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Educate and prepare students with the **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS,** and **PERSONAL QUALITIES** to be productive citizens.



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

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District Number 304 met in a regular session on Monday, May 12, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at Coultrap Educational Services Center, 227 North Fourth Street, Geneva, Illinois.

1. CALL TO ORDER (Policy 2:220)

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

Board members present: Molly Ansari, Policy Committee Chair Stephanie Bellino, President Larry Cabeen, Dan Choi, Vice President/Finance Committee Chair Jackie Forbes, Willard Hooks, Paul Radlinski. Late: None. Absent: None.

The President welcomed everyone, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

District staff present: Lauri Haugen, Principal Fabyan Elementary School, Tom Rogers, Principal Geneva High School; Todd Latham, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services; Shonette Sims, Assistant Superintendent Learning & Teaching; Dr. Adam Law, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services; Dr. Andy Barrett, Superintendent.

Others present: Dee Neukirch, Sadie Karlson, Sara Karlson, Victor Rivera, Daviana Davila, Brian Maloney, Sherry Fang, Tyler Zeeck, Rene Swidenbank, Jessica Zeeck, Lynn Fors, Trupti Kakadiya, Ursula Klicker, Le Nguyen, Rita Furman, Mary Glinke, Jaimie Carr Holda, Murry Brazelton, Jie Brazelton, Stacey Fanale, Lisa Rios, Adrian Rios, Will & Sara Dwyer, Josie Dwyer, Phil Bellino, Emilia Bellino, Kate Bellino, Abe Bellino, Jade Magiera, Wendy Schaper, Quinn Schaper, Jason Schaper, Becky Reeve, Matt & Autumn Bruno, Jen & Shawn Kestler, Michael & Tania Oldham, Julie & Lamar Heller, Jen Haney, Heidi & Brett Borter, Kurt Borter, Sophia Borter, Evan Swierczewski, Abby Arnold, Markus Kastenmeier, Tanye & Andrei Lunin, Joanna Parring, Jessica Lehan, Mike & Megan Kelly, Carrie Homewood, Jessie Egan, Jordan Zimmeroff, Maddy Bruno, Olivia Bogacz, Ryan Kelly, Lucas Oldham, Caden Sorenson, Owen Homewood, Amelia Fuhrman, Landon Fanale, Tyler Haney, Claire Reeve, Eli Brazelton, Sohum Kakadiya, Emmi Rios, Ryker Nguyen, Ila Cunningham, Kirill Lunin, Jonathan Papasevastos, Michael Moylan, Elizabeth Peacock.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Policy 2:220)

1. Regular Session, April 28, 2025
2. Executive Session, April 28, 2025

Motion by Ansari second by Forbes, to approve the above-listed minutes, item 2.1-2.2. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

3. BOARD OF EDUCATION REORGANIZATION (PRESS Policy 2:210) – President

Larry Cabeen

1. Accept Kane County Clerk's Canvass of Votes for the April 1, 2025, Election of Members for the Board of Education

Motion by Radlinski second by Ansari, to approve the above-listed, item 3.1. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

2. Oath of Office and Seating of New Board Members

Re-elected board members took the oath of office.

3. Election of Officers

To elect officers, the board must select a president pro tem. Larry Cabeen volunteered to be president pro tem. Elections began with the board president. Paul Radlinski nominated Larry Cabeen for president. With no opposition, Larry Cabeen is the board president. Larry Cabeen nominated Jackie Forbes for vice president. With no opposition, Jackie Forbes is the board vice president. Paul Radlinski nominated Bonnie Johnson for board secretary. With no opposition, Bonnie Johnson is the board secretary. Jackie Forbes nominated Todd Latham for board treasurer. With no opposition, Todd Latham is the board treasurer.

4. 2024-2025 Board Meeting Calendar

Motion by Forbes second by Hooks, to approve the above-listed calendar, item 3.4. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

5. Review Committee & Liaison Assignments

Board members agreed to table this item and review it at the upcoming board retreat.

4. RECOGNITION, AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Tradition of Excellence: GHS Students (Policy 6:330)
DECA, Virtual Enterprises, FCCLA, Math Team

Virtual Enterprises Youth Business Competition

Abby Arnold	Owen Homewood	Caden Sorensen
Maddy Bruno	Ryan Kelly	Evan Swierczewski
Olivia Bogacz	Lucas Oldham	

DECA National Competition

Abby Arnold	Ellie Grantcharov	Luisa Parente
Aiden Cook	Addy Kling	Evan Swierczewski
Jack Danosky	Elle Miller	

FCCLA State Competition

Caitlyn Cilio	Lily Hamilton	Nicole Schofield
Amelia Fuhrman	Kayla Hobart	Keira Williams
Molly Gaston	Luisa Parente	

Math Team State Competition

Ashley Billings	Nicholas Grimes	Ryker Nguyen
Eli Brazelton	Tyler Haney	Jonathan Papasevastos
Caitlyn Cilio	Sohum Kakadiya	Claire Reeve
Ila Cunningham	Eli Kuruvilla	Emmi Rios
Landon Fanale	Kirill Lunin	Nora Storaasli
Zachary Feucht	Dylan McCord	Alvin Tang
Kaan Gokalp	Caiden Newcomb	Somansh Tripathi

