

**Mahomet-Seymour
COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT NO. 3
Champaign County, Illinois
Meeting of the Board of Education
Regular Meeting**

Held in the Board Conference Room

Date: January 19, 2021

7:00 Regular Board Meeting

1. Call to order

The Regular Board Meeting was called to order by President Max McComb at 7:01 p.m. He welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. Roll Call

Board members physically present for the roll call were Max McComb, Lori Larson, and Merle Giles. Board members Meghan Hennesy, Ken Keefe, and Dr. Colleen Schultz attended remotely. Also physically present were Superintendent, Dr. Lindsey Hall, and Board Recorder, Dawn Quinley. Dr. Jeremy Henrichs was absent.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

President McComb asked those in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Giles**, *to approve the agenda* as presented.

Member Keefe asked to move New Business items 1, 4, 5, and 8 to the consent agenda. Dr. Hall explained that items containing a resolution are not able to be added to the consent agenda, so item 1 may not be moved.

Motion was made by **Keefe**, seconded by **Larson**, to modify the agenda by moving new business items 4, 5, and 8 to the consent agenda. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 6-0. Motion carried.

President McComb called for a vote on the modified agenda. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 6-0. Motion carried.

5. Consent Agenda Items

President McComb asked the Board if they would like to see any additional changes to the consent agenda. New business items 4, 5, and 8 were added to the consent agenda.

- Minutes for the December 14, 2020 Regular Meeting - Open Session
- Minutes for the December 14, 2020 Regular Meeting - Closed Session
- Bills as presented
- Treasurer’s Report as presented
- Personnel Changes as presented
- 2021-2022 School Calendar
- Budget Transfers & Amendments
- 2021-2022 Budget Timeline
- Amendment of Food Service Agreement with Arbor Management

- Approval of ESL Teacher
- Approval of Additional Custodian

Member Hennesy expressed concern about the sufficiency of details included in the closed meeting minutes for December 14. She said she will be voting no on the minutes and would to request an agenda item for the next meeting so the Board can discuss minutes.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Giles**, to approve the consent agenda as modified. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 4-2. Members Keefe, Giles, Larson and McComb voted yes. Members Hennesy and Schultz voted no. Motion carried.

6. Donations

Dr. Lindsey Hall read the donation list:

<u>Name of Donor</u>	<u>Donation To</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Value</u>
Mark Musselman	High School	Piano	\$2,200.00
The Vineyard Church	High School	Cash to Social Work Fund	\$2,500.00
Mahomet Area Chamber of Commerce	High School	Cash for Girls Basketball Team	\$500.00
M-S Music Boosters	High School	Cash for Madrigals	\$1699.50
Total			\$6,899.50

Motion was made by **Giles**, seconded by **Schultz**, to approve the *Donation List* as presented. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 6-0. Motion carried.

7. Communications from PTO, MSEA, Foundation, Visitors and Board Commendations

PTO: No report

MSEA: No report

MSEF: The Foundation collected over \$20,000 in their annual campaign. She thanked the generous donors and the community for their support. The grant committee will meet soon to dicuss wheter or not they will be able to offer any grants.

Visitors: There was no public participation from visitors.

8. Reports, Updates & Informational Board Communication

Meghan Hennesy had no report.

Colleen Schultz had no report.

Ken Keefe said he was happy and cautiously optimistic with the return to Tier 1. He looks forward to seeing extracurriculars resume and a return to normalcy.

Lori Larson said she is grateful to the district and staff for offering COVID testing. She is also grateful for the opportunity to serve both remote and in-person students. It is exciting to see that we are able to continue to do some things an continue to make accommodations due to COVID.

Merle Giles said he is happy to hear that our COVID leadership continues.

President McComb echoed Ken’s optimism for our region’s return to Tier 1. Thank you to the staff and everyone for what they have done to get us up and moving. He appreciates the hard work that made it happen.

Financial Update

Heather Smith, Chief School Business Official, gave a financial report to the Board. Sales tax this January was \$500 more than last January. It looks optimistic that we will not have to borrow money to pay our bonds. We are a little ahead on revenue; grants have helped with that along with receiving the rest of our 2019 property taxes levy money. Expenses are a little higher this month due to payment of Fieldhouse expenses. Debt service is high because we pay our debt service at the beginning of the year. She explained that the budget will need to be amended if we receive a second round of federal money related to COVID.

