

GIBSON CITY-MELVIN-SIBLEY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #5
SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES OF
February 28, 2024

The Board of Education of Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley Community Unit School District #5 met in regular session on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 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: High School Principal Kyle Bielfeldt, Elementary School Associate Principal Staci Lindelof, GCMS Education Association President Susan Riley, Technology Director Walker Willis, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction Erin Nuss, FCSEC Director Jesse McFarling, 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

Susan Riley, President of the GCMS Education Association, presented an Ad supporting the 1% County Schools Facility Tax which is being distributed prior to the March 19 primary election. The Ad is paid for by the GCMS Education Association IPACE fund.

A motion to **go into executive session** was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Elder at 6:17 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 6:55 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 approve the three-year contract for AJ Richard as the GCMS Director of Student Services as presented. Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Leonard. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Natalie Anderson as an elementary teacher for GCMS for the 2024-2025 school year at Step 1 BA of the negotiated agreement. Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Shannon Cotter as an elementary teacher for GCMS for the 2024-2025 school year at Step 1 BA of the negotiated agreement. Motion was made by board member Friday and seconded by board member Leonard. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Claire Kassitas as a Middle School teacher for GCMS for the 2024-2025 school year at Step 1 BA of the negotiated agreement. Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Sydney Funk as a High School ELA teacher for GCMS for the 2024-2025 school year at Step 2 BA of the negotiated agreement. Motion was made by board member Friday and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Emma Rapp as an elementary teacher for GCMS for the 2024-2025 school year at Step 1 BA of the negotiated agreement. Motion was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Friday. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Sydney Braden as an elementary teacher for GCMS for the 2024-2025 school year at Step 1 BA of the negotiated agreement. Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to approve Jayme Egged as a GCMS High School Assistant track coach in accordance with the negotiated agreement for the 2024 track season. Motion was made by

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

Motion to accept the resignation of Crystal Richard as GCMS High School head volleyball coach effective at the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year with thanks for service.

Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Leonard. Motion carried by voice vote with all members present voting yes.

Motion to hire Aiden Davis to be the Assistant Building and Grounds Supervisor for GCMS School District beginning on July 1, 2024 with a salary of \$52,000, and an additional supervisory period from May 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024 with a salary add on of \$1,000 per month in addition to his hourly wage. Motion was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Whitehouse. Motion carried by roll call with Mussman, Whitehouse, Elder, Friday, Leonard and Johnson voting yes. Board member Tucker-Davis voted to abstain.

Motion to accept the retirement of Carl Welch effective June 29, 2024 with thanks for 37.8 years of service. Motion was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Elder. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

Motion to approve the following volunteer coaches for Spring 2024. Motion was made by board member Friday and seconded by board member Tucker-Davis. Motion carried by voice vote with all members present voting yes.

- Track: Chase McCall and Ali Sizemore
- Baseball: Bob Huppert and Patrick Bean
- Softball: Tim Leonard and Dave Dornbusch

Additional Agenda Items: None

Consent Agenda

GCMS Accounts Payable bills approved were \$744,999.53

Education fund	\$434,978.92
Building fund	\$160,349.89
Debt Service fund	\$0.00
Transportation fund	\$116,500.72
IMRF/FICA fund	\$10,904.17
Capital Projects	\$0.00
W/C	\$0.00
TORT	\$22,265.83
F/HLS	\$0.00

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GCMS Payrolls approved were \$518,026.67

Education fund	\$443,764.85
Building fund	\$34,428.52
Transportation fund	\$617.42
TORT	\$39,215.88

FCSEC Accounts Payable bills approved were \$32,285.59

Education fund	\$31,543.71
Building fund	\$0.00
IMRF/FICA Fund	\$741.88

FCSEC Payrolls approved were \$46,461.55 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 August 2022.

Approve Field Trips for:

5th Grade	Museum of Science & Industry	May 16, 2024
HS Art Class	HOIC Art Fair	March 1, 2024
HS Art Students	Scholastic Honors Workshop	February 23, 2024
HS Special Education Class	Parkland College	March 5, 2024
PreK Students	Gibson City Fire House	April 3 & 4, 2024
FBLA	State Leadership Conference	April 4 & 5, 2024

Approve the following donations:

\$200.00	From: Willam Ogg	For: HS Chorus
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Approve Facility Use Agreements or Request for Use of School Kitchen/Cafeteria pending proof of insurance and all other district requirements for:

- WGCY All Star Games at the High School Gym on Saturday, March 16, 2024.

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Approve the minutes for the GCMS Regular and Executive Session Minutes of January 31, 2024 and the Strategy & Enrichment Committee meeting minutes from January 31, 2024 as presented.

Motion to accept the consent agenda as presented in the board packet. Motion was made by board member Elder 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

- Next committee meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2024
- Bids for the new pressbox, parking lot/walkway paving will be accepted on March 6, 2024 at the GCMS Unit Office.
- See Superintendent report for more updates.

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

No Report

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

No Report

Building Administration Reports:

High School Principal Report, Kyle Bielfeldt

Enrollment

- Freshmen - 59
- Sophomore - 77
- Junior - 69
- Senior - 68

Total Enrollment: 273

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February Student of the Month: Ryan Carley

Staff Award Recognition: Angie Funk has been recognized by the HOIC and the ISBE for her efforts over her career. She received the HOIC Academic Legacy Award on Friday, February 16. She also received the Those Who Excel Award – Special Recognition from the ISBE. This award is presented to educators that have connected with their school community and made a positive impact.