2. Accelerated Enrichment Program Overview - George Petmezas, AE Staff & Students

George Petmezas, along with staff and students from Heartland Elementary School, Fabyan Elementary School, and Geneva Middle School North, presented on the

Accelerated and Enrichment Program (AE). Students are identified for this program beginning in third grade for reading and math. CogAT and MAP testing, along with teacher recommendation, are considered to qualify. Students talked about a book they read called "Refugee" that inspired them to start a fundraiser to help children in need all around the world. They chose UNICEF and raised \$1,338. Another project they worked on in math was scaling projects. They chose buildings around the world to scale down and build. Students brought examples for board members to see. The skills and confidence that students build in the AE program in elementary school follows them into middle and high school. Middle school students shared about the AE reading and math programs. In reading, they read a book call "Inside Out and Back Again" that helped them better understand war, loss, family, culture shock, and the challenges of being an immigrant. They also learned about annotating, which helped them to stop and think about what they were reading. In math, they learned about the stock market, which helped them to use math in real life. There were conversations about how current events can affect the stock market. They also learned about patterns in math and how numbers work and fit together. Teachers continue to collaborate through grade level teams and monthly meetings where they can reflect and review processes. There are three goals for the matrix that help to determine who qualifies for the program. They are to detangle and simplify qualification matrix, reduce problem solving meetings, and reduce the number of newly qualified AE students entering middle school without previous experience. The matrix for math and reading have been revised for the 2025-26 school year to help capture those students who were doing well, but did not qualify.

Board comments, questions, concerns: Are we capturing some of those students who test taking may not be their strong point? (Yes, that is why we have a problem-solving process.) What about the opposite and the parent thinks this is where their child belongs but it does not show up? (This is why we revised the matrix.) At the high school we have shifted due to state law changes where students are automatically placed into these classes based on scores. We also went off policy where anyone can choose what class they are in. Does this play into where students will place later into high school? (Yes.)

3. What Makes Our Program Special: English Language Learners – Shonette Sims, EL Staff & Students

Staff and students from the district's bilingual program shared stories about what makes their program special. This program has incredible teachers and instructional assistants that provide support for the students. The program at Harrison Elementary will be piloting a new curriculum program, at the high school they have a newcomer curriculum for English 1 and a new foundational math class for newcomers, and the numbers at the middle schools are more balanced. The students shared what country they came from and what some of their favorite things are in class. They enjoy reading, music, math, teaching their friends Spanish, puzzles, and coloring. Jen Thill, who teaches geometry and algebra at the high school, felt compelled to take on a new task. She noticed that a larger number of students in 7th and 8th grade were coming to us without the same math foundational skills as their peers. Ms. Thill decided she wanted to teach a foundational math class for these students. Several staff members participated in getting this class up and running. There are already four students who will be going on to the regular algebra track with their gen ed peers.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

(PRESS Policy 2:230) Per Board Policy 2:230, attendees wishing to formally address the Board must register their intention to participate in the public portion(s) of the meeting upon their arrival at the meeting. Complete the form in the Welcome to Our Meeting brochure (print legibly) and give it to the Presiding Officer or the Recording Secretary before the meeting is called to order.

Several people spoke on the district's German program and their disappointment that the program will be phased out. They shared that German offers many advantages

over other languages and Germany has many of the best engineering firms. Families have moved to Geneva because of the German program. Students who have graduated shared how taking German allowed them opportunities to travel abroad, to learn about another culture, and how it shaped their future. Parents also shared about the experiences that taking German has offered their children and that removing this program would take away those experiences. Staff shared that this program has been around for twenty-seven years and some years there is a drop in enrollment, but then the next year it may go up. The average class size at Geneva High School is twenty-two and the German class is currently at 21.6. The Strategic Plan talks about how cultural competency is an important part of the curriculum, so why would we want to phase out this program? Staff would like to propose that you continue the program for the next two years and continue to promote all world languages equally at the middle schools through the summer world language camp to see how this affects the numbers. If a future attempt to overturn the law is successful in the next three years, then we revisit where we are. Over the next couple of years, the small AP German 5 classes can be combined with German 4 and taught as a blended class.

6. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Board Member Code of Conduct #8 - "I will be sufficiently informed about and prepared to act on the specific issues before the Board, and remain reasonable knowledgeable about the local, State, national, and global education issues."

Jackie Forbes shared that this morning the General Assembly House had a subject matter hearing about HB 2451, which is regarding an amendment to foreign language for two years at the high school level. They heard from various organizations throughout the state who are subject matter experts on this, and they also took questions from the Education Policy Committee and the House. They will continue to look at this legislation. Senate Bill 191 talks about requiring districts to have three-point safety belts on school buses. If you lease buses this will not be a requirement and will not be retroactive to any buses you purchased in the past. Only new bus purchases could potentially require these safety belts.

Board comments, questions, concerns: Do any of our buses have the three-point safety belts? (No.)

