

## Achieve Excellence and Empower Students to Succeed

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, August 25, 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, Paul Radlinski. Late: None. Absent: Willard Hooks.

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

District staff present: Shonette Sims, Assistant Superintendent Learning & Teaching; Dr. Adam Law, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services; Dr. Andy Barrett, Superintendent.

Others present: Cathy Fuller, Nicole O'Connor.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Policy 2:220)

1. Regular Session, August 11, 2025
2. Executive Session, August 11, 2025

Motion by Choi second by Forbes, to approve the above-listed minutes, items 2.1-2.2. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, one (1), Hooks. Abstained, none (0).

#### 3. RECOGNITION, AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Illinois State Board of Education Assessment Update – Shonette Sims  
Shonette Sims shared an update on the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) assessment changes. The reason for the changes is that high cut scores mislabel students who are on track for college or career as “not meeting” proficiency standards. Students across the country are not being compared on the same levels, which could mean that a student coming from another state who is proficient may not be proficient in Illinois. The levels were misaligned, not only by the tests, but across the grade levels, and as they related to those college and career expectations. The solution was to right-size performance levels and proficiency benchmarks, realign designations to provide clearer expectations of school performance, and deploy a continuous improvement model for all schools through Regional Offices of Education. ISBE adopted new cut scores by subject and grade, which gives a truer picture of student performance with an increase in ELA and math, and a decrease in science. Overall, in Geneva schools we are seeing increases in “proficient” and “meets expectations.” In terms of the ACT, the scores are like what they were prior to our

adoption of the SAT. What did not change were the annual summative designations and the percentage of value indicators. The state hopes to have this put together and out to us by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Board comments, questions, concerns: What do IAR and ISA mean? (IAR is Illinois Assessment of Readiness and ISA is Illinois Science Assessment.) Was science in four bands? (Yes.) Do we have any numbers to show this growth? (We do not have that yet, but that is the student growth percentage that will stay the same. Once that information is released, we can bring that back to you.) Is this going to affect student placement since we have policies in place? (The Accelerated Placement Act has passed, so yes it would affect those students that would be eligible for advanced placement or automatic enrollment at the high school. At the K-8 level we are expected to have policies and practices for identifying students and placing them.) Last year, we adjusted how many points were given for scoring, so does that mean the score you need will change to get in? (Those scores were based primarily on COGAT and MAP.) Does math already align with these scores or are we already doing a different kind of assessment and what will this look like for parents? (There will be individual reports for parents that will explain where their students are.) This might be something to share with parents in case there is a big jump in scores. In the first couple of slides it talks about how Illinois compares to other states, but why is this? (The logic was that this was part of the state's rationale for making this change.) The ACT and SAT are lagging indicators because they are given in high school and by then it is too late. (That is why the benchmark assessments are so helpful.) Are there correlations between those assessments and how students will do with the ACT or SAT later in their career? (Each of the assessment protocols have concordance tables that were created to indicate a level of proficiency.)

**4. 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.*  
None.

**5. 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."*  
None.

**6. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Policy 3:40)**

Dr. Barrett shared that the 2025-2026 school year has started with the theme of "All Together Now." We have some important and challenging issues to work through, so our message to staff was if we can approach these challenges with positivity, peace, love, joy, and a collaborative intentionality, then we can come together and contribute to something bigger. It was a great start to the school year with staff returning last Monday and students starting on Thursday. Our Geneva Early Learning Program students started today. The summer capital projects are completed, so thank you to our operations team and construction partners for working hard to make this happen. The board will be planning a fall retreat to talk about our assessment of facilities.

At the last board meeting, the board had a discussion regarding a hearing officer, and several members had questions, so Dr. Barrett brought back some information that might help answer some of those questions. He shared the language from Policy 7:210, Expulsion Procedures. The administration could review and vet potential hearing officers and bring a proposal for services to the board. The board would vote on this proposal and if approved, the hearing officer would be available at the

district's discretion. If the hearing officer is needed the rate would roughly be \$250 an hour. The hearing officer would conduct the hearing and provide the board with a written report with their recommendation. The board would then make the final decision. What Dr. Barrett would like tonight is for the board to vote on whether he should seek a formal proposal for hearing officer services for potential use in future student disciplinary matters.

Lastly, the Superintendent shared some transportation facts. The district transports 3,235 students each day, there are 233 individual routes, 1,194 utilized bus stops, 69 buses covering routes, 67 drivers, 6 monitors, and 2,170.5 miles driven daily. This mileage does not include after school activities or field trips. Thank you to our transportation department for all they do to get our students to and from school safely each day.

## **7. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATION**

### **1. Hearing Officer Services for Disciplinary Matters**

The board president addressed the superintendents request to seek a formal proposal for a hearing officer. He has complete faith that the current board could arrive at a fair and just decision on these issues, never-the-less, this board will not be around forever, and it may be prudent to have such a resource at our disposal. He then asked for board input.

