

**GIBSON CITY-MELVIN-SIBLEY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #5**  
**SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES OF**  
**October 24, 2023**

The Board of Education of Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley Community Unit School District #5 met in regular session on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 6:15 p.m. in the GCMS Board Room located at 307 N Sangamon Avenue, Gibson City. The board was called to order by Board President Josh Johnson, roll was called with members Whitehouse, Elder, Leonard, Friday, Tucker-Davis and Mussman in attendance. Also present were: GCMS Education Association Representative Angela Funk, High School Principal Kyle Bielfeldt, Middle School Principal Kent Nash, FCSEC Director Jesse McFarling, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction Erin Nuss, Elementary School Associate Principal Staci Lindelof, Director of Technology Walker Willis, Secretary to the Board Lori Kristensen and District Superintendent Jeremy Darnell.

Absent: None

The meeting started with the Pledge of Allegiance being recited by all present.

Recognition of Visitors: None

A motion to **go into executive session** was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Elder at 6:35 p.m. Motion carried by roll call with all board members present voting yes for the purpose of discussing matters pertaining to the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the district including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).

Discussion of lawfully closed meeting minutes, whether for the purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(21).

A motion to **return to open session** was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Friday at 6:55 p.m. Motion carried by roll call, with all board members present voting yes.

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**Action Items to Consider From Executive Session**

**Accept Requests for:**

**Motion to accept the resignation of Emma Adamek as a GCMS Teacher effective November 21, 2023 with thanks for service.** Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Leaonrd. Motion carried by voice vote with all board members present voting yes.

**Motion to approve the maternity leave request for Cyndi Wurmnest to begin on or near April 11, 2024 through the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year.** Motion was made by board member Friday and seconded by board member Leonard. Motion carried by roll call with all board members present voting yes.

**Motion to approve the resignation of Robert Johnson as a paraprofessional for GCMS School District effective October 30, 2023.** Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by voice vote with all board members present voting yes.

**Motion to approve the following volunteers for GCMS School District.** Motion was made by board member Friday and seconded by board member Elder. Motion carried by voice vote with all board members present voting yes.

- Wrestling - Chris Nowak and Brian Lange

**Additional Agenda Items:**

11.6 Application for Construction Grant

**Consent Agenda**

**GCMS Accounts Payable bills approved were \$1,122,455.85**

Education fund	\$689,403.93
Building fund	\$67,057.21
Debt Service fund	\$0.00
Transportation fund	\$182,110.28
IMRF/FICA fund	\$35,652.32
Capital Projects	\$130,017.55
W/C	\$0.00
TORT	\$18,214.56
F/HLS	\$0.00

**GCMS Payrolls approved were \$532,993.23**

Education fund	\$459,199.37
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Building fund	\$34,502.24
Transportation fund	\$613.71
TORT	\$38,677.91

**FCSEC Accounts Payable bills approved were \$28,290.45**

Education fund	\$27,049.08
Building fund	\$0.00
IMRF/FICA Fund	\$1,241.37

**FCSEC Payrolls approved were \$48,196.66 all in the Education fund**

Financial/treasurer's report on behalf of the GCMS District and the FCSEC, Lunch Report, the summary of investment report on behalf of the GCMS District and approval of the destruction of executive session tapes through the end of April 2022.

**Approve Field Trips for:**

<b>FOR:</b>	<b>TO:</b>	<b>DATE:</b>
FBLA	Collinsville, IL	November 3-5, 2023
FBLA	Rantoul, IL	October 21, 2023
Interact	Aurora, IL	November 29, 2023
Future Teachers Club	Bloomington, IL	TBD
High School Leadership	East Peoria, IL	November 13, 2023
5th Grade	Champaign, IL	November 15, 2023
Art 4	Chicago, IL	November 17, 2023
High School Band	New Orleans, LA	Spring Break 2025

**Approve the following donations:** None

**Approve Facility Use Agreements or Request for Use of School Kitchen/Cafeteria pending proof of insurance and all other district requirements for:**

- GCMS Youth Wrestling - ES Gym, November 4 & 5, 2023
- City of Gibson - ES Cafeteria, November 14, 2023

Approve the minutes for the GCMS Regular and Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2023 and the Personnel and Finance Committee meeting minutes from October 11, 2023, and the Strategy and Enrichment Committee meeting minutes from October 4, 2023 as presented.

