

KEWANEE COMM SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING FEBRUARY 22, 2022

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL FOR SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Kewanee Community Unit School District No. 229 was held in the Kewanee High School Petersen Auditorium with President Johnson calling the Meeting to order at 6:00pm. Roll call showed the following Members present: Stabler, Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, and Johnson. Superintendent Sullens was also present for the Closed Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

At 6:00pm Member Dev seconded a motion made by Member Christiansen to enter into Closed Session to consider (C)(1) the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the District and (C) (2) to consider collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees (C) (5) the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body (C) (8) Security Procedures (C) (9) Student Disciplinary Cases (C) (11) Litigation, * 5ILCS 120/2 Open Meetings *The School Code of Illinois/2021*. Voice roll vote showed all present Members voting aye. The motion carried.

At 7:21pm Member Steffen seconded a motion made by Member Christiansen to adjourn the Closed Session meeting. Voice roll call was heard with all present Members voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL FOR OPEN SESSION MEETING

President Johnson called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:30pm. This Open Session continued in the Petersen Auditorium at Kewanee High School. Roll call showed the following Board Members present: Stabler, Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, and Johnson. The audience included staff members: R Baney, T Brown, D Hodge-Bates, J Anderson, J Bryan, J Brandmeyer, K Simms, T Simms, D Ensley, M Vinson, C Burnett, M Hewitt, B Hewitt, A Elgin, R Ince, S Juarez, and J Russell from the Kewanee Radio Station. Recording secretary H Hughes and Superintendent C Sullens were in attendance as well.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Johnson asked the audience to stand, if able, and join the Board in saying the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag.

INVITED GUESTS

None

MINUTES, FINANCIAL, TREASURER'S REPORT, AND BILLS AND PAYROLL CONSENT AGENDA

President Johnson asked for a motion for a Consent Agenda and acceptance of Items V, VI & VII. Member Christiansen seconded the motion made by Member DeBord to approve consent Items V, VI & VII. The roll showed Members Stabler, Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

None

REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent

FY23 Funding

Dr. Sullens stated that everyone is looking ahead to FY23 funding. Evidence Based Funding (EBF) replaced General State Aid a few years ago. EBF looks at local resources that Districts have available via the EAV among other factors. Prior to EBF, Districts received a set amount per kid. With EBF, the District has definitely benefited. Locally, we don't have a lot of property wealth behind each student. In order for the formula to work the State has to add an additional \$350 million to the pot each year. The Governor has committed the additional money in his budget that was submitted to the Legislature. In addition to the EBF funding, the Governor is proposing to fully fund categoricals,

such as Transportation and Special Education. Transportation is paid a year behind and pays for 60% of budgeted expenses. Dr. Sullens stated that he was thankful the Governor was supporting the formula. One concern is the freeze on the three cent per gallon tax. The roads in Illinois are terrible and without the tax, the money may not be there to fix them in the future.

Building and Grounds Improvements

Dr. Sullens informed the Board that the maintenance and custodial staff have been doing a great job of removing snow this season. Dr. Sullens stated that he hopes that we don't have to worry about snow anymore this season.

FOIA Requests

Dr. Sullens stated that all FOIA requests have been acknowledged.

Mr. Anderson-Central Principal

Testing-Preparation

Mr. Anderson informed the Board that the District students will be assessed with IAR tests. Testing for grades 3-8 will begin on March 14 and they hope to be completed by spring break. Mr. Anderson stated the District had participated in IAR-interim testing earlier this year. Staff was going over the data to find any trends and if there were in gaps in learning. They will then have mini lessons to try and close the gap.

Mr. Bryan – KHS Principal

Dr. Sullens presented for Mr. Bryan.

KHS Sports Update

Dr. Sullens asked Member DeBord for an update on the KHS Wrestling Team at IHSA Team Sectionals at Tremont High School. Member DeBord stated that KHS had lost against Tremont.

State Qualifiers

Dr. Sullens reported that Mya Mirocha qualified for the State Bowling meet and finished 32nd. She will be back next year for her Senior year. Kadin Rednour was a state qualifier in Wrestling in his weight class and Max Kelly qualified as an Alternate in his weight class.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

KHS Welding/Cafeteria and Fine Arts Storage Project

Dr. Sullens reported the Fine Arts Storage Area is complete. It has been painted and the HVAC installed. We will be able to store band equipment and choral risers in there. The new welding booths for the welding lab have been delivered. We are still waiting on the breakers to be delivered and installed. He stated that we hope to have them delivered within the next couple of weeks.

Various Gym/Cafeteria HVAC Projects

Dr. Sullens stated that crews are continuing to make progress at all of the buildings. Lyle, Belle, and Irving should be completed and able to be used after Spring Break.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration and Approval of Resolution Authorizing and Providing for the issue of Approximately \$1,735,000 Debt Certificates, Series 2022, for the Purpose of Improving Sites and Altering, Repairing and Equipping School Buildings and Facilities, Authorizing and Providing for an Installment Purchase Agreement for the Purpose of Paying the Cost of Purchasing Real or Personal Property, or Both, and Authorizing the Sale of Said Certificates to the Purchaser Thereof.

Dr. Sullens recommended to approve the Debt Certificate. The monies that will pay for this are from the Countywide Sales Tax funds. These funds can only be used for Capital Projects. The funds will pay for the Debt Certificate and bonds

that have been issued. These funds cannot be used for salaries. In previous years, the excess funds were used to install air conditioning units in classrooms. All classrooms have had air conditioning units installed.

Dr. Sullens stated that the Debt Certificate is the equivalent of getting an eight-year car loan. Stifel went out on our behalf to obtain bank bids. Peoples National Bank of Kewanee was the low bidder with a rate of 1.83%. Other bids were from Heartland Bank at 2.65% and Commerce Bank at 2.2%. The final payment for the Debt Certificate will be made in 2029.

Dr. Sullens recommended approving the Resolution to issue the Debt Certificate. Member Salisbury seconded a motion made by Member Steffen to approve. The roll call vote showed Members Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, Stabler, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

Consideration and Approval of Resolution for Byrne & Jones Construction Utilizing the District's Membership in T.I.P.S. Awards to Install Turf Football Field Project

Dr. Sullens stated that the turf project committee had been looking at different brands and different levels of shock pads. The proposal from Byrne & Jones would remove 6-8 inches and replace it with rock, shock pad, and 2 inches of turf. This product is expected to last 10-15 years. When speaking with other schools who have installed turf, they are surprised by how many organizations use the field now. The installation of turf will allow for football games for the high school and Central, soccer practices and games, and band practices. With the approval tonight, the project will be started no later than June 1st and done by the fall. There will be four weeks of demo and construction and six weeks of installation.

Member Christiansen asked for clarification on the relocation of the field events. She wanted to ensure that there was enough space for all the events in the new area.

Dr. Sullens stated that only two events were being moved along the fence on Third Street. Those were long jump and triple jump. The pole vault will be moved near the high jump. He said that he was confident that the layout would allow for all events.

Dr. Sullens recommended to approve the Resolution for Byrne & Jones Construction to install the Turf Football Field at KHS. President Johnson called for a motion to approve.

Member Salisbury made the motion to approve. Member Steffen seconded the motion. The roll call vote showed Members DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, Stabler, Dev, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes heard. The motion carried.

Consideration and Approval of the Updated *Return to Learn Plan*

Dr. Sullens stated that there have been two prior *Return to Learn Plans*. One was approved last year and the other earlier this school year. This plan was created by a staff committee that included principals and teachers. The updated plan presented states that masks are recommended for all staff, students, and visitors to all KCUD buildings. The District supports those who wish to continue to wear a mask. Drivers and passengers are still required to wear a mask on school transportation, regardless of the vehicle type. This includes transportation to and from school and/or activities. Transportation is regulated by a Federal mandate from the CDC that requires masking on public transportation. Driver's education is not covered with this mandate. It is up to the student and instructor to decide if masks are worn. In regards to the COVID testing and protocols, the District will continue to work with Health Department officials on all communicable diseases. Students and staff will be required to isolate for five days after a positive COVID test. Upon their return individuals must wear a mask for an additional five days. The IDPH has informed the nurses to treat COVID as they would Influenza A or B. Weekly testing of unvaccinated staff members will be discontinued at this time.

Member Dev asked to clarify if an individual's vaccination status had any bearing on the masking rule. Dr. Sullens stated that masks were recommended but not required regardless of vaccination status.

Member DeBord asked if close contact guidance was in the plan. Dr. Sullens stated that it wasn't at this time and that IDPH guidelines will be followed.

Member Christiansen asked if IDPH guidelines were to be changed if the plan would need to be updated and approved. Dr. Sullens stated that we would follow IDPH guidelines and wouldn't need Board approval for changes.

Dr. Sullens recommended approving the updated *Return to Learn Plan*. President Johnson called for a motion to approve. Member Steffen seconded the motion made by Member Stabler to approve the updated *Return to Learn Plan*. The roll call vote showed Members Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, Stabler, Dev, DeBord, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes heard. The motion carried.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION

PERSONNEL:

Resignations

Central Jr. High Assistant Football Coach	Duane Johnston	Effective 1/20/22
KHS Assistant Track Coach	Rolando Aguilar	

Dr. Sullens recommended approving the resignations of D Johnston and R Aguilar. Member DeBord seconded a motion made by Member Christiansen to approve. The roll call vote showed Members Salisbury, Steffen, Stabler, Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes heard. The motion carried.

