

Crawfordsville Community School Corporation Board of Education – Regular Meeting

**Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.
Crawfordsville Middle School - 705 Wallace Avenue**

MINUTES

I. Roll Call

Steven McLaughlin, Dr. Bowling, Dr. Ryker, Nick Hedrick, Diana Wilbert, Stacey Guard, and Jason Seward were in attendance. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, Susan Albrecht, Ellen Ball, Kathleen Brown, and Kent Minnette attended virtually via Zoom.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes, Construction Accounts Payable Voucher, Payroll Claims Vouchers, Register of Accounts Payable Voucher, and Surplus Items

Susan Albrecht made a motion to approve the Previous Meeting Minutes, Accounts Payable Vouchers, Payroll Claims Vouchers, and Register of Accounts Payable. Ellen Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. New Business

A. Consider Application for Technology Advance from the Common School Fund

Dr. Bowling explained that this is the source of school technology financing which is done twice a year. The application is completed by Doug Lengerich, Technology Director and sent to the board for approval. Costs consist of devices for the students such as chrome books, laptops, and software that needs to be maintained throughout the year. Dr. Bowling recommended approval.

Kathleen Brown made a motion to approve the Application for Technology Advance from the Common School Fund. Ellen Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of Temporary Loan Tax Anticipation Warrants

This is an annual item which serves a safety net in case there is a shortfall 2021 property tax revenue. At the start of the calendar year, the Corporation borrows money through an Indiana state-run program that is handled through the Indiana Bond Bank. Interest rates are very low. In 2019 the interest rate was 1.65%. The Corporation pays the loan back in December of the same calendar year. The Bond Bank will review the application to determine the official sizing looking at past property tax draws for the School Corporation resulting with a decision on the amount of the temporary loan.

Susan Albrecht made a motion to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of Temporary Loan Tax Application Warrants. Ellen Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Consider Tentative Agreement with Crawfordsville Education Association

Dr. Bowling advised the Board that they are allowed to discuss, but not vote on the teacher's contract at this meeting. Voting will take place in a separate ratification meeting scheduled for November 15th at 6:00 P.M. at the Administrative Building. He stated that both sides have a good working relationship and are finding common ground. Base teacher salaries will increase \$1,100 (one step on the salary schedule). A new pay level will be created for those teachers who are currently at the highest level.

In addition the tentative agreement includes the following:

- Dual credit stipend for courses that requires a content area Masters Degree of \$250 per class per semester.
- New ECA position: Second Step Ambassador Position at Nicholson
- Small language adjustments to comply with the IEERB Compliance Report

Dr. Bowling advised that the Board just needs to consider the tentative agreement at this time. A Virtual Meeting is set for November 15th at 6:00 P.M. at the Administrative Building for the Board to vote.

V. Personnel

- A. Recommend Amanda Calhoun, Hoover Title One Aide
- B. Recommend Khloey Surface, CHS Teacher's Aide
- C. Consider Retirement Kevin Fischer, Power & Transportation Director of Transportation

Kathleen Brown made a motion to approve the recommendation of Amanda Calhoun and Khloey Surface. Ellen Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ellen Ball made a motion to approve the resignation of Kevin Fischer's new retirement date of June 1, 2021. Susan Albrecht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Assistant Superintendent Report

Construction

Crawfordsville High School construction is progressing. Currently we are in Phase 7 which includes classroom renovations with sets of rooms being completed every 10 to 15 days. Work is also continuing on the limestone on the new entrance, furniture selection, and completing the fence and entrance around the athletic complex.

Rural and Low Income School Grants

The Rural and Low Income School Grant was submitted. This grant is used to help pay for teacher instruction and student interventions through funding for instructional coaches at the elementary level.

Partnership with the City

With a shortage of subs for our nurses due to quarantines and Amy Bales, Safety Manager, filling in wherever needed, we have partnered with the Crawfordsville Fire Department for paramedics to cover for nursing staff in the schools. Dr. Ryker stated, "It is very impressive how the three school corporations, City, and County are all working together that is helping us out at this point and time."

Susan Albrecht asked about the shortage of subs being filled with the paramedics of the fire department if North and South Schools to help support their nurses also? Kudos to whomever started this great model of cooperation between the City and the schools using the municipal entity to see us through this time period. Dr. Ryker advised that both North and South have asked to join in also. He has been working with Amy Bales along with Paul Miller from the fire department through grants the fire department has received to be able to help our schools. Impressive how the three schools work together.

