

MINUTES OF BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES MEETING
February 13, 2017

The Board of School Trustees met in regular session on Monday, February 13, 2017, at the Education Support Center. The following members were present: Ms. Rebecca Gardenour, President; Ms. LeeAnn Wiseheart, Vice-President; Mrs. Donna Corbett, Secretary; Ms. Jan Anderson, Member; Mr. Lee Cotner, Member; Mrs. Elizabeth Galligan, Member; and Mrs. Jenny Higbie, Member. Also present were the following administrators: Dr. Bruce Hibbard, Superintendent; Dr. Brad Snyder, Deputy Superintendent; Mr. Bill Briscoe, Assistant to the Superintendent for Administration and Operations; and Mr. Fred McWhorter, Chief Business Officer.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Gardenour called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. RECITE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Ms. Gardenour asked everyone to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

The public was invited to address the Board on matters of educational importance. Oral complaints regarding specific students and/or personnel will not be heard. School employees are encouraged to contact their immediate supervisor to be heard on specific complaints relating to the terms and status of their employment prior to addressing the Board. Individuals were asked to confine their comments to no more than three minutes. There were sign up sheets near each entrance prior to the start of the meeting.

Mr. Bill Krammes, 4624 Shady View Drive, Floyds Knobs, shared in spite of public scrutiny, state and federal mandates our professional educators fight for our kids' success. Central office administrators work hard to provide buildings with everything in their power to provide a quality education for all students. We have the introduction of the Professional Learning Community, a consistent vision and commitment to excellence that did not exist just a few years ago, schools with the highest attendance and graduation rates, the most credits earned while in high school through quality AP, IB, dual credit, and vocational education programs, greater academic success by every school, fiscal responsibility, and a community that believes in us. He encouraged the Board to do what is right and just to keep this corporation moving forward.

Mr. George Mouser, 6411 Phillip Schmidt Road, Floyds Knobs, commented, in his opinion, not enough money is spent on education; it is just put in the wrong place. He is concerned taxes will increase if there is a lawsuit on diversity. He said the Board can do something to prevent this by hiring minority administrators and teaching staff. They passed up an opportunity to put a minority gentleman on School Board who was qualified.

Mr. Joseph Moore, 1344 Edwardsville-Galena Road, Georgetown, asked if assessments increase will affect the bond payments and interest. Mr. McWhorter explained that as assessed valuation goes up, the rate goes down.

Ms. Pat Harrison, 5010 S. Skyline, Floyds Knobs, commented Dr. Hibbard has done great things for the school corporation. With his leadership, we have seen more Four Star Schools and National Blue Ribbon Schools and soaring graduation rates. She urged the School Board, especially since there are new members, to take more time to learn about things Dr. Hibbard has been doing to help our schools before voting tonight. Dr. Hibbard is all about our kids and everyone in this room tonight should be the same way.

Mr. Paul Kiger, 1304 Dent Ave, New Albany, said the new School Board members have been on board about a month. He encouraged board members to research the work Dr. Hibbard has done to improve our schools before rushing to make a vote on his contract. He encouraged the Board to be transparent in this process. It seems action taken tonight is the first step in a process to terminate Dr. Hibbard. Highlights of his tenure with NAFC Schools include: helped pass the \$87 million referendum with no tax increase, supports not only students but parents and teachers as well, supports a modern way of learning and helps students access

technology that they need to succeed in our modern world, fights for our teachers and school staff by helping them reach their goals. Dr. Hibbard has seen great progress in our schools. More students than ever are transferring from out of county which results in millions of new funds for our schools.

Ms. Anne Bitzegaio, 1325 Ridgeway Ave., New Albany, on behalf of Young Democrats, shared that they are troubled by the Board's lack of transparency concerning the most recent appointment. They understand Mr. Cotner's experience and interest, but feel diversity among the schools and school board is vital. They also have concerns with the School Board approaching the evaluation of Dr. Hibbard in the same opaque manner. Dr. Hibbard has been a proven advocate of public education. If the School Board feels that Dr. Hibbard has not been the outstanding educator that they see, they want to be given the facts and hear the discussions that justify the analysis.

