

- ..... heard Board Member Kellie Mullins recite the Elkhart Promise.
- ..... heard Board Vice President Doug Weaver review the invitation to speak protocol and explain that Public Comment was moved to the beginning of the meeting agenda.
- ..... heard an audience member express concerns about leadership at Eastwood.
- ..... heard Jeff Hemmerlein, Principal at Pierre Moran Middle School, welcome the Board and introduce the Pierre Moran staff.

Mr. Hemmerlein shared Pierre Moran’s demographics which includes a total of four hundred thirty-seven (437) students, of which 59.6% are Hispanic, 21.2% White, 12.1% African American, and 7.1% Multiracial. Currently, 37% of students are English Learners (EL) and 75% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Pierre Moran attendance is up over 12% from 2022-2023 with all sub groups showing a positive increase in attendance. Overall, attendance is slightly below the state average; however, they have demonstrated positive improvement this school year.

As a part of their School Improvement Plan (SIP), Pierre Moran is continuing to work on chronic absenteeism with a goal to improve by at least 7% which will decrease the student population experiencing absenteeism to less than 50%. Goals for academics include increasing students’ proficiency rates on the 2024 ILearn by 5% as well as increasing the percentage of students performing above the “Below” category by at least 10%.

Mr. Hemmerlein shared that Pierre Moran realized academic growth in English, demonstrating a 14% decrease in students performing in the “Below” category and a 6% increase in students labeled “Proficient” (at or above). 56% of eighth grade students met or exceeded growth goals on NWEA with academic growth in Math significantly higher than expected. Both seventh and eighth grade far exceeded their projected growth with 55% and 52% respectively meeting or exceeding their growth projections. Mr. Hemmerlein is confident they are headed in the right direction, and celebrated all teachers and students for their dedication and hard work.

Mr. Hemmerlein highlighted the Student Services Team consisting of school counselors and social workers working with reading intervention groups and small focus group support to ensure students are capable of learning in the classroom.

Pierre Moran will be one (1) of thirty-four (34) Indiana schools participating in the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP). RAMP is a counseling program which is based on data-informed decision making; is delivered to all students systematically; uses developmentally appropriate curriculum focused on the mindsets and behaviors needed by all students to obtain postsecondary readiness and success; works to close achievement and opportunity gaps; and results in improved student achievement, attendance and discipline. All of this work is intended to increase student achievement in math and reading, state test scores, and attendance rate as well as decrease suspension rates, bullying, and negative student behavior. This is a two (2) year project.

Pierre Moran offers additional academic opportunities including academic enrichment four (4) days per week and Fridays are used for setting goals, checking grades, and creating plans to complete work. Pierre Moran is also a part of the Full Service Community Schools Grant which provides even more after school opportunities, mentoring programs, and community partnerships. Pierre Moran's professional development for staff has a strong focus on content area literacy, engagement strategies, EL accommodations, and after-school tutoring.

Pierre Moran is a very active school offering various activities, competitions, incentives and recognitions for students. They are currently planning their annual Hoopla event at the end of March and all proceeds will go to the Tolson Center; last year, they raised \$1,800 for CAPS. The Pierre Moran Boys Soccer Team won their conference championship game. They also had five (5) students who received gold and silver keys and four (4) who received honorable mentions for the Scholastic Art Competition.

In response to Board inquiry, Mr. Hemmerlein informed Board members that attendance issues are generally more student specific, not based on grade level; however, seventh graders do tend to be more "excited" to be in middle school than eighth graders. Currently, staff members are doing check-ins with students to monitor how they are doing. The administration is in the process of developing an attendance team which will be breaking down data and doing check-ins with both students and parents.

Mrs. Mullins shared that people are talking about the upward trends and positive things happening at Pierre Moran and it is spreading across the community.

In response to Board inquiry, Mr. Hemmerlein shared parent feedback regarding student absences is unique to each family's circumstances and Pierre Moran is no different than what is happening in other districts. COVID and eLearning created a culture which makes it easy and acceptable for students to stay home as students can easily access their work on learning management systems and submit missed work electronically.

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

Minutes – February 27, 2024 – Regular Board Meeting

Claims in the amount of \$9,457,488.90.

Proposed school fundraisers in accordance with Board policy.

Accepted the following extra-curricular purchase requests: Elkhart High School (EHS) Athletics Extra Curricular Fund to purchase a volleyball net system for the volleyball team totaling \$3,757.55.

Gift Acceptance:

Accepted with appreciation the following donations made to Elkhart Community Schools (ECS): \$500 from Cressy & Everett, Inc. Realtors to EHS Athletics to be used to assist in the growth and development of the Boys Track and Field Team; \$500 from D & B Environmental, LLC to EHS to be used for the growth and development of the Boys

Track and Field Team; \$250 from Welch Packaging Group, Inc. to EHS to be used to pay fall conference registrations and dues for the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) program; \$2,000 from Haley Renee Stouder to EHS Athletics to assist in the growth and development of our Girls Tennis Team; \$500 from Subway of Elkhart, Goshen, and Wakarusa, care of Robin M. Giddings, to EHS to be used to pay fall conference registrations and dues for the FBLA program; \$750 from PE Robbins 2 to EHS to be used to purchase supplies, equipment and competition entry fees for ElkLogics Robotics; \$500 from S.A. Comunale, care of Kathy Karlson, to EHS to be used to purchase supplies, equipment and competition entry fees for ElkLogics Robotics; \$250 from JSK Hospitality, care of Priti Patel, to EHS to be used to pay fall conference registrations and dues for the FBLA program; \$1,000 from K Squared Painting LLC to the Elkhart Middle Schools to be used for the growth and development of the middle school baseball program; \$1,200 from Crossroads Community Church to Pierre Moran to be used for the purchase of supplies for the Hoopla event; \$540 from Premium Concrete Services Inc. to Pierre Moran to be used for the purchase of supplies for their student rewards; and \$1,000 from Susan and David Rowley to Pierre Moran to be used for the purchase of supplies for the Hoopla event.

