

Board of Education Meeting Minutes

6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 (Amended 3/19/24) at Berlin High School Library Media Center

1. Meeting Called to Order by President

President Kujawa called the regular March Board of Education meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call

Present: Bartol; Gehrke-via telephone; Kujawa; Malchetske-via zoom; Podoll; Shattuck-via zoom; Toney (left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.).

Absent: Burgess & Krause.

4. Consent Agenda - Action Item

Toney/Bartol moved to approve the consent agenda items consisting of February 28, 2024 minutes, resignations of Nicole LeDioyt-Technology Integration Specialist/MS Special Education Teacher, Mackennah Sucharski-4K Teacher, new hire of Christina Serrano-District Social Worker, and February vouchers in the amount of \$975,206.26. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

i. Approval of Agenda

ii. Approval of February 28, 2024 Minutes

iii. Retirements, Resignations & New Hires

iv. Approval of February Vouchers

5. Time to Shine

Berlin High School Principal, Bryant Bednarek, introduced the FOCUS Program (Finally Overcoming Challenges Until Successful).

Karyl Hanson, Mark Trampf and students, shared experiences and stories about the program. Credit deficiencies and truancy are the top two reasons for students to qualify for the program. No cell phones are allowed when entering the building. Work experience at local connections like McDonalds, Wal-Mart, FLASH Trucking, Kinas, etc. is the most popular and major way that students earn credits, and learn work ethics and skills. Competency is a new piece that is used to test students who come to us with little or no credits. Competency goes on the transcript in lieu of course credits.

ESSER funding provided new furniture and other upgrades to the space they have made their own. FOCUS is located in the old district office building. 34 students currently participate; 2 teachers; 1 paraprofessional.

6. Opportunity for those in audience to address the Board on any school related issue

None

7. High School Principal At-Risk and Alternative Education Presentation

Kristy Block shared experiences and stories about the program. She is a master of the credit retrieval/recovery program tool APEX that we use in our district.

High School staff meet every Monday to review students' grades, attendance, behavioral reports, etc. to see who may qualify for the At-Risk program or some type of intervention.

The main goals are to increase graduation rates and decrease truancy. SST (Student Success Teams) aid with this process.

8. Virtual Reality Presentation by Library Media Specialists

The Library Media Specialists, Shelly Johnson, Heather Kurczek, and Sarah Gumtow, gave this presentation. The district currently has one UV cart (storage, cleaning, & charging station), 30 goggles, and 5-yr tech support purchased for roughly \$18k from Common School Funds. Students can make their own interactive experiences or use the numerous ones provided. Students can wear the goggles for up to 15 minutes. Used to enhance a teacher's lesson or presentation through virtual reality tools; students travel without leaving the room.

9. Special Education Vision and Multi-Year Plan Presentation

Ann Schnyder, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education, gave an overview of her role and the specific work her department does to support all students, specifically those who receive special education services, have an IEP, counseling, etc. Special Ed receives a report card to see if in compliance. The department has exceeded the 80% mark in the last few years in serving students with IEPs and disabilities.

We believe all students are engaged and are valued. We want all students to learn and achieve at a high level. We want to meet the social and emotional needs of all students; it is not just the counselor's job, but, teachers, principals, coaches, and everyone's job in the district. Work towards inclusion of all students and make sure they have the skills and tools to succeed in school and life.

Our district could use more Spanish-speaking assistance to help with our growing population of Hispanic/Latino students. 20-22% of our students have a disability or an IEP (higher than the state average); a high percentage of special education students move into our district with an existing IEP.

10. Approval to purchase a special education vehicle with a wheelchair lift - Action Item

Podoll/Gehrke moved to purchase a special education vehicle with a wheelchair lift from A&J Vans. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

11. Financial Update

Dr. Durtschi briefly touched on declining student enrollment projections and a budget deficit currently at roughly \$873k for the 2024-25 school year. The deficit will continue to grow in future years. ESSER funds will end/be used up by September 2024. Cost-saving measures will continue to be explored while ensuring a quality education for all students. Even with budget reductions, an operational referendum is likely to be recommended to the Board for a vote at the June board meeting to appear on the November 2024 ballot. Matters will continue to be discussed and reviewed at future Finance Committee meetings on April 4, May 2, and June 6.

12. Superintendent Update

Dr. Durtschi acknowledged and thanked Beth Malchetske & Nick Toney for their time on the Board. The success of the spaghetti dinner held last week; 260 dinners sold; the money raised goes towards scholarships; student-drawn placemats were a hit. 4K registration is taking place, and we will be offering three all-day sessions in the fall.

COVID-19 update the district is treating this cold/fever/flu symptoms now. Updates on ACT and Forward tests, Parent Teacher Conferences, Prom, and Spring Play are all up and coming. Check the school website and calendars.

13. Committee Updates

Dr. Durtschi shared that the Finance Committee was covered in the financial update. Provided update on B&G projects slated for this spring/summer: Clay playground, BHS cafeteria floor, kitchen floor & drain, BHS gym floor, BHS sound/theatre, etc. Stock donation from the Miller family was received for pool equipment/improvements and appreciated value of stock/gains will be used towards gym floor sanding/refurbishing. May have some future April/May committee meetings virtually to approve items quickly and place them on the agenda for approval by the

entire Board.

14. School Board Member Updates

v. Board Correspondent Legislative Update

Nick Bartol reported that DPI is trying to loosen the waiver to change school start days before September 1st. Write to your congressperson.

vi. Board President Update

Catherine Kujawa acknowledged and gave a thank you to Beth Malchetske for her time on the Board. Always challenged and had insightful questions; the wealth of knowledge; she will be missed.

15. Adjourn

Malchetske/Bartol moved to approve to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.