

June 8, 2022

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
DECATUR COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

The Board of School Trustees met in regular session on Wednesday, June 8, 2022 at the Central Office, 2020 N Montgomery Rd., Greensburg, IN 47240.

Board President Joyce Geis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. All members of the board were present.

Under routine matters, upon a motion made by Todd Mauer and a second by Stephen AmRhein, minutes of the regular board meeting held May 11, 2022 were unanimously approved.

Payment of claims and payroll were ordered on a motion made by Todd Mauer, a second by Lizette Bell and passed unanimously.

On a motion made by Nicholas Messer and a second by Todd Mauer, the following conference was unanimously approved.

Conferences

Jason Holland – Special Education Legislative Summit
Alexandria, VA – July 10, 2022 – 7/13/2022

On a motion made by Chris Owens and a second by Matthew Hoeing, the following resignations and retirements were unanimously approved. Todd Mauer noted that he is sad to see Theresa Crain retire, as she drove all of his children.

Resignations

Nate Canfield – Title I Interventionist
North Decatur Elementary School

Emily Baltus – Educational Assistant
South Decatur Elementary School

Misti Burchett – Part Time Educational Assistant
North Decatur Elementary School

Retirements

Theresa Crain – Bus Driver – Last Day May 26, 2022

On a motion by Stephen AmRhein and a second by Lizette Bell, the following appointments were approved 6-1, with Nicholas Messer abstaining.

Appointments

Jason Hacker - Varsity Boys Basketball Coach
South Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Val Stephen – English Teacher
North Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Zach Luttel - Special Education Instructional Assistant
South Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Tyler Johnson - 8th Grade Girls Basketball Coach
North Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Mary Rogers- Title I Interventionist
North Decatur Elementary School

Summer Help 12.85/hr

Taylor Bohman, Barbara McIntosh, and Crystal Hoover – Custodial Help
North Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Amanda Reatherford and Kaitlyn Woodhull – Custodial Help
South Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Kathy Taylor and Wendy Kopplin – Educational Assistants
South Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

Ryken Winchester, Sheila Skinner, and Cathy Pitmann – Technology Help

Chase Kalli, Olivia Krieger, and Brayden Lee – Technology Help – 20hr/week

Erin Shafer, Lynn Pennington, Brayden Yeager, Kamdenn McKinney, and Cater Gray
Bus Cleaning Help

There were no agenda topics.

Under written requests, the following individuals requested to address the board regarding property taxes.

- John Derheimer, Keith Reed, Debbie Reed, Barb Herbert, Walt Herbert, Bob Kirby, Vicky Kirby, Kenny Rennekamp, Aaron Hatton, Joyce Hatton, Sherri Huff, Richard Schmidt, Melanie Schmidt, Brenda Cheek, Denver Cheek, Jim Moore

Joyce Geis gave instruction on how individuals would address the board. She would call the names from the list of written requests and each individual would have 3 minutes to address the board.

John Derheimer was the first speaker to be called upon. He first expressed his gratitude for the the Board and the work they do. Second, Mr. Derheimer expressed his concern over rising property taxes and that they would continue to rise with his main grievance being that he would have preferred the Board had given the citizens a warning that the taxes would be increasing, rather than it being a surprise. Thus, he requests that in the future, the board give warning to the public if possible.

Keith Reed and Debbie Reed were called on next, but failed to attend the meeting.

Barb Herbert was called upon next. Her main concern was that her property taxes had increased 28%, up \$1,200.00, \$800.00 of which the school was responsible for. Mrs. Herbert referenced the construction costs at the school, voicing her desire as a tax payer to see a detailed report of how the construction funds were spent. Mrs. Herbert continued stating she had done research and found that the school may be involved in a lawsuit regarding the construction not being completed correctly. Mrs. Herbert finished her time

voicing her concern that if taxes continue to rise in this manner, she fears she will not be able to afford her property taxes and thus will be unable to remain in her home.

