

**Mahomet-Seymour
COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT NO. 3
Champaign County, Illinois
Meeting of the Board of Education
Regular Meeting**

Held in the Board Conference Room

Date: November 16, 2020

7:00 Regular Board Meeting

1. Call to order

The Regular Board Meeting was called to order by President Max McComb at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. Roll Call

Board members physically present for the roll call were Max McComb, Lori Larson, Merle Giles, and Dr. Jeremy Henrichs. Board members Meghan Hennesy, Ken Keefe, and Dr. Colleen Schultz attended remotely. Also physically present were Superintendent, Dr. Lindsey Hall, and Board Recorder, Dawn Quinley.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

President McComb asked those in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

President McComb said that there was a suggestion to move items 11.B.1. and 11.B.2. to the consent agenda

Motion was made by **Keefe**, seconded by **Giles**, *to approve the agenda* as modified by moving items 11.B.1 and 11.B.2. to the consent agenda. The motion was approved by “yes” vote, 7-0. Motion carried.

5. Consent Agenda Items

President McComb asked the Board if they would like to see any additional changes to the consent agenda.

- Minutes for the October 05, 2020 Budget Hearing - Open Session
- Minutes for the September 14, 2020 Study Session – Open Session
- Minutes for the September 14, 2020 Study Session – Closed Session
- Minutes for the September 21, 2020 Regular Meeting - Open Session
- Bills as presented
- Treasurer’s Report as presented
- Personnel Changes as presented
- Adoption of Estimated Tax Levy (11.B.1.)
- Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance Renewals (11.B.2.)
- PRESS 105

Motion was made by **Henrichs**, seconded by **Larson**, to approve the consent agenda with the addition of items 11.B.1. and 11.B.2. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 4-3. Members Giles, Henrichs, Larson and McComb voted yes. Members Hennesy, Schultz, and Keefe voted no. Motion carried.

6. Donations

There were no donations in November.

7. Recognition of Ellen Ericson, Illinois Foreign Language Teacher of the Year

Dr. Lindsey Hall introduced Ellen Ericson as the ICTFL Paul T. Griffith Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Ericson has been a Spanish instructor for 14 years, has been instrumental at establishing the seal of bi-literacy at the high school, is a statewide leader in her professional organization, and an outstanding leader in the District. Dr. Hall congratulated Mrs. Ericson and thanked her for her many contributions to the Mahomet-Seymour School District.

8. Recognition of School Board Member Day

Dr. Lindsey Hall recognized and thanked the Board Of Education for their volunteer service to the Mahomet-Seymour School District. She expressed her appreciation for all they do every day, and for the difficult role they have fulfilled during the pandemic.

9. Communications from PTO, MSEA, Foundation, Visitors and Board Commendations

PTO: No report

MSEA: Megan Jones, Co-President of the MSEA, along with James Heinold, read a statement from the MSEA. The letter expressed concerns about not moving to fully remote learning as recently recommended by the CUPHD. MSEA plans to file a grievance regarding hazardous working conditions if the District does not choose to go fully remote as soon as possible.

Foundation: Lori Larson reported that the annual campaign letter is in the mail and will serve as the fundraiser for the year. The education foundation raises money to provide grants for the District teachers and schools.

Public Participation

Name	Agenda Topic
Lindsay Kearns	COVID-19 & District Liability
Janet Mohr	CUPHD remote learning recommendation and school plans for 2 nd semester
Robert DeAtley	CUPHD remote learning recommendation
Jennifer Smith	COVID-19 school plans
Jaime Derringer	CUPHD remote learning recommendation
Mindy Spencer	Diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, and CUPHD remote learning recommendation
Eric Potter	CUPHD remote learning recommendation
Eric Lewis	CUPHD remote learning recommendation
Sarah Vrona	CUPHD remote learning recommendation
Colin Diercks	COVID-19 school plans for 2 nd semester

10. Reports, Updates & Informational Board Communication

Ken Keefe encouraged a switch to fully remote instruction as soon as possible. The District has plans in place and is ready for the transition. He said this is something we should do to protect our community and the Board should lead the way.

Colleen Schultz gave a shout out to the Junior High cross country team. In these days, we should celebrate things that are successful and great and both the boys and girls teams were sectional champions. She congratulated them and thanked the coaching staff of Lisa Martin, Conan Jurkowski, Lori Clark, and Matt Mills.

Meghan Hennesy thanked everyone who has taken the time to come in person to talk to the Board, made phone calls, or sent emails to the Board. These communications are good for the Board to receive so the Board can best represent the community. She encouraged everyone who might be looking for something

safe and fun to do to check out Cauldron Bubble, a play by the High School Drama Department. Tickets are available now.

Merle Giles thanked the Health Department for doing the job that they do and doing it very well. He encouraged the Board to continue to perform the broad array of duties they are appointed to do with regard to the education of the students in the District.

