

Geneva Area City Board of Education
September 18, 2019

The Board of Education of the Geneva Area City School District met in regular session at 7:00 p.m., September 18, 2019, in the Middle School cafetorium. The meeting was called to order by President Arndt.

Roll Call: Present: Mr. Arndt, Mr. Brashear, Mr. Dana, Ms. Fisher, Mrs. Ortiz, Superintendent Kujala, and Treasurer Lillie

Absent: None

Visitors
& Guests: Administrative Assistant Horvath; Principals Anderson, Burzanko, Doherty, Gustin, and Wetherholt; Assistant Principals Markijohn and Mollohan; David Thomas, Ashtabula County Auditor; GATA representatives; newspaper reporters; and other citizens

Certification by Treasurer of Compliance with Meeting Requirements Rules

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Arndt led the Pledge of Allegiance

Correspondence

Mr. Kujala read a thank you note from Valarie Leitch thanking the Board for remembering Ed Leitch, our former Maintenance/Transportation Director, with a memorial gift. They hope to purchase a water feature for the church to honor all the work Ed did for the church and the community.

Agenda Modification

Several agenda modifications were made.

Hearing of Public

Margie Netzel, 4319 N Ridge Rd E., Geneva, and Stephanie Williams, 205 Swan St., Geneva, representing the Geneva Parents for School Safety, reported that they have been fundraising for the last year and a half to purchase lockdown door barricades for every classroom in the Geneva district. They are now \$16,000 from reaching their goal. They encouraged everyone to donate to raise \$3,200 per building or \$7 per student. Their hope is to fund, purchase and install barricades by the end of the calendar year. They distributed some forms and pamphlets announcing their need. They will also hold a Dining to Donate event at Honeybee's Restaurant on October 29th from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. National Bullying Prevention Monthly programs will be conducted at all buildings during October.

Andy Tetlow, 2033 Pelton Rd., Austinburg, asked if the Strategic Plan Document was available on the District's website or if copies were available somewhere. Mr. Kujala responded that he has not put them online yet. He did distribute them to staff and was waiting to get feedback on the formant and things like that. He will probably be putting it online this week. Mr. Tetlow asked about the status of the recording of the Board meetings as far as getting that posted online. Mr. Kujala answered that we just put in a purchase order for some additional equipment that will allow us to plug directly into our board at the High School so we don't pick up all the background noise. He said we are moving forward with publishing those and possibly streaming on YouTube. Mr. Tetlow asked about items N. 3. and 4. on the agenda and wondered if the Board would be expounding on those a little more during the meeting as it was difficult to tell what they were about. Mr. Kujala explained that the Board would be going into executive session at 3., and it may be lengthy. We cannot expound upon what takes place in executive session with our legal counsel, but the Board will be returning from that session and taking action on the remainder of the agenda.

Michelle Cinco, 4348 Stonegate Dr., Ashtabula, came here today to reiterate a request she brought to the Board in February or March last year to consider implementing all-day, every-day kindergarten for next school year. As a teacher, she sees the importance of it but also as a parent, her daughter is in kindergarten this year. She knows there is research on both sides, but as a teacher and a parent, it is extremely important and she thinks that it would only benefit the students we serve.

Mr. Dana asked if we had a student brave enough to make a comment or ask a question. John Jackam, 3920 Countryview Lane, Rock Creek, said his education has been very satisfactory, and he would also like to comment on the AP Government/AP History educational trip. He would really like to go on this trip to Washington, D.C., as he has never been there, so he hopes that gets approved.

Approval of Minutes

128-19

Mr. Brashear moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, to approve the minutes of the regular session on August 21, 2019 as presented by the Treasurer. Roll Call: YES: Arndt, Brashear, Dana, Fisher, and Ortiz. Motion carried.

Financial Report

129-19

Mrs. Ortiz moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, to approve the August, 2019 financial report as presented by the Treasurer. Roll Call: YES: Brashear, Dana, Fisher, Ortiz, and Arndt. Motion carried.