Walt Herbert was called upon next, stating he had many of the same concerns as his wife, who had just spoken. Mr. Herbert voiced his belief that the school system was important and necessary to the community. He went on however, to voice his concerns over inflation, not only of his property taxes, but the cost of living in general and stated he realized the members of the board felt those effects too. Mr. Herbert voiced his concern that he believed the tax percentage of Decatur County was among the highest in the state, that spending may need to be looked at, and he was concerned the county was going too far into debt. Mr. Herbert slightly exceeded his time, however he finished by voicing his understanding that it is a problem for everyone in the community and that he is concerned for the future.

Bob Kirby spoke next. Mr. Kirby expressed that he had built homes in the county 23 years ago and has witnessed the prices increasing more every year, to the point of being unreasonable. Mr. Kirby voiced his biggest concern was for the individuals on a fixed income, who won't be able to continue to pay the increasing prices.

Vicky Kirby was called upon next, but failed to attend the meeting.

Kenny Rennekamp was called upon next and began by stating he knew the schools were getting older and would need upkeep. However, Mr. Rennekamp expressed his concern that money is spent recklessly, specifically mentioning the *watchtower* additions to the high schools several years ago, which he regards as a pointless expense. Mr. Rennekamp states he agrees with the previous speakers, and asks for better stewardship of funds.

Aaron Hatton spoke next and began by expressing his appreciation for the Board and the work they do. Mr. Hatton expressed that he loves his community and neighbors and that he has been retired for a while but the tax increases were going to cause him to have to go back to work if he wanted to stay in his home. Mr. Hatton then expressed that he had some complaints regarding how things were being assessed on his property, specifically the square footage of his attic and crawlspace. Mr. Hatton expressed his desire for his property to be reassessed and reported his property taxes from the schools had increased 51%, from \$900.00 to \$1,500.00. Mr. Hatton voiced his concern that things do not seem “kosher” and that he would like things to be investigated.

Joyce Hatton was called upon next, stating she agreed with everything her husband, the previous speaker, had said. She further voiced that she did not understand why there was such a high increase in the taxes and she shared the concern that she will not be able to afford to remain in her home.

Sherri Huff, Richard Schmidt, Melanie Schmidt, Brenda Cheek, and Denver Cheek were each called upon but failed to attend the meeting.

Jim Moore was the last to speak. Mr. Moore began by stating he understood that every person and every industry is feeling rising costs. Mr. Moore argued that there must be a limit put on spending. That the school has money coming in from inflation, but they do not need to spend it, rather they could send it back, thus keeping taxes from increasing. Mr. Moore’s main concern is that he feels that money is not being properly budgeted but being spent needlessly.

Dr. Jarrod Burns thanked everyone for their comments, and although not required to give a response, Mr. Burns expressed his understanding for the concerns being shared

and wanted to give what answers he could, even if they were not all answers they would want to hear.

Dr. Burns began by explaining that it is required by law that public notices be put out and that those laws and procedures were followed, giving the community the opportunity to stay informed.

Dr. Burns continued to address some of the specific concerns regarding taxes and appraising, stating he cannot speak to what other government entities can or cannot do but he can only speak to what the school specifically does. Thus, some of their concerns such as incorrect appraisals would need to be taken up with the correct government entity.

Dr. Burns then addressed the concern of being a high taxed county. However, as explained in the handout Dr. Burns provided, in 2018 Decatur County was the 8th lowest in property taxes for schools in the state of Indiana and currently Decatur County is the 31st lowest in property taxes for school, which is still considerably low.

Dr. Burns went on to describe how the construction money was very controlled in how it could be spent and that it was not spent frivolously on luxuries but the buildings were 40 years old with original plumbing, electric, furniture that was falling apart, asbestos, bad floors, etc., which all needed to be replaced simply to keep the schools safe and functional.

Dr. Burns addressed the lawsuit that Mrs. Herbert referred to, saying there was a dispute with Forster Electric, but it had been resolved 9 months prior and was not an issue at this time.

Dr. Burns addressed the concern over the *watchtower* additions, stating that was a project that was done by a prior superintendent and that he had no knowledge of the how and why those towers were made and the effect it had, if any, on the community, but he would look into it.

Dr. Burns expressed his understanding with the frustration people were having, and that inflation is being felt by everyone. However, unfortunately, the schools are not getting an increase in money due to inflation and the school systems are feeling it like every other industry. Dr. Burns then stated there would be a small increase to the property taxes in 2023 as well, that it would be much less significant than this year's increase and then it would begin to drop in 2024.

