

**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, July 9, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. at Coultrap, 1113 Peyton, Geneva, Illinois.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- 1.1 Roll Call
- 1.2 Welcome
- 1.3 Pledge
- 1.4 Reminder to sign attendance sheet

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by President Grosso.

Board members present: President Mark Grosso, Matt Henry, Mike McCormick, Vice President Kelly Nowak, Policy Committee Chair Mary Stith, Finance Committee Chair Bill Wilson. Late: None.  
Absent: Tim Moran.

The President welcomed everyone, led them in the Pledge and reminded them to sign the attendance record.

District administrators present: Dr. Julie Dye, Principal Williamsburg Elementary School; George Petmezas, Principal Mill Creek Elementary School; Shonette Sims, Principal, Harrison Street School; Darcy Thompson, Principal Fabyan Elementary School; Craig Collins, Assistant Superintendent Personnel Services; Donna Oberg, Assistant Superintendent Business Services; Patty O'Neil, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction; and Dr. Kent Mutchler, Superintendent.

Others present: Fred Dresser, Sue Sarkauskas (Daily Herald), Bob Pojwizt, Jim Cullen, David Lamb, W. Church, Jim & Kathy VanSpankeren, Bob Mann, Margo Matson, Brenda Schory (Chronicle), Amy Hamilton, Michelle Bianchi, Gail Ryan, Sandy Kaczmariski (Patch), Sherry Kirby, Tracy Watson, Lynn Moravick, David Ziegler, Sean & Ande Masoncup, Leslie Juby, Jeremy Schokora, Emma Avery, Viki Deardorff, Dana Deardorff, Teresa Keenan, Hali Cooper, William & Tracie Nicholson, Sue Honk, Heidi Mocclly, Anne & Mark Rokos, Brian Mayers, Rebecca Bartelli, Dawn Gargano, Karna Chiusciel, Videi Kellicle, Michelle Bowen, James Day, Marci Oleson, Angela Neri, Christa Gibson, Andrea Alitzer, Kim Howard, Sarah Tracey, Jen & Ed Midgley, Laura Lemke, Judy Wehrmeister, Brigid Buchman, Colleen Krohe, Terri Frieders, Lynda Johnson, Lisa & Mark Bova, Amy and Ralafel Cobbler, Nancy Cant, Chris & Terri Kelly, Chad Ludwig, Herb Stith, Melissa Bradley, Jackie Forces, Lana Waters, Shelly Mocha, Brook & T.J. Bean, Beth Abbott, Gavin & Christina Hays, Cathy Thomson, Valerie Finch, Chris Kelley, Amy Fond, Amy Macmillan, Jamie Weinberger, Sharon Johnson, Stephen & Core Neil, Camille Spillage, Thomas Evens, Aim & Chris Vents, Beth & Ted Samubwitz, Cathy Fuller, Carrie & James Day, Julie Kroeyn, Megan Kelly, LeAnn Erhant, Noel Rooks, Nancy Degler, Jim & Lauren Solner, Chad Marquardt, Anne Mikrut, Kimberly Grimes, Dana Frieders, Karen Dillenburgh, Sabine Fako, Andrew Nolan, Sheila Mally, Jeff Steffen, Ruth Velaizquez, Lucy Cave, Stacie & Dan Salzman, Carolyn Chaudwell, Sharon Doll, Melissa Hostas, Matt Hart, Randy & Nina Neuber, Melissa Swierczewski, Liana Mathias, Nikki Lutzow, Jim Dwight

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The President reminded audience members that comments or discussion regarding individual students or personnel matters were not permitted and that individuals wishing to address the Board should use the microphone and state their name and address as the meetings are video recorded.

Comments included:

As a parent of a student scheduled to enter kindergarten at Williamsburg, asking that the Board add the additional kindergarten sections recommended by the Administration and by the 175 parents who signed the petition that was circulated. Please keep the children with their siblings and peers, and their neighbors.

I signed the petition that was circulated because I'm for restoring a non-threatening feeling at Board

meetings.

Would request that the Board vote separately for Mill Creek and Williamsburg additional kindergarten sections. Mill Creek's enrollment will not decrease. New homes are still being built and young families are purchasing them. There are already 29 confirmed kindergarten students in each of Mill Creek's kindergarten sections and it's time to add another section. Times have changed. It's 2012 with more programs required for special education. Is classroom control all we are after. We want all students engaged at every level including kindergarten. Appreciate the letter sent to parents but feel that busing students would be a logistical nightmare and is a short-term solution. Add another section at Mill Creek for next year and do the boundary study.

Live in Randall Square. Homes are about 20 years old and turnover is young families with young children. The attendance area is Williamsburg, even though Western Avenue School is closer. This neighborhood will continue to turn over and young families will continue to move in. Please consider this when making your decision.

Look at this from a five-year olds perspective to understand why they don't want to be bused to another school. I grew up in Geneva, bought my home in a neighborhood. My five-year old will be disturbed to not go to school with his friends.

I didn't move to Geneva for the schools. I have no children in the District. I'm paying higher taxes and enrollment numbers are the same and the number of teachers is adequate for the enrollment.

Did only Mill Creek and Williamsburg parents get a letter about kindergarten or did parents across the District get the letter? If I was a parent living in another neighborhood, I'd be concerned that I wasn't considered because my child's class size will be going up.

I grew up in Geneva. My parents still live in Geneva and they would be disturbed if my children get moved to a school other than the one in their attendance area. Will the change be permanent? Just one year and then moved again? More than one year? Please consider everything when making the decision.

I've only been a Geneva resident for four weeks. Have children who would be entering kindergarten and second grade at Mill Creek. Have the same concerns I expressed at the June 23rd meeting. At the last meeting, it was suggested moving students, so it appears that redistricting should be done. But, if redistricting is necessary, do the following year. Keep the student in place next year. Also need to consider what you would do with student who enter Mill Creek or Williamsburg mid-year. Where would they be assigned? One move for a child is not the end of the world but three moves in three years will have an impact. Is busing the best solution? The Administrative recommendation was for adding the required staff. Please consider that. I contacted other school districts to see what they did. Most stated the only reason they would bus a student was for full day vs. half day kindergarten programs. Appreciate the service the Board provides to the community.

Adding kindergarten sessions won't break the budget. We have the money. But the kindergarten class size numbers at Fabian, Harrison and Heartland are low and they are high at Mill Creek and Williamsburg. That isn't equitable, so bite the bullet and spend the \$63,000 for more staff. But then, make a commitment not to add the 1.5% increase in the budget. You also need to start talking about grade centers at the elementary level because we have the classroom space available.

Busing makes sense if students are college age but not for kindergarten. Don't just consider the financial impact. Make a sound decision considering the impact to students.

All agree that class sizes are large but please consider the impact and burden on parents, too. I'll have both a kindergarten and second grade student at Mill Creek. If one student is in one school and another is at a different school, which school get my money, which PTO do parents join, where do they volunteer their time, which program do they attend. Bad news is bad news for children no matter what comments are being made on PATCH.

The Board President commented that it seems everyone is upset about the possibility of busing some students but at the June 23rd meeting, no decision was made. The Board only requested that the administration provide additional information for consideration.

### **3. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **3.1 Additional Kindergarten Sections: Mill Creek and Williamsburg Elementary Schools**

Board discussion, comments, questions:

Stated at the last meeting support for the administrative recommendation and since then have review enrollment numbers from past years, which we didn't have at the last meeting. I still support the administrative recommendation but would like to see enrollment data reported regularly from now on and would like it color-coded in order to be able identify enrollment bubbles at different levels. Sat on the last boundary committee. All the children who had to move made it through and the children who were the most successful had parents committed to it. Feel it is important that the Policy Committee look at developing a protocol for dealing with this topic in the future.

Have heard both sides of this issue. Father lives in Eagle Brook. Brother with four children lives in Mill Creek. I have five children. Numbers are important but when you back out the cost of busing, we're only talking about \$48,000. I can support the administrative recommendation.

Glad to see so many individuals involved in the process and attending the meeting. Many times there is only a small group voicing their opinions at the Board meetings. Geneva has many young families with children. Brought up the possibility of busing students at the last meeting just as another option for consideration. Can agree to adding teachers for 2012-2013 but agree that we'll need to do a boundary study and plan for the next three-to-five years.

Long-time Geneva resident whose family moved from St. Peter to Fourth Street. At the time of the move, I stayed at Fourth Street but due to enrollment numbers, my sister was moved to Sixth Street School. I live in Mill Creek and Geneva has six excellent elementary school and children get a good education at all of them. Agree that we'll need to look at boundaries. And, the Board can't just look at the net cost, it has to look at all the teacher costs which include both salary and benefits. The Board needs to be prudent and I'm not sure yet how I'll vote on this issue.

Glad that we all agree that 28 kindergarten students in a class is too large. I've said that I believe in "educational equity" not class size equity. Students survive moves and busing. Didn't serve on the last boundary study committee and don't feel that another district-wide boundary student is necessary but we will need to consider making some boundary changes. Will never support a separate vote for one building over another. We are a community unit district and a team and I can support adding staff.

Have a granddaughter starting kindergarten who will have to walk about a mile to school. Would support a boundary study light and feel that we could find some efficiencies in staff levels.

Motion by Nowak, second by McCormick, to add an additional section of kindergarten at Mill Creek Elementary and at Williamsburg Elementary, as recommended in the administrative proposal. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

Following the vote, the Superintendent noted that the last boundary changes were to populate Fabian Elementary School when it opened and he proposed that the next study making boundary changes to only those areas where it is evident there are issues.

**3.2 Discussion: Possible Disposition of Vacant 27 Acre Parcel of Land Owned by District**  
The Board President reported that at the time this parcel was purchased, it was to be used for a replacement location for the District's maintenance facility, as well as athletic practice fields that were lost at Williamsburg with the construction of Williamsburg Elementary School. It has also been considered as a place for parking school buses but there were security concerns about using the site for buses. Following an athletic needs study, it was determined that the site could not be used for practice fields because approximately 30% of the property would be required for a retention pond. Consequently, a decision regarding this property had been put off. He felt it was time to put this property back on the tax rolls.

Board discussion: Do we know the current value of the property? (We'd need to direct the administration to investigate and provide information to the Board.) What would the proceeds be used for? (To help pay down debt.) If the property is sold, would like to see a portion of the funds

used to obtain a location other than the middle school campus to park school buses.

Motion by Grosso, second by Henry, to direct the administration to proceed with the actions necessary for the possible disposition of the above-listed property. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Henry, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

- 4.1 Textbook Adoption: Geneva High School
- 4.2 Personnel Report
- 4.3 2012-2013 Educational Support Staff Handbook
- 4.4 Amended Renewal of Ten-year Intergovernmental Agreement for Fiber Optic Institutional Network: Geneva CUSD 304 and City of Geneva, \$250,000 (change in language only, not cost or service)

Motion by Wilson, second by Nowak, to approve Consent Agenda Items 9.1 through 9.4, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Henry, McCormick, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**5. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS & REPORTS**

Comments included: Tonight's Finance Committee meeting included a presentation by Elizabeth Hennessy of William Blair and Company on the District's debt structure and bond issues from 1994 to the present, the preliminary 2012-2013 Education Fund Budget, a proposal to change banking services in order to cut costs, and a review of the District's budget to spending history from 2004 to the present, which showed that the District's actual expenditures since 2007 have been relatively flat. The Board's goal for 2012-2013 is to try to keep the Education Fund budget flat. The Administration and members of the Board were thanked for agreeing to tonight's special meeting which provided an opportunity to receive additional information and feedback prior to making a decision on the recommendation for additional kindergarten sections. The artificial turf is in place at Burgess Field and looks good.

**6 EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES OF THE PUBLIC BODY [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1); COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATING MATTERS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC BODY AND ITS EMPLOYEES OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)]**

At 8:02 p.m., motion by Henry, second by Nowak, to go into executive session to consider matters pertaining to the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body; and collective negotiation matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Stith, Wilson, Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

At 8:09 p.m., following a break for Board members to speak to members of the press and the audience, and for the room to clear, the Board moved into executive session.

At 8:30 p.m., motion by Nowak, second by Stith, and with unanimous consent, the Board returned to open session.

**7. ACTION POSSIBLE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:30 p.m., motion by Wilson, second by Henry, and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ PRESIDENT

SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_ RECORDING SECRETARY