Ms. Nicole Yates, 1135 West Street, New Albany, and President of the NAACP expressed concerns about the process undertaken by the Board when appointing its most recent Board member. In July, the Board scrutinized the administration for not hiring a minority to fill a principal position at New Albany High School. Seven months later when faced with a perfect opportunity to lead by example it chose instead to very quietly appoint Mr. Cotner. This will mark the 16th consecutive year since a person of color has served on this Board. There is no room for politics or personal agenda when it comes to making decisions for our young people. The citizens of Floyd County deserve better than a Board that willfully ignores a distinctive population it pro-ports to represent. She will remind their members how this Board rejected a rare opportunity to engage the entire community in a conversation about how best to fill the vacant Board seat.

Mrs. Michele Day, 2017 Spring Farms Drive, Floyds Knobs, in her work as an educator, made certain that children, teaching, and learning were the top priority and the basis for every decision made. They based decisions on data and results, not opinion or supposition. They made observations and supported them with evidence. Our district has experienced increased academic achievement, increased professional development, increased fiscal responsibility, and increased recognitions and awards in a time period that been difficult for public education. The Board agenda item regarding the Superintendent has created questions and uncertainty among parents, community, and staff. This is not a time for uncertainty when children are beginning ISTEP and we are at the beginning of major capital improvements. We need consistency, continuity, and confidence in the leadership. There are three members that have just joined the Board. They should be given a real opportunity to interact with the Superintendent before being asked to evaluate his job performance. She asked that every decision that the Board makes be in the best interest of children, teaching, and learning.

Mrs. Wendy Ivey, 4012 Viewcrest Loop, Floyds Knobs, on behalf of the New Albany Floyd County Principals, expressed their appreciation and support for Dr. Hibbard. He introduced and implemented the Professional Learning Community to our schools which has lead to increased learning and rigorous curriculum development design. He has provided excellent professional development in teaching. Our buildings have some of the finest and best trained staff in the region. The principals sincerely appreciate the improvements that Dr. Hibbard has brought to the New Albany Floyd County Schools, his successful efforts to create equal facilities for all students, and his support and training for increasing academic achievement. They ask the Board members to consider the progress and growth that Dr. Hibbard has brought to our corporation.

Mr. Michael Wildt, 1020 Falcon Court, New Albany shared concerns with the lack of diversity in the district. He encouraged everyone to use all the tools available to hire minority employees. He himself has applied for positions in the district and will continue to do so.

Mr. Mark Kessans, 4115 Payne Koehler, New Albany agreed with everything positive that has been said tonight about Dr. Hibbard. In addition to those things, he said that when he served as the Education Association President, he and Dr. Hibbard "had some rough times" but he can gladly say now those times have been healed. Dr. Hibbard has worked very, very hard. Any Superintendent can look good on paper, but with Dr. Hibbard we know who we have — he does listen to what other people say and he has decisions to make. We may not always agree with every decision someone in that capacity has to make. All anyone can ask is that that person listen, provide a rationale for what they have done, and take the time to talk with someone if

they don't understand the decision made. Mr. Kessans continued by saying he is around a lot of teachers and is not aware of any teachers who think the system is broken. Looking back 43 years, he doesn't recall when we have had a smoother running operation than what we currently have. He doesn't recall us being in a better financial situation than we currently are. He encouraged the Board to continue working with Dr. Hibbard, and if there are areas of concern, meet with him.

D. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

The following items were presented for approval:

- Approval of Minutes of January 9, 2017, Executive Session and Regular Session, January 18, 2017, Executive Session, January 25, 2017, Executive Session, and January 30, 2017, Special Session, Work Session, and Executive Session;
- Approval of Claims;
- Approval of Staffing Report;
- Approval of Overnight Field Trip Requests from New Albany High School and Floyd Central High School;
- Acceptance of Donations to S. Ellen Jones Elementary School, Georgetown Elementary School, and New Albany High School;
- Approval of St. Baldrick's Host Agreement for Georgetown Elementary School;
- Approval of Architectural Contracts for Highland Hills Middle School, Prosser, and New Albany High School;
- Approval of Emergency Allocation for Highland Hills Middle School Boiler Replacement.

