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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, August 11, 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 Stephanie Bellino led the Pledge of Allegiance.

District staff present: Todd Latham, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services; George Petmezas, Director Learning & Teaching; Shonette Sims, Assistant Superintendent Learning & Teaching; Dr. Adam Law, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services; Dr. Andy Barrett, Superintendent.

Others present: Cathy Fuller.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Policy 2:220)

1. Regular Session, July 14, 2025
2. Executive Session, July 14, 2025
Motion by Radlinski second by Bellino, to approve the above-listed minutes, items 2.1-2.2. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Ansari, Bellino, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, one (1), Cabeen.
3. Special Meeting, August 5, 2025
Motion by Bellino second by Forbes, to approve the above-listed minutes, item 2.3. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

3. RECOGNITION, AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Elementary Literacy Pilot Intro – Shonette Sims & George Petmezas
Shonette Sims and George Petmezas shared information regarding the elementary literacy pilot that will take place this school year. The work for this pilot began three years ago. Our initial idea was Scarborough's Rope, whose work is seeded in students with dyslexia. She took language comprehension and word recognition and weaved them into skilled reading. We are focusing our work this year on language comprehension. There are two programs that we will be piloting in two classrooms per grade level at each elementary school. Teachers will receive ongoing professional development from the curriculum companies and there will be release

time for these teachers to plan together with their other grade level colleagues. There will be communication sent to the families of the students that will be in our piloting classrooms. Phonics/word study and interactive read aloud will not be part of the pilot program. The two programs we will be piloting will have a phonics program embedded in them. At the start of last year, we went around the district, did a listening tour, and found out that most of the bumps from year one had gone away. One area that teachers shared feedback was the comprehension piece, as well as writing and grammar. This is what made us look for something new. There were six presentations and two finalists, Benchmark Advance and HMH Into Reading. The pilot will begin with Benchmark Advance going until Thanksgiving, then switching over to HMH Into Reading through February. Classrooms who are not part of the pilot will remain status quo. Staff will participate in ongoing professional development throughout the school year to be prepared for the shift in instruction and curriculum.

Board member comments, questions, concerns: Are these going to be using the same conventions? (Thus far they will be using the same conventions. Some start with a basic sentence. The writing is about what they have been reading and that background knowledge. It also says it makes the writing more robust as the students articulate.) In the spring you presented, and I asked about phonics and phonemic awareness. Is it more phonics or phonemic awareness? It is more phonemic awareness.) You mentioned two programs, so is it either or, or is it sequential? (It will be three months of each and then we decide.) And, if you are not happy with either at that point and time, do you stay with what you are currently doing today? (I do not think we would go back to the drawing board because we have seen what is out there. I think what our staff will see is that the structure and the format will be similar to the slide decks that were developed in house.) If you do choose one, will it replace Word Wisdom or be an add on? (It would be an add on. When we do choose a curriculum, we would then evaluate the phonics and word study program. If they are robust, then we would purchase those.) What area does spelling fit into? (It is still in the Word Wisdom and Really Great Reading.) So, will it stay the same for spelling? (Instead of the typical list of spelling words this is done through orthographical mapping. Even with the pilot program you will not see that traditional list come home.) As you were discussing the pilot program more, have you considered getting input from parents or students? (Student surveys are harder to do and with parent surveys it is hard to give them accurate information when they see the end product coming home.) Are any recent graduates coming into school districts with any experience in methodology to know about these programs, because how do you keep them from being overwhelmed and burnt out? (Unfortunately, no we are not seeing students come out of college with this knowledge. This is why we have ongoing professional development.) We have heard that the assessment tools are very robust in these programs, so when you come back to present again on how this pilot is going, can you touch on this? (Yes.) How do you plan to co-evaluate the success of the program when not all students are doing the pilot? (That is one of the things we have talked about with the pilot companies, and we do not know yet. We do have our standardized tests throughout the year.) How long have these two programs been out there and is there data out there to show their programs are good? (They have been around for twenty years or more. When we looked at these four years ago, they were not what they are today. They have done a great deal to modify their curriculum.) Do we have data from other districts that shows students did better with these programs? (Yes, not only do they have their own white papers, but we also went through the reading leagues clearing house and others to assess outcome.)

