

..... heard Board Vice President Troy Scott recite the Elkhart Promise.

..... heard Assistant Superintendent of Exceptional Learners, Tony England, recognize Lisa Ernsberger, Director of High Ability, for being nominated by the National Association of Gifted Children for the District Coordinator of the Year. This past week, Elkhart Community Schools (ECS) was notified that Ms. Ernsberger was officially named the National Representative Coordinator for Gifted Children.

In response to Board inquiry, Ms. Ernsberger informed the Board the recognition will bring attention to ECS and the work that has been done over the past three years as well as the work in progress for the high ability population. She highlighted the recent efforts made to reach ECS' underrepresented populations, including free and reduced lunch and, beginning this year, emerging bilingual students through Rising Scholars. Middle schools have demonstrated a ninety-five (95%) percent success rate with kids identified as Rising Scholars. She is looking forward to seeing this same success with ECS' emerging bilingual students.

In response to Board inquiry, Ms. Ernsberger informed Board members about an upcoming event, Newly Identified Night, which will provide more information about the program to families, encourage participation, and address any questions families may have about the program. She will work with her team in an effort to help promote and encourage new families to participate in the program.

In response to Board inquiry, Ms. Ernsberger shared this school year, ECS is offering an exploratory Rising Scholars program at Mary Beck Elementary School. They are using local norms at Mary Beck to identify clusters of students in need of enrichment. Cluster teachers will work with these students as well as social workers, who will work to develop leadership and friendship skills. All three middle schools have similar programs where students are identified as Rising Scholars using the local norms at each middle school as well as input provided by 6th grade teachers. Identified students are tagged as being Rising Scholars so teachers know to provide additional support to help prepare these students for future honors courses and potentially the Early College Program when entering high school.

All Board members congratulated Ms. Ernsberger and expressed their appreciation for her great work and success with the high ability program at ECS.

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

Minutes – September 12, 2023 – Regular Board Meeting

Claims in the amount of \$10,940,333.22.

Proposed school fundraisers in accordance with Board policy.

Accepted with appreciation the following donations made to Elkhart Community Schools (ECS): 204 notebooks, 200 sharpies, 12 blankets, 24 Starbucks cups, 360 pens, and 200 highlighters to be used as door prizes for the substitute and secretary meetings with an estimated value of \$1,800; \$10,000 to Elkhart High School (EHS) Athletic Department from Phyllis Tubbs to be used to assist with the growth and development of student athletes; and

Zippie Xtreme Manual Wheelchair to ECS from Jeffrey and Kimberlee Wilhelm for student use.

Conference Leave Requests

Approved overnight trip request for Pinewood Elementary School 6th Grade students to travel to Camp Friedenswald in Cassopolis, Michigan on May 2 – 3, 2024 for the 6th grade camping trip.

Submission of the following grants: Indiana Learns Grant hosted by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) in the amount of \$1,000 per student for tutoring during or outside the school day for Pinewood students who did not pass the ILEARN assessment; K-12 Robotics Competition Grant hosted by the IDOE in the amount of \$50,000 to be used for the funding of competitive robotics competitions; Title IV, Part A Student Support & Academic Enrichment Grant hosted by the IDOE in the amount of \$276,688.59 to be used to provide students access to a well-rounded education, improve school conditions for student learning and improve academic achievement with supports in the areas of digital literacy and STEM learning; 611 Part B Funds Special Education Grant hosted by the IDOE in the amount of \$3,452,401 to be used for basic staff employment and will cover all goals; 619 Part B Special Education Fund (Preschool) Grant hosted by the IDOE in the amount of \$125,133 to be used for basic teacher employment and will cover all teacher goals; Paraprofessional Training Grant hosted by IDOE in the amount of \$25,000 to be used for the training of special education paraprofessionals; and Indiana IDOE Robokind Grant hosted by the IDOE in the amount of \$162,700 to be used for a line item State budget for the use of Robokind Robots for Speech and Language engagement for students with autism.