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**Motion to accept the consent agenda** as presented in the board packet. Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Leonard. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

**Committee Reports:**

**Policy:** Committee members: Miranda Leonard, Janna Friday, Adam Mussman, Jeremy Darnell, and Erin Nuss

- No Report.

**Building, Grounds, and Transportation:** Committee members: Adam Elder, Emily Tucker-Davis, Adam Mussman, Rich Doman, and Bob Jones

- Darnell reported that the general contractor and the sub contractor who built the greenhouse are optimistic about the leaks being repaired and permanently fixed.
- The installation of the solar panels on the elementary school are approximately 80% complete.

**Personnel and Finance:** Committee members: Josh Johnson, Phil Whitehouse, Janna Friday, and Jeremy Darnell

- The Personnel and Finance committee recommended to the board a one time Cost of Living Bonus for GCMS employees. \$1,000 to full time employees and \$500 to part time employees. The cost of living bonus will be paid out on the November 15 payroll.
- Jesse McFarling reported that Ford County Special Education Cooperative will follow this process once it is approved by their Executive Board and will pay out the cost of living bonus on the November 30 payroll.

**Strategy and Enrichment:** Committee members: Josh Johnson, Emily Tucker-Davis, Miranda Leonard, Jeremy Darnell, and Erin Nuss

- The Strategy and Enrichment committee recommended to the board hiring an outside Strategic Planning Consulting business to evaluate the district's vision. The consultant will meet and work with the board members and the administrative team for long term planning.

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**Building Administration Reports:**

**High School Principal Report, Kyle Bielfeldt**

Enrollment

- Freshmen - 57
- Sophomore - 74
- Junior - 70
- Senior - 71
- Total - 272

**October Student of the Month:** Getty Greer

**Principal Advisory Meetings:** Mr. Allen and Mr. Bielfeldt held the first staff principal advisory meeting on October 12. Seven staff members attended and spoke about the positives, concerns, and needs so far this school year. SEL lessons and testing times/dates were brought up as a concern. Positives were fewer issues with technology/Chromebooks and the effectiveness of Go Guardian. The student principal advisory will meet on Wednesday, October 25. The students that will be participating in this meeting are the class presidents and vice-presidents.

**National Honor Society:** The National Honor Society letters were sent home with students on Wednesday, October 18. The induction ceremony is Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am in the high school gym.

**Homecoming:** Homecoming week was a big success. There was great student participation throughout the week and the senior class were the overall winners for the week. A big shout out to Mr. Stone and the student council for putting on a great week.

**Illinois Principals Conference:** Mr. Bielfeldt thanked board members for allowing him to attend the IPA conference in Peoria. He attended several great sessions and was able to speak with principals from all over the state.

**Athletics:** The soccer team's season ended with a loss to U High in the regional championship. The team ended the season with a 22-3 record and also set several school records throughout the season.

The boys golf team qualified for sectionals this year, placing third at regionals.

Volleyball regionals will begin Monday, October 23.

Football has qualified for the playoffs, and are hoping for a round 1 home game.

**Upcoming Events**

Oct. 25	Student Advisory Meeting
Oct. 26	Vision and Hearing Rescreening

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Oct. 27	Health/Life/Safety Visit
Oct. 30	Student Recognition Assembly – 3 PM
Oct. 31	Greenhouse Control Training
Nov. 1-3	FFA National Convention
Nov. 2	SEL Meeting
Nov. 3	Variety Show – 7 PM
Nov. 4-5	FBLA State Fall Retreat
Nov. 6	Blood Drive – 9 AM
Nov. 7	NHS Ceremony – 8:30 AM ELAR Curriculum Meeting – 3:35 PM
Nov. 8	Clove Alliance Presentations (Erin’s Law) HOIC Principals Meeting
Nov. 9	High School Leadership Meeting
Nov. 10	Veterans Day Assembly – 9 AM
Nov. 13	IHSA Student Leadership Conference
Nov. 13-17	Girls Basketball Tournament
Nov. 14	Admin Meeting – 9 AM
Nov. 16	LEAD Team Meeting
Nov. 17	Mid Term 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter Art IV Field Trip
Nov. 18	ILMEA All-District Band/Choir
Nov. 20-25	Boys Basketball Turkey Tournament
Nov. 21	Clubs and Organizations Photos
Nov. 22-24	Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 29	Board of Education Meeting

