

**Monroe-Gregg Board of School Trustees
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Performing Arts Center
October 4, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Monroe-Gregg Board of School Trustees began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by School Board President, Mrs. Celina Clements at 6:32 P.M., in the Performing Arts Center. Board Members in attendance were: Mr. Jack Elliott, Mr. Tom Kennedy, Mr. Tim Pridemore and Mr. Brock Sears. Also in attendance, Dr. Kirk Freeman, School Superintendent; Mr. Steve Harris, School Board Attorney; Director of Finance, Kelly Dillon; MGTA President, Casey Honkomp; and several community members.

CONSIDERATION OF DONATION TO THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT FROM THE SICHTING FAMILY

The Sighting Family presented a \$2,000 check to Athletic Director, Nick Purichia. This money was raised and donated in memory of Jim Sighting. Mr. Purichia thanked the family for their generous donation to the Athletic Department.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Sears. Motion carried 5-0.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH RECOGNITION:

Student recognition awards are sponsored by the Monrovia Alumni each month. October 2021 award recipients were Madison Collins – MES; Jordan Brewer – MES; Charlie Rounds (due to being unable to attend in September, was present) – MES; Keeley Nees – MMS; and Emma Gaston – MHS

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

The following parents and community members requested to speak. Each request was submitted and followed requirements per Board Policy 0167.3 Public Participation at Board Meeting.

Former Student, Cooper Trigg, asked to address the Board. He was unable to speak due to lack of preparation per Board Policy. Mr. Trigg did not wish to speak on an agenda item and had not submitted a request seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

Parent, Mrs. Erica Leeds, regarding Unconstitutional School Policies.

Parent, Dr. Angela Vaughn-Frederick regarding September 13, 2021 Board Meeting.

Community Member, Mrs. Jacqueline Tharp regarding Student Masking.

Parent, Mr. Eric Zimmerman, withdrew his request to speak.

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CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The motion was made by Mr. Elliott to approve the following minutes as presented:

Work Session: September 9, 2021

Executive Meeting, Budget Hearing and Regular Meeting: September 13, 2021

Executive Sessions: September 20, 2021 and September 22, 2021

Mr. Pridemore seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS

Mr. Kennedy made the motion to approve claims, #4855 through #4972 in the amount of \$1,383,019.28. Mr. Sears seconded the motion to approve payment of expenditures as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to approve all personnel recommendations as presented with no additions, changes or deletions to the report. Mr. Sears seconded the motion; motion passed 4-1. Mr. Elliott was opposed.

2022 BUDGET ADOPTION

Dr. Freeman recommended the Board approve the 2022 School Budget, CPF Plan, Bus Replacement Plan and the following resolutions as presented: any anticipated 2022 transfers and the appropriations & tax rates (Form 4).

Mr. Pridemore made the motion to approve all budget items as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kennedy; motion carried 5-0.

CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) PUBLIC HEARING

Dr. Freeman explained that each school district seeking E Rate funding is required by law to hold a public hearing stating the following:

Internet filters are in place and active throughout the school district.

Board Policy regarding school internet usage has been reviewed and updated.

CONSIDERATION OF SPORTS MEDICINE AGREEMENTS (3) WITH HENDRICKS REGIONAL HEALTH

Dr. Freeman recommended the Board approve all agreements with Hendricks Regional Health. Hendricks Regional Health has hired Brandy Crum to continue as our on-site athletic trainer. School Attorney, Steve Harris reviewed the documents per Dr. Freeman's request and all documents are in order.

Mr. Sears made the motion to approve all three (3) agreements as recommended. Mr. Pridemore seconded the motion; motion carried 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF CELL PHONE REIMBURSEMENT

Mrs. Dillon provided a list of employees who may receive the cell phone compensation at the September meeting. Two additional names have been added for approval at this time. Mr. Elliott made a motion to approve the updated list. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kennedy and carried 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Each principal submitted their building level school improvement plan for approval. Mr. Kennedy made the motion to approve all three plans as submitted. Mr. Sears seconded the motion for approval. All plans passed 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN FOR 2022

Dr. Freeman asked the board to approve the updated District Safety Plan for 2022 as submitted by Safety Directors, Kelly Meier and Scott Tucker. Mr. Pridemore made the motion to approve as presented, Mr. Kennedy seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK CHANGES

Mrs. Meier asked the Board to approve a change to the current Elementary Handbook. Mr. Elliott made the motion to approve changes as presented by Mrs. Meier. Mr. Sears seconded the motion; motion carried 5-0.