Director of Special Education's Report

Christine Northrup shared that she and Rhonda Ehrecke had hoped to give the Board a presentation on therapy dogs, but on advice of the Alliance of Therapy dogs, the presentation has been postponed until February. Mrs. Northrup was asked about the District's ability to meet special education needs after the loss of another special education teacher. She explained that there is a significant shortage in special education teachers across the nation. The District has partnered with Grand Canyon University to provide support to current staff members who are interested in obtaining the LBS1 certification, or interested in becoming certified special education teachers. Eastern Illinois University is also planning to offer classes in Champaign for people to become certified teachers.

Director of Instruction's Report

Dr. Nicole Rummel's report was included in the Board packet. She expressed her appreciation to the teachers for their work with students who are struggling academically. There will be credit recovery opportunities beginning in February at the High School to help students get back on track for graduation. Dr. Rummel and Christine Northrup have been working with interventionists at the elementary level to pull together data with the plan to create a 2-3 year plan to get students back on track after the pandemic. The first social emotional learning event for parents, paid for by the Healing Illinois Grant, was held tonight. Twelve parents attended the remote meeting. An identical program will be offered on Saturday and a recording will be made available. The Board thanked Dr. Rummel for the data. Member Keefe asked if she had any concerns about grade inflation. Dr. Rummel said that she is more concerned about the number of students not engaged in learning right now than she is in grade inflation. She said they are looking at summer school and offering another Jump Start session for students to help them get caught up.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Lindsey Hall's report was included in the Board packet. She echoed thanks to the entire staff for getting us to the second semester. Dr. Hall offered her condolences on behalf of the school district to the families on the recent passing of Terry Greene, Judy Swiger, and Sherry Emerson, three people who had positive impacts on the District. Dr. Hall reported that the Facilitating Team had its first meeting on January 14. It is an enthusiastic and energetic group and she is looking forward to next meeting on January 28. The group will meet every other Thursday moving forward. Member Keefe asked that the Board would be invited to future facilitating meetings as observers, but not as participants. Member Schultz agreed that it had been previously decided by the Board that the entire Board would be invited to observe, but not participate, so that open meetings act requirements do not come into effect. Dr. Hall apologized for not announcing the January 14 meeting to the Board, noting it was an unintentional oversight. She announced the next meeting will be held on January 28.

9. Regular Business

9. A. Unfinished Business

9. B. New Business

9.B.1. Abatement Resolution & Transfer from Sales Tax to Debt Service

Heather Smith, Chief Financial Business Officer, explained what a tax abatement is and the reasons to abate. She reviewed the abatement information. She was asked about the due date of the series 2016 bonds. She explained that the due dates are spread throughout several years and the last payment is in 2027.

Motion was made by **Giles**, seconded by **Keefe**, to approve the resolution to abate taxes as presented. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 6-0. Motion carried.

9.B.2. Parkland Dual Credit Fees

Dr. Nicole Rummel and Chad Benedict learned last year that Parkland College is going to begin assessing fees for dual credit courses offered at local high schools even when those courses are taught by high school faculty. The fee is different based on the course and is based on the number attending the course, and the District would help those students on free or reduced lunch. Dr. Rummel described the fee as a processing fee being charged by Parkland to cover their costs, and noted that it is significantly less than the per credit fee charged by Parkland for a college course. The Board asked several follow up questions focusing on whether or not it was reasonable to expect families to pay the fees. Some members expressed concern that there are families who are not able to afford to pay, but who do not qualify for free or reduced lunch. Dr. Rummel said the District has helped families in this situation in the past and this practice would continue. Other members said it was reasonable to expect families to pay the fee as there is a value to the college credit being received and the District has other needs that could be addressed by not absorbing the fees.

Motion was made by **Giles**, seconded by **Larson**, to approve passing along the Parkland dual credit fee to families for dual credit courses taught by Mahomet-Seymour staff at the Parkland Community College per student rate charged to the district with the district covering fees in full (free lunch), or in part (reduced lunch), for qualifying students.

Member Hennesy stated that she would like more data, and Dr. Schultz she would like the Board to discuss fees and extra things we ask people to pay for at a future meeting. President McComb said this could be discussed at a study session. Member Keefe would like to push back on Parkland to express our displeasure at the fees. Dr. Hall said that the District has already done this. After a time of more discussion, President McComb called for a vote.

Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-3. Members Giles, Larson, and McComb voted yes. Members Keefe, Schultz, and Hennesy voted no. Motion defeated.