Lori Larson echoed congratulations to the Junior High Cross Country Team. She also shared that the High School Girls Cross Country Team placed 14th at State, and the High School Boys Cross Country Team got 2nd at State. She thanked coaches Jama Grotelueschen and Neil Garrison. She was pleased to see that the High School was able to give out academic letters. She reported that she attended the IASB Delegate Assembly remotely, and out of 258 member districts there to vote, 89% voted for recommending that school boards maintain local control.

Jeremy Henrichs had no report.

President McComb said that he appreciated the shout out for School Board Member appreciation. He is grateful for the opportunities he has had to talk with other school board members in Illinois as everyone works through this difficult time. He expressed his thanks for the fantastic job done on the Veteran's Day production. He acknowledged that it isn't what we normally do, but since it wasn't safe to bring everyone in to the schools, he appreciated the great job done on the video production.

Financial Update

Heather Smith, Chief School Business Official, gave a financial report to the Board. She shared that the District received \$7.9 million in October, and \$1 million has been received so far in November. The District has received 97% of last year's levy. Sales tax percentage for the year is down 6.2%.

Director of Special Education's Report

Christine Northrup's report was included in the Board packet. Mrs. Northrup wanted to publicly thank the three District CPI (crisis prevention and intervention) trainers: Lauren Pratt, Cynthia Johnson, and Brian Bajer.

Director of Instruction's Report

Dr. Nicole Rummel's report was included in the Board packet. She mentioned that the SAT scores from the fall were a little higher than last spring. She expected them to be lower, and is interested in watching this over the next few years as the District plays catchup from last spring. She also reported that she and Dr. Kevin Tan received a \$45,000 Healing Illinois grant from the Department of Human Services. Mahomet-Seymour is the only school district to receive the grant, and it was one of the largest awards in the state. The Board asked several follow up questions including what feedback was received about Indigenous Peoples Day and changes to curriculum surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion. Dr. Rummel indicated that she received feedback indicating that the switch from celebrating Columbus to celebrating the founding of the land was appreciated. Some new books have been purchased that have characters that represent the diversity of students so that they see themselves in the books we have available.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Lindsey Hall's report was included in the Board packet. She reported that our school district, and across the nation, are feeling the effects of the teacher shortage. Some of the positives coming out of that are an effort to identify students who may want to go into education. A group through the Education for Employment system called Education Pathways committee has started to put together some focused activities to encourage and recruit students who want to go into education and get them started in high school. The District has the opportunity to conduct COVID-19 rapid testing here, and District Nurse Nita Bachman will present more on this later in the meeting.

11. Regular Business

9. A. Unfinished Business

9. B. New Business

9.B.1. Resolution Concerning Review of Hazardous Conditions

Nick York indicated that there were no changes from last year. There were no questions from the Board.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Hennesy**, to approve the Resolution Concerning Review of Hazardous Conditions as presented. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 7-0. Motion carried.

9.B.2. Class Rank & Proposed Board Policy 6:335

Mahomet-Seymour High School Principal Chad Benedict reviewed the process and timeline used to update the academic recognition plan at the high school. Mr. Benedict and Dr. Colleen Schultz worked with Dr. Hall, High School Division Heads, the Principal Advisory Committee, and also held a virtual Campus Conversation with students and staff to obtain feedback. The proposal includes a modified honors recognition system for the classes of 2022 and 2023 which is a blend of the previous recognition plan and the proposed new plan which will start with the class of 2024 and all successive classes. Mr. Benedict reviewed the specifics of each plan. Mr. Benedict expressed his thanks to Dr. Schultz and Dr. Hall for their feedback, and to everyone who worked on the proposals. Dr. Schultz said that it was a true pleasure to work with Mr. Benedict and the staff, particularly high school guidance counselor, Tim Lybarger. She also mentioned that she appreciates the thought given to recognizing students who may not be college bound but achieve high standards academically. The Board asked follow up questions, and a concern was raised about the proposed plan not recognizing excellence at the highest levels, and not teaching students to cope with stress levels and adversity. Mr. Benedict indicated that other schools have transitioned away from numerical class rank, and balancing overall mental health and wellbeing was something the new system addressed. The feedback from the staff and students has been positive.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Hennesy**, to approve Board Policy 6:330 and the changes to the Academic Recognition Program at Mahomet-Seymour High School. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 6-1. Member Henrichs voted no. Motion carried.

9.B.3. Settlement Agreement

Dr. Lindsey Hall recommended that the Board approve the settlement agreement.

After a time of discussion, motion was made by Larson, seconded by Henrichs, to approve the settlement agreement between D.C. et al. v. BOE of M-S CUSD #3 et al. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 4-2. Members Larson, Henrichs, Giles, and McComb voted yes. Members Hennesy and Schultz voted no. Member Keefe abstained.

