

..... heard Board member Rocky Enfield recite the Elkhart Promise.

..... approved the following items under a consent approval:

Minutes – December 13, 2022 – Public Work Session  
Minutes – December 13, 2022 – Regular Board Meeting

Claims in the amount of \$5,913,480.24.

Proposed school fundraisers in accordance with Board policy.

Accepted the following extra-curricular purchase requests: West Side Athletics Account to purchase thirty (30) helmets totaling \$5,670.00 and West Side Extra-Curricular Account to purchase three (3) trombones and six (6) trumpets totaling \$9,149.55.

Gift Acceptance – Accepted with appreciation the following donations made to Elkhart Community Schools (ECS): Oil, lubricants, and other miscellaneous automotive supplies with an owner estimated value of \$78,000 from Kem Krest to the Elkhart Area Career Center (EACC) to be used in the Automotive and Diesel Technology classes; \$1,000 from Legacy Heating and Air, Inc. to Elkhart High School (EHS) Cheerleading team to assist with the growth of the program; and \$1,000 from Monteith’s Best-One Tire and Service to EHS Cheerleading team to assist with the growth of the program.

Conference Leave Requests

Submission of the following grants: Community Foundation of Elkhart County Mishler Brown Grant hosted by Carrie Berghoff of Community Foundation of Elkhart County for the Agriculture department in the amount of \$50,000 and NRA Foundation hosted by Friends of the NRA for the Elkhart High School (EHS) Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) in the amount of \$12,000

Personnel Report:

Employment of the following three (3) certified staff member: Laurie Kaiser, grade 6 at Osolo; Monica Shankle, special education at Beardsley; and William Simmons, math at West Side.

Resignation of the following three (3) certified staff members: Aaron Elias, social studies at Pierre Moran; Russell Horst, science at Elkhart High; and Kathryn Lane, language arts at Elkhart High.

Employment of the following one (1) classified employee: Suzanne Tufts, secretary at ESC.

Retirement of the following one (1) classified employee: Loria Mayes, executive assistant at ESC

Unpaid leave extension for the following one (1) classified employee: Lisa Swartzell-Guerra, food service at Riverview.

Resignation of the following one (1) classified employee: Kevin Havens, custodian at West Side.

- ..... heard Superintendent Steve Thalheimer inform the Board this was the second week of the surveys and encouraged community members to go to ECS's website to take the surveys. All students in grades 7 through 12 will be taking the student surveys this week during their advisory period.
- ..... approved the purchase of 10 new passenger buses through the State Cooperative Purchasing program. The recommended purchase includes three special needs, 72 passenger buses with three wheelchair hook ups, 1,000 pound Braun lift and air-conditioning; three 78 passenger front engine conventional buses; and four 84 passenger rear engine transit buses for a total of \$1,589,653.00. Twenty buses will be traded outright reducing our fleet by ten buses.
- ..... awarded the bid for Fuel for 2023 to Ceres Solutions, as the most responsive and most responsible bidder. Later in the meeting, Jon Chevalier, director of transportation, received confirmation that Ceres Solutions would honor the fixed pricing quoted in their fuel bid.
- ..... heard Brad Sheppard, assistant superintendent of instruction, present a proposed new course offering for the 2023-2024 school year: Advanced Placement Precalculus, for Board review.
- ..... received the monthly financial report.
- ..... received the monthly insurance update.
- ..... heard Kerry Mullet, Elkhart Teachers' Association president, inform the Board they have a happy teaching staff. She thanked the Board and the bargaining team for a great bargaining season. Lots of good things are taking place this pay period including this year's bargaining increases, insurance premium holiday, and the Teacher Appreciation Grant stipends.

Ms. Mullet thanked all the staff in the administration building, especially the "unsung heroes" including Chris Romanetz, certified payroll; Maggie Logano, director of human resources; Loria Mayes, executive assistant; Cliff Ziebold, manager of enterprise application services; and the many others who worked tirelessly to ensure each staff member got their accurate income adjustment.

In closing, Ms. Mullet wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

- ..... heard Mayor Rod Roberson and Mrs. Regina Roberson thank the administration and Board for their words of comfort and for allowing them to house the memorial services for the Mayor's brother, Garvin Roberson, at North Side Gymnasium, a place Garvin was most connected. In closing, they presented some donations to ECS, in Garvin Roberson's memory, to the Board president and noted the family is requesting any further donations be made to EHS Athletics and or the Elkhart County Humane Society.

..... heard Board members express their sympathy and thank Mayor and Mrs. Roberson for sharing.

..... heard Dr. Thalheimer ask the director of transportation to provide a status update on the bus driver shortage from last week. Mr. Chevalier informed the Board the transportation department had a lot of illness last week with sixteen drivers absent due to illness; there were six drivers out sick today. He affirmed ECS bus drivers are dedicated employees who care about our students. Most were able to return to work this week, some wearing masks to protect themselves and students from potentially getting sick, in order to make sure our students get to school safely. Mr. Chevalier said, "I couldn't be more proud."

In response to Board inquiry, Mr. Chevalier explained last week was the "perfect storm" and it was simply not feasible to get students to school safely; there was just too much sickness. He further explained when bus drivers are absent, all of the transportation employees who hold a CDL step up to cover routes including the routers, supervisors, dispatchers, trainers, and director of transportation. Mr. Chevalier assured Board members they are doing everything they can to get kids to school, all while keeping them safe.

All Board members thanked Mr. Chevalier and the transportation department employees for their efforts.

..... heard Dr. Thalheimer thank Board members Rocky Enfield and Babette Boling for their service, always being child centered, and supporting ECS efforts as a district.

..... heard Dr. Thalheimer wish everyone a safe and happy holiday break.

..... heard Mrs. Boling remark on her time serving on the Board stating it was a pleasure and honor to work with Dr. Thalheimer and the rest of the Board members.

..... heard Mr. Enfield remark about his time serving on the Board stating it was a pleasure to serve with Dr. Thalheimer and the rest of the Board members.

..... heard all Board members express their gratitude and thank Mr. Enfield and Mrs. Boling for their service to ECS.

..... heard Board member Kellie Mullins recognize Loria Mayes who is retiring with 42 years of service.