Board members have received information regarding each item on the consent agenda; however, any member may request that any item be removed from the consent agenda and discussed separately. Mr. Cotner asked to remove the Approval of Minutes of January 9, 2017, Executive Session and Regular Session, January 18, 2017, Executive Session, January 25, 2017, Executive Session, and January 30, 2017, Special Session. Mr. Cotner then made a motion to approve all remaining items on the consent agenda as presented and recommended. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Galligan and carried unanimously following a roll call vote.

- Minutes of January 30, 2017, Work Session and Executive Session as presented.
- Claims beginning #70117 through and including #70596 and payrolls of 1-13-17 and 1-27-17 in the total amount of \$10,613,375.65.
- Staffing Report as presented.
- Overnight Field Trip Requests from New Albany High School and Floyd Central High School as presented.
- Acceptance of Donations to S. Ellen Jones Elementary School, Georgetown Elementary School, and New Albany High School as presented.
- St. Baldrick's Host Agreement for Georgetown Elementary School as presented.
- Architectural Contracts for Highland Hills Middle School, Prosser, and New Albany High School as presented.
- Emergency Allocation for Highland Hills Middle School Boiler Replacement as presented.

Mr. Cotner asked to abstain from voting on the Minutes of January 9, 2017, Executive Session and Regular Session, January 18, 2017, Executive Session, January 25, 2017, Executive Session, and January 30, 2017, Special Session as he was not a member of the Board at that time. Ms. Wiseheart made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 9, 2017, Executive Session and Regular Session, January 18, 2017, Executive Session, January 25, 2017, Executive Session, and January 30, 2017, Special Session as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Higbie and carried with 6 votes in favor and 1 abstention. Ms. Wiseheart, Mrs. Corbett, Ms. Anderson, Mrs. Galligan, Mrs. Higbie, and Ms. Gardenour voted in favor and Mr. Cotner abstained.

Dr. Keith Bush introduced Larissa Williams as Assistant Principal at Scribner Middle School. Mr. Tony Duffy and Mrs. LuAnne Suer introduced Taylor Eiler as Administrative Intern at Floyd Knobs Elementary. Both of

these appointments were approved tonight on the staffing report.

E. ACTION ITEMS:

Consider Non-Renewal or Extension of Superintendent's Contract:

Ms. Gardenour stated, "the Superintendent has a contract with the Board. The Superintendent's contract is currently set to expire June 30, 2018. But, his contract will automatically be extended for another year to June 30, 2019, unless the Board provides him notice of non-renewal by June 30th of this year. So the question to consider is do we let the Superintendent's contract automatically extend for another year to June 30th of 2019 or do we instead authorize and instruct our attorney to provide notice of non-renewal so that his contract will expire on June 30, 2018. The deadline for notice of non-renewal is June 30th of this year. If we provide notice of non-renewal of that deadline, the Superintendent's contract will expire on June 30, 2018. If we do not provide notice of non-renewal by that date deadline, the Superintendent's contract will automatically be extended for another year to June 30, 2019."

Ms. Wiseheart then stated, "I move that the Board authorize and instruct it's attorney to give the Superintendent notice of non-renewal of the Superintendent's contract so that the contract will expire on June 30, 2018, and not be automatically extended to June 30, 2019."

Ms. Anderson asked to speak and Ms. Gardenour asked that she wait for discussion. Ms. Gardenour then asked for a second to the motion. Mrs. Higbie seconded the motion. Ms. Gardenour then asked for discussion.

