

**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, October 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 7:00 p.m. by President Grosso.

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

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

District administrators present: Doug Drexler, Assistant Principal GHS; Robert McElligott, Director of Transportation; Jerel Waide, Director of Student Services; 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: Sue Sarkauskas (Daily Herald), Monica Blatchiey, Lynn Morovick, Fred Dresser, Beth Ward, Mark Pennington, George Jackowiec, Shelby Porter, Susan Farley, David Villwock, Matt Polishak, Kathy VanSpankere, Julie Pouilly, Jim Lewis, Jess Kennath, Alexa Aguilar, Wynn & Marilyn Church, Doug Benjamin, Carol Sanders, Gene McEnery, Colleen LaFamie, Sarah Karch, Jennifer Welenc, Diane Chapman, Brigid Buchman, Mary Keyzer, Jackie Forbes, Tom Vlache, Katarina Masters, Amy Hamilton, Cathy Carino, Laurie Winkler Darrow, Chip Barber, Brenda Schory (K.C. Chronicle), Debbie Hanson, Amy Schelich, Noel Rooks, Aaron Lee, Todd Leden, Ann Marie Turner, Gunther Lubben, Kris Keller, Robert Wilson, Heidi Roed, Craig Rasmussen, Peggy Franz, Joe Franz, Geneva Teachers, Ren Hensg, Steve Young, Rick Romano, Therese Davison, Bill Clancy, Andrew Dahlberg, Gail Ryan, Laurie Reattoir, Myranda Johnson, Michelle Porter, Lisa Gillette, Jason Flaks, and other individuals who did not sign the attendance record.

**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 come to the podium, use the microphone, and state their name and address as the meetings are video recorded. He added that there has been a lot of misinformation in various media regarding negotiations and wanted to state that the Board of Education would continue to honor the confidentiality agreement, would not be influenced by any group, would continue to work in good faith with the Federal mediator, were making slow but steady progress, and the next mediation session was scheduled for October 23, 2012. He asked anyone speaking tonight to be respectful in their comments. He requested a show of hands for the number of teachers wanting to address the Board - there were eight.

Comments included the following:

I'm a fourth grade teacher and have been employed in Geneva for fifteen years. Am speaking on behalf of teachers who are in or have completed an approved masters program. Feel the Board should allow those teachers to move the appropriate lanes and be paid for their graduate hours. Tonight's my 30th wedding anniversary but am here to try to convince the Board of my worth. I finish what I start and my students benefit from my work. Do we want educators who don't advance their education for fifteen years? Teachers are working without a contract. Respect the teachers in

masters programs and honor the promises made to the teachers for lane advancement.

I'm an Elburn resident but have taught fourth grade at Williamsburg Elementary School for twenty years. I love being a teacher in Geneva. I'm not speaking on behalf of the GEA but I do support them. I'm speaking as an individual and want to address the use of "average" being applied to Geneva's teachers. No teacher comes to work wanting to be average. No new teachers are asked what makes them average. At Williamsburg any students in grade three through five are allowed to participate in student council. The number of students participating has grown from 50 to over 100 and the teachers continue to seek ways to encourage student participation. During last week's data collection meeting, every person looked for ways to benefit students. Respectfully ask that the Board not seek "average" in these negotiations.

I'm a fourteen year Geneva teacher, taxpayer and parent. My three year old started at Friendship Station this year but I'm starting to feel apprehensive because as many as 60 teachers could retire in the next four to five years and am concerned that there could be an educational void as his children enter Geneva's public schools. Feel we won't be able to attract the best teachers to Geneva in the future if Geneva's base teacher salary is less than the surrounding school districts'. Understand the benefit of abatement to taxpayers but if there is not budget investment for teachers, families won't want to move to Geneva for the schools. We need to be able to replace quality teachers with quality teachers in the future.

I'm a seventh grade language arts teacher employed by Geneva for four years. Have attended many Board meetings and don't want to criticize anyone. We all need to respect each other. Both of my parents were educators and I've never regretted my career choice. I spend many hours beyond my work day; before school, after school and on weekends. Geneva's teachers make a difference in the lives of their students and they are not replaceable. The long-term affects of a pay freeze for those teachers at the bottom of the pay scale or for those teachers unable to move lanes won't ever be able to be made up. Please consider the long-term affects of negative decisions by the Board.

