

GIBSON CITY-MELVIN-SIBLEY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #5
SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES OF
November 29, 2023

The Board of Education of Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley Community Unit School District #5 met in regular session on Wednesday, November 29, 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 Elder, Leonard, and Tucker-Davis and in attendance. Also present were: GCMS Education Association President Susan Riley, High School Principal Kyle Bielfeldt, Middle School Principal Kent Nash, FCSEC Director Jesse McFarling, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction Erin Nuss, Elementary School Principal Justin Kean, Secretary to the Board Lori Kristensen and District Superintendent Jeremy Darnell.

Absent: Board members Whitehouse, Friday, and Mussman

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 6:16 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 Tucker-Davis at 6:19 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 approve the maternity leave for Kaylee Petersen upon the birth of her child from approximately March 9, 2024 through May 24, 2024. Motion was made by board member Elder and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by voice vote with all board members present voting yes.

Motion to approve the maternity leave for Michelle O’Neill upon the birth of her child from approximately April 18, 2024 through May 23, 2024. Motion was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by voice vote with all board members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Rheanna Harris as a paraprofessional for GCMS School District at a rate of \$15.00 per hour for 7 hours per day. Motion was made by board member Tucker-Davis and seconded by board member Elder. Motion carried by roll call with all board members present voting yes.

Motion to hire April Warren as a GCMS Middle School assistant scholastic bowl coach for the 2023-2024 school year. Motion was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by roll call with all board members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Jenny Luttrell as a volunteer assistant coach for GCMS Volleyball for the 2023-2024 season. Motion was made by board member Tucker-Davis and seconded by board member Leonard. Motion carried by voice vote with all board members present voting yes.

Additional Agenda Items:

11.4 GCMS 2024 Property Casualty Renewal

Consent Agenda

GCMS Accounts Payable bills approved were \$1,575,092.01

Education fund	\$554,639.70
Building fund	\$462,530.43
Debt Service fund	\$0.00
Transportation fund	\$117,432.85
IMRF/FICA fund	\$29,277.69
Capital Projects	\$277,075.34
W/C	\$0.00
TORT	\$20,793.00
F/HLS	\$0.00

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GCMS Payrolls approved were \$657,179.53

Education fund	\$569,725.99
Building fund	\$43,327.46
Transportation fund	\$618.36
TORT	\$43,507.72

FCSEC Accounts Payable bills approved were \$29,858.09

Education fund	\$29,101.60
Building fund	\$0.00
IMRF/FICA Fund	\$756.49

FCSEC Payrolls approved were \$47,585.53 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 May 2022.

Approve Field Trips for:

For:	To:	Date:
Chamber Choir	Gibson City Area	December 13, 2023
7th Grade	ISU Redbird Arena	April 19, 2024
Art 4	Chicago Art District	December 9, 2023
6th Grade	Peoria, IL	April 24, 2024
High School Student Leaders	Pontiac, IL	December 6, 2023

Approve the following donations:

Amount:	From:	Designated to:
\$5,945	Booster Club	GCMS Football
\$2,525.20	Booster Club	GCMS Boys Basketball

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

- Gibson City Boy Scouts to use the Gym and Cafeteria from November 2023 - February 2024.
- Gibson City Lions Club to use the Elementary School Cafeteria and kitchen on February 18, 2024.

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Approve the minutes for the GCMS Regular and Executive Session Minutes of October 24, 2023 and the Building and Grounds Committee meeting minutes from November 1, 2023 as presented.

Motion to accept the consent agenda as presented in the board packet. Motion was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. 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

- The next committee meeting is scheduled for December 13 at 11:30 a.m. at the District Office.

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

- Report from the November 1 committee meeting: Plan continues for the new press box which should begin demolition and construction in May. McLean County Asphalt has been contracted to price a paved walkway from Sangamon Ave to the new press box. The solar panel installation at the elementary school is almost complete with the switch taking place over Christmas break. The next building to have panels installed is the middle school.