CONSIDERATION OF MASTER TEACHER CONTRACT FOR 2021-2023

Dr. Freeman asked the Board to approve the two year contract agreement reached with the Teachers' Association. Dr. Freeman and Union President, Casey Honkomp both agree this is a very good contract and will also meet state compliance. 78% of new money will go toward teacher salaries.

OTHER

Dr. Freeman stated the school district is wrapping up the first nine week grading period. He commended the staff and students for an excellent start to the school year.

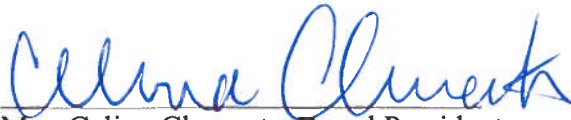
Board President, Celina Clements read a letter on behalf of the school board members regarding the district's "Return to Instruction Plan". (A copy of the letter is included with the minutes.)

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ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pridemore made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Sears. Mrs. Clements adjourned the meeting at 7:16 P.M.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Celina Clements".

Mrs. Celina Clements, Board President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Pridemore".

Mr. Tim Pridemore, Board Secretary

Community Members and Staff,

As I'm sure you are aware, the 2021-2022 school year has been more challenging than anticipated. The persistence of the Covid Delta variance has forced us to alter our plans for "return to school".

A "Return to Instruction Plan" or also referred to by the community as the "COVID-19 re-entry plan" is required to be submitted and approved by the local health department prior to policy adoption by the school board. We began the year with high hopes of a very "normal year" including limited mitigation efforts and quarantine.

At the September board meeting the board approved an updated plan to align with current executive orders and guidance from Governor Holcomb. This new plan added a temporary masking requirement but allowed the district to virtually eliminate the need for student quarantine. The benefit is to maximize student "in-person" learning and allow for uninterrupted participation in extra-curricular activities due to quarantine requirements.

This policy change was suggested and approved by a committee represented by our board, building administrators, school nurses, and teachers union. The Morgan County Board of Health approved this plan. There has been some concern raised by a segment of the community that this decision was reached prior to input from the public at the September board meeting. As the agenda stated "consideration of an update to the covid policy", the committee created the plan for the approval of the Morgan County Health Department and school board. The board feels this action was taken in response to administration and community feedback that the quarantine policies in place were proving detrimental to an effective learning environment.

Since the change to the "beginning of the year" policy, we have seen a significant decrease in the number of quarantined students from 482 students in the month of August to 22 students as of Oct. 1st. Confirmed positive cases have also declined district-wide to 5 current positive cases.

We as a district will continue to assess reasonable changes to the Covid response plan with a goal of maximizing the "in-person" educational experience, while providing as many "normal" activities as possible. The board and district will try to achieve this goal while working within the guidelines of the current Federal, State and Local health guidelines.

For the October meeting, there are no changes to the policy being considered for a vote. Therefore, the current temporary policy remains in effect. We will continue to monitor

positive cases, quarantined numbers, executive orders, and will follow the mandatory guidelines of the Morgan County Health Department.

Below are some other notable items that have been achieved this year:

We are in discussion to purchase 20 acres of land on the east side of our football field. This land will allow our campus to grow and will create a boundary for our school campus.

We worked with the Superintendent and teachers union to create a long-term plan for increasing teacher salaries resulting in the approval of one of the largest pay increases for our teachers to date. As of the October board meeting, an allocation of 78% of our “new money” will go directly to funding teacher salaries. Additionally, we are looking forward to developing a plan for our classified personnel salary increases as well.

We have contracted with architects to review our current building capacities to address district growth over the next few years. This review will result in a strategic and a step-by-step approach to facility expansion if needed.

A budget has been proposed for the next school year designed to maintain our existing tax rate at \$1.07. This will result in the tax rate being maintained for the past 5 years while improving our athletic facilities, the addition of the auditorium, the interior of our buildings, and student workspaces.

Additionally, our “rainy day” fund, also known as a savings, has increased from over \$714,425 dollars in June 2017 to over \$1,860,321 as of June 2021.

In conclusion, we appreciate the vast majority of community members, staff, parents, and students who continually understand and support the difficult decisions that must be made as we navigate the ongoing COVID situation.

Respectfully,
Monroe-Gregg School Board