I'm a parent of a fifth grader at Harrison Elementary and a ninth grader at GHS. I've done my best to become informed. I've served on the PTO's beautification committee when the building principal said there was no money to pay for the landscaping and brick paver installation, parents and local businesses stepped up to pay for it. Now, even though my family is struggling financially, and I'm driving cars as old as my children, I'm asking the Board to step up, go back to the table and settle a fair contract with the teachers that doesn't include a pay freeze. Mr. McQuillan doesn't speak for me and the Board needs to consider the long-term impact their decision will have on the District if we can't get attract teacher to work in Geneva in the future.

I'm a resident of Elburn and I teach social studies at Geneva High School. I also serve as a coach, a class advisor, and as a parent figure to students. Everyone needs to consider all aspects of these negotiations and needs to recognize that if we are going to continue to excel, we need to compensate the teachers and reward them for their work and performance. There are misconceptions about many teachers' last salary increases. While I did receive a 12% increase, it was because I took on two extra curricular activities and five stipend activities at the high school. I spend many hours of time and I use my masters in administration in my duties. I also volunteer, with no compensation, for some duties. We all need to recognize the impact we have on students. I love teaching and being involved in this community. Teachers need to be rewarded for their efforts and their work. I think teachers invest more in education so that their students can pay it forward.

I'm a Geneva teacher, taxpayer, and parent of two Geneva graduates. Many Geneva teachers work and live in the community. The "Green Shirts" who live and work in Geneva also shop and spend their money in Geneva. They also instill in their students a desire to give back to their community. I was a referendum chair when Coultrap was converted from the middle school to an elementary school and supported my community as others before me supported their children's education. When our referendums have passed, people didn't say "yes, but." They said, yes, we will pay the debt and not that they would pay the debt by saying no to paying the teachers. I'm asking the Board to negotiate with the teachers and have open meetings with the teachers' negotiation team.

I'm the parent of five children and a twenty-two year resident of Geneva. Two of my children are still in school and all of my children have done well. I'm involved in my children's schools and know that

the teacher go above and beyond their normal daily responsibilities. My mother, sister and brother all moved to Geneva because of its support of education. I hope the Board knows we have great teachers in Geneva and what an asset the Geneva students are to this community and the larger world.

The President indicated that there would be another opportunity for public comment later on the agenda.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

3.1 Regular Session September 24, 2012

3.2 Executive Session September 24, 2012

Motion by McCormick, second by Wilson, to approve the above-listed minutes, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, five (5), Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Wilson. Nays, none (0). Abstained, two (2), Moran, Grosso. Motion carried.

### **4. RECOGNITION, AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS, BOARD REORGANIZATION**

4.1 Red Ribbon Week Activities:

4.1.1 GHS Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) - Shelby Porter & Myranda Johnson  
(Lisa Gillette, GHS SADD Advisor)

4.1.2 Geneva Coalition for Youth - Julie Pouilly

Representatives from S.A.D.D. and the Geneva Coalition for Youth summarized the events and activities planned for this year's Red Ribbon Week which is October 20 - 27. This year's theme is "The Best Me is DRUG FREE." The students emphasized that most teens are not using drugs, rather they are spending time with their family and friends. Community members were encouraged to participate in the annual Candlelight Vigil on Sunday, October 21st at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. Other activities planned include the hanging of the ribbons, a collection program for expired and unused prescription and over the counter drugs; a 5K race and fund-raiser; baking cookies for Drug Court Graduation; a community food drive and blood drive; Make a Difference Day; and "healthy choice" Halloween events at Peck Farm Park. Ms. Gillette and Ms. Pouilly thanked the Board of Education and the administration for their support. Additional information and tips for Red Ribbon Week and working with teens is available on the Coalition's web site. Ms. Pouilly reported that she will be stepping down as the Red Ribbon Chair and encouraged those interested in taking it over to contact her.

The Board thanked Ms. Gillette and Ms. Pouilly, the Coalition, and the students for their efforts on behalf of all of Geneva's youth.

4.2 Student Services Report: Jerel Waide

The Director of Student Services provided an overview of her department's 2012-2013 initiatives. The focus this year is on special education district/state/national trend data, social emotional learning standards, problem solving process and development of a Response to Intervention action plan, staff professional development in writing measurable goals, behavior, Danielson and Common Core. On February 9, 2013, at Geneva Middle School South Campus, the District will host forums for building resilient youth - Parent University and Chick Chat. Parent University will have breakout sessions on health and wellness, academic support, stress, safety, and post secondary planning/preparation. Chick Chat, for fourth and fifth grade girls, will focus on being your best self, identifying personal strengths, challenges and support systems, identifying/expressing feelings and emotions, friends/positive relationships, and problem solving. Later this year, the Board will receive reports on assistive technology, homeless/home hospital instruction, and health/wellness/medical update.