Approval of Invoices

Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Brashear, to approve the August, 2019 invoices as paid and listed by the Treasurer. Roll

Call: YES: Dana, Fisher, Ortiz, Arndt and Brashear. Motion carried.

Informational Items – Current Investments (see addendum file)

Donation: \$500 from an anonymous donor to provide lunches for students in need instead of giving them the alternate lunch

Mr. Arndt comment that we have donations listed at almost every Board meeting, and many of them are anonymous. He had someone tell him several years ago that the Geneva School District is surrounded by some very gracious people. Its things like this that make him really believe that, so thank you.

Legislative Report

Ms. Fisher reported that five new bills were presented since our last Board meeting. HB 322 is a revision of the current standard-based teacher evaluation policy. HB 326 would allow public employees elected to certain offices to continue to receive disability benefits during their term of office. HB 333 would allow school districts to contract with third parties to provide digital record storage, management and retrieval. SB 181 would require a template for a workplace/education partnership program. SB 200 would provide for screening and intervention for children with dyslexia.

Ms. Fisher said the big buzz this month is in the Senate Education Committee. They are conducting hearings concerning HB 154 which seeks to dismantle the Academic Distress Commission. This bill was rolled into the Biennial Budget and was vetoed by Governor DeWine. Ms. Fisher noted that this shows government at its most confusing. The original bill would dismantle the Academic Distress Commissions that take over schools that reach a certain level of difficulty in passing the state report cards, and plans would be constructed with state assistance to fix the problems. The committee accepted a substitute version during its second hearing. The revised bill would create a five member panel called the School Transformation Board charged with overseeing improvement efforts in school districts with persistently low report card grades among other responsibilities. The bill would also designate school districts with “improvement” status where if they receive overall failing status for two consecutive years, they would be required to create an improvement plan. They would then be eligible for state funding to contract with a school improvement organization. Accepting the funding and executing a contract would delay the establishment of an academic distress commission until the sixth consecutive overall F grade. Meanwhile, the Academic Distress Commissions would undergo a facelift. The CEO’s would now be called Directors, and the distress commissions would now be called

School Improvement Committees. However, they would still be a group of primarily businessmen trying to solve the school's problems. The Ohio School Boards Association is against this. They seem to feel that the money would be better spent providing support to assist districts with making improvements.

A-Tech Report

Mr. Brashear reported that A-Tech is currently going through a new adult accreditation process, something that takes a couple of months. So far they have filled out a survey of a little over 2,100 questions, and there is a committee with representatives from Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Ohio that will meet with Board members. The reason that Atech decided to switch to this new organization, the Council on Occupational Education, is because this organization is more favorable and more friendly to the adult side of education. They have to have this in order for students to be eligible for PELL Grants and student loans. He passed around some information on the organization. He also reminded everyone about the annual Stakeholder or Advisory Council Dinner on October 10th in the evening where a number of business owners and managers meet with Atech and give a state of the area address, letting Atech know what their needs are pertaining to the workforce. Mr. Brashear also shared some information regarding the Truck World TIF. The original ask was for 30 years and 100%, but it appears that it has been reduced to 20 years.

Report of the Superintendent

Building principals introduced new staff and reported on their school openings and their current enrollment data.

Mr. Wetherholt went first and began his report on the High School by reading a letter from a couple who sponsored a 5K race in tandem with the 18th Annual Walk for the Cure. They were very thankful to Emily Long and the cross country team for assisting with the race, and they were very touched when those kids went back and ran alongside the last two racers to bring them home to the finish line. Many other Geneva students including the band volunteered at the walk, and many participants commented that the students were cordial and very helpful! Mr. Wetherholt reported that Geneva High School is probably off to one of its best starts academically and athletically. He congratulated both the girls and boys golf teams for winning their CVC championships, the football team for their 2-1 start, and the volleyball team was doing great. After introducing two new staff members, Mr. Wetherholt shared some data on AIR testing results, enrollment numbers, and new programs that began last year. He also thanked the building staff for getting things up and running and having the building in excellent shape.