Member Larson said she thinks that it is the District’s responsibility to educate students in Pre-K-12, and offering college credit courses should require a fee as it is above and beyond what the District is responsible to provide. Member Giles says that it sends the message that the District is going to subsidize the college bound. Dr. Schultz and Member Hennesy both requested that the item be included on the agenda for the February study session. President McComb said that there is a conflict with adding it to the February agenda, so it would be March before it can be discussed. Dr. Schultz would like the Board to discuss what the Board might do to set parameters that would allow everyone to participate. Dr. Hall said that she thinks it is a valid and worthy discussion, but she sees two topics: passing along payment for dual credit fees and discussing all fees and other extra items students are required to pay to participate in academics and extracurricular activities. She said it would be helpful if the Board would communicate questions ahead of the meeting so they can bring information the board wants to facilitate the discussion. Member Hennesy indicated that she would be happy to send along questions that are specific to those two topics ahead of the meeting and hopes that others will do the same.

9.B.3. Chromebooks

Jared Lynn shared that based on current enrollment, he would like to request approval for 530 devices. He noted that the prices have gone up substantially because of increased market demand. There is a bit of urgency to get the order in now so that the order arrives on time. The Board asked several follow up questions including whether the order placed last year has been received. Mr. Lynn indicated that the District is still waiting to receive Chromebooks ordered last year, but anticipates receiving these by the end of the month. He and CSBO, Heather Smith, explained the need for the 530 new devices to replace aging Chromebooks and to have one for every student.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Giles**, to approve the purchase of student Chromebooks as presented. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 5-1. Member Keefe voted no. Motion carried.

9.B.4. Amendment of Food Service Agreement with Arbor Management

Moved to Consent Agenda.

9.B.5. Approval of ESL Teacher

Moved to Consent Agenda.

9.B.6. Memorandum of Understanding: Second Semester Work Hours

Dr. Lindsey Hall explained that administration worked with the MSEA to develop the memorandum of understanding regarding second semester work hours. Since the student day is shorter than a typical year, work hours need to be established through the MOU. The Board discussed Member Hennesy’s concern about an email the Board received from the MSEA that appeared to her to suggest that some of the MOU negotiating could have been under duress with some saying yes when they might have wanted to say no. Member Keefe said he doesn’t know where the position of the district came from because the Board didn’t discuss it. Dr. Hall shared that the hours came from the reopening plan and the MOU from the first semester. The new MOU was an extension of the MOU from last semester.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Giles**, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding and the Letter of Understanding with the MSEA. Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-3. Members Giles, Larson, and McComb voted yes. Members Hennesy, Schultz, and Keefe voted no. Motion defeated.

9.B.7. Memorandum of Understanding: COVID-19 Leave

Dr. Lindsey Hall explained that this MOU is needed because of some changes in COVID leave which is the new name for FFCRA. This MOU allows employees to have access to whatever COVID leave they have left over prior to 12/31/20 and extends the time to use it until 3/31/21. The MSEA has seen and reviewed the MOU and are in favor of moving ahead.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Giles**, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the MSEA that addresses COVID-19 leave for second semester.

Motion was made by **Schultz**, seconded by **Hennesy**, to amend the MOU from 15 days to a maximum of 50 days. The Board discussed the motion to amend. Dr. Hall and Ms. Smith said the District should check with the District attorney and TRS about this as there are possible TRS penalties for both the district and employees. The District attorney drafted the MOU and is the one who is the expert about this. Member Schultz said she is concerned that staff might feel like they have to come to school when they should stay home, and she would like anyone who finds themselves in that situation to be paid so that they will be more likely to stay home when they should. Dr. Hall and Dr. Rummel explained that most employees haven’t dipped into COVID leave at all, staff has been allowed to work from home when quarantined so employees have not used any leave for those days, and employees have access to their own sick leave as well as the

sick leave bank. Member Schultz asked that we follow up with TRS and the District attorney even if the motion to approve 15 days is passed to see if 50 days is allowable. Member Keefe asked that we find out if any number greater than 15 days is allowable. Dr. Hall will request a written opinion from the attorney and will pass this on to the Board. If the attorney has a different suggestion, then it will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

President McComb called for a vote on the motion to amend the MOU from 15 to 50 days. Motion was not approved by a vote of 0-6 Motion defeated.

President McComb called for a vote on the original motion. Motion approved by “yes” vote, 6-0. Motion carried.