**Middle School Principal Report, Kent Nash**

Enrollment Total: 216 Students

- 6th Grade: 63 students
- 7th Grade: 85 students
- 8th Grade: 68 students

**Red Ribbon Week:** Stefanie Zook, School Counselor, has been working hard to plan the Middle School Red Ribbon Week activities from Oct. 23-27. Enrichments will also complete posters and door decorations that provide a message of drug and alcohol prevention. All students will also have the opportunity to sign a pledge to be drug and alcohol free and those will be posted in the hallways. The goal of the week is to expand students' knowledge of the dangers of drugs and alcohol, while also building a sense of community among enrichments and the building related to these efforts. A special presentation from Trooper Tracy will be on Tuesday, October 24.

**Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month:** On the October 6 School Improvement Day students heard from McKenzie Nelson during their PE classes. McKenzie shared her story of dealing with suicide and mental health. Mrs. Van Vickle and Mrs. Zook designed activities for

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students to complete during their enrichment time to spread awareness of Suicide Prevention and Awareness.

**ILMEA All District Choir:** Several students from GCMS Middle School were selected for ILMEA All District Choir this year. They will perform at the ILMEA District festival on November 18. Congratulations to Ashlan Allhands, Chance Hewitt, Levi Johnson, Emery Summers, and Sean Volker. They were selected by video audition from hundreds of students from surrounding areas, and it is a huge honor for them.

**Elementary School Principal Report, Justin Kean**

Enrollment:

- Pre K: 69
- K: 77
- 1: 77
- 2: 71
- 3: 69
- 4: 78
- 5: 61
- Total: 502

**Falcons with Character:** The character trait for the month of October is Caring.

**IPA Conference:** Mr Kean thanked the board for supporting his attendance at the annual conference where he can network with other principals.

**Student Teachers:** There will be four student teachers at the Elementary School for the Spring semester. Mr Kean reported that he conducted an interview with each of them to assess the fit with GCMS and the college student's desire as a teacher.

**SIP Day:** The October School Improvement Day included discussions on ALICE after the all staff session with Brandon Thomas. The full ALICE drill was conducted at the elementary school on October 11 with the Gibson City Police.

**Fire Prevention Week:** The Gibson City Fire Department gave presentations to PreK, Kindergarten and 1st Grade.

**IAR Scores:** Grade level meetings have started to take place to discuss scores from last school year. Grade levels are using the data from last year's scores to analyze current curriculum and delivery of the curriculum.

**Red Ribbon Week:** RRW is scheduled for October 23-27. Students can participate in dress up days to celebrate the week and learn more about drug and alcohol prevention.

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**Special Education Director, Jesse McFarling**

The FCSEC Executive Board met on October 8, 2023. Agenda items to be discussed at the meeting were: Consideration of action on the approval of the cost of living bonus for FCSEC employees to be paid out on the November 30 payroll. The board also discussed the DLM 1% participation threshold, changes to Infinitic, outside placement waitlists, AI special education resources, and updates to current IEP meeting counts.

**Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction - Erin Nuss**

**SIP Half Day- October 6:** Brandon Thomas presented on ALICE followed by building breakout discussions. A district wide CC meeting was held to discuss student time on devices and to analyze the Illinois Instructional Mandates (how and when the school district covers all mandates).

**GCMS University:** The new teacher group discussed self-reflection on parent contact and its importance when all is going well, as well as when things in the classroom are challenging. Mentor teachers assisted new teachers with parent-teacher conference role play to help new teachers be prepared to answer common parent questions.

**Assessment News:** PSAT/NMSQT technology failed on the initial date of testing, but the second date of October 19 worked out. Thank you to Mrs Kristin Welborn for facilitating all test preparation. The Kindergarten readiness assessment has been completed along with grade level discussion of IAR assessment data from 2023.