Board comments, questions, concerns: A hearing officer can appear less biased, but we need to consider our time and resources. It seems like there is overlap and redundancy and then the cost. (A piece worth noting is that if we were to go in this direction, we would probably default to one or the other. In most cases, we will not have time to bring the board together to decide if we should use a hearing officer, so you would need to decide who would make that decision on your behalf.) If the hearing officer conducts the hearing, would the same people be in the room as if we had done it? (Yes.) If I were the parent and I wanted a hearing, I would want a hearing in front of the board. There are two things that as a board member that are important, and they are graduation and disciplinary hearings. It was my assumption that you, as the superintendent, would be the one that would decide if we conducted the hearing or if the hearing officer does. The right place to take this might be the Policy Committee. Maybe we need to change the policy to give the parents the right to appeal, if we do use a hearing officer, to come before the board to avoid going to court. In the process, it sounds like there could be outcomes, which are a recommendation from the administration, a recommendation from the hearing officer, and as a board we make the final decision. Most districts use a hearing officer for legal protection and their expertise. Is this additional legal protection? (Kind of, we might have an attorney there and the parent may have an attorney, so the hearing officer would be more like a judge.) This board is not an expert at these kinds of hearings, so having someone with more knowledge and expertise would be better. This does not mean that this is my final decision, but it cannot hurt to seek out more information. Another thing is that the hearing officer knows what you can and cannot do or say during the hearing. Shouldn't our attorney know what we can and cannot do or say? Maybe we are doubling up. What happens once we have a proposal? (We would decide if this were what we wanted to do and we would take a vote.) If you voted for a hearing officer, then you would need to decide what the default would be. It would be nice to know with boards that have a hearing officer how often the hearing officer disagrees with the administration. (My guess would be very seldom.)

Motion by Radlinski second by Bellino, to approve Dr. Barrett seeking a formal proposal for hearing officer services for potential use in future student disciplinary matters, item 7.1. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, one (1), Hooks. Abstained, none (0).

## **8. WORK-STUDY TOPICS & FUTURE ACTION CONSIDERATION**

1. Policy Updates: First Reading – **Updated, Reviewed & New** (Policy 2:240)
  1. Policy 1:10, School District Legal Status – Review & Monitoring
  2. Policy 1:20, District Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements
  3. Policy 1:30, School District Philosophy – Review & Monitoring
  4. Policy 2:10, School District Governance – Review & Monitoring
  5. Policy 2:80, Board Member Oath and Conduct – Review & Monitoring
  6. Exhibit 2:120-E1, Guidelines for Serving as a Mentor to a New Board of Education Member – Rewritten
  7. Exhibit 2:120-E2, Website Listing of Development and Training Completed by Board Members – Updated
  8. Policy 2:130, Board-Superintendent Relationship – Update
  9. Exhibit 2:220-E4, Open Meetings Act – Updated
  10. Exhibit 2:220-E7, Access to Closed Meeting Minutes and Verbatim Recordings – Updated
  11. Exhibit 2:220-E9, Requirements for No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video During Disaster Declaration – Rewritten
  12. Policy 2:240, Board Policy Development – Review & Monitoring
  13. Exhibit 2:240-E1, PRESS Issue Updates – Rewritten
  14. Exhibit 2:240-E2, Developing Local Policy – Rewritten
  15. Policy 3:30, District Administrative Protocol – Updated
  16. Policy 4:50, Payment Procedures – Review & Monitoring
  17. Policy 4:90, Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds – Review & Monitoring
  18. Policy 4:180, Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery – Review & Monitoring
  19. Exhibit 5:20-E, Resolution to Prohibit Sexual Harassment – Review & Monitoring
  20. Policy 5:270, Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment – Review & Monitoring
  21. Policy 7:40, Nonpublic School Students, Including Parochial and Home-Schooled Students – Review & Monitoring
  22. Policy 7:90, Release During School Hours – Review & Monitoring
  23. Policy 7:130, Student Rights and Responsibilities – Review & Monitoring
  24. Policy 7:140, Search and Seizure - Updated
  25. Policy 7:300, Extracurricular Athletics – Updated
  26. Policy 7:325, Student Fundraising Activities – Review & Monitoring
  27. Policy 8:80, Gifts, Grants, and Bequests – Updated
  28. Policy 8:110, Public Suggestions and Concerns – Review & Monitoring

Stephanie Bellino shared that these policies have been reviewed by the Policy Committee and administration. If the board has any questions, she is happy to answer them.

## **9. INFORMATION**

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

## **10. CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Personnel Report: Resignations, Retirements, Leave Requests, Changes in Assignment/FTE, New Hires (Policies 3:50, 5:200, 5:280)
2. Monthly Financials - July (Policy 4:40, 4:55)
3. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$3,000, Jody Sexton Properties LLC (\$1,500), Elburn

Market (\$1,500), for GHS athletic supplies/uniforms purchases/needs (Policy 8:80)

4. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$4,500, Biscuit Café, Inc. (\$1,500 for GHS athletic supplies/uniforms purchases/needs), Geneva Feeder Basketball (\$1,500 for girls' basketball & \$1,500 for boys' basketball), for GHS athletic supplies/uniforms purchases/needs (Policy 8:80)

Motion by Choi second by Bellino, to approve the above-listed, items 10.1-10.4. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, one (1), Hooks. Abstained, none (0).

#### **11. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

*Policy Committee, Finance Committee, Boundary Task Force, Communications Task Force, Facilities Task Force, Technology Task Force, 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 welcomed back staff, students, and families as we begin the 2025-2026 school year. Some board members attended the GHS Corn Boil, which is a great event where they recognize distinct groups of students. Thank you to our facilities and transportation teams for all they do for our schools and students. Thank you to Mrs. Sims for her presentation tonight. It is not easy to present on a topic when you do not have all the information yet. The 2025-2026 staff kick off was great this year and we know that much time and effort went into planning for this event. Involving students in this event made it even better. It was also great to see staff fired up and ready to start a new school year. It is great to see parents walking their kids to school each day while the weather is nice. Thank you to our families as this is a busy time of year with kids starting school, curriculum nights and other events. It would be nice to get an update on team structure at the middle schools. Thank you to fellow board members for the great discussion tonight.

#### **12. NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:26 p.m., motion by Choi second by Forbes and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ PRESIDENT  
(Date)

SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_