Mr. Anderson noted that Geneva Middle School has a great custodial staff that worked hard over the summer to make this building beautiful, and he is very appreciative of that. He also

commented that the secretarial staff did a great job getting everything ready for the new school year, enabling GMS to start off with a great series of open houses for 6th, 7th and 8th grade students. All of their teachers donated their time, came in, and got them off to an excellent start with their open houses. GMS has seen lots of changes this year with several new classes and a completely new master schedule. Mr. Anderson gave credit to Mr. Currence, Mr. Wright, and Mr. Burgard for helping to get a couple of things in place over the summer including the new shop program, which they are happy to have back after a long hiatus. They also helped prepare the football field in back for home games. He also thanked Mrs. Leonard and the bus garage, and they are happy to have full busing back. Mr. Mollohan thanked everyone for making him feel welcome in his new role as Assistant Principal. Mr. Anderson shared information on staff changes and reported that enrollment and the number of special education students have been fairly consistent while open enrollment rebounded after taking a drop last year. He reported that GMS did see a drop in test scores, which took a little wind out of their sails after being tops in the county and receiving a Momentum Award, so they are already buckling down to see what they can do and have made some changes to get back on track.

Mrs. Gustin introduced two new teachers who both had a wealth of experience to bring to Geneva Platt R. Spencer. She noted that they had a great opening, and their custodian and housekeepers did a fabulous job cleaning the building. Mrs. Gustin commented that they are extremely happy to have full bus transportation back, and things have gone very smoothly overall even when we've been short drivers, and the bus drivers have gone out of their way to make sure that kids get to where they need to be. She thanked the Board for bringing back Mrs. Simmons to teach Elementary Art. Overall enrollment is down a little compared to last year, but there are sure to be additional fluctuations throughout the school year. Mrs. Gustin reported on several back to school events that already took place, including open house, a PTO meeting, PBIS assemblies, a visit from the GHS PBIS class, and a Constitution Day Assembly yesterday. She said the 4th grade will be marching in the Grape Jamboree Parade, and they have plans for a Skate Night at Ashtabula Family Roller Den, a Book Fair Family Night, Fall Family Night and "Bingo for Books", and a Halloween Parade on Halloween. Mrs. Gustin commented on two new programs for this year; one is PAX (means Peace in Latin) where students are taught lessons towards a peaceful school environment and the other is Wonders Reading, which she thanked the Board for purchasing.

Mrs. Doherty reported that Cork Elementary had a great start to their year also. The custodial staff gave every classroom and the rest of the building a good cleaning and the floors actually

sparkle. Mrs. Richey, the secretary, was in and out during July to get everything ready for the kindergarten students coming in. Teachers are there in August preparing their classrooms for open house. Mrs. Doherty credited Mrs. Schroeder for securing a Living Generously Grant to re-organize the library. She noted that the cafeteria is always ready and transportation was smooth, as they worked with bus drivers and Mrs. Leonard to connect students with buses. Mrs. Doherty mentioned four teachers who were new to Cork and also thanked the Board for bringing back Art. She was happy to have PAX training completed on the Staff Waiver Day. She was also excited to get the new reading series and thanked the Board for that. They administered their first diagnostic and are getting reading improvement plans ready. Cork was supposed to have their full-scale safety drill today, but they had a safety incident in the morning that put them in a soft lockdown. Mrs. Doherty reported that enrollment was slightly up, and she supplied open enrollment numbers, intervention counts, and Title I and Speech numbers.