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

- The next committee meeting is scheduled for December 6 at 11:30 a.m. at the District Office.

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

- The next committee meeting is scheduled for January 31 at 11:30 a.m. at the District Office.

Building Administration Reports:

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High School Principal Report, Kyle Bielfeldt

Enrollment

- Freshmen - 57
- Sophomore - 73
- Junior - 70
- Senior - 71
- Total - 271

November Student of the Month: Nick Smith

Student Advisory Meetings: The first student advisory meeting was held on October 25. The president and vice president of each class were present for the meeting. Students discussed their concerns, needs, and positives for the school year. Concerns were locker placements and Chromebook usage and speeds. The positives were that students felt like this year was the first year where things feel completely back to normal. The next student advisory meeting will be with the class cabinet members on December 7.

National Honor Society: The National Honor Society Induction Ceremony was held on Thursday, November 7. The following students are members of NHS.

Seniors: Brynn Boundy, Ella Brake, Charles Francis, Annabelle Goodin, Getty Greer, Rylie Huls, Molly Killian, Kate Kristensen, Lilly Lahr, Wrigely Maxey, Chasyn Pollard, Savannah Shumate, Nicholas Smith, Alex Ward.

Juniors: Matthew Allen, Elizabeth Giroux, Ryker Grauer, Cohen Kean, Sophia Ray

Veterans Day Assembly: The GCMS Veterans Day Assembly took place on Friday, November 10. Students from each of the buildings participated in the ceremony. Thank you to Mr. Ryan Tompkins for emceeding the event and Mrs. Jennifer Keefe for conducting the elementary students in their song. Thank you also to Ray Goin and the kitchen staff for providing the veteran's breakfast.

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.

Interact Blood Drive and Coat Drive, Samaritan's Purse: Interact held a blood drive on Monday, November 6. Kodee Cloninger organized the event and had 37 units of blood donated. The club also collected over 100 articles of winter weather gear on Saturday November 18 as the town readied for the lighted parade. They will take the Falcon Bus to the RP parking lot after Thanksgiving where community people who need winter supplies can choose from the donations. Also, on November 19, Interact students volunteered at the Samaritan's Purse

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warehouse in Aurora. Students were provided an opportunity to do service with an international impact.

IHSA Leadership Conference: Ms. Riley took six students to the IHSA Leadership conference in Peoria on Monday, November 13. The students heard the message that leadership is found externally for those in leadership positions, internally when habits inspire others to follow, and in service leadership in the workplace to ensure others are cared for and have their needs met.

Lead Team Meeting: The high school had their second LEAD Team meeting on November 16. The following topics were discussed.

- Chronic absenteeism and how staff can make a positive push for student presence.
- Study Hall phone policy - students with a C or higher are permitted to use their phones.
- Should the LEAD Team stay on a rotation basis or change how staff members participate on the team?
- Reminder to staff that parents should be contacted by the class teacher when an assessment, report or project is not turned in which will impact the student's grade.

ILMEA All District Choir: The following students were selected to perform with the All District Choir on November 18. Lucas Clinton, Jonathan Fields, Charles Francis, Evan Killian, and Calvin Rachiell.

FA Fundraiser: The boys and girls basketball teams are sponsoring a fundraiser for Friedreich's Ataxia on December 7 and 8. An SEL lesson will be presented on November 29 centered on Life is How we react and discuss the grassroot efforts behind finding a cure for FA.

FBLA Food Drive: The club will be hosting a food drive for our local food pantry from November 27-December 8. They are accepting monetary donations, canned and paper goods.

Athletics: Winter athletics are in full swing with the girls basketball tournament beginning November 13 and the boys basketball tournament beginning on November 20. Wrestling has their first meet on November 30.

