



**GENEVA COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 304
227 NORTH FOURTH STREET, GENEVA, ILLINOIS
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF A SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District Number 304 met in a special session on Monday, August 2, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at Geneva Middle School South, 1415 Viking Drive, Geneva, Illinois.

1. CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call
2. Welcome
3. Pledge
4. Reminder to sign attendance sheet

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Egan.

Board members present: President Taylor Egan, Jackie Forbes, Vice President Mike McCormick, Larry Cabeen, Dan Choi, Policy Committee Chair Alicia Saxton. Late: None. Absent: Tammie Meek.

The President welcomed everyone and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance.

District staff present: Terry Bleau, Principal Geneva Middle School South; Mike Wilkes, Technology Director; Shonette Sims, Director Learning & Teaching; Dr. Andy Barrett, Assistant Superintendent Learning & Teaching; Dr. Adam Law, Assistant Superintendent Personnel Services; Dr. Kent Mutchler, Superintendent.

Others present: Danielle Macchia, Lori Giampoli, Dominique Fontanilla, Andrew Ulijasz, Pat H., Ashlee White, Amanda Lane, Mark Fellinger, B. Lee, Michelle Irwin, Jennifer Fuhrmann, Bridget Siligmuller, Kate Bochte, Alex Karpf, Katarina Masters, Scott Black, James Erickson, Chris Heckman, Jennifer Smith, Adrianna Sims, Tiffany Douglass, Phil Bellino, Lani Mergen, Maleah Mergen, Christopher Benschhoof, Joshua Alvarado, Anne Boryszewski, Roxanne Shilka, Emily Ericksen, Hadley Woodhouse, Bethany Ruddock, Jonathan Bretz, Lawrence Yoo, Jessica Littlefield, Jean Smith, Phil Smith, Kate Coxworth, Lanay Sorce, Aline Brigham, Andrea Heeg, Heidi DeMarco, Caitlin Palagi, Ilena Ogden, Brad Flanigan, Stephanie Fellinger, Patti Hodge, Trish B., Kelly Dziadus, Brianne Karpf, Martha Tate, Jennifer La Fleur, Ryan Vance, Sandy Bressner, Stephanie Bellino, Diane Kay Gelder, Roy Gelder, Kathryn Gelder, Julie ?, Brad Flanigan, Teresa Blonquist, Debbie Kanarowski, Stephanie Anthony, Jim & Lauren S., Jon Kristofer, David & Claudia Eichelberger, Nancy Yi, B. Burns, Ryan Dentz.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Policy 2:220)

(PRESS Policy 2:230) *Per Board Policy 2:230, attendees wishing to formally address the Board during Public Comments must register their intention to participate in person by completing a **Public Comments Form** [at this link](#). Copies will also be made available and collected at the entrance.*

Many Geneva community members and parents presented to the Board their concerns regarding masking for their children. Those wanting masks shared that the district has many rules that we are expected to follow, such as the dress code and are asking the district to require masks for all staff and students regardless of vaccination status. There were many concerns over students who are compromised or who have family members that are, and have no online option this year. Not requiring masks does not provide a safe environment to educate children and will cause disruption. Those opposing masks shared that parents should make health decisions for their children and that

masking is a health decision. They stated that children are not at high risk for COVID and that schools are not hotspots. We need to live with this virus because it is not going away. The district cannot quarantine our children without our consent or an order from the court. We will not let our children be taken out of school.

3. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATION

1. 2021-2022 School Year Plan & Resolution

Dr. Andy Barrett, Shonette Sims, and Dr. Mutchler presented to the Board the 2021-22 School Year Plan. They shared that we do know that all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days. Our short-term goal is to safely maintain full in-person learning, while our long-term goal is to achieve an ultimate return to a pre-pandemic learning environment. We need a balance of health metrics and mitigation strategies to return to safe in-person learning. This plan includes layered mitigation strategies, situational monitoring, daily monitoring, vaccination, distancing, contact tracing and quarantine requirements, cleaning, testing, and masking. Additional considerations include transportation requirements and lunch guidance. An online-only or hybrid option will not be available this year. For students with significant health needs, we will offer homebound services. We will continue to monitor guidance from the CDC, IDPH and ISBE, and to provide updates.