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Policy 3:40)

Dr. Barrett shared that last week was Teacher Appreciation Week, which was a time to recognize our teachers for all the things they do. The next board meeting will be held on the Tuesday following Memorial Day, which is May 27. He has already shared about declining enrollment and sunseting the German program and that tonight is an opportunity for additional feedback from stakeholders. We are trying to look at this with respect to the Strategic Plan. It is about long-term commitment. Declining enrollment and low class enrollment has been why these conversations are taking place.

Board comments, questions, concerns: I have been hearing about the enrollment going up and down. Are we really looking at spikes continuing to trend or is it going down? (It is on a downward trajectory.) At one point we were at 500 students per cohort and now we are around 400 students per cohort. We see that number going even lower over the next decade. The spikes that were talked about had to do with class enrollment, not district enrollment. I know this is an elective, and we offer several electives, but do we look at a cap that we want all classes at a certain size? Do we choose not to run other electives? Are there other electives in the same boat as the German program? (This is something we have been watching for a few years. We are having this discussion now because of the lower interest in German 1 for next year. In any given year there are several classes that we do not run. This does not

mean we do not think these classes are important. It is the five-year commitment that has us looking at this now.) Have we tried to recruit students for German? (We have offered summer camps in the last couple of years.) One of the options was part-time teachers and blended classes. How would something like this work? Is this the best thing to do? (We have two part-time teachers currently. If it did phase out, you would use less and less FTE (staff). It is not ideal to put two classes together, but we have done it in the past.) This is not going to be the last time we are going to have a conversation like this, and I am not sure how we address this. If we do not think outside the box, we are going to offer less and less to our students. It feels like our program needs a marketing person to capture and promote the language, I assume someone talks to the middle school to see how many students might be interested in a specific course. Something I had asked Dr. Barrett for was the number of students enrolled for next year. He did share some numbers for other foreign language classes, and it might be helpful to see all those numbers side by side. One thing that I heard was that online foreign language is not a good option. Can you mention some of the logistical problems with a co-op model? (We have co-op programs in our district now. These are formal organizations that have intergovernmental agreements, their own boards, their own budget, and their own staff. You are talking about different districts with different start and end times, different period lengths, and different teacher contracts. There is also the problem with transportation. The last big challenge is that this is not the last time this is going to happen. As you have gone to superintendent meetings have you heard of any other districts looking to do a co-op? (No one has expressed interest.)

8. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATION

9. WORK-STUDY TOPICS & FUTURE ACTION CONSIDERATION

10. INFORMATION

1. Board Meeting/Presentation Schedule (Policy 2:220)
2. FOIA Requests & Board Correspondence (Policy 2:250)

11. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Personnel Report: Resignations, Retirements, Leave Requests, Changes in Assignment/FTE, New Hires (Policies 3:50, 5:200, 5:280)
2. Request to Purchase: \$24,025.75, Datamation Imaging Services, for digitization of student records

Motion by Forbes second by Ansari, to approve the above-listed, items 10.1-10.2. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Policy Committee, Finance Committee, Boundary Task Force, Communications Task Force, Facilities Task Force, Technology Task Force, Joint PTO, Geneva Academic Foundation, Geneva All-Sports Boosters, Geneva Music Boosters, Geneva High School Theater Boosters, GEARS, K-12 Discipline Committee, PRIDE, Fox Valley Career Center, IASB/Legislative, IASB Kishwaukee Governing Board

Board members thanked everyone that participated in the meeting tonight. It was a great way to have conversations about what we are doing in the district. Congrats to our teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week. Happy Mother's Day to all our moms in the district. We could not do everything we do without them. Encouraging to see the Accelerated Enrichment presentation and to learn more about it. Looking forward to the musical at Harrison Street School on Wednesday. Thank you to everyone for coming out tonight and the thoughtful concerns about the German program. Thank you to the families that brought their students tonight to share with us about their programs. The Geneva Music Boosters jazz dinner is on Tuesday, May 20. Tickets are available through the 14th at www.genevamusicboosters.org. The cost is \$18 for adults and \$12 for children ages 4-12. A shout out to Ms. Peacock & Dr. Moylan

for what they are doing with their students. It would be nice to organize our presentations so that our younger students go first. Tonight was a testament that people are listening to what we are talking about.

13. NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 14. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER MATTERS PERTAINING TO APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, OR DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF 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. HOWEVER, A MEETING TO CONSIDER AN INCREASE IN COMPENSATION TO A SPECIFIC EMPLOYEE THAT IS SUBJECT TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WAGE INCREASE TRANSPARENCY ACT MAY NOT BE CLOSED AND MUST BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND POSTED AND HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACT [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)]. [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)] (Policy 2:220)**

At 9:37 p.m., motion by Choi, second by Bellino, to go into executive session to consider matters pertaining to appointment, employment, compensation, or discipline, performance, or dismissal of 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 public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee that is subject to the local government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and must be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act.

At 9:59 p.m., the Board returned to open session.

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:59 p.m., motion by Forbes second by Radlinski and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED _____ PRESIDENT
(Date)

SECRETARY _____