9.B.8. Approval of Additional Custodian

Moved to Consent Agenda.

9.B.9. COVID-19 Data Request

Dr. Colleen Schultz said that the Board Bar in the packet does not accurately reflect what she asked for. She explained that she asked for the COVID Dashboard/Data to be included as an action item so that the Board can discuss data given to the Board and the community, and make motions for the Board to be able to direct in this regard. She outlined her concerns with the process to have an item added to the agenda. She said she feels like this particular agenda item was designed to pit people against it.

Motion was made by **Schultz**, seconded by **Keefe**, that the Superintendent will provide the Board with accurate and complete COVID data. The Board discussed the motion with Dr. Schultz stating that the COVID dashboard has many inaccuracies and any time she attempts to get accurate data it is denied. She would like accurate data so the Board can make informed decisions. Dr. Hall and District Nurse, Nita Bachman, stressed that the COVID dashboard is accurate, and offered to look into any situations that Dr. Schultz feels are inaccurate. Member Hennesy said that she felt it was important to mention that she also requested some agenda items and those were summarily denied. She said there seem to be two boards; one who can request data and receive it and another who can request data and not receive it.

After a lengthy discussion, Member Larson asked to call the vote on the motion, which President McComb agreed to do. Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-3. Members Keefe, Hennesy, and Schultz voted yes. Members Larson, Giles, and McComb voted no. Motion defeated.

9.B.10. Federal COVID-19 Relief Funds

Dr. Colleen Schultz asked for the agenda item. She said that because the Board seems to just want to fight about everything, she feels that is unproductive and she had nothing to say.

Motion was made by **Keefe**, seconded by **Hennesy**, that the Mahomet Seymour School District will not spend, or commit to spend, any federal COVID-19 related funds without prior approval via a vote by the Board of Education. The Board discussed the motion. CSBO, Heather Smith, said that just as with the first round of COVID relief money, she plans to bring a budget to the Board when she has the information on any amount to be received. In the meantime, if the District receives money, she would like to be able to proceed with spending on day-to-day operational items. Any large purchases would come to the Board for approval just as they have in the past. Member Hennesy asked for a report that breaks down what was spent and what has been spent over the budget. Ms. Smith said this information was on the report she already provided to the Board. The Board discussed the role of the CSBO and the role of the Board in the process. Dr. Hall said that we have a highly qualified CSBO who can advise the board and her recommendation to

vote against the motion is because the CSBO is qualified and can handle making recommendations about this money not to create an argument. President McComb and Member Giles asked why the Board would tie Ms. Smith's hands when they need to buy more supplies. While there may be a cadence of information that should come to the Board, the management processes are already in place. Ms. Smith said that she would be willing to provide the Board with reports as often as they want and she will come to the Board as soon as she has the information available.

President McComb called for a vote on the motion. Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-3. Members Keefe, Schultz, and Hennesy voted yes. Members Giles, Larson, and McComb voted no. Motion defeated.

9.B.11. COVID-19 Update

Dr. Lindsey Hall reported that our region has moved from Tier 3 to Tier 1 in Phase 4 which has implications primarily for athletics, what we can and can't do and how to move ahead. Coaches will be reaching out to parents soon. Sports are categorized into low, medium, and high risk. Boys swimming is low risk, JH volleyball is considered medium risk, and basketball is considered high risk. Low and medium risk sports may compete. High risk sports are limited to intra-squad practices. No spectators will be allowed at competitions, but the District is looking to live stream the events.

Vaccines are moving ahead. Some staff have already been vaccinated: District Nurse, Health EOPS, and staff that have CPI training. Signups for educators will be done through the Regional Office of Education. District Nurse, Nita Bachman, said that best estimates are that vaccines for educators are coming in next 2-3 weeks. Testing is going well and we continue to move forward.

10. Closed Session

McComb stated it was necessary to go into Closed Session for the purpose of: *1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. 2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.*

Motion was made by **Giles**, seconded by **Keefe**, at 9:32 p.m. to go into closed session for the purposes stated by McComb. The motion was approved by "yes" vote, 6-0. Motion carried.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Giles**, at 9:57 p.m., to return to open session. The motion was approved by "yes" vote, 6-0. Motion carried.

11. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by "yes" vote, 6-0 at 10:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Max McComb, President

Dr. Jeremy Henrichs, Secretary

Submitted by Dawn Quinley, Board Recorder