#### Conference Leave Requests

Submission of the following grant: 2024 Digital Learning Grant hosted by the Indiana Department of Education in the amount of \$50,000 to be used to support learning through Universal Design for Learning strategies. A cohort of UDL Champions will support teachers and learners using blended instructional strategies through iPads and Logitech Crayons. These assistive technologies, along with training on their use, will be used to ensure accessibility and inclusivity for all learners, and improve digital literacy for school professionals and students.

#### Personnel Report:

Two (2) Separation agreements.

Retirement of the following two (2) certified staff: Kristin Carpenter, Grade 4 at Feeser and Suzanne Shaffer, Music at Roosevelt.

Resignation of the following six (6) certified staff: Michelle Kessler, Counselor at Freshman Division; Caitlin Lanctot, Art at Daly; Brenda Mitchell, Science at EHS; Meagan Rodriguez, Science at Freshman Division; Donald Stolz, Social Studies at EHS; and Paige Walters, Speech Pathologist at Beck.

Unpaid parental leave for the following one (1) certified staff: Mariana Cortez, ENL at Pierre Moran.

Unpaid personal leave for the following one (1) certified staff: Brittany Choler, Special Education at Woodland.

Employment of the following eleven (11) classified employees: Destiny Bell, Substitute Teacher at ECS; Kayla Brookshire, Paraprofessional at PACE; Corentis Crawford III, Custodian at Freshman Division; Jonathan Halliburton, Custodian at EHS; Taia Hunt,

Registered Behavior Technician at Eastwood; Lisa M. Jones, Paraprofessional at HELC; Shaun McAllister, Paraprofessional at PRIDE; Elisabeth Miller, Custodian at Monger; Larry Schumacher, Bus Driver at Transportation; Luke Smittendorf, Paraprofessional at Freshman Division; and Umeki Williams, Paraprofessional at Freshman Division.

Unpaid Leave for the following four (4) classified employees: Janie Halliburton, Custodian at EHS; Tracy Kirts, Testing Specialist at EACC; Deondra Nelson, Bus Driver at Transportation; and Quiana Owens, Food Service at EHS.

Retirement of the following one (1) classified employee: Patricia Robinson, Food Service at Commissary.

Resignation of the following one (1) classified employee: Ann Marie Doyle, Paraprofessional at Elkhart Academy.

..... approved proposed revisions to Board Policy 2240 – Controversial Issues as presented during the February 27, 2024 Board meeting.

..... approved proposed revisions to Board Policy 3422.06S – Secretarial/Business Compensation Plan and waived second reading. Mr. Thorne explained to Board members that additional duties were assigned to two (2) positions within this policy; therefore, both position descriptions were evaluated using the rubric developed to rate all positions in this employee group and hourly wage ranges were adjusted accordingly. The proposed revisions bring these positions into alignment with other similar positions.

..... approved proposed revisions to Board Policy 3422.12S – Employees in Miscellaneous Positions Compensation Plan and waived second reading. Mr. Thorne explained to Board members a new classified position was created to be responsible for the oversight and development of elementary activities and athletics. Previously, this position was a certified teacher position with responsibilities for both elementary activities and attendance. The attendance responsibilities have been shifted to the Student Services Department and moving forward, this new position will be paid out of the Operations Fund once filled.

..... Unanimously approved a Memorandum of Understanding Regarding School Resource Officers and School Crossing Guards.

..... opened the public 1028 hearing on the Apple Inc. Lease. Zac Quiett, Chief Financial Officer, provided the Board a historical context of funding, a project description, and terms of the financing. Mr. Quiett then outlined the Board action being requested and noted the requirement to allow time for public comment. After hearing one comment from the audience, the hearing was closed.

..... adopted a resolution authorizing and approving the execution and delivery of an installment purchase agreement with Apple Inc. for computer equipment, software and support services.

..... heard Superintendent Dr. Larry Huff share that he had a great first week in Elkhart. He thanked the patrons who attended the community events last week and shared how very important it is for him to hear the visions from our teachers, community, parents and students

when it comes to establishing how to make Elkhart the destination place not only for this region, but for the State of Indiana.

Dr. Huff recognized it was National Social Worker Month and thanked them for the compassion and dedication they have for our students; they are wonderful individuals and ECS is very lucky to have them. Dr. Huff expressed his disappointment about having to miss "*SpongeBob*" the Musical over the weekend; he heard students did an outstanding job and made Elkhart proud. In closing, he thanked those who have been kind, generous with their words, and supportive; he is looking forward to learning more about the community.

..... heard Mrs. Mullins celebrate the girls' basketball team from Eastwood for winning the city tournament. Mrs. Mullins announced the military ball is coming up along with the music department continuing its pathway to amazing music.

..... heard Mr. Weaver thank current and prior Board members for their support over the years as well as Mr. Mow for his service as interim Superintendent. Mr. Weaver welcomed Dr. Huff and expressed his excitement about the future of Elkhart Community Schools under his leadership.

..... heard Dr. Huff thank Mr. Weaver for the kind words and how he is humbled to be part of Elkhart's story.