

**Galena City School District
Board of Education Meeting
Charles Evans Community Library
Wednesday, August 16, 2023**

1) CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Karin Bodony called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

a) Introduction of Guests

Staff Members: Lisa Shelby, Lynn Betterton, Ben Blasco, Dennis Spinks, Cory Stringer, Naomi Winters, Will Kramer, Ashley Kramer, Richard Ramage, Rebecca Dunne, Dawn Wilson, Dean O'Dell, Edith Hildebrand, Jessie Towaruk, Chris Javier, and Jason Johnson.

b) Roll Call

Fred Huntington – present	Marylee Kauffman – present	Shirley Cleaver – present
Karin Bodony – present	Jenny Bryant – present	

A quorum was established.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance recited by all.

3) VISION/MISSION/CORE VALUES

The Vision/Mission & Core Values were read aloud by all Board Members.

4) AGENDA APPROVAL

a) Agenda

Board member Cleaver made a motion to approve the agenda.
Board member Huntington seconded the motion.

Motion carries. Board (5/0)

Amendments: None

5) STUDENT/STAFF PRESENTATIONS

None

6) STUDENT/STAFF COMMENTS

None

7) COMMUNITY COMMENTS

None

8) REPORTS

a. **Secretary's Report**

May and July Board Meeting Minutes

No Comments

b. **Financial Report – Edith Hildebrand reported:**

- Reports based on FY23 audited reports from old system
- Business office still converting to new software system, effective in July
- Still paying out FY23 expenditures and closing out FY23 budgets.

Comments:

- Board member Bodony said it sounds like a lot of work, and it all makes sense.
- Board member Cleaver asked a question to the board of whether we need full reports on financials every meeting, or could we get that quarterly, and do a synopsis otherwise.
- Discussion: All agreed – September, February, March, June will be full reports.

c. Directors and Principal Reports

Technology – Chris Javier

- Improved speeds for bandwidth, increased by 25megs
- New website will launch at start of school year.
- Working on server upgrades and physical wiring upgrades.
- Thank you to E-rate team, and Melissa Fritz for help with AK Reads literacy data tracking.
- Val and Sal information coming soon, presentation is being finalized.

Comments:

- Board Member Bodony asked how to get feedback to Chris for website. He said there will be a form.
- Board Member Bodony commented it is difficult to navigate back to the district from each of the school sites. Chris commented the new server will help with this issue.
- Board Member Bryant thanked Chris for giving a technology report; knows the tech team holds everything together behind the scenes, but the team is critical to student success.

IDEA – Dean O’Dell

- Working with DEED to meet needs of homeschool families and requirements of AK Reads Act.
- Traveling to all sites for in-service, mainly focused on understanding AK Reads
- Working on strategic planning goals:
 - Student success – congratulations to FFA team headed to Nationals and Robotics team who competed well.
 - Adding Vendor Fairs, which brings local vendors together with families and providers.
 - Celebrating growing enrollment, and dubbing this a year of gratitude.

Comments:

- Board member Kauffmann asked if IDEA students must take AK History. Director O’Dell answered yes, they do, it is a graduation requirement.
- Board member Cleaver thanks all of the IDEA staff, and said she enjoyed traveling to Juneau and Fairbanks for IDEA graduations.
- Board member Bodony excited to see workshops to help high school families with ILP’s, and she appreciates the positivity around AK Reads act as an opportunity.
- Board member Huntington said thank you for the hard work, and that is evident in current enrollment around seven thousand students.

Special Education Director – Jessie Towarak

- Enjoyed time on site in Galena, getting to know staff.
- Now working with IDEA offices, and leading in-services with SPED team next week.
- Learning processes, conducting needs assessments.
- We will have a SPED audit in October, have a good relationship with the state, and looks forward to this work to be conducted out of the Fairbanks IDEA office.

Comments:

- Board member Bryant gave a welcome and from the board and a thank you for joining our District.

SHS Principal – Cory Stringer

- Three year olds are registering.
- Shifting bell schedule, and middle school will add time to their day.
- 8th grades will have options for electives, and will be rotating classes at SHS.
- Working hard on AK Reads act, and training for teachers.
- Meet the staff dessert potluck tomorrow, cooks are making spaghetti.

Comments:

Board Member Cleaver thanked Cory for the report and reminded him to make sure he takes time off to be with his family. His hard work and all that he does for students is recognized and appreciated.

GILA Principal – Naomi Winters

- Excited to welcome new teachers, including international teachers yet to arrive.
- TCC is bringing a team to help us with orientation for incoming students.
- Dr. McGill and a team of mental health specialists will also be on site to help welcome and orient students, especially around mental health awareness and needs.

Comments:

Board Member Cleaver thanked her for the report, and congratulated her son on completing his internship with Boeing.

Residential Life Director – Ben Blasco

- Enrollment is sitting at 171, and students begin arriving at the end of the week.
- Thank you to Richard for taking lead on new furniture received from UAF to swap out well-loved furniture in student dorm rooms.
- Dr. McGill is working with the local clinic to conduct QPR training and the Blanket Exercise with staff.
- We are still working on staffing, some to hire, many are here, and others are arriving in early September.

Comments:

- Board member Bodony asked if they were RA's, and how training is handled for late staff arrivals, and Ben answered that some are RA's. Male RA's are still needed. Training is conducted through shadowing trained staff, and Richard has created videos to follow of training already conducted.
- Board member Bodony also asked if Residential Life staff would be at open house dessert potluck for introductions to the community, and said she enjoyed introductions conducted at staff in-service. Ben responded, yes, they would attend dessert potluck.

Activity Director – Cory Stringer

- Volleyball schedule confirmed, and have 3 home games, including homecoming for Nome games.
- Amanda A will be Assistant Volleyball Coach, Ross is Assistant Cross Country coach. We have lots of interest from new staff.
- We hope to bring Student Council back. Assistant Principal Hawley is working on ordering swag for staff and students.
- We are working on middle school basketball to Nenana (on call). Middle school is getting more difficult to schedule.

Comments:

- Board member Bodoni thanks Cory and appreciates having all of the schedules.
- Dr. Johnson commented that the entire administration team will support events and allow Cory to be a spectator at times.
- Board member Bodoni commented that she thought we had a different person as Activity Director? Cory answered, correct, but they resigned.

Sega Report – none

Assistant Superintendent Report – Lisa Shelby

- Learning and supporting admin team in in-service planning and hiring staff.
- Creating systems to monitor mandatory training for GCSD employees.
- Through strategic plan – creating assessment calendar, mentors for new teachers, and ongoing professional development planning throughout the school year calendar.
- Ongoing work includes the Early Childhood District-wide grant implementation, updating the GCSD CTE plan and articulated pathways to increase our dual credit offerings, and building a creative recruitment plan for staffing for FY25.

Superintendents Report – Dr. Jason Johnson

- New processes for onboarding students at Residential Life is invaluable.
- We are doing new things with new innovations, so expect some noise
- Aviation update – we have someone flying out to explore space on the airstrip, we have someone to help us with a hangar, and we are working on a large grant to offset costs. We are hopeful to have a plane and instructor on the ground by August of 2024.

Comments:

Board member Cleaver asked how teacher housing was coming along. Dr. Johnson responded all is on track, initial drawings and measurements of the property taking place this week. We are renting properties from owners to help offset needs for housing, in partnership with the City.

Board member Cleaver made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Board member Huntington seconded the motion.

Motion carries. Board (5/0)

9) OLD BUSINESS- None

10) NEW BUSINESS

a) 2023-2024 IDEA High School Handbook

Board member Cleaver made the motion.

Board member Kauffman seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to I move to approve the updated 2023-2024 IDEA High School Handbook. These edits will provide guidance for management of student services for the IDEA offices.

DISCUSSION:

1. The IDEA High School Student Handbook has been recently updated and vetted through the IDEA offices and IDEA Field Reps.
2. There are many small changes for clarification or improved grammatical choices. The only

substantive changes in the IDEA High School Student Handbook are listed below:

- a. p. 8 – Removed Close-Up Juneau, since we no longer do the Juneau trip.
 - b. p. 8 – Removed High School Planner, an optional worksheet that helped parents and contact teachers to track courses for graduation and scholarships. The Excel form had some complex formulas that were not working correctly, so it was removed from the website.
 - c. There is some other minor re-phrasing or clarification on pages 8, 9, and 13.
3. The edited 2023-2024 IDEA High School Student Handbook is attached.

Motion carries. Board (5/0)

b) 2023-2024 IDEA Parent Handbook

Board member Cleaver made the motion.

Board member Kauffman seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to approve the updated 2023-2024 IDEA Parent Handbook. These edits will provide guidance for management of student services for the IDEA offices.

DISCUSSION:

1. The IDEA Parent Handbook has been recently updated and vetted through the IDEA offices and IDEA Field Reps.
2. Most of the changes are grammatical, or provide clarification. The biggest changes to the IDEA Parent Handbook are outlined below:
 - a. p. 2 – Adjusted site admins for regions A & G. Adjusted description of Region G, since they are all far from an office, but not all “off the road system.”
 - b. p. 5 – Added reference to a graduation in Eagle River.
 - c. p. 7-8 – Updated allotment amount and added a lot of explanation to clarify how direct instruction is tracked and set the stage for the eventual withdrawal process.
 - d. p. 12 – Raised some spending limits. Added beekeeping limits. Made some adjustments to drones, now that they are becoming more ubiquitous. Emphasized travel limits and raised the dollar limit.
 - e. p. 15 – Clarified some receipt info for reimbursements for materials.
 - f. p. 21 – Testing language is re-worked to reflect AK Reads screening.
 - g. p. 25 – Clarification regarding webmail and Office 365.
 - h. p. 26 – Added language about the ability to get Apple products, not just Windows.
 - i. p. 29 – Added regulation reference.
 - j. P. 32 – Removed percentage computation language, which is a bit tedious and not really necessary; if families need help, it’s a good opportunity for the Contact Teacher to have a meaningful contact.
3. The edited 2023-2024 IDEA Parent Handbook is attached.