Mrs. Burzanko reported that Austinburg Elementary had their open house on August 21st with 93% of their families in attendance. AESA was there promoting their new fundraiser, and Mrs. Burzanko had pledged that if 100 students/parents signed up for the fundraiser, she would wear a bright pink tutu at the pick-up and dismissal, which she did. She also thanked the Board for bringing back Art and purchasing the new reading series. GHS PBIS students have been coming to the building to talk about positive behavior and ways that students can give back. She also thanked the Board for adding typicals into the preschool, and they currently have five enrolled. She thanked the custodian substitute, housekeeper, cafeteria, bus drivers and the secretary for all their hard work getting the building and areas ready. Mrs. Burzanko shared enrollment numbers, which are down slightly from last year. She also thanked the Board for bringing back busing, which has really helped at pick-up time.

Ohio School Report Cards

Mr. Kujala provided a brief overview of the District's State Report Card results. The Report Card came out on Sept. 12th, and Mr. Kujala has spent the last couple of days talking with building administrators about their report cards and changes they are already looking at. He shared with the Board in their packets some information about district and building results. We did see some percentage decreases this year on our district scores, but when you look at some of the individual buildings, there were some increases that happened there. We know that we have a lot of work to do, and we have put in a new math series in the last couple years and a new reading series this year. All administrators and teachers are committed to looking at the data and making improvements. The last four pages of the packet show a comparison of the other schools in Ashtabula County and nearby

Lake County Schools for this year and last year. Mr. Kujala explained that he wanted to give the Board a chance to review this information, because there have already been reports in the Star Beacon and Gazette, but he'll give a more detailed report in October with ways we are going to improve.

Mr. Dana commented that we were not pleased with the report card results, but we also certainly expected we were going to have a drop based on the cuts that we've made. There's incredible work that's been done in our classrooms and improvements have been made. He apologized to Mr. Anderson for the hit they took on the report card after GMS was hit hard with cuts, including an administrator that made Mr. Anderson have to do the work of two people. Mr. Dana acknowledged that we passed our first operational levy in a generation, so we will be looking for much higher scores in the future, and he was excited to have the industrial arts program back here showing that we are trying to deal with the individual needs of our children. He also commented on the all-day, every-day kindergarten which we heard about from Ms. Fisher at our last meeting, and we heard that again today about the importance of it. We've talked about the need of having all-day, every-day kindergarten before the Board had to make cuts, but we now need to look strongly at implementing it and he looks forward to a recommendation from Mr. Kujala.

Executive Session

131-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Brashear moved, seconded by Mr. Dana, that the Board hold an executive session for the purpose of conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action.

Went in to executive session 8:18 p.m.

Returned from executive session 9:52 p.m.

Roll Call: YES: Fisher, Ortiz, Arndt, Brashear, and Dana. Motion carried.

SPIRE Sports Facility Agreement Assignment

132-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Brashear moved, seconded by Mr. Dana, to approve the Resolution Approving the Assignment and Assumption of the Sports Facility Agreement dated January 30, 2018 to Geneva Sports LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company. Roll Call: YES: Ortiz, Arndt, Brashear, Dana, and Fisher. Motion carried.

2019-2020 Appropriations

133-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mrs. Ortiz moved, seconded by Mr. Brashear, approval of the appropriations as presented, for fiscal year 2019-2020, to be considered permanent appropriations upon receipt of the Certificate of the County Auditor that the Total Appropriations from Each Fund Do Not

Exceed the Official Estimate of Resources. General Fund appropriations are approved by the second digit of function and the first digit of object. All other appropriations are approved by fund (see addendum file). Roll Call: YES: Arndt, Brashear, Dana, Fisher, and Ortiz. Motion carried.

Disposal of Assets

134-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Ms. Fisher moved, seconded by Mrs. Ortiz, that the Board approve the disposal of the attached list of assets, as they are no longer of any use to the District (see addendum file). Roll Call: YES: Brashear, Dana, Fisher, Ortiz, and Arndt. Motion carried.

Early Graduate

135-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Brashear, that the Board approve the following student as having met the requirements for early graduation for the 2019-2020 school year.