Mike Allen was nominated for the HOIC Athletic Legacy Award.

LEAD Team Meeting: The high school LEAD Team met on Thursday, February 8. They discussed several items including: Admin surveys, Social Media shaming, Junior and Senior Privileges, SEL and mySaebrs data, Care the Crap Out of Them Initiative, Sub Expectations, and attendance

FBLA Fundraiser: With the help of many, the FBLA Krispy Kreme fundraiser was a success. They delivered 524 boxes (one dozen each) of doughnuts Monday, February 20 and netted about \$4,300. A special thanks to Mr. Jeremy Darnell for driving the minibus at 5:30 a.m. with some members to get there first thing in the morning. Those involved appreciate the board's approval for the fundraiser and all the support for this organization.

Student Assembly: The GCMS High School hosted a special speaker to talk to the students about social media use and the impact it can have on their careers. Ben Tracy, a Ridgeview graduate, spoke about his experiences with social media, how it impacted his life, and the perils that can come with it. We continued the discussion into our advisory periods to ensure that students are aware of the positives and negatives of social media.

Ford County Attendance Initiative: On Wednesday, February 7th administrators from Ford County Schools met with staff from the Champaign-Ford County Regional Office of Education Attendance Improvement Program to discuss and collaborate on improving attendance in area schools. One area all the schools have been discussing is the increase of chronic absenteeism for students in Ford County. Chronic absenteeism is when a student misses 10% of the school year or 17.5 days or more of school in one year.

Athletics: The girls basketball won their regional on Thursday, February 15 vs. Ridgeview. They are now playing in the Ridgeview sectional. The first game of the sectional is Tuesday, February 20 vs. Peoria Heights. The sectional championship will take place on Thursday, February 22.

Lily Sizemore was named News Gazette Athlete of the Week for the week of February 19.

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The boys basketball team is currently in their postseason. They won their first game of regionals vs. Calvary. They take on Cornerstone Academy on Wednesday, February 21 in Lexington. The championship game will take place on Friday, February 23.

GCMS-F wrestling team sent six wrestlers to the state wrestling tournaments. To honor the wrestlers there was a parade through the elementary school.

- Shawn Schlickman
- Carson Maxey
- Cooper Miller
- Aiden Sancken
- Justice Milligan
- Avery Schlickman

Carson Maxey finished with 4th place at 150 lbs. Girls State tournament begins on Friday, February 23.

Scholastic bowl regular season ends on February 22. The HOIC tournament is on February 29 and regionals begin on March 4.

Spring sports begin on Monday, February 26.

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 26 HOIC Music Festival and Spring Sports Begin
- Feb. 27 High School Leadership Meeting and FBLA SLC Testing
- Feb. 28 Board Meeting – 6:15 PM
- Mar. 1 HOIC Art Festival
- Mar. 5 Admin Meeting – 9 AM
- Mar. 6 ELAR Curriculum Meeting – 3:35 PM
- Mar. 7 Student Principal’s Advisory Meeting – 11:30 AM and ISU Career Fair
- Mar. 8 SIP Day with an 11:30 AM Student Dismissal/Faculty Meeting at 7:30 AM
- Mar. 8/9 Musical – 7 PM

Middle School Principal Report, Kent Nash

- 6th Grade - 61
- 7th Grade - 86
- 8th Grade - 66

Enrollment Total: 213 Students

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Classroom 4-H Club Project

Emma Milligan was the first student to complete the GCMS Classroom 4-H Club project. All the students in Mrs. O'Neill's STEM class had the option of becoming part of the "Classroom Club". Since it was a pilot program the 4-H extension covered the \$20 fee. After the 5 lessons were presented in the 4-H STEM Pathways Program, the club members were asked to create a poster board project and present it to a judge based on what their favorite part of the program was, something they learned, and do some research on a career related to Ag. Emma did an awesome job and she received a ribbon as well as she is eligible to receive a premium pay out next year after the fair. The program presenter took her project with her and it will be displayed at the Ford County Fair this summer among the other 4-H projects.

Science Experiences

Jacob Dickey came to visit the 7th grade Science students since they are studying weather in the Earth Science unit. It was a great day. For two days in March and two days in April, the 4-H Ford County Extension will come and do rockets with the 8th grade Astronomy class. In May, a StarLab has been scheduled to be here all day for the 7th grade science classes to go to.

Guest Speakers

Ben Tracy spoke with the students on February 22nd. He spoke with students about digital citizenship and how to safely use social media.

Athletics

Both volleyball teams are Twin County Conference Champions! The 7th grade team begins play in the regional tournament on Saturday, February 24th. The regional is being held at St. Joseph Middle School. The 8th grade regional will be played in Hoopeston starting on March 2.

The wrestling team will be competing in the Monticello Regional on Saturday, February 24. Sectionals will take place in Vandalia on Saturday March 2. The state finals will be in Dekalb at NIU on March 8-9.

Elementary School Principal Report, Justin Kean

Enrollment:

- Pre K - 74
- K - 76
- 1 - 75
- 2 - 72
- 3 - 70
- 4 - 79
- 5 - 61
- Total - 507

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Book Fair: The book fