

**NORTH PUTNAM COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**JANUARY 13, 2022 MINUTES**

The members of the Board of School Trustees of the North Putnam Community School Corporation held a regular session meeting on Thursday, January 13, 2022, 7:00 P.M. at North Putnam High School, Large Group Instruction Room, 8869 N CR 250 E, Roachdale, Indiana.

Board members present in person: Mark Hoke  
Rachel Mandeville  
Joanie Knapp  
Eric Oliver  
Amber Greene  
Travis Lambermont

Board members absent: Ron Spencer

Superintendent present: Nicole Allee

Attorney present: Darren Chadd

**I. SUPPORT**

**A. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Pledge of Allegiance**

Travis Lambermont called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members present were Mark Hoke, Rachel Mandeville, Joanie Knapp, Eric Oliver, Amber Greene, and Travis Lambermont.

**B. Approval of Agenda:**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**C. Recognition:**

**Celebrating Success – Beth Waterman, Principal, Roachdale Elementary (Honoree: Julie Black):**

Julie Black, Teacher at Roachdale Elementary, is the recipient of the Excellence in Teaching Award for January.

Julie Black graduated from Indiana State University. She has taught at North Putnam for twenty years. She is a dedicated and valuable teacher at Roachdale Elementary. She truly cares about the students and their education. She enjoys diamond dot painting, crafting with her Cricut, boating with her family, traveling and cruising, and is a huge Disney World fan. Congratulations to Julie Black. We are very proud of her.

**D. Public Comments:**

A patron was curious on the process when identifying a student to quarantine and if they watch a video is there a chance of mistaken identity. He wanted to know how they go about resolving it. His daughter was quarantined because she was around a student who tested positive. He thinks it is mistaken identity. She does so well in school and works so hard and he hates to see this for her. With missing ten days or five days, she will not be allowed to practice with the team. Another patron had a concern about special education positions that have been recently vacated and what we are doing to find replacements. He heard we hired one teacher, but apparently we cannot keep teachers because other schools pay more. If we can spend more money on athletics, then we need to spend more for teachers.

**E. Consent Agenda:**

We added staff to the personnel agenda and they are noted with an asterisk.

Mark Hoke motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Joanie Knapp seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**F. Disposition of Outstanding Checks:**

According to Indiana Code, we can receipt old checks (two years) back into our account. Tanya Pearson noted we receipted \$946.50 back into our account from outstanding checks. Mark Hoke asked if the funds get put back into the building accounts. Tanya Pearson responded yes they do.

Joanie Knapp motioned to approve the disposition of outstanding checks as presented. Rachel Mandeville seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**G. Approval of Extra-Curricular Funds:**

Dr. Allee provided a list of ECA funds in each building. The schools deposit money they receive into these funds. Rachel Mandeville asked if the middle school athletics falls under the high school. Dr. Allee noted that yes it does.

Joanie Knapp motioned to approve the extra-curricular funds as presented. Amber Greene seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**H. Transfer of Funds:**

Tanya Pearson noted we are requesting to transfer \$750,000 from the Operations Fund to the Rainy Day Fund. Dr. Allee responded this is similar to a savings account and it allows us to make one-time expenditures for any issues that come up. Money spent from this fund is subject to purchasing guidelines. Tanya Pearson noted that we have not spent any out of this account in four years.

Eric Oliver motioned to approve the above transfer of funds as presented. Mark Hoke seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**I. Approval of Tax Refund Exchange and Compliance System (TRECS):**

Tanya Pearson noted that other school corporations use TRECS and the service is free. The program we currently use charges us \$6.00 per family and we only get 50% of the money they collect. TRECS is a results-oriented process to help schools collect outstanding debts in a timely, cost-effective manner. This program would allow textbook rental and other delinquent fees to be automatically deducted from tax refunds. This is very simple and has no cost to the corporation. We have \$41,800 in uncollected textbook rental. The company we currently use has not been successful in collecting past due accounts. Dr. Allee noted that even with the new process, they would still have an opportunity to contact the buildings and set up a payment plan. The schools send three total collection invoices before turning them over. Mark Hoke asked if the \$41,800 was just for this school year. Tanya Pearson responded yes it is.