### **5. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The Superintendent reported on last weekend's Geneva High School homecoming activities and he thanked all the staff, parents and volunteers for helping make it a positive experience for students. Staff and professional development activities led by District administrators and trainers from the Consortium for Educational Change were held throughout the District last Friday and focused on frameworks and common core standards. He thanked the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the Director of Curriculum for work on the standard core programs. The Director of VALEES is retiring at the end of this academic year and a search process for his replacement will begin shortly.

**6. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATIONS**

**6.1 Resolution in Support of Red Ribbon Week**

Motion by Henry, second by Nowak, to adopt the resolution in support of Red Ribbon Week, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), McCormick, Moran, Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Henry, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**6.2 Geneva High School Program of Study 2013-2014**

Motion by Wilson, second by Moran, to approve the 2013-2014 GHS program of study, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Moran, Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Henry, McCormick, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**7. WORK-STUDY TOPICS & FUTURE ACTION CONSIDERATIONS**

None

**8. INFORMATION**

**8.1 FOIA Requests & Responses**

No discussion.

**9. CONSENT AGENDA**

**9.1 Personnel Report: Resignations, Retirements, Leave Requests, Changes in Assignment/FTE, New Hires**

New Hires Support Staff

Fiden, Marybeth, FES, Special Education Assistant, 3 hrs/day, 9 Month, Start Date 10/9/12

Resignations Support Staff

Bui, Jennifer, FS, Special Education Assistant, Floater, 3.25 hrs/day, 9 Month, Effective 10/3/12

Fredres, Julia, FS, Special Education Assistant, 6.25 hrs/day, 9 Month, Effective 9/28/12

Miller, Jason, GHS, Technology Assistant, 7 hrs/day, 9 Month, Effective 10/9/12

Page, Kim, GMSN, Second Shift Custodian, 12 Month, Effective 10/12/12

Smith, Susan, GMSN, Special Education Assistant, 7 hrs/day, 9 Month, Effective 10/2/12

Dismissals Support Staff

Cloat, Max, CO, District Technician, 12 Month, Effective 10/9/12

Reappointments/Reclassifications

Little, Regis, FES, Special Education Assistant, 3/ hrs/day to Friendship Station Preschool, Special Education Assistant, 6.25 hrs/day, 9 Month

Retirements Support Staff

Melendez, Norberto, GHS, Second Shift Custodian, 12 Month, Effective 11/16/12

**9.2 Illinois State Board of Education Application for Recognition 2012-2013**

Motion by Nowak, second by Wilson, to approve Consent Agenda Items 9.1 and 9.2, as presented.

On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Henry, McCormick, Moran, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON BOARD OF EDUCATION ACTION**

Comments included:

I'm a Geneva resident with two properties and paying \$10,000 per year in property taxes and I consider it well worth it. I believe Geneva's school district is exemplary in many ways. Geneva's motto is a Tradition of Excellence. Some would be satisfied with "a tradition of just good enough." It takes many conditions to have excellent schools; parents, secretaries, drivers, custodians, board members all looking out for students and putting them first and teachers who go the extra mile. After investing \$5 billion in his foundation, Bill Gates was asked what's the number one thing he'd learned and he said: "Hire the best teachers." Much is taken for granted and it doesn't take much to tear it down. Each of my three children made it through college in four years. Excellence pays you back. Our location and the quality of our schools make our community desirable and your property valuable. Don't take this educational system for granted. Get involved and educate yourself on the issues. Many would tear our system down but you need to get involved or you will be replacing the District's motto.

I'm a taxpayer who has lived in Geneva for twenty-two years. I'm a parent with a student in college and one just graduated. I'm a Geneva 304 support staff member, and was a parent volunteer in the schools. I can't say enough about Geneva 304, it is a great place to work and a great school district. I don't belong to any group. While I don't agree with much from the TaxFacts, I believe Geneva's teachers are respected by the District and the District has respected our teachers. Much has been

blown out of proportion. The times have changed and we are facing an financial crisis in the nation and the state and our District is not exempt. I would like to ask everyone to take a deep breath and work together to move forward. While I don't know all of the issues but I have friends who have had to take pay freezes, pay cuts, and have lost their jobs and they all live in Geneva. All of the District support staff and the administrators have taken pay freezes and they didn't leave. Let's remove the emotion and just move forward.