9.B.4. Go to Bid

Dr. Lindsey Hall and Director of Facilities, Steve Curtis, shared that the health/life safety amendment was approved to use h/l's funds for the replacement of two boilers. Dr. Hall asked for approval to go out to bid for the replacement of two boilers at the high school. The Board asked several follow up questions about the condition of the operational boilers, and whether there would be any cost savings from replacing all four boilers. Chief School Business Official, Heather Smith, said that the District does not have enough health/life safety funds to replace all four at this time. Replacing the two non-operational boilers is an urgent need.

Motion was made by **Henrichs**, seconded by **Giles**, to authorize the superintendent to let bids for the one for one replacement of the two existing non-operational boilers at Mahomet-Seymour High School. Bids will be

taken with the intention to bring for review and approval at the December 14th BOE meeting. Motion was approved by “yes” vote, 7-0. Motion carried.

9.B.5. Proposed Revisions to Board Policies 1:10, 3:10, 6:10

Dr. Lindsey Hall shared that the proposed changes to the three policies encapsulates the direction the District is moving in with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They signify the District and Board’s commitment to the work being done in this area. These policies will come back for a vote at next month’s meeting.

9.B.6. Approve Full Time Health EOP Positions for Second Semester

Dr. Lindsey Hall asked the Board to approve moving the three part-time health educational office personnel positions to three full-time positions beginning second semester. She sees a need for more hours moving forward in light of the rapid testing that will likely be happening in the future, and they have been very involved in contact tracing and communicating with parents.

Motion was made by **Larson**, seconded by **Henrichs**, to approve increasing the Health EOP’s at LT, MSJHS and MSHS to a full-time position for second semester.

Motion was made by **Hennesy**, seconded by **Schultz**, to table the decision to January until more is known about what the school week will look like then. District Nurse Nita Bachman said that she is in favor of moving the positions to full-time for second semester, noting she could use their help now. She said the staff is working beyond the hours they are being paid for already, and helping with a variety of other tasks that Mrs. Bachman has not had capacity to do. If students return to school 4 days/week in January, these will be essential positions to have in place. Dr. Hall said she understands the thought behind tabling it, but a hallmark of COVID is that we have to make decisions with the information we currently have. Dr. Schultz asked if the decision could be tabled to December as a middle ground. Member Giles said that he thought it was important to pay people for the work they are doing.

After a time of discussion, President McComb called for a vote on the motion to table. Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-4. Members Hennesy, Schultz, and Keefe voted yes. Members Giles, Henrichs, Larson, and McComb voted no. Motion defeated.

Member Keefe asked Mrs. Bachman what tasks she and the others are working on late into the night. She detailed all of the work occurring. Member Keefe asked if the public health department asked the District to do this work. Mrs. Bachman said that CUPHD has been very appreciative of what the District is doing and has shared the protocols that Mrs. Bachman has developed with other schools in the area. She said that families are notified of exposures and positive cases well before public health can contact them. Mrs. Bachman is able to get all of the affected people out of school and into quarantine the same day. Member Keefe said he is extremely grateful for the hard work, but is more inclined to not expect workers to work more than they are being paid for, and would want to allow public health to do what they are supposed to do and the District do what is our responsibility to do. Mrs. Bachman said that CUPHD thanked her for what the District is doing and asked her to please continue. She said she has not asked the Health EOPs to work longer hours, they are doing it on their own. Member Giles said he thinks the District has a duty to our parents, staff, and students to keep them safe in this manner. Dr. Schultz agreed. Mrs. Bachman was asked what the workload would look like if we were to go fully remote. She said the workload would be very similar because once the District starts testing, it will be for both remote students and staff, and it will be impossible to do without extra hands. Mrs. Bachman was asked to send the protocol that she has developed to the Board.

Motion was made by **Schultz**, seconded by **Hennesy**, to amend the original motion from moving the positions to full-time beginning second semester, to moving the positions to full-time as soon as possible. Motion to amend the original motion was approved by “yes” vote, 7-0. Motion carried.

President McComb called for a vote on the amended motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 6-1. Member Keefe voted no. Motion carried.

9.B.7. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee

Member Hennesy said she feels it is important to have board level attention to this topic. She believes the community, students, teachers, and parents, have asked for the Board’s help in this area. She expressed her disappointment that the Superintendent intends to not recommend this committee stating that she feels there is a pattern of behavior that the members in the majority don’t want to do the work of the board. The Board discussed the proposal with some expressing disagreement with the idea that this is what the Board should focus on, and disagreement that Board committees should operate separate from Administration. Member Hennesy stated that she sees the committee as providing additional input and voices and signal a level of the commitment to the community by the Board. There was discussion about the things currently being done in this area and Member Hennesy said she didn’t want to imply that what is being done by the staff is lacking, nor is it a critique of what is currently being done. She believes the board is here to support in many different ways and can provide additional time and support in doing this. President McComb says he believes this is a difference of opinion and approach. Dr. Hall stated that there have been multiple opportunities to discuss the Board’s role and what they should and shouldn’t be involved in, and her recommendation to not approve the committee has to do with what is board work.

Motion was made by **Hennesy**, seconded by **Schultz**, for the Board to create an inclusion and diversity committee focused on inclusion and diversity in our schools. Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-4. Members Schultz, Keefe, and Hennesy voted yes. Members Giles, Larson, Henrichs, and McComb voted no. Motion defeated.

9.B.8. COVID-19 Update

Dr. Lindsey Hall gave a brief update about the upcoming basketball season. She said there is a meeting this Thursday with IHSA, It doesn’t seem likely that there will be a basketball season. We will proceed with some other winter sports that are medium to low risk and we will proceed with non-contact practices in basketball and wrestling.

District Nurse Nita Bachman explained that she and Dr. Hall recently had a conversation with the deputy director of CUPHD about free antigen testing kits from IDPH that will be available to schools. The District applied for and received an emergency CLIA waiver to be able to offer testing. This is 15 minute point of care rapid antigen testing. Students that are symptomatic will be tested, and we will know who is positive and who is exposed right then. The plan is to open up to all staff and students. Positive antigen tests will need a PCR test. Have a meeting tomorrow to talk about coordinating PCR testing. A physician at Christie Clinic has agreed to underwrite us, so they will work with us on this. Additional PPE will be needed. Every test whether negative or positive will be reported to IDPH every day. Consent forms will be needed before anyone is tested, and District attorneys will review the consent form before it is used. The Board asked several follow up questions including where the District’s liability is with regard to testing. Mrs. Bachman explained that if a symptomatic person tests negative with the antigen test, they will send them immediately for a PCR test to confirm the negative result. If the antigen test is positive, they are presumed positive and quarantined. This follows IDPH guidelines. It will allow our students and staff to know right away without waiting on test results which have been taking up to a week to receive from other testing locations.

Motion was made by **Hennesy**, seconded by **Keefe**, to immediately follow the CUPHD recommendations and move to full time remote learning.

It was noted that COVID-19 was not listed as an action item on the agenda. There was significant discussion about whether or not an item that has not been listed as an action item on the agenda can be voted on. Members Shultz and Hennesy said that they asked for it to be an action item and that board policy allows a vote on any items on the agenda. President McComb referred to page 18 of IASB's Coming to Order recommends because of court rulings that Boards not take action on any items not listed as an action item on the agenda.

Dr. Lindsey Hall said she spoke with Franzek attorney, Shelly Anderson, and the conversation was rooted around whether the recommendation from CUPHD was guidance or a mandate. Ms. Anderson was clear that it was guidance and the District does not have to follow the recommendation from CUPHD. Looking at our current data it is a defensible position in choosing to not go fully remote.

Dr. Hall was asked if current in-person students can make a change to remote. She indicated that the District has worked with all requests since the beginning of the school year to make a change and will continue to do that. Students in JH and HS are able to move from in-person to remote and vice versa easier than in the elementary schools. In the elementary schools, students whose parents want to move them from in-person to remote will be treated as if they are quarantined.

Dr. Hall was asked how many substitutes the District will not be able to fill before a building needs to be shut down. She said there have been days where principals have been in the classroom, but we have not approached a level where we have needed to shut down a building because of a lack of subs. The entire pandemic has been about needing to make decisions with the level of information available at the time. There has not been a time so far with regard to subs, or in conversations with CUPHD where there has been a recommendation to go fully remote or change what is being done. Dr. Schultz asked Dr. Hall if the information she has now would cause her to reassess what should happen in January. She said it might, but she would use the analogy of not calling a snow day in January now.

Mrs. Bachman and Dr. Hall reviewed the communications and website updates that happen when positive cases are identified.

After extended discussion, President McComb called for a vote on the motion. Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-4. Members Keefe, Hennesy, and Schultz voted yes. Members Larson, Henrichs, Giles, and McComb voted no. Motion defeated.

10. Closed Session

McComb stated it was necessary to go into Closed Session for the purpose of: *1) 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. 2) Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. 3) The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body. 4) 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.*

Motion was made by **Giles**, seconded by **Larson**, at 10:36 p.m. to go into closed session for the purposes stated by McComb. The motion was approved by “yes” vote, 7-0. Motion carried.

Motion was made by **Henrichs**, seconded by **Giles**, at 11:42 p.m., to return to open session. The motion was approved by “yes” vote, 7-0. Motion carried.

11. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by “yes” vote, 7-0 at 11:44 p.m. Motion carried.

Max McComb, President

Dr. Jeremy Henrichs, Secretary

Submitted by Dawn Quinley, Board Recorder