Board comments, questions, concerns: Sounds like the CDC guidance recommending masks, and we have always followed the language of the CDC. It looks like the language is the same between the two announcements from the CDC, other than vaccination status. Is that correct? (Yes, it is because we are saying the trending is up due to positivity and transference. The CDC, last week, separated out K-12 schools to say that they strongly recommend, which the IDPH accepted. The Kane County Health Department put out a statement that said “should” and “shall”, which is even stronger. ISBE today in their Q&A is saying that everyone is recommended to wear masks in K-12.) Say we start the year requiring masks, what are some of the data points we would use to reduce mitigations? (The transmittal and positivity rates.) Are you looking for approval tonight to be able to change the plan without coming to the Board? (If needed, yes. We hope we do not have to use the resolution.) Will the high school be back to a full day with lunch being served? (Yes.) It would be helpful if we could tie some of these things to the metrics. We are working on the assumption that we will start the year wearing masks, and there will be no need to quarantine if all the mitigation strategies are followed. What if we move back to a lower strategy and remove masks, and there is an issue with quarantining, are we still working under the assumption that if you are out of quarantine and can be vaccinated but are not, then it is considered an absence? How are we going to handle the quarantining at the elementary schools since they are not eligible for the vaccine? (At the elementary level, if any student is quarantined, they will be getting their work and support from the school. At the secondary level, it will look as though the student was sick from school or home with the mumps. The elementary kids will have a more robust plan in place.) In the hallways and during passing periods in the middle schools and high school, what is the assumption if a student tests positive? (In general, that is where contact tracing comes into play, but in those brief instances we are assuming it is like going to the store. This is what makes schools different than any other place.) In terms of extracurricular, has ISBE come out with any guidance? (It's a combination and they are planning to run sports in the regular season.) Are we going to vote on two things tonight? (Yes.) I have a problem mandating over the wishes of our parents. Having said that, I am also worried about the house of cards falling apart because of the quarantine. If a child has a problem with the mask, but then they get COVID and knock several kids out, our face-to-face education starts to fall. So, kids must wear masks on buses, but it is only highly recommended that they wear them in the classroom? (The contact and quarantine piece are a significant piece. We want that scale to stay down, because we want kids in school. My interpretation when the original guidance came out, was that what some of those entities thought was, okay we can start out with masks, but then asking when they can stop wearing them.) What is our hesitation with the shield testing? Is it the cost? (We just need more information on how to structure it, because we are hearing it takes about an hour per classroom.) So, it would be across a level? (Ideally, it would be every student participating. We would have to have a minimum of 100 tests per day. Tests must be dropped off by us, and results take 24 hours.) Do we have insurance if we are sued? Can we make masks recommended, and not mandated without losing our insurance? (The

more mitigation levels you have, the less you liability expense and yes, we can mandate.) The resolution gives you the authority to follow the CDC, but the plan is going to go a step further than the resolution? (There may be disconnect. We can take this back to the attorney's and have it updated based on the most recent CDC guidelines. It would probably be worthwhile to table the resolution and just approve the plan tonight. The resolution is only there in case we need to decide quickly.) What set off the alarm for me is that it is so complex, I do not think I completely understood the implications. If we have quarantined students and there is no plan, there will be many students that lose out on learning. What is the quarantine time span? (It is 10-14 days, but we are waiting for more clarification.) If we mandate masks, and we have kids come to school without masks, what as a district can we do? (We need to look at that on an individual basis. We would have masks that we would ask them to wear and if they refuse, we would turn them away.) The change in the guidance is really in whether you are vaccinated? (When this came out on the 9th, it said if you were vaccinated you did not have to wear a mask, and in theory when they said that, no one was wearing a mask.) Two of the moving parts is having metrics in place and the shield testing. This is a very complex plan, and this puts us in a very tough place because it is not mandated. The process of turning a student away because they do not have a mask does not sit well with me. We need more time to look at this. It is going to be an uphill battle if we start out with masks optional and must go to mandated, versus just mandating them from the beginning. We are not doubtful of our administrators. If we approve the resolution tonight, how does that affect the administrations planning? (We plan every day, so not sure it will affect us in our planning.) The significant question here is the mask. The Board is going to table this item until August 9th. If someone could please investigate the insurance and bring information back to the next meeting, that would be helpful.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER MATTERS PERTAINING TO LITIGATION, WHEN AN ACTION AGAINST, AFFECTING, OR ON BEHALF OF THE PARTICULAR PUBLIC BODY FINDS THAT SUCH AN ACTION IS PROBABLE OR IMMINENT, IN WHICH CASE THE BASIS FOR THE FINDING SHALL BE RECORDED AND ENTERED INTO THE MINUTES OF THE CLOSED MEETING [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)]. [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)] (Policy 2:220)

At 9:57 p.m., motion by McCormick, second by Cabeen, to go into executive session to consider matters pertaining to litigation, when an action against, affecting, or on behalf of the public body finds that such an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, McCormick, Saxton, Egan. Nays, none (0). Absent, one (1), Meek. Abstained, none (0).

At 10:07 p.m., the Board returned to open session.

5. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:08 p.m., motion by Cabeen, second by Forbes and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED _____ PRESIDENT
(Date)

SECRETARY _____ RECORDING
SECRETARY