Dr. Burns finished by stating that moving forward, decisions would continue to be made with respect to how it will affect the community, balancing the needs of educating students with the needs of the community. Dr. Burns then thanked everyone for coming and addressing the Board.

There was no old business.

Under new business, on a motion made by Matthew Hoeing and a second by Nick Messer, re-approval of the Return to Learn Plan was unanimously approved.

Dr. Burns explained that this is a re-approval that is required to be done every 6 months until 2024 and that no changes were being made at this time to the plan.

On a motion made by Todd Mauer and a second by Lizzette Bell, the following donations were unanimously approved:

Donations

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
North Decatur Jr./Sr. High School		
First Baptist Church	\$500.00	FCA
Decatur County Treasurer	\$3,000.00	SADD
North Decatur Elementary School		
South Decatur Jr./Sr. High School		
Greensburg/Decatur County Chamber of Commerce	\$250.00	FFA
First Baptist Church	\$500.00	FCA
Nick Stewart	\$750.00	Athletics
Nick Stewart	\$750.00	Drama Club
South Decatur Elementary School		
Sandcreek Township	\$2,300.00	Woods Project

Matthew Hoeing and Lizette Bell made note of the generosity of those who made donations, and said thank you.

On a motion made by Nicholas Messer and a second made by Stephen AmRhein, the disposal of the following obsolete equipment was unanimously approved.

OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT

North Decatur Elementary School

- 69 Indiana Success student workbooks (green books)
- 12 Chapter Resource books
- 12 Teacher Manuals
- 5 Additional Teacher Resource Books
- HP color LaserJet CP4525 Printer – Title I – broken – Serial #: JPBC9BG0S6
- 44 Volume 1 - ISBN #: 13 9780544745599
- 44 Volume 2 – ISBN #: 10 0544745590
- 5 Indiana Success – ISBN #: 9780544778962
- 3 sets of Teacher Materials – 19
- 97 Health and Wellness Indiana – ISBN # - 0022821686
- 44 Write Source – ISBN #: 9780669518085
- 42 IN Success Go Math! Workbooks
- 2 McGraw Hill Health and Wellness Teacher Edition
- 6 McGraw Hill Health and Wellness Assessments and Guides
- 15 Real World Problem Solving Math and Science booklets
- 1 set Science Key Concept Cards

- 1 set Science, A Closer Look Vocabulary Cards
- 7 Wonders Consumable Practice Book – ISBN #:978-0-02118713-3
- 15 My Science Notebook – Consumable – ISBN #: 978-0-07-658764-3
- 81 My Science Notebook – Newer Version – ISBN #: 978-0-07-898606-2
- 63 Wonders hardback – Literature Anthology – ISBN #: 978-0-02-118712-6
- 64 Wonders Hardback – Reading/Writing Workshop – ISBN #: 978-0-02-118711-9
- 46 Write Source hardback – ISBN #: 978-0-669-50705-1
- 60 Discovering World Geography – ISBN #: 978-0-02-136073-4
- All Go Math! teacher and student materials K-6

North Decatur Jr./Sr. High School

- Clarinet - Serial #: 1040443
- Clarinet – Serial #: 23279
- Mellophone – Serial #: 970328
- Piano – Serial #: 495950
- Trombone – Brand: Glory
- Bari Sax Case – Brand: Pro-Tec
- 7 Composite drumline harnesses
- 2 Orchestra Pro Music Stands
- Analog Tuner
- 2 Speaker Stands
- Marching bass drum – Brand: Evans
- Portable PA Speakers – Brand: Tailgater Pro
- Color Guard Flagpole
- 4 Color Guard rifles
- Home theater surround sound system
- Area stereo speaker – Brand: Kenmore
- Clarinet case
- Travel electric guitar
- Broken percussion/microphone racking

On a motion made by Lizette Bell and a second made by Chris Owens, student fundraisers were unanimously approved.

There was no Communications or Reports.

The next regular Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at Central Office.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m. on a motion by Chris Owens and a second by Matthew Hoeing.

Matthew Hoeing, Secretary
Board of School Trustees
Decatur County Community Schools

APPROVED BY:
