brie is continuing to work on the budget. She congratulated all the early retirees. She thanked the Finance Department for helping during the transition.

10. Future Events and Informational Items.

- Thursday, February 6, Community Forum, 6:00 pm, MT
- Thursday, February 6, Superintendent Finalist Interviews, 7:00 pm, Admin
- Tuesday, February 18, BOE meeting, 6:00 pm

11. Closed Session .

11.01 Motion to Enter Into Closed Session.

Motion by Director Eastman, seconded by Director Lynch, to go into closed session in accordance with Iowa Code section 21.5(1.i.) of the Open Meetings Law to evaluate the professional competency of an individual whose appointment is being considered to prevent needless and irreparable injury to that individual's reputation, as that individual has requested a closed session.

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

Directors entered into closed session at 8:45 p.m. They returned to open session at 10:12 p.m.

12. Adjournment.

Director Castro motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 p.m.

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Adam Holland, President

ATTEST:

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Colleen Skolrood, Secretary

Director Pyevich's statement that he read under Shared Communication.

I know we're having a closed meeting tonight after the regular meeting, but I feel that something needs to be said in the open meeting, so if you just give me a couple of minutes here.....

I find myself in an unusual position that seems to be no fault of my own, yet I also don't see a way to get out from under it.

I sit on this school board, and the community that put us all here through the voting process, thinks that we either "don't care," or "don't understand the issues of our district," or "the community "can't understand why we aren't doing anything" about current issues that have popped up.

Just one very simple example that perhaps a lot of us didn't give a second thought about: just a week ago, on January 27, we all received an email from a very concerned mother with 3 children in the district, and she described tremendous class disruptions from other students in the class. The very troublesome thing is that she started her email stating that she wants to share this huge concern of hers, but didn't "expect anything other than to be blown off as this is what has happened to numerous other parents with the same concerns." We then subsequently received another email from our superintendent that stated he responded to her. And although that's all fine and good, I have no idea how this issue was resolved, or if it even was resolved. This is just one small recent example of how the board is in the dark as to what the outcome actually is in these situations.

A school board is not supposed to get caught up in the weeds of the daily operations of running a district – we hire professionals to do that. The board is instead supposed to set the vision, the goals, and the direction in which the district should be heading and trying to aspire to.

The rub comes in when the email from the very concerned parent I just referenced is sent to the board, and we hear that this problem has been ongoing, and even gets "blown off," instead of being handled by the professionals running this district. A one-time occurrence that gets stamped out quickly is what I would think the board should expect, the concerned parent should expect, and the community in general should expect to happen. But this parent's letter refers to the chronicity of this problem, and Steve Geifman's experiences that he relayed to us when he visited the schools, as well as the seemingly never-ending stories we hear from our teachers point to an ongoing problem of disciplinary issues in our schools that are not getting addressed.

So what is the problem? Why am I having chronic behavior issues? It becomes necessary to look at these professionals we have in place. A more widely known and discussed recent example has been about a couple of social media and electronic bulletin board postings. We have each received dozens and dozens of emails over the past several months about these incredibly controversial postings by one such professional leading our district. We have gone so far as to get legal opinions (at district expense) to confirm whether these postings are allowable under our policies or not. These opinions were that the postings were probably okay under the current language of our policies, although some of us sitting around this table do not agree with those decisions. Whether they would hold up to a court of law or even to overall public opinion, I don't know. But I do know that in both of these cases, neither legal opinion strongly supported or



affirmed that these postings were fine – the opinions were very wishy-washy it's clear that these postings were felt to be “on the cusp” of being legal within our policies. And, as a result, we heard it from the public.

Have we spoken to the person posting these things? I don't know. I know the person heard it from the public (or probably read it in the newspaper), but the community expects me (the board) to do something, but that's simply because they don't understand the chain of command within a public school district. The public feels slighted that they have elected a board that seems to be ambivalent and not care – which clearly is not the truth – but that's what it seems like to them.

In talking with teachers throughout the district, I've been told that students are clearly running the schools, and I have heard a lot of things through the rumor mill – we all have- and most parents and most of the community have heard these things. And these things are all in addition to the daily foul-mouthed insubordinate remarks relayed from student to teacher that occur daily. I've heard of a BHS student's car being stolen by other BHS students and the vehicle was subsequently used in a shooting, I have heard of an absolutely hideous assault on a school bus by one BHS student on another, I have heard of a free-for-all fight in the BHS cafeteria where our police officer was on the ground with his sidearm knocked loose during the melee, I have heard of money being stolen by BHS student from the activities office, and I've heard of a large stash of marijuana being found in a car and locker of a BHS student. Assuming all of these things happened, none of these things came to the board for expulsion hearings. Were the perpetrators expelled and didn't fight it so it didn't have to come to the board? Maybe, but that's not what I've heard. In fact, I've heard the exact opposite. I've heard that none of these offending students had much of a disciplinary action taken against them by the school at all. In the car theft incident, I've heard the school's response to the victim's family (whose car was totaled, mind you) was that the kids that stole the car were really “good kids” and that the victim probably learned a valuable lesson in that in the future, he should lock up his car keys and not leave them in his backpack in the locker room.

All that being said, at some point, a school board must get involved. Remember, the school board sets the vision, goals, and direction for the district, and I think that we can all agree that a vision and goal of teachers being able to instruct without chronic behavioral interruptions is a pretty reasonable goal. I'm not saying the solution is easy, but first and foremost, I need to know if these things happened, and if they did, what happened to the perpetrator and how did the school handle the victim. Anonymously, of course – I don't need to know anyone's names. But I do need to know that these types of situations are being handled. I have a couple people sitting on the board that ran on an agenda to improve transparency – well, let's start here. Keep situations anonymous, but it's clear that disciplinary situations need to be vetted by the board. And once we're satisfied that these big items are being handled, I can assume the smaller ones, the chronically daily ones, will also go away. That's because we will have set an understanding not only with the students, but also with all parents and the community as a whole, that this is a place for learning and we will not tolerate chronic disciplinary problems. I can't allow kids, or teachers for that matter, to come to school, which is supposed to be a safe place to learn, and allow them to turn it into a place where they have to worry about kids throwing chairs in the classroom, cussing out a teacher, stealing their car, or assaulting them on a bus – without consequences.

Therefore, going forward, and I have mentioned this several times in the past, I want there to be a set meeting (monthly is probably enough), but this meeting needs to include security, police, administration and a board member or two to discuss situations that came up and how they were handled. Expectations need to be set, along with significant consequences. It will not be easy, and

we're going to upset some people in the early-going, but the majority of the stakeholders feel this is long overdue. And it would not take long until the students and staff of this district would come to appreciate what has been done in the best interest of this district.