In response to Board inquiry, Dr. Bruce Stahly, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, informed the Board most tutoring funded through the Indiana Learns Grant will take place outside of the school day; there may be some provided during the school day where study halls are applicable.

In response to Board inquiry, Dr. Stahly informed Board members the administration is working on Tier 2 interventions as well as improving intervention materials to reach all students, including those students who did not pass ILEARN and fall outside the perimeters of the Indiana Learns Grant. If the grant proves to be successful, ECS can duplicate this program but would have to find a funding source.

Personnel Report:

Employment of one (1) certified employee for 2023/24 school year: Autumn McKinney, Kindergarten at Osolo.

Unpaid leave for the following one (1) certified employee: Hillaree Biddlecome, Social Worker at EHS.

Employment of the following seven (7) classified employees: Kristine Baker, Bus Helper at Transportation; Ashley Colon, Food Service at Woodland; Haylee Copsey, SLPA at HELC; Delaine Johnson, Bus Driver at Transportation; Jessica Kauffman, Food Service at Pinewood; Cocheta Manion, Food Service Administration at Food Service; and Retha Wise, Custodian at Freshman Division.

Retirement of the following one (1) classified employee: Sue Ann Artley, Allergy Specialist at Food Service.

Unpaid leave for the following one (1) classified employee: Undra Clay, Custodian at Freshman Division.

Resignation of the following five (5) classified employees: Arick Dashed, Custodian at Feeser; Turquoise Holloway, Food Service at Pinewood; Dana Irving, Paraprofessional at PRIDE Academy; Lisa Lopez, Food Service at Woodland and EHS; and Alisha Tillotson, Food Service at Commissary.

..... received the monthly financial report and found everything to be in order.

..... received the monthly insurance report.

..... unanimously approved the administration's recommendation to award the roof projects at EHS, North Side Middle School and West Side Middle School in the amount of \$5,992,400 to Midland Engineering of South Bend, Indiana. The project includes a partial roof replacement at EHS and total roof replacement at both middle schools, including North Side gym. ESSER III funds will be used to fund this project and estimated completion date is August 31, 2024.

In response to Board inquiry, Tony Gianesi, Chief Operating Officer, informed the Board the roof replacement at EHS is long overdue; West Side's roof is twenty-one (21) years old and the one with the most problems; and North Side's roof has had several issues over the past several years as well.

In response to Board inquiry, Mr. Gianesi informed the Board the contract has not been finalized at this time; with Board approval, he can begin conversations of possible assurances regarding labor costs and timeframe. Mr. Gianesi assured the Board that Midland is a large company capable of accommodating a project of this size.

..... heard Dr. Stahly present a proposed new course offering for the 2024-2025 school year: Digital Media where students will analyze local, national, and global media through the lens of law, ethics, and social responsibility.

In response to Board inquiry, Dr. Stahly informed Board members this is one course offered across two semesters. Board members emphasized that this course offering is another opportunity to tell a story about the great things happening at ECS.

..... unanimously approved Board Policy 3410.04CS – Substitute Compensation as presented and waived second reading. The proposed revisions included allowing the retired teacher rate to be paid to all retired teachers regardless of the state the teacher retired from; increased the compensation for substitute teachers who possess an Indiana License; establishes a formal process for determining whether a teacher holds the qualifications to grade and write lesson plans; specifically links compensation paid to substitute teacher in long-term assignments to the base salaries of teachers with a bachelor's or master's degree (Master Contract); and establishes a rate of pay for substitute teachers who attend professional development activities.

..... heard Mr. Mow remind Board members their next meeting will be held on October 10, 2023.

..... heard Board Member Anne VonDerVellen speak to the Parent University event at Roosevelt STEAM Academy on October 3, 2023 at 6:15 p.m.

..... heard Board President Dacey Davis thank the community for their support to deny the request to locate a cell tower immediately adjacent to Pinewood. Board Member Kellie Mullins added, if they try to appeal the decision, she encouraged the community to come out even stronger in opposition.