Retirements

None

Hires

KHS Agriculture/Industrial Arts Teacher	
For 2022-2023 School Year	Alexis Ruemker
Central Resource Teacher for 2022-23 School Year	Kristen Adkison
Central Elementary Teacher for 2022-23 School Year	Jessica Hogeboom
Central Elementary Teacher for 2022-23 School Year	Allison McDowell
Central ELL Teacher for 2022-23 School Year	Hall Keen
Central Playground Supervisor	Becky Sedlacek
Regular Bus Driver	Paul Williams
KHS Assistant Track Coach	Ben Hunter
KHS Spring Weights Coach	Brad Swanson
Belle 21 st Century Teacher Effective 2/8/22	Koreen Jurgensen
Belle 21 st Century Student Assistant	Jersie Duytschaver
Belle 21 st Century Student Assistant	Abigail DeSchepper
Central 21 st Century Teacher	Jessica Carlson
Central 21 st Century Aide	April Knott
Central Jr. High Assistant Football Coach	Matt Taylor
Central Jr. High Assistant Football Coach	Ricky LaFollette

Dr. Sullens recommended to approve the above hires. Member Dev seconded a motion made by Member Steffen to approve. The roll call vote showed Members Steffen, Stabler, Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

*All hires are contingent upon hires obtaining appropriate certification and qualifications prior to beginning job.

Leaves

None

Student Teachers

Evelin Martinez Fall of 2022 Spanish Teacher with Mrs. Miler

Dr. Sullens recommended to approve E Martinez as a Student Teacher with Mrs. Miler. Member DeBord seconded the motion made by Member Christiansen to approve. The roll call vote showed Members Stabler, Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

Transfers

Cecilia Shaw Bus Aide-Increase hours from 3 to approximately 4.5 per day. Effective 1/5/22
Sandra Bonilla From Central Playground Supervisor to Central Bilingual Aide
Tom Baney From Central Jr. High Assistant Football Coach to Central Jr. High Head Football Coach

Dr. Sullens recommended to approve the above listed transfers. Member DeBord seconded a motion made by Member Christiansen to approve. The roll call vote showed Members Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, Stabler, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

Volunteers

Donna Havelka Central Jr. High and KHS Track Coach
Tatum Drury Neponset Track Coach
Payton Weston KHS Softball Coach
Dayton Ince KHS Baseball Coach

Dr. Sullens recommended to approve the above listed volunteers. Member Stabler seconded a motion made by Member Salisbury to approve. The roll call vote showed Members DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, Stabler, Dev, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

Renewal/Non-Renewal of Stipend Positions

None

OTHER ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION

Expulsion of Student B-2022

Dr. Sullens recommended to approve the expulsion of Student B-2022 for the remainder of 2021-2022 school year for gross misconduct. Member Johnson seconded a motion made by Member Stabler to approve. The roll call vote showed Members Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, Stabler, Dev, DeBord, and Johnson all voting aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

Brandon Hewitt, father of three students, wanted to address the bullying of his children. He stated that his oldest attended Kewanee High School until December when she withdrew due to bullying. She is now attending Cambridge High School. Mr. Hewitt stated that the bullying was brought to the attention of the principal and vice principal and the only thing done was her schedule was rearranged. His daughter that is a freshman is having issues with a student who is a junior. He stated that when the school was contacted their solution presented was the same. If his daughter sees the student outside of school, there are issues also. Mr. Hewitt stated that he would like something done to stop the bullying.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION

Ron Salisbury stated that he is looking forward to the turf field being done. He feels that it will be a great addition to the District's facilities. He mentioned that he believes that the soccer, football, and band programs will benefit from it.

Jeff Johnson stated that with all of the great things happening in the District that he was disappointed to spend so much time and energy on the issue of the masking policy. He stated that he didn't mind people disagreeing with him but it doesn't have to be disrespectful. He hopes that the unnecessary drama we have been seeing is over.

Lori Christiansen thanked Dr. Johnson for his comments and stated that she agreed 100% with them. She stated that she is concerned after the actions of the last couple of weeks. She wanted to remind parents that their children are watching. Every parent needs to speak with their children about those who are masking differently than them. She stated that taunting and pressuring peers to take a mask off or put a mask on will not be tolerated.

She said that she feels like we have been through a crazy and exhausting ultra-marathon and we were ten feet from the finish line. The fact that 200 students at the preschool are not eligible for the vaccine yet keeps her up at night. At the last meeting someone stated that they wanted to run for the Board. Member Christiansen wanted them to realize that equity is important in schools and to keep that in mind. For the preschool parents, she hopes the vaccine is available soon for your students. Member Christiansen complimented the students, teachers, staff, administrators, and the vast majority of parents. She stated that they have gone through the past two years with tremendous grace, strength, courage, and compassion for others. She mentioned that the staff had tried hard keep everyone safe. She said that this a time to celebrate the great progress that has been made and that isn't due to the voices of a nosy few. But to all of those who have done the right thing for so long. She stated that she was honored to have gone on the journey with everyone.

Moment of Silence

Joyce Mowbray, Retired Neponset School Secretary

ADJOURNMENT

Member DeBord seconded a motion made by Member Dev to adjourn the open meeting. A voice vote from Members Stabler, Dev, DeBord, Christiansen, Salisbury, Steffen, and Johnson was heard all voting aye. There were no nay votes heard. The motion carried.

The open meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.

JEFF JOHNSON, PRESIDENT

JON DEBORD, SECRETARY