I'm a doctoral candidate at NIU working toward a PhD. It's important to hear people's stories but data regarding teacher salaries in the media and in blogs isn't always accurate or facts. Teachers should be compensated for their knowledge and negative comments about specific individuals shouldn't be tolerated. About 10% of teachers' salaries are for their retirement. I'm fortunate to work with other caring individuals. The Board has stated they value Geneva's teacher, please keep that in mind during the negotiations.

Every person who has spoken on behalf of the teachers has talked about money. Many in this community haven't received raises and teachers not getting a raise doesn't mean we don't respect or value them. We should be talking about less money. It really upsets me that this is the message being sent to our students. The promises in the three-year contract that ended were kept. Times are different than they were three years ago. We have higher unemployment and people are making less. Working hard doesn't equate to more getting more money. Many people in other careers work hard and haven't gotten a raise. If negotiations are supposed to be confidential, why do teachers have information about the negotiations that the taxpayers don't have? We should all know it or it should all be confidential. We are in debt by over \$300 million. We need to spend wisely and plan for the future. When times were good, Geneva teachers were compensated. Why not go for a one-year contract and when times are good again, we can look at raises for teachers again.

As a Board, you have a tough job and I don't envy you. The Board has a lot of support in the community. I thank the teachers and am eternally grateful for what they do, but the teachers need to appreciate what the taxpayers of Geneva have provided to support education in our community by paying the bill. The District has a very large debt service to repay. It is a sizable line item and we need to address it. The debt is real and will impact every taxpayer for years. This is all about the budget. The Board is being asked to provide guidance and make decisions that will impact every taxpayer in the school district. I'm asking the Board to make sound financial decisions today for the future of the district.

I'm a Geneva resident and taxpayer. I get up at 3:45 a.m. and drive three hours to and from work. I, too, work nights and weekends and am on call most weekends. Everyone in Geneva works hard, not just teachers. I don't have children but I do have nieces and nephews. In my new job, I had to take a \$15,000 pay cut. I have no bonus, no benefits and no pension. My father and mother are teachers. Every teacher takes care of other people's children and work at home and on weekends grading papers and I don't believe they only work eight months. My husband and I work hard to balance our budget and now more and more of our finances go toward paying for our home and taxes. I don't belittle the teachers' job, but I don't believe they should get a raise when so many others in the community haven't. We're not asking them to take a pay cut, only a pay freeze.

I'm a Batavia resident, and a Geneva teacher who entered education as a second career. Geneva desires experienced teachers and teachers should be compensated for their experience. I paid \$13,500 for my masters degree to be a better teacher. Geneva only paid \$2,000 toward my masters degree. I've served on committees without a stipend. I got a raise for my masters degree. I support two kids on my own and I appreciate that the Board pays for some of the health benefits. I know two teachers who finished their advanced degree but are not being compensated for it. Please consider paying for the continuing education hours for these teachers.

I speak for myself, not TaxFacts, and all of the information on the TaxFacts web site is accurate, sourced, and anything we have posted on our web site is public information and can be found. Thanks to the Board for following the confidentiality agreement regarding these negotiations when others have not. Personally, I'd like all of the negotiations to be open in the future. The District will spend \$4 million more this year than it takes in. We are not in a surplus condition. The debt service will increase every year through 2026 and we will pay \$294.7 million. The reserves are due to overtaxing and those funds belong to the taxpayers and no one else. The \$57 million in reserves belongs to the taxpayers and will help offset the increases in the debt. I urge the Board to only

spend on debt service repayment and think of the entire community, not just one group. I'm also tired of the rhetoric. No one has said Geneva teachers are average. The GEA was the first to talk about average salary measurements. I do agree that teachers should be paid for their advanced education. The GEA is now facing its worst nightmare - a strong board and an informed public. The bus drivers, support staff and administrators have already taken a salary freeze.

I'm a parent, a Geneva taxpayer, and the spouse of a Geneva teacher. I want to thank the Board and the administration for a strong school system. I work for Duke University and I took a one year pay freeze but we were told in advance why it was frozen and were kept informed. They gave us a one time bonus and modest cost of living increases. I'm sure both sides will work in good faith to settle a fair contract. My taxes go to pay for the future and I'm happy to pay it forward by paying my taxes.

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

*Policy Committee, Finance Committee, Facilities Task Force, Communication Task Force, Joint PTO, Geneva All-Sports Boosters, Geneva Music Boosters, Geneva High School Theater Boosters, Academic Foundation, GEARS, K-12 Discipline Committee, Geneva Coalition for Youth, PRIDE, REMS Grant*

Comments included the following:

Thanked the GHS Student Council class advisors and students for their work on Homecoming and appreciate all that they do. Thanked Ms. Pouilly for her work on Red Ribbon Week. Attended a health insurance seminar about the costs and penalties associated with implementation of the new Health Care Reform Act. Attended the DuPage IASB division meeting which focused on the implications of a Boards' decisions. The Board does take a long- and short-range view for every decision they make, which isn't always easy.

Chaperoned at the GHS Homecoming dance. Kudos to Ms. Keyzer, the staff and parent volunteers. The students were amazing.

Attended the GMS South Partners Day. What is sometimes forgotten is the amount of parent involvement in their children's education and by paying their taxes. The Partners Day provided an opportunity to see how involved parents are in their children's education. Heard some rhetoric last week that I'm a teacher hater. It's absolutely not the case. My degree is in secondary social studies education. My sister and brother are both in education. I don't hate teachers. I respect them and I know that my children do, as well.

Attended the DuPage division meeting and the Kishwaukee division meeting which focused on the Teachers' Retirement fund. There are two sides to every story. At the DuPage meeting they discussed the elimination of step and lane and other districts are considering it as well. They'd like to reward teachers on merit. I also want to say that I love teachers, too. If I could, I'd put a sign in my yard but I won't because I don't believe in involving parents in this. We need to solve it. I too have individuals in my family who work as teachers and I value teachers. My daughter is a teacher in a district that just came off a hard freeze, and a soft freeze and during that she paid for her own advanced degree and she had to wait to get the higher pay. While she started at a higher base, she has 26 students in second grade. There are tradeoffs working in any district. My other daughter just started working for a district that will be striking October 16th. I want to point out that we all have a story. We all have experiences. I believe we all believe in students and their future. We all care. I appreciate the teachers who spoke tonight in a kind manner and not confrontational. Let's stay in this together. We are a team.

At the IASB Kishwaukee Division meeting, Geneva Board members (Mary Stith, Kelly Nowak, Bill Wilson) were recognized as Master School Board members. To achieve that recognition, a Board member must earn 200 hours of continuing education. To maintain it a Board member must earn 50 hours every year. These Board members continue their education in order to serve the students, parents, teachers and taxpayers and I congratulate my fellow board members on this achievement.

I'm straight forward and am going to make objective decisions, and will tell it like it is. I, too, have a sister in education. This isn't about money or wages, who makes how much or who's owed how much and I'm a little tired about respect being associated with how much you make. This Board isn't going to give up on these negotiations. We are working methodically, in good faith, and will continue to do so. Impetuous and quick is not in our vocabulary. We want to get it right.

**12. NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No discussion.

**13. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER MATTERS PERTAINING TO COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATING MATTERS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC BODY AND ITS EMPLOYEES OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)]; THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES OF THE PUBLIC BODY [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1); AND PENDING LITIGATION [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)]**

At 9:05 p.m., motion by Henry, second by Nowak, to go into executive session to consider matters pertaining to collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, and pending litigation. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Stith, Wilson, Henry, McCormick, Moran, Nowak, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

The Board President reported that action could be possible following executive session but it would not be related to negotiations. He added that the Board would take about ten minutes before going into executive session to respond to questions from members of the media or the audience.

At 9:15 p.m., the Board moved into executive session.

At 10:23 p.m, motion by Wilson, second by Henry, and with unanimous consent, the Board returned to open session.

**14. ACTION POSSIBLE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion by Henry, second by Wilson, to approve the issuance of a Notice letter to an employee as discussed in closed session and to authorize the President or Secretary of the Board to issue that warning letter to the employee. Henry moved, and Wilson seconded, to modify the motion to include an additional directive to the employee, as discussed in closed session. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Wilson, Henry, McCormick, Moran, Nowak, Stith, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:26 p.m., motion by Wilson, second by Henry, and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

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

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