2. 2025-26 Capital Improvement Plan (Policy 4:10) – Todd Latham

Todd Latham presented the 2025-26 Capital Improvement Plan that covers several buildings in the district and the Safety Improvement Plan that covers both middle schools. These capital projects will address aging buildings and facilities. The Life, Health, Safety projects are required to be compliant with the Kane County ROE. The

cost of all projects is estimated to be \$8,261,026. Roughly, \$7.7 million will be transferred to the Capital Projects Fund to cover this cost.

Board comments, questions, concerns: How many schools will we have after this year for the new lighting? (North was the first school, and we are not quite done yet.) Will the elementary's be done after hours like the middle school? (Yes.) So, we would not have to wait until summer to schedule the other schools? (No.) In 2023, I asked a question about background noise, so do we have a sound level meter? (Yes, we do. We talked recently about this and how we can evaluate this concern. We can consider doing a formal analysis, but we would have to look at the cost because we would need to get a consultant.) When you mention engineers, are these structural engineers or are these engineers who understand acoustics? (The engineers and architects that we work with, their job is to be in a school evaluating all those components. It is not their area of expertise, but it is within their wheelhouse.) So, the state requires us to put together a Health, Life, Safety Plan, but do they give us funding for these things? (No.) What do districts who do not have funding do? (They typically adjust within their budgets or borrow the funds.) Any update on this summer's projects? (Most of them will be completed by the time school starts. There is only project we did not get to. We also have some flooring on back order.)

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."

Jackie Forbes shared that the governor signed several bills recently in a ceremony. One was Public Act 104-0128 that has to do with teacher licensure. Teachers who are coming from another state now must take some kind of test, so that they can teach in Illinois. Another is Public Act 104-0032, which has to do with annual mental health screenings for students. The screenings will not be optional for schools, but they will be optional for families. This will begin during the 2027-28 school year.

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

The Superintendent thanked the board members for the special meeting to discuss the Campton Hills development. We did get approval for the developer donation agreement and planning is ongoing. It was our understanding that the Village of Campton Hills was to have their public hearing about the annexation agreement tonight, but we found out today that it was cancelled.

Summer projects are going well and nearing completion. We will be ready for when kids come back to school. The library at the high school looks amazing. Thank you to our operations team, architects, engineers, and contractors.

There were discussions at the last meeting regarding the district's hearing process and the possibility of having a hearing officer in place. More information was gathered, and we learned that most districts utilize a hearing officer for their objectivity, expertise, and legal protection. The hearing officer does not decide but instead makes a recommendation. This does not mean that a hearing officer must be used for every hearing. It is important to have an agreement approved prior to the beginning of the process. We will engage with potential hearing officers and seek an agreement for the board to consider should they choose to do so.

Board comments, questions, concerns: Do the parents still have the right, no matter what the recommendation of the hearing officer, to seek redress from the board? (Theoretically, they would lose that right. They could either present their case to the board or the board's designee, which would be the hearing officer.) I feel like we are getting ahead of ourselves by you seeking an agreement for the board. Shouldn't we first, as a board, want to consider this and then later approve any contract you have? (I would not ask you for a formal agreement tonight. This is more for formal feedback right now.) Having a hearing officer would offer some legal protection in addition to those other areas. We should pursue this to give us another tool even if we never use it. I am more curious about the cost. I do not like taking that right away from the parent and making our decision whether we will hear from them after it is presented to a hearing officer. I do not want to insulate the board over something like this. (We could still be advisory.) Could we write the policy to allow the parents to choose instead of us choosing? If a parent were to appeal at a hearing held by a hearing officer we would have no information regarding the hearing, so maybe it would be good to have two board members attend the hearing as witnesses. (You could do this.) Should we do a vote at the next meeting to approve researching a hearing officer? (This sounds like a good idea.)

Monday, August 18 is our opening day at the Arcada Theater with building and district meetings and professional development following. Tuesday, August 19 and Wednesday, August 20 there will be building and district meetings, professional development, and start-up preparation. Thursday, August 21 is the first day of school!