**Retention and Recruitment:** Mrs. Nuss reported that the Sunshine Carts made their rounds on the last day of the 1st quarter with small treats for staff. She thanked the administrators for their servant leadership in helping deliver the treats with a thank you. Justin Kean and Mrs. Nuss will attend the ISU Job Educator Career Fair on October 31 to represent GCMS and talk to prospective employees.

**Technology Director - Walker Willis**

**Online Testing:** GCMS High School was originally scheduled to take the online PSAT test on Wednesday October 11. At approximately 7:00 am that morning Mr Willis received a report that one of our teachers could not log in to the management portal for the test. Shortly after, he quickly received reports that this was a widespread outage affecting schools across Illinois and into other states. By 7:45 am the management website was still down, so the decision was made to cancel testing for the day, giving teachers a few minutes to adjust their plans for the day. The management website came back online around 8:15 am that morning after plans had changed. The testing was rescheduled to October 19. Overall this was a situation out of the staff's control, but nonetheless, it was a schedule disruption and Mr Willis is working to make sure everything on the school's end is working properly.

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**Greenhouse Update:** With the near completion of the Greenhouse, additional cameras and internet connectivity have been added to cover the new space.

**Chromebook Repairs:** Repair Tickets for 1st Quarter 2023-2024: 37  
 Total Tickets for 2022-23 School Year: 143

**Superintendent Report**

Presentation of the Tentative Levy for FY24 tax year

Superintendent Darnell presented the school district's tentative tax levy for 2024. The tentative levy projects a total of \$9.89 million in real estate taxes to be collected next summer, including \$6.9 million for the district's education fund, \$1 million for the operations and maintenance fund, \$800,000 for the Tort fund, \$101,654 for the working cash fund, \$150,000 for the Social Security fund, \$225,000 for the municipal retirement fund, \$101,654 for the fire prevention and safety fund, \$101,654 for the leasing fund, and \$81,323 for the special education fund. A public notice of the reading will be published in the Ford County Chronicle for a final levy approval at the November 29 board meeting. **Announcement of FY24 Levy Hearing which will take place on November 29, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the GCMS Board Room.**

Presentation of Tentative Board of Education Meeting Calendar for 2024

Wednesday, January 31	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, February 28	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, March 20	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, April 24	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, May 29	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, June 26	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, July 31	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, August 28	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, September 25	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, October 30	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, November 25	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.
Wednesday, December 18	Regular Session	6:15 p.m.

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Presentation of GCMS FY23 Audit

Russ Leigh, from Russ Leigh & Associates, presented information on the GCMS annual audit that takes place annually in July after the fiscal year closes on June 30. Leigh reported that GCMS is in compliance with state statutes and school code and received a clean opinion on the audit. From an accounting standpoint, no issues were found and some adjustments were made. Leigh also reported that the State of Illinois listed GCMS on the "Recognition List" for three of its key operating funds being in very good standing.

**Motion to accept the GCMS FY23 Audit as presented by Russ Leigh and Associates**

Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Elder. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Presentation of FCSEC FY23 Audit

Russ Leigh also presented the FY23 audit for FCSEC which also contained a "clean opinion."

**Motion to accept the FCSEC FY23 Audit as presented by Russ Leigh and Associates**

Motion was made by board member Tucker-Davis and seconded by board member Friday. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Cost of Living Bonus

Superintendent Darnell recommended to the board a \$1,000 cost of living bonus for all full time GCMS employees and \$500 to all GCMS part time employees. The one time bonus is to help assist employees with current inflation costs. The district is in a financial position to offset some of the expenses employees are seeing through the rising cost of living.

**Motion to approve a one time cost of living bonus in the amount of \$1,000 for all full time GCMS employees and \$500 for all GCMS part time employees who are on the GCMS payroll on November 1, 2023 to be paid in full on the November 15 payroll.**

Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Friday. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Application for Construction Grant

The school district has received a construction grant for the past several years. In order to start the grant application process again, the board formally approves the process of moving forward with the application. **Motion to approve moving forward with an application for a construction grant as presented.** Motion was made by board member Elder and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by voice vote with all members present voting yes.

**A motion to adjourn the meeting** was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Elder at 7:39 p.m. Motion carried by voice vote, with all members present voting yes.

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Board President Josh Johnson

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Secretary to the Board Lori H. Kristensen