Motion carries. Board (5/0)

c) School Nurse Position Creation

Board member Cleaver made the motion.

Board member Kauffman seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to approve the creation of a School Nurse Position per the attached documentation.

DISCUSSION:

1. BPs 4111, 4119.3 and 4315 are attached for reference
2. The position's job description is attached for reference
3. The Superintendent's justification was provided within the Work Session

Motion carries. Board (5/0)

d) Admin II Position Creation

Board member Cleaver made the motion.
Board member Huntington seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to approve the updated 2023-2024 IDEA High School Handbook. These edits will provide guidance for management of student services for the IDEA offices.

DISCUSSION:

1. BPs 4212 and 4119.3 are attached for reference
2. The position's job description is attached for reference
3. The Superintendent's justification was provided within the Work Session

Motion carries. Board (5/0)

e) IDEA FFA Out of State Travel Request

Board member Cleaver made the motion.
Board member Kauffman seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to approve out-of-state travel and one-time funding of up to **\$5,000.00** for travel expenses to support the requested travel to the National FFA Convention and Expo in Indianapolis during November of 2023.

DISCUSSION:

1. **BP 6153** (enclosed) states that the GCSD School Board shall approve all school-sponsored trips involving out-of-state travel.
2. For funding, travel, and other details see attached letters from the IDEA Contact Teacher and FFA Chapter Advisor Kirsten Boatright.
3. Superintendent Johnson could have approved these funding requests since they are under \$40,000. However, since these funding requests involve travel outside of Alaska and the GCSD School Board must approve such trips, Superintendent Johnson felt that the GCSD School Board ought to discuss these requests to support these academic opportunities financially while also deciding on approving the out-of-state travel issue.

Motion carries. Board (5/0)

f) Staff Adjustments

Board member Cleaver made the motion.
Board member Bryant seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to approve the following hires.

DISCUSSION:

List of New Hires

GCSD - Assistant Business Manager, Mary Demoski
SHS - Receptionist/Secretary, Molly Kinsey
SHS - Early Learning Aide, Kimberly Huntington
SHS / GILA - Special Education Aide (Galena) IDEA -
Contact Teacher (Fairbanks), Katherine Quirk
IDEA - Contact Teacher (Kenai), Karen Melin
IDEA - Contact Teacher (Kenai), Georgia James
IDEA - Contact Teacher (Wasilla), Kevin Moos
IDEA - Coach (Wasilla), Janice Habermann
GILA - Receptionist/Secretary, Ieshia Goodell
SHS – Long Term Substitute, Vimonrat Hamm

1. BP 4111 :

Certificated Personnel Recruitment and Selection is attached that provides guidance for the appointment of certificated personnel.

2. BP 4212 Appointment and Conditions of Employment (Classified Personnel) is attached that provides guidance for the appointment of classified personnel.

3. GCSD's Strategic Plan and Mission emphasize the significance of recruiting and retaining exceptional staff.

Motion carries. Board (4/0) / 1 abstain

Next meeting: September 13, 2023

9) **BOARD COMMENTS:**

Cleaver, thank everyone for great start to school year. Kids are excited, Jason has only been here a year and 6 mos – lots of change and good things happening. Maybe we could list challenges as part of the reports too? Like the info in the reports, look forward to meet and greet tomorrow. Liked the employee list as well.

Kauffman, thank you for informative wonderful reports

Huntington, thank all of the hard work to put all of these programs together and help them grow. IDEA has 7K students, which is all part of GCSD, and we are getting good recognition for all we are doing. Talked about unmanned vehicles and drones, met someone I passed Jason's info to. They are looking to find partnership with UA system to work with UMGs.

Byrant, same things, just ditto to what everyone said- thanks so much to our staff, so exciting all of the things are happening. Sometimes we get all caught up with all of the challenges that suck all of the oxygen, and there are so many positives. School nurse position has a lot of things that is on our wish list for several years, add aviation program, music program, art program, all of our wish list things that are happening. Thanks Jason and your team for bringing us this and making it happen. Thank you.

Bodony, I agree with what everyone says. I spend last week with K-3 kids in camp, and they are high energy and ready. Look out! Looking forward to a great school year.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice - President Bodony adjourned the regular meeting of the GCSD Board of Education at **8:42 pm**.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Huntington, Board Secretary

Date Minutes Approved