Kenndehl R. Swanson

Roll Call: YES: Dana, Fisher, Ortiz, Arndt and Brashear. Motion carried.

2019-2020 Personnel

136-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Brashear moved, seconded by Mr. Dana, the following personnel actions for the 2019-2020 contract year:

a. FMLA

Drew A. Rapose, Teacher, High School, leave of absence from 10/14/19 through 11/15/19. This leave will be designated under the Family Medical Leave Act.

b. Resignation Extra-Curricular

James R. Berei - Asst. Varsity Boys Track
Rachel M. Blevins - 9th Grade Class Sponsor

c. Change of Contract

Julie A. Newmeyer, School Nurse, from ½-time to full-time, effective 08/27/19

Nicoleta E. Lechintan, Cafeteria Worker, 9 mos./year, from Geneva Platt R. Spencer, 2.0 hrs./day and 2.25 hrs./day to Middle School, 3.5 hrs./day, effective 09/09/19

Brenda L. Cork, Bus Driver, Bus Garage, 9 mos./year, from 4.75 hrs./day to 5 hrs./day, effective 09/16/19

d. Temporary Contract

James K. Zukoski, Custodian II, Austinburg, 7 hrs./day, effective 09/09/19

e. The hiring of the following personnel, on a one-year contract, to be paid according to the adopted wage guidelines, subject to meeting certification requirements of the State of Ohio, as well as a satisfactory physical examination, background check and/or other training, if applicable.

1) Extra-Curricular Assignment

Rachel M. Blevins.....11th Grade Class Sponsor
Leslie A. Monroe.....Assistant Girls Tennis, 1/3-time
Michael R. Rose.....Assistant Girls Tennis, 1/3-time

2) Homebound Tutor

Raydquel A. Myers

3) Substitute Teacher

Amber L. McGuire
Sandra K. Sivalon

4) Reinstate from Reduction in Force

Robin A. Fowler, Housekeeper, Middle School, 7 hrs./day,
10 mos./year, effective 09/23/19

5) Substitute Cafeteria Worker

Anne Bernardo
Sheila M. Tidwell, effective 08/28/19
Pamela S. Zukoski, effective 08/26/19

6) Substitute Housekeeper

Timothy J. Mills

7) Substitute Custodian II/III

Timothy J. Mills

8) Activity Workers, effective 08/21/19

Roberta Boomhower
Shane Clugh
John Haeseler

9) Students (Mr. Hunt) – Hours-to-be-assigned – to be paid according to the adopted wage incentive, effective 08/26/19:

Mackenzie Baker	Jose Miranda Rodriguez
Sydney Brown	Jarrick Peterson
Kyle Campos	Christopher Ramos
Tivon Clark	Joshua Rice
Christopher Cogar	Alexandra Roney

Matthew Hoover Brighton Rosado
Camren Hungerford Christopher Smith
Viva Lebron Mark Trimbath
Devin Lee Shayla Tucholski
Reese Lewis

Roll Call: YES: Fisher, Ortiz, Brashear, and Dana. NO: Arndt
Motion carried.

Master Electric Energy
Sales Agreement

137-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mrs. Ortiz moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, approval of the enclosed resolution authorizing the execution and delivery of a Master Electric Energy Sales Agreement between the District and Power4Schools' endorsed electric supplier, Engie Resources LLC. Mr. Lillie explained that our current electric contract is up at the end of this year. The Ohio Schools Council and Power4Schools (which is a joint organization including OSC, OSBA, OASBO and BASA) have put together a contract that is being called "the best energy supply contract in the history of Power4Schools". This contract would have us paying for the next 24 month period an Energy-Only fixed price rate of \$.03194/kwh. This would be different than the All Inclusive Rate we are used to seeing that includes Pass Thru components that originate at the utility. We are told that the energy companies would estimate high to cover these Pass Thru Fees, making the full cost \$.045 to \$0.48 per kwh. By going with the Energy-Only rate, we might save money as opposed to going with the All Inclusive Rate, so the recommendation is to try this for the 24 months.