Upcoming Events

Dec 7	Student Advisory meeting
Dec 8	Faculty meeting/SIP Day/CCC meeting
Dec 10	Winter Concert at 2:30 p.m.
Dec 11	Elementary Christmas Concert
Dec 13	Chamber Choir Caroling/EFE Board Meeting/HOIC Meeting
Dec 14	Principal Advisory/High School Leadership
Dec 15	Semester Exams begin/Student Council Christmas movie
Dec 18	Semester Exams
Dec 19	Semester Exams/2:20 dismissal for Christmas Break

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Jan 3 Staff InService

Middle School Principal Report, Kent Nash

Enrollment Total: 216 Students

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

Principal's Advisory: The PA committee met on Nov. 16. Open positions and staffing needs were discussed, plans for the last day before Christmas Break, Winter FastBridge testing, and MTSS process and procedures in the middle school.

Athletics Update: 7th grade girls basketball made it to the quarterfinal round of the regional tournament on November 13. They ended their season with a record of 7-11.

8th Grade Girls Basketball is playing for the regional title on Tuesday, November 21. They finished the regular season with a 15-3 record. If they win the regional title they will move on to sectional play in the Salt Fork Sectional on Wednesday, December 6 against Bement.

Boys basketball has started. Both teams are currently 7-1.

Wrestling practice starts on Nov. 27. There are quite a few returning wrestlers so it should be another competitive team.

Fine Arts Update: There were several students selected for ILMEA All District Choir this year. They performed at the ILMEA District festival on November 18th. Congratulations to Ashlan Allhands, Chance Hewitt, Levi Johnson, Emery Summers, and Sean Volker.

Upcoming Events

Nov. 27	Wrestling practice starts
Dec. 2	Boys Basketball TCC Tourney starts
Dec. 8	SIP Day
Dec. 19	End of 2nd Quarter

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Elementary School Principal Report, Justin Kean

Enrollment:

- Pre K: 70
- K: 76
- 1: 76
- 2: 71
- 3: 69
- 4: 78
- 5: 61
- Total: 501

Millie Parade: Millie Fields walked through the halls at school ringing the bell with family as students and staff cheered.

Veterans Day Assembly: Students did well in transition to the high school and at the assembly. Everyone always loves their singing for the assembly.

5th to U of I: 5th grade teachers reported they were very proud of the 5th grade students on their field trip after watching some of the other groups.

Lunch and Learn: It has been fun seeing some of the elementary staff presenting in this type of setting and it has been well received by other teachers.

Thanksgiving Lunch in Kristin McDonald's Classroom: Staff are always excited to participate in this luncheon prepared by Kristin McDonald's students and the students enjoy serving the meal.

Coin Drive: \$5323.79 was raised which is the most the building has ever raised. 4B rode in the lighted bus, and the 4th Grade won the pizza party sponsored by the bus drivers (\$2094.06).

Upcoming Events

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|----------|------------------------------|
| Dec. 8th | Finn Bell Ringing Parade!!! |
| Dec. 12 | Elementary Christmas Program |
| Dec. 13 | Santa Shop |
| Dec. 18 | Pre K Family Engagement |

Special Education Director, Jesse McFarling

The FCSEC Executive Board met on November 8. Agenda items to be discussed at the meeting were: Consideration of action on the approval of the cost of living bonus for FCSEC employees

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to be paid out on the November 30 payroll. The board also discussed the DLM 1% participation threshold, changes to Infinitec, outside placement waitlists, AI special education resources, and updates to current IEP meeting counts.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction - Erin Nuss

Curriculum: The new ELAR curriculum implementation continues to go well—the Structured Literacy approach used for K-2 is a major change in that it aligns with the Science of Reading research. We're excited to see what winter assessment data shows about effectiveness.

Staff Highlight: Sarah Rehberg and Joanna Willis recently led a lunch n' learn workshop on the importance of clipping sounds when teaching phonics and phonemic awareness. Can you say the sound for /b/ without saying "buh"? How about /r/ without the "ruh"? Karly Corley and Cortney Davis led lunch n' learns on Common Language we should be using for ELAR instruction across grades K-5.