Rachel Mandeville motioned to approve the above TRECS program as presented. Joanie Knapp seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**II. BOARD ORGANIZATION**

**A. Election of Officers – President, Vice President, Secretary (Newly elected President will preside at the meeting):**

Dr. Allee opened the meeting up for nominations of Board officers. Joanie Knapp nominated Travis Lambermont. Darren Chadd, Corporation Attorney, noted that second nominations were not required. There were no other nominations. The nominations for Board President was closed. Travis Lambermont received a 5 – 0 – 1 vote (Travis Lambermont abstained). Travis Lambermont was elected President of the Board.

Rachel Mandeville nominated Mark Hoke for Vice President. There were no other nominations. The nominations for Vice President were closed. Mark Hoke received a 5 – 0 – 1 vote (Mark Hoke abstained). Mark Hoke was elected Vice President of the Board.

Mark Hoke nominated Joanie Knapp for Secretary. There were no others nominations. The nominations for Secretary were closed. Joanie Knapp received a 5 – 0 – 1 vote (Joanie Knapp abstained). Joanie Knapp was elected Secretary of the Board.

**B. Establishment of Date, Time, and Place of Meeting:**

Dr. Allee noted the recommendation is to continue Board meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Large Group Instruction Room at the high school with the exception of July and September.

Joanie Knapp motioned to approve the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Large Group Instruction Room at the high school with the exception of July and September as presented. Rachel Mandeville seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**C. Appointment of Corporation Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer:**

Rachel Mandeville motioned to approve the appointment of Tanya Pearson, Corporation Treasurer, and Mandy Keslar, Assistant Treasurer. Joanie Knapp seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**D. Adoption of Board Salary (\$2,000 Annually):**

Currently, Board members are paid \$2,000 annually. Rachel Mandeville would like to discuss adding stipends for extra meetings. With increases recently given to staff and administrators, it's worth a discussion. In the past, Board members did not want to take extra money from the corporation, but members could donate the money back to the corporation if they choose to do so. Darren Chadd, Corporation Attorney, noted that \$2,000 annually is the maximum allowed per state law, but they can continue to look into stipends for extra meetings. This should be done as a resolution. Amber Greene is not comfortable receiving a stipend and feels we are here to serve the community and the pay we receive now is enough. Eric Oliver feels they have put a lot of time in with extra meetings. Travis Lambermont commented that if you are showing up just to get a paycheck, then you are doing it for the wrong reasons. Eric Oliver just thinks it's worth discussing. Dr. Allee noted they would need to keep in mind that we would need to calculate for this to determine the impact, since we have not figured it in before now. Eric Oliver commented that they have spent a lot of Saturdays meeting as a Board and he feels there should be compensation. Joanie Knapp feels this is a community service and is not in favor of more money. Rachel Mandeville asked if this could be tabled until we have more information.

Rachel Mandeville motioned to table the adoption of the Board salary until we have more information. Mark Hoke seconded the motion and it died with a 3 – 3 – 0 vote (Travis Lambermont, Amber Greene, and Joanie Knapp nay). Mark Hoke motioned to adopt the Board salary as presented with more information on extra stipends on the next agenda. Rachel Mandeville seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**E. Appointment of Extra Curricular Treasurers:**

Joanie Knapp motioned to approve the appointment of ECA treasurers Katrina Watson-BB; Patty Jones-RD; Jennifer Nelson-MS; and Caitlin McMurtry-HS. Mark Hoke seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**F. Approval of Bonds for Treasurers:**

Indiana Code requires that anyone handling money, deposits, and collecting money for textbooks or other fees must be bonded.

Travis Lambermont motioned to approve the bonds for treasurers as presented. Amber Greene seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**G. Appointment of Corporation Attorney:**

Taylor, Chadd, Minnette, Schneider & Clutter, have been our corporation attorneys for some time now. Since they started, they have not increased our fees from the \$180 per hour. They try to give a discount to the school, but sometimes it becomes necessary to increase the fees. Therefore, they are increasing by \$10 making their fee \$190 per hour.

Eric Oliver motioned to approve Taylor, Chadd, Minnette, Schneider, & Clutter with a rate increase to \$190 per hour (\$10 per hour increase). Joanie Knapp seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**H. Appointment of Board Members as Representatives to the Collective Bargaining Process:**

We can have up to three Board members on the Collective Bargaining Committee. This committee meets with the North Putnam Teacher’s Association to discuss negotiations. Travis Lambermont asked for volunteers. Ron Spencer and Joanie Knapp volunteered.

Travis Lambermont motioned to approve the above representatives to the Collective Bargaining Process. Amber Greene seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**I. Forms for Conflict of Interest Statements (Distributed for Return at February Board Meeting):**

The Conflict of Interest Statements need to be returned to April Lambermont at the February Board meeting. Dr. Allee noted that each Board member should complete the form, even if they do not have a conflict.

The Board recessed at 7:49 p.m. for the Board of Finance meeting.

**III. RECESS – Board of Finance Meeting**

**A. Elect President and Secretary:**

The Board of Finance consists of members of the Board. They need to elect a President and a Secretary.

Rachel Mandeville motioned to keep the same officers as the Board officers. This would be Travis Lambermont, President, and Joanie Knapp, Secretary. Amber Greene seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**B. Review Corporation Investments and Financial Update:**

Tanya Pearson noted that each year we are required to present financial information. The Board receives a fund report each month. The assessed value and population are listed in the information provided to the Board. We have had declining enrollment, but we increased by 41 students in September. The fund balances are listed. Federal funds are reimbursed to the corporation after the money has been spent. The chart lists all funds and not just the educational funds. All of the funds are doing well. She is very pleased with the funds and we are sustaining and do not need to ask tax payers for assistance. Eric Oliver is impressed the net assessed value of property is \$5,000,000. Dr. Allee noted this is the value of the taxes. Rachel Mandeville thanked them for the great job.

The Board of Finance meeting was closed at 7:57 p.m.

**IV. PROTECT**

**A. Discussion of Back to School Plan:**

Dr. Allee received a memo from our counsel talking about vaccination requirements. The Supreme Court denied mandating this, so this is not an issue now. This memo included continuing the requirement that a person with COVID-19 must isolate and follow close contact rules. The attorney who works with the Superintendent’s Study Council helped with some of the information. We can be fined for every day we refuse to follow the guidelines. The Putnam County Health Department has the authority to order a school corporation to close. We report to them when we reach over 20% in absences. The Department of Education also tracks this. Grant funds also could be subject to garnishment and discontinuance. We are allowed to send students home with communicable diseases, but whatever they decide, we will enforce.

She provided information from the CDC. It talks about who should quarantine and who would not need to quarantine. It discusses masks and activities students could participate in and isolation guidance updates for everyone regardless of vaccination status. The information from the Putnam County Health Department state if the school follows the new CDC guidelines, students that are COVID positive or are identified as a close contact and returning on day 6 will have to wear a properly fitted mask at all times on days 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. The exception would be when eating, participating in band or choir, or playing in a sport. Students that are COVID positive or are identified as a close contact and returning on day 6 would have to eat in a separate area from other students in the cafeteria and be at least six feet apart from each other on days 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. If we have no mask requirement, a student or staff member that has been exposed to someone with COVID in or outside the classroom and are fully vaccinated may remain in school as long as they are asymptomatic. She spoke to Mary Unger, Corporation Nurse, and the administrators and they feel it would

not be in our best interest to move to five days and we could look at ten days. The only way around this is to mask all of the time. The Putnam County Health Department does not agree with the CDC guidelines, but they will follow them. She also provided a document showing teaching positions unfilled and subs available. We have a small number of substitutes. We have administrators covering classes and teachers giving up prep periods to help.

She provided the Board with more information on quarantining and masking. Joanie Knapp commented that we are a red county right now and she wonders if we should go back to masking because of this. She thinks it would simplify things. Rachel Mandeville commented the Putnam County Health Department does not support the guidelines, but they follow them. She thinks our guidelines seem to be very conservative. She heard from families who cannot afford to take any more time off of work. Mark Hoke commented that other school corporations make their back to school plan simple. Some are going to follow CDC guidelines and some are going to follow Department of Health, but otherwise they are following CDC guidelines. Dr. Allee asked Darren Chadd if we are reported and they cite the administrators and her for committing a misdemeanor at what point or extent would the attorney defend them and would they pay for the services. Darren Chadd noted these are the rules and we need to follow or there could be consequences affecting the superintendent, administrators, and corporation. Rachel Mandeville asked if we do not follow the CDC guidelines that the Health Department wants us to follow is that breaking the rules. Darren Chadd noted that under the rules, there may be more monitoring and enforcing required. Joanie Knapp feels this is a lot to ask the administrators to monitor. Dr. Allee said they could look at five days and fully masked. If we are making significant changes, maybe we shouldn't put them in place until the students and staff come back on Tuesday. Travis Lambermont asked if this is something we could discuss further when we meet the first week in February. Dr. Allee said the only thing with that is the numbers can change drastically on a regular basis.