Mr. Dana asked how this affects the contract we entered with respect to the light fixtures. Mr. Lillie responded that this has no effect on that contract, as this action would lower the electric price on all 15 district meters. That light fixture contract will reduce the amount of electricity the District uses and eliminate our cost for maintenance of the lights. Mr. Lillie shared that he has had contact from other brokers, with which we have had no dealing in the past and know very little about, saying that the Power4Schools program might not be the best deal out there. Mr. Lillie acknowledged that it might not be the best deal, but it is very close, and Power4Schools has done many other things for school districts such as making sure we incurred no additional costs from the polar vortexes. They also represent us before the PUCO.

Mr. Dana said he had no problem with the company and no problem with the rate, but his only concern was that this action wouldn't interfere with the action at the last meeting with what that company hoped to recoup from the investment they were putting into the lights. Mr. Lillie answered that the agreement with FES specified the set amount we would pay based upon the soft audit, and that amount could only be adjusted based on the hard audit or

the results of the data loggers after one year, and the rate would have no impact on the usage. Roll Call: YES: Ortiz, Arndt, Brashear, Dana, and Fisher. Motion carried.

AP History and Gov.
Trip to DC in 2020

138-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mrs. Ortiz moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, approval for AP US History and AP Government Geneva High School students to travel to Washington, DC, from March 12, 2020 through March 14, 2020. Mr. Dana had questions about any liability concerns and that there was no cost to the District with respect to the students going on this trip. Mr. Kujala responded that there were no liability concerns and no cost, and this trip has occurred previously. Roll Call: YES: Arndt, Brashear, Dana, Fisher, and Ortiz. Motion carried.

Other

Mr. Kujala mentioned that we are in the process of finalizing the details for our levy campaign. Mr. Dana asked if there was any increase in taxes as a result of this levy renewal. Mr. Kujala said there is no increase, and it is a renewal. He said this will be our last opportunity for this renewal levy that has been on the books since 1959. Mr. Kujala noted that it would cost the homeowner of a \$100,000 home around \$30 per year. We are issue #32, and he provided the Board with the list of issues from the county and checked the items that are in our voting area. He also shared a breakdown of levy events from staff and employee involvement, sign distribution and placement, postcards to positive voters, to website and social media messaging. One of the messages he is promoting is that this is our final opportunity to pass the levy at this collection level. If it should fail, any future PI levy would be new and cost taxpayers more, as they would not be eligible for any rollback.

Mr. Brashear reiterated that it is very important that everybody understands that if it does not pass this time, it is no longer the bargain PI levy. The Board will have no choice but to continue to go after it. He said everyone heard testimonials tonight about how critical it was to have transportation back. The PI levy is one of the things we count upon to support transportation by using it to purchase buses. Mr. Kujala said he also distributed the sign we used last time with information on the back that has been updated. He encouraged Board members to feel free to share any suggestions. Mr. Lillie emphasized that the cost on an owner-occupied \$100,000 home would actually be \$26.03, and the cost would be even less than that because of reduction factors.

Executive Session

139-19

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Brashear moved, seconded by Mrs. Ortiz, that the Board hold an executive session for the purpose of preparing for, conducting, or reviewing

negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment.

Went into executive session at 10:08 p.m.

Returned from executive session at 10:34 p.m.

Roll Call: YES: Brashear, Dana, Fisher, Ortiz, and Arndt. Motion carried

Adjournment

140-18

Mr. Brashear moved, seconded by Mrs. Ortiz, to adjourn the regular session at 10:35 p.m. Roll Call: YES: Dana, Fisher, Ortiz, Arndt and Brashear. Motion carried.

The foregoing is a true and accurate record of the minutes and proceedings of the regular session held by the Board of Education of the Geneva Area City School District on September 18, 2019.