Dr. Ryker also discussed the steps taken on the quarantine protocol for positive COVID cases within the schools and how they are handled involving Amy Bales, School Nurses, and Administrators.

Ellen Ball shared a concern of the schools hearing of confirmed cases before the individual due to the HIPPA laws. Dr. Ryker advised that the County Health Nurse contacts the individual while another member of the Health Department contacts the school as soon as they receive the results. Therefore, at times we hear it from the Health Department before we hear from the individual.

VII. Superintendent's Report

Bright Spot

- The Middle School Musical was held due to the hard work of many. Our teachers had to set up the auditorium, pre-sell tickets and submit a plan to the Health Department to make it happen. They selflessly did all this to give the kids a wonderful experience and a memory that will last far beyond middle school. It went very well. All kids were masked.

General Update

- Completion of the Non-English Speaking Program Grant that helps support the EL instructors at all the different building levels, including the High School.
- FEMA money is now available. Anything that was purchased extra because of COVID was turned into FEMA. We have been told that we are not going to receive reimbursement. Items purchased included devices to assist in distance learning. FEMA is not going to cover any of the technology. There may be a chance that the tents purchased for elementary schools for outdoor use may be covered. We are waiting on more information. The Cares Act Fund is available to use if needed.

COVID

Montgomery County cases along with school quarantines are increasing resulting in the county being classified at the orange level. Dr. Bowling meets twice weekly with the other county superintendents and the Health Department to discuss the situation. All three school corporations plan to stay the course with in-school learning at this time with quarantining where needed. The Health Department has not seen much if any spread within schools. Most positives are coming spread at home or at social events.

Staffing is a struggle at this time to keep classrooms covered. Other staff are stepping in to keep classes going. At the elementary level, classrooms with a significant number of quarantines have been moved to distance learning rather than having some students report in-person while others are at home. Crawfordsville Middle School had a teacher quarantined who was able to broadcast back into the classroom. The staff is being very creative at this time to make it work.

If things do get worse in terms of case numbers, increased spread in the schools, or staffing issues, a recommendation for distance learning on a school by school basis could be made. However, the quarantines will likely be short term in nature - days or weeks as opposed to months or an entire semester.

Ellen Ball received contacts from parents encouraging us to go back to the Hybrid and will relay Dr. Bowling's report back to them.

Dr. Bowling advised if the COVID situation changes for the worse, short term moves to distance learning for a few days or a week or two would likely be the recommendation as opposed to the

hybrid model. School principals and teacher leadership teams at each building will certainly be asked to participate in making these recommendations.

Winter Sports and Extracurricular Activities

- Schools are handing out two tickets per immediate family member per event.
- We are not participating with schools whose counties are in red.
- More families with students in sports are asking for distance education to protect their children from missing games due to quarantines.
- A message has been sent encouraging parents to curtail social activities at home and in the community. Data is showing that these types of gatherings are generating the majority of the positive cases in the county.

Metrics

Positivity Rate: **6.41%** - Target: **5%**

Weekly Cases Per 100,000: **357** - Target: **10 (Blue)**

The Positivity Rate puts the County in the Yellow Level. The Cases Per Week puts the County in the Red Level. The two combined put us at the Orange Level.

Susan Albrecht asked, “Have we lost a lot of people who would normally be subs or are they just busy and we have more spots than we can fill? Dr. Bowling advised, “At the beginning of the year, permanent subs were hired for every building. Subs were told that they would be working four days a week to help offset this issue.”

Dr. Ryker advised, “We are not filling all of our vacancies. The current fill rate has been 52%, 52%, 61% and 80% which consist of not only teachers. The sub pool number we currently have is not any different from what we had the year before. They are not accepting the jobs.

VIII. Board Members’ Communication

Steve McLaughlin thanked Dr. Bowling and his staff for everything they are doing along with Susan Albrecht and Kathleen Brown in keeping the board up to date on the COVID issue.

Kathleen Brown also expressed appreciation to the administration and the staff’s willingness to have the subcommittee weekly meetings with COVID discussions since February.

IX. Patron Comments

There were no patron comments at this time.

X. Adjournment

Ellen Ball made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kathleen Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:43 P.M.