Ms. Anderson asked to table a vote regarding the Superintendent's contract. She said, "I am not certain why we are doing this now when we have as much time as we have to be able to sit down and collectively, as a Board, discuss this. Talk about transparency. His contract reads that we have until June to make this decision. There are three Board members that have just joined us. They should be given the opportunity to interact with the Superintendent before being asked to vote on his current job performance. I think that only stands to reason and I would like to request that the Board table the vote tonight. Any seconds?"

Mrs. Corbett then said, "I would like to ask if it doesn't auto-renew and it comes to June 30th, there is nothing to stop us from re-negotiating a contract.... another contract, right? Ms. Gardenour said, "Correct. We can still negotiate his contract later this year." Ms. Anderson added, "But it should be negotiated. This is hurry up and I think we needed more time to think about it." Ms. Gardenour continued, "This is just stopping the rollover, Jan. This is not.... we can re-negotiate his contract. This is stopping the roll-over....the evergreen aspect of it." Ms. Anderson then said, "I understand all that. I just think that it happened very quickly and it took all of us by a surprise including members of the community and members of our organization." Ms. Gardenour responded, "I think what the Board needs to remember, and I know the last contract you voted against it, there was a contract negotiated in December of 2013 after the election but before the new School Board members came on. And, the only people present at those negotiations was the Board President Mr. Hines, the Superintendent, and an attorney by the name of Andrew Manna. It was not the School Board Attorney John Woodard. And, the Superintendent had that written into his contract obviously knowing that sooner or later it would have to come before a vote for the rollover. Like I said, this gives us flexibility and our ISBA attorneys and Mr. Woodard are saying it is a very good idea because it does provide flexibility for us. This does not mean that we cannot negotiate his contract. Any other discussion?"

Mr. Cotner spoke, "I will share a little history. The first elected School Board back in 2002 right before they took office, all the top administrators were given these evergreen clauses. I guess there was a fear the new Board was going to come in and clear house. It was wrong then and it's wrong now. I'm philosophically opposed to an evergreen clause. And in no way, in no way, does a vote tonight on the non-renewal or the

evergreen clause should be considered any type of indictment or vote of non-confidence or no confidence on the excellent work that Dr. Hibbard has done and the academics and the staff work he has done here. I agree with everything Bill said and Michele said and everybody else. His work has been exemplary. But the evergreen clause, like I said, it wasn't right then and it's not right now and it needs to go."

Ms. Anderson said, "I don't have a problem with any of this. I have a problem with the fact it was done as quickly as it was and as a surprise as it was. Other than that, if we go to June 30 or however we need to pull it off, but I think we still need to have time to meet together to discuss it thoroughly." Mr. Cotner said, "so we could even add that back in if we wanted to, correct?" Ms. Anderson responded, "Sure." Mr. Cotner then said, "So that's back on the table. But I think it needs to be thoroughly vetted, if we were to go to an evergreen clause again, thoroughly vetted with the whole Board and not just the President and Dr. Hibbard." Ms. Anderson replied, "I agree. We are on the same page." Mrs. Gardenour asked if there was any other discussion. With no one responding, she asked that the roll be called. The motion previously made by Ms. Wiseheart and seconded by Mrs. Higbie carried unanimously following a roll call vote.

Approval of Revised 2017 School Board Meeting Calendar:

Board members received copies of the revised School Board meeting calendar with Work Sessions added.

Upon motion by Mrs. Corbett, second by Ms. Anderson, approval was given to the revised 2017 School Board Meeting Calendar as presented. Following a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Receive Update and Consider Authority to Bid Construction Projects at Highland Hills Middle School and Green Valley Elementary:

Dr. Snyder shared a timeline detailing the bid process schedule for Highland Hills and Green Valley and requested authority to bid the projects. The plan includes to receive bids for the Highland Hills project on February 28, 2017, and bring to the Board for approval at the March 13, 2017, meeting. For Green Valley, the plan is to receive bids on March 28, 2017, and bring to the Board for approval at the April 10, 2017, meeting. Renderings and photos of both projects were shared with the Board.

Upon motion by Mrs. Galligan, second by Mr. Cotner, authority was given to bid construction projects at Highland Hills Middle School and Green Valley Elementary as presented and recommended. The motion unanimously carried following a roll call vote.

F. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Discussion of Board Policy 5610 "Suspension and Expulsion of Students:

Mr. Briscoe shared that it is within the Board's authority to either hear all the appeals of the expulsion examiner or hear none. The Board actually hears all of them unless they have said they will not hear them. In the past before this last year, when a parent made an appeal of the expulsion examiner, Boards voted whether or not to hear it. During that period of time, all of the Boards chose at that time not to hear them. There was a situation last summer where the Board did hear one on a technicality. Right after that, the Board then voted to not hear any of them.

Mr. Briscoe shared copies of the policy that was adopted 7-21-16. He said from administration's point of view, they believe the Board should not hear these. There is an expulsion examiner that hears these and sometimes sides with the school corporation and sometimes with the student. Since that process is in place by statute, administration doesn't feel there is a need for this.

Ms. Gardenour said ever since she has been on the Board, she has always, always voted to hear it because she feels that parents of students have that right. She recalls only having about 12 requests since she has

been on the Board. She asked Mr. Briscoe if that number was correct. Mr. Briscoe said yes, it has been about 12. However, in his opinion, if the Board votes to hear them all, then the expulsion examiner probably would feel to tell them that her decision is not final and the Board can hear them. Then, there may be more appeals than there have been in the past.

Mrs. Corbett commented that one of the major roles they serve as a Board is to make policy. If there is a flaw with the policy, we need to re-evaluate and see if a change needs to be made.

Ms. Wiseheart said she too has wanted to hear them in the past. The hearing last summer was a prime example of why the policy needs to be revisited. Also, she has been contacted by parents who feel they should be given that opportunity to appeal.

Following discussion, it was the directive of the Board to bring this policy back for a first reading.

Receive Budget Update;

Mr. McWhorter shared that our 2016 tax rate was 1.1069 and this year came in at 0.9404, which is 16 cents lower or 15%. Our rate hasn't been this low since our school district incorporated in 1956. During our 2017 budget presentation we had estimated that the final rate would most likely go down in 2017; however, the unexpected rise in assessed valuation caused the rate to come in even lower than expected which is very good news to taxpayers. The levy is also lower so this is a true tax decrease.

In regard to property tax collection for 2016, the school corporation collected 97.2% of what was expected. We typically plan on collecting between 96-98% each year. Because of the way protected taxes (Debt Service) affects our school corporation, our CPF, Transportation, and Bus Replacement were negatively affected more so than if we were able to spread equally across all the funds like some school corporations in the State are able to do. If we had the ability to spread the shortfall across all the funds, the CPF, Transportation, and Bus Replacement would have received more funding. However, Debt Service is still protected by cash balance and the law says you have to pay debt first.

Ms. Gardenour asked if the State legislators are looking in to changing anything with the protected taxes. Mr. McWhorter said protected taxes protects the Debt Service fund. There is a sunset provision on it; therefore, this coming year, the ability to spread across all funds is going to end for everyone.

Mr. McWhorter then shared information on the history of our beginning cash balance, revenue, and expenditures since 2008. We ended 2016 with a balanced budget and a 12.2% cash balance. This is the fourth year in a row where we have had an actual balanced budget - didn't use stimulus or rainy day monies. We were planning on approximately 2.5% new revenue for the 2017 budget year, but so far the Legislature is saying approximately 1%. He will keep the Board updated throughout the year on where this stands. Additional items to consider going forward include: Title I funding has been cut approximately \$200,000 for 2016-2017, Title II funding has been cut \$10,000 for 2016-2017, Wildcat Academy not funded for 2017-2018.

G. MISCELLANEOUS:

The Board scheduled a work session for February 27, 2017, at 6:00 p.m.

With no further business to be brought before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce A. Hibbard, Ph.D., Superintendent