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

1. Policy Updates: Second Reading – **Updated, Reviewed & New** (Policy 2:240)
 1. Policy 2:260, Uniform Grievance Procedure – Updated
 2. Policy 2:265, Title IX Grievance Procedure – Rewritten
 3. Policy 4:15, Identity Protection – Updated
 4. Policy 4:80, Accounting and Audits – Updated
 5. Policy 5:10, Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment – Updated
 6. Policy 5:20, Workplace Harassment Prohibited – Updated
 7. Policy 5:60, Reimbursement Expenses – Updated
 8. Policy 5:100, Staff Development Program – Updated
 9. Policy 6:150, Home and Hospital Instruction – Updated
 10. Policy 6:235, Access to Electronic Networks – Updated
 11. Policy 7:10, Equal Educational Opportunities – Updated
 12. Policy 7:20, Harassment of Students Prohibited – Updated
 13. Policy 7:60, Residence – Updated
 14. Policy 7:70, Attendance and Truancy – Updated
 15. Policy 7:180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment -Updated
 16. Policy 7:185, Teen Dating Violence Prohibited – Updated
 17. Policy 7:190, Student Behavior – Updated
 18. Policy 7:200, Suspension Procedures – Updated
 19. Policy 7:210, Expulsion Procedures – Updated
 20. Policy 7:250, Student Support Services – Updated
 21. Policy 7:255, Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence - New
 22. Policy 7:270, Administering Medicines to Students – Updated
 23. Policy 7:310, Restrictions on Publications; K-8 schools – Updated
 24. Policy 7:315, Restrictions on Publications; High Schools – Updated
 25. Policy 7:340, Student Records – Updated

These policies have been reviewed by the policy committee and administration. Their

recommendation is for the board to approve these policies.

Motion by Choi second by Forbes, to approve the above-listed policies, items 7.1.1-7.1.25. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

2. 2025-26 Capital Improvement Plan (Policy 4:10)

Todd Latham presented this earlier in the meeting and is recommending the board approve this plan.

Motion by Radlinski second by Hooks, to approve the above-listed, item 7.2. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

8. WORK-STUDY TOPICS & FUTURE ACTION CONSIDERATION

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. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$1,000, Ken's Auto Center, Inc., for the VocEx Special Education 2025 Car Wash
3. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$12,000, Fabyan Elementary PTO, for new furniture in the library (Policy 8:80)
4. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$1,500, Maid Brigade of Central DuPage & Kane Co., for GHS athletic team supplies, uniforms, and other needs (Policy 8:80)
5. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$1,500, Viking Eyecare LLC DBA Pearle Vision, for GHS athletic supplies/uniforms purchases/needs (Policy 8:80)
6. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$7,500, Linda Bergemann Baird & Warner (\$1,500, Geneva Pool Service (\$1,500), Mocat, Inc. (Nobel House) (\$1,500), Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers (\$1,500), Bob Jass Chevrolet, Inc. (\$1,500), for GHS athletic supplies/uniforms purchases/needs (Policy 8:80)
7. Gifts, Grants, Bequests: \$20,951.28, Geneva All Sports Boosters, for GHS athletic teams spring state patches & apparel and Hudl annual subscription (Policy 8:80)
8. Maxim Healthcare Services Contract (Policy 4:60)
9. Disposal of Paper Student Files
10. Superintendent's Contract (Policy 3:40)
11. Disposition of Verbatim Record of Closed Meetings January 2023 through December 2023
12. Easement Agreement
13. Speech Language Pathology Contract Agreement

Motion by Choi second by Forbes, to approve the above-listed, items 10.1-10.13. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). 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 shared that they are excited for the new school year to begin. Board members said that opening day is one of the highlights of the new year. Thank you to Shonette Sims and George Petmezas for their hard work on curriculum changes.

Thank you to Todd Latham for the presentation on the Capital Plan. Thank you to all

the generous donors who donated to our schools. A board member recommended that the board have a two-day fall retreat to discuss matters pertaining to Operations & Maintenance. Board members attended the new teacher luncheon today where they were able to talk with new teachers. Good luck to students as they start the new year and enjoy your last bit of summer before school starts!

12. NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE DISCUSSION OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS LAWFULLY CLOSED UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, WHETHER FOR PURPOSES OF APPROVAL BY THE BODY OF THE MINUTES OR SEMI-ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE MINUTES AS MANDATED BY SECTION 2.06 [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21). [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)] (Policy 2:220)

At 8:28 p.m., motion by Forbes, second by Hooks, to go into executive session to consider matters pertaining to the discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by section 2.06.

14. POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Disposition of Closed Session Minutes – January 2025 through June 2025
Motion by Ansari second by Radlinski, to approve the above-listed closed session minutes remain closed, item 14.1. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Ansari, Bellino, Cabeen, Choi, Forbes, Hooks, Radlinski. Nays, none (0). Absent, none (0). Abstained, none (0).

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:35 p.m., motion by Ansari second by Forbes and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED _____ PRESIDENT
(Date)

SECRETARY _____