

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

Held in the Board Conference Room

Date: March 30, 2020

**6:00 Special Meeting**

**1. Call to order**

The Special Meeting was called to order by President Max McComb at 6:08 p.m. He welcomed all present to the meeting.

**2. Roll Call**

Board members physically present for the roll call were Max McComb, and Merle Giles. Board members Lori Larson, Meghan Hennesy, Dr. Jeremy Henrichs, Ken Keefe, and Dr. Colleen Schultz attended the meeting by video conference. Also physically present were Dr. Lindsey Hall, Superintendent, Heather Smith, CSBO, and Dawn Quinley, Board Recorder.

**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 Giles, seconded by Larson, *to approve the agenda* as presented. The motion passed.

**5. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**6. COVID-19 Update**

Dr. Lindsey Hall provided the Board with information regarding the impacts of Covid-19 to the District so far. She reported that the school building closure stands through April 7, and that Governor Pritzker has said he will review this as it gets closer to the date. Dr. Hall shared that remote learning guidelines were released by the Illinois State Board of Education late Friday evening. Staff has been amazing, and will be ready to implement remote learning with students on April 2. If additional closure is announced, we will continue with remote learning plans. The school calendar remains in place with May 22 as the last day for students. There is an institute day for teachers on May 26.

Dr. Hall reported that she and Mr. Benedict are discussing graduation and both believe it is best not to make a decision now as there isn't enough information available. They are coming up with plan B in the event that Krannert is not available for the ceremony on May 22. Dr. Hall's recommendation is to remain patient, take a wait-and-see approach, and stay on track with the executive orders that come out.

Dr. Hall reported that she met with the administrative leadership team and MSEA leadership over the weekend to discuss and decide the best course of action with regard to the remote learning recommendations that came out Friday evening from ISBE. The District will use two remote learning planning days on March 31 and April 1, and will develop remote learning plans through April 7. A plan for using the remaining three remote learning planning days will be made when we hear how much longer the building closure might be. The goal is to lower stress and anxiety for staff and families. There has been tremendous support from the community so far.

**7. Current District Response**

**Student Learning:** Dr. Hall gave an update of the remote learning recommendation guidelines. The administrative leadership team met over the weekend and discussed the recommendations. Dr. Rummel met with the District Instructional Review Team (DIRT) virtually this morning, and discussed issues and questions within the plan. There is a remote staff meeting scheduled tomorrow to share plans and follow up with the entire staff. The finalized plan will go out to teachers and then to families sometime tomorrow. Dr. Hall plans to send a video message to families

that will outline several items related to remote learning including information about grading. It is a top priority of the District to connect and stay engaged with each student. Principals and teachers have discussed plans to track engagement and follow up as needed to make sure we connect with every student. Mobile hotspots are available for checkout, and two busses are equipped with Wi-Fi and district Wi-Fi is accessible through all building parking lots. Mediacom is also offering free connectivity for families. There is currently a 3 month wait for purchasing additional mobile hotspots. The Board asked several follow-up questions.

**Food Distribution:** Dr. Hall gave an update on food distribution. She indicated that food distribution has been and will continue to happen on a daily basis at Middletown Prairie, Lincoln Trail and delivery by school bus while school buildings are closed. Mom's Pantry will also be open Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. The Give Me 5 program is also delivering bags of food. Dr. Hall shared that she has been working with other leaders in the community about how the need could grow and expand as time goes on.

Additionally, Dr. Hall shared that the District has loaned five 3D printers to a Mahomet company, Threat Tec, who will use them to make a prototype of masks. High School social worker, Rachel Simmons, has dedicated her skill set to the social emotional needs of our staff. The High school is setting up a hotline for students they can text or call at any time and it will ring a general number. Whoever is available at the time can respond with no personal numbers being shared with the student.

## **8. Financial Impact of Shutdown**

**Paying Employees:** Dr. Hall forwarded to the Board a joint statement from the Office of the Governor, Illinois Association of School Administrators, Illinois Principals Association, and the Illinois State Board of Education. The statement covered a number of different aspects of the current remote learning situation. The plan addresses the paying of employee's during this time and indicates that all employees will be paid normally, receive full and normal service credit in their pension systems, and no district will lose evidence based funding. Dr. Hall said the District has a contract with its employees, has the money budgeted, and it is the right thing to do under the circumstances.

**Added savings and/or added costs during shutdown:** Heather Smith shared that the District is saving on fuel and overtime with regard to transportation, custodial overtime, utilities, and supplies. The District will also see savings with Arbor management because they will bill the District based on actual use. The District will lose pre-k tuition.

**Sales tax impact and Fieldhouse financing:** Heather Smith shared that she is using a reduction of 20% in sales tax revenue as a worst case scenario. This would be the equivalent of no purchases being made for 2.5 months out of 12 months, which doesn't seem likely. She is able to track this amount monthly. The District should be able to cover the Fieldhouse payments, but may not have as much for some additional projects next summer. The Board asked Dr. Hall whether or not the contracts for the Fieldhouse had already been executed. Dr. Hall indicated that they had. Dr. Colleen Schultz expressed concern that the Board had not voted to approve the Fieldhouse contracts, but had only voted to approve an amendment to Ken Keefe's motion regarding the Fieldhouse projects. The Board discussed the concern, with several expressing that they believed they had voted on the amended motion and that the Fieldhouse projects had been approved at the February meeting. Dr. Hall indicated that she believed the Board had voted to approve the bids in February and then had a lengthy discussion about financing the approved projects at the March meeting. Dr. Schultz stated that she is concerned about making payroll for the next year and with taking on additional debt in a time of uncertainty. Heather Smith will check with Kevin Heid about financing options and find out how much we have put in at this point.

**Impact on next year's budget:** Heather Smith shared that there is nothing she knows of right now that will impact next year's budget. There is some question about property tax bills going out on time along with people's ability to pay. Dr. Hall shared that she spoke with Senator Chapin Rose, and the grant money is still slated to be received. The Board asked if the grant would be lost if the Fieldhouse projects did not proceed. Dr. Hall will check into this.

**Impact on plans to increase staff for next year:** Dr. Hall indicated that she still sees the need for the staffing plan that was presented to and approved by the Board. There is a teacher shortage and this makes it important to be early to the game in terms of hiring. A question was asked about the surety of receiving tier money and the balance in the Education Fund at the end of the fiscal year. Dr. Hall indicated that there is language in the Evidence Based Funding

law that guarantees a minimum amount. Heather Smith shared that the Education Fund is estimated to have around 2 million dollars at the end of the fiscal year. The Board asked President McComb and Merle Giles to share what lessons they might have learned from years past when funding was cut. President McComb shared that in the past, the Board elected to spend down fund balances, not cutting staff except through attrition, and let things correct over time. He said he is inclined to stick with the plan. Mr. Giles shared that in the past, when the District did not receive about 4 million dollars, and had some negative fund balances for several years. Dr. Hall stated that the Board has asked some good questions, and there is information she does not have tonight that she would like to gather for a future discussion. Jobs have been posted and at least one has been offered. The Board asked Dr. Hall to not make any additional offers until the Board can discuss it further on April 6.

**9. April 6 Study Session**

The Board discussed the agenda for the April 6 Study Session. There will be a remote update from Board attorneys in closed session, a financial update, and a staffing discussion. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. with closed session, and move into open session.

The board thanked everyone for all of the hard work as the crisis has unfolded noting that a lot has come together very quickly.

**10. Public Comment** There was no public comment.

**11. Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 8:16 p.m.

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Max McComb, President

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Dr. Jeremy Henrichs Secretary

Submitted by Dawn Quinley, Board Recorder