Rachel Mandeville motioned to move from 14 days quarantine to 10 days quarantine effective January 18, 2022 and watch CDC numbers as they come in. Mark Hoke seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

Joanie Knapp commented that with the county in the red are we concerned that we should be wearing masks. Joanie Knapp motioned to approve mandating masks if the county is in red. Travis Lambermont seconded the motion and it died with a 2 – 4 – 0 vote (Amber Greene, Eric Oliver, Rachel Mandeville, and Mark Hoke nay). Dr. Allee confirmed that beginning Tuesday the plan remains essentially the same with the exception of changing from 14 days quarantine to 10 days. Eric Oliver asked if it is easier with the masks. Jason Chew commented that it is challenging with high school students. Rodney Simpson commented it is easier with elementary students.

**V. ENGAGE:**

There were no topics.

**VI. EDUCATE**

**A. Approval of International Travel Program-High School Agriculture:**

Bucky Kramer provided information to Kate Skirvin on an International Travel Program for agriculture students. This would allow our agriculture students to travel to Ireland. The students would learn about where our food comes from and what crops are most grown and used in the United States. It will provide a deeper understanding of global agriculture. It's a great opportunity for our students.

Rachel Mandeville motioned to approve the above International Travel Program to Ireland as presented. Joanie Knapp seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

**VII. DEVELOP**

There were no topics.

**VIII. REPORTS**

**A. Superintendent (Dr. Allee):**

She distributed an annual calendar of events to the Board. The budget and financial outlook is on there. Census information from Susan Brudvig was also included. She thanked the parents for attending tonight

and their patience. Parents overall have been supportive and understanding. Thanks to the administrators for working to fill openings as soon as possible.

**B. Treasurer (Tanya Pearson):**

We received the 1782 Notice. The proposed tax rate of \$1.67 came in at \$1.06. This is good news. The assessed value did increase by \$11,000. We still have the cheapest tax rate in the county.

**C. Director of Operations (Terry Tippin):**

He gave kudos to the custodians, support staff, and bus drivers for keeping the buildings and busses sanitized. They implemented the tablets on the busses. The tablets have been great. We have 20 bus route drivers. We are still in pretty good shape right now on bus drivers. The drivers have done a tremendous job. He thanks the community for being patient.

**D. Administrators:**

Beth Waterman noted they finished the diagnostics data and have been studying it. The after school program has been great and this is a nice approach to supporting our students.

Rodney Simpson commented he just completed safety training. Everything has been going good.

Bart Jochim said it's been a busy weekend. The girls and boys basketball played Friday and Saturday with wins both days. There is conference wrestling at Edgewood. Out of seven county championships, North Putnam has won five of them. This is exciting. Thanks to all the coaches.

Jason Chew noted the band and choir concert was great last month. He appreciated Mrs. Pierce stepping in to cover. The sophomores went to Area 30 this week and will begin scheduling soon for the next school year. Homecoming is this week. We have a great group of leaders in the building who have stepped up and helped when needed and he appreciates it.

Bucky Kramer stated they have great staff. Mr. Fouts has been pulling through and continues to fight. The iReady numbers are at mid-point. Students have been working hard. He thanked Joanie Knapp for helping with and continuing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholar. Matt Couch is taking 42 middle school students to a Young Women and STEM Conference. This is very exciting. He thanked everyone for their support.

**IX. BOARD COMMENTS:**

Rachel Mandeville thanked the public for coming out. She was glad we could take care of teachers financially recently. She thanked the patron who shared information about staff. Joanie Knapp thanked the staff and sent her thoughts to Dan Fouts. Mark Hoke asked about when the wrestling/weight equipment would be moved. Jason Chew commented there is a lot to move. The intent is this space will be a classroom once moved. The challenge is moving the mats on a regular basis. Some stuff has been moved, just not all of it. Mark Hoke said Dan Fouts is in his thoughts.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Joanie Knapp moved for adjournment of the meeting. Mark Hoke seconded the motion and it carried with a 6 – 0 vote. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on February 17, 2022 at the high school.

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*Travis Lambermont, President*

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*Rachel Mandeville, Member*

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*Mark Hoke, Vice President*

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*Eric Oliver, Member*

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*Joanie Knapp, Secretary*

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*Ron Spencer, Member*

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*Amber Greene, Member*