Preschool: The GCMS Instructional Coaches (AJ Richard and Ashley Schwenk) completed a mock-audit of the GCMS and PBL Preschool-for-All programs in preparation for our Compliance Monitoring Visit from ISBE. (Quick reminder: GCMS-PBL has a PFA partnership grant of \$422,000 annually for preschool programming). Both programs did very well in terms of both compliance and classroom performance. Huge thanks to the instructional coaches who learned how to use the ECERS rubric to evaluate the programs.

Professional Development: Co-Teaching Co-Planning sessions are new this year. We are offering paid time after/before school for co-teaching teams to come in to co-plan together. Support offered by instructional coaches and/or Erin and Jeremy. Sessions have been very well attended and productive with no less than four teams at every session. Walker Willis led a Third Thursday on "AI: The Good, The Bad, and The Useful" that was well-attended and well-reviewed by staff. We continue to actively discuss the impact of AI on schools and education.

Retention and Recruitment: Erin attended the Fall ISU Educator Career Fair. Our efforts to take on more student teachers are evident in that I was visited by many past and future GCMS student teachers.

GCMS University: Monthly meetings with new teachers (and second year teachers) focused on Work-Life Fit rather than work-life balance and strategies for coping with burnout.

Technology Director - Walker Willis

Chromebook Repairs: 1st Quarter - 37, total as of 11/20/2023 - 54

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Football Field: With the construction of the new press box next year, the sound system will most likely be updated on the field. Initial meetings have started with vendors to explore different options.

Greenhouse: Network access and camera coverage of the new greenhouse has been established. Remote access is set up to the environmental controls so both Mr. Reale and Mr. Jones can monitor the status of the greenhouse at all times.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Mr. Willis led a professional development seminar with teachers about emerging AI tools and their impact on education. He discussed the biggest potential benefits of AI along with aspects of it that should encourage us to be cautious. He also looked at a number of applications of AI that can be incredibly useful for teachers. This is a technology that is evolving rapidly so it will be a topic of ongoing discussion. Mr. Willis also had the opportunity to join Mr. Tompkins' ethics class to discuss some of the ethical considerations of this new technology. The students were very engaged throughout and offered well reasoned insights into how we should deal with this technology moving forward.

Superintendent Report

FY24 GCMS Tax Levy

The FY24 Tax Levy was presented at the 6:00 p.m. special board meeting by Superintendent Darnell. **Motion to approve the FY24 GCMS Tax Levy as presented.** Motion was made by board member Tucker-Davis and seconded by board member Leonard. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

GCMS Board of Education Meeting Calendar for 2024

Motion to approve the 2024 GCMS BOE meeting dates as presented. Motion was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

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.

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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.

1% County Facilities Sales Tax Discussion

Discussion took place on a possible 1% county facilities sales tax increase. The current sales tax rate is 6.25%. Darnell reported that if the three schools in Ford County chose to make this a formal resolution, it will take place in January. The resolution would be sent to the ROE9 and they would be responsible for getting the resolution on the spring ballot. The school districts would see the revenue from the increased 1% in FY25.

GCMS Property Casualty Renewal

Superintendent Darnell reported to the board that the Property Casualty renewal from Insurance Providers Group will have a 22% increase. **Motion to approve the 2024 Property Casualty renewal with IPG as presented.** Motion was made by board member Elder and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Reporting Bullying

High School Principal, Kyle Bielfeldt, shared with the board a document he has been working on to report bullying in the schools. The form created is a tool to make determinations and allocate proper consequences when a student reports bullying. This document provides procedures for conflict resolution and assists in conversations for administration and students.

Illinois School Report Card Review

The BOE reviewed the Interactive Illinois Report Card as published at illinoisreportcard.com. Mrs. Nuss highlighted the tabs for district expenditures per pupil in comparison to the new Student Growth Percentiles. GCMS School District expenditures per pupil are still well below the state average while average student growth on standardized assessments is much greater. The Board of Education also looked at the improvement in chronic absenteeism.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by board member Tucker-Davis and seconded by board member Leonard at 7:07 p.m. Motion carried by voice vote, with all members present voting yes.

Board President Josh Johnson

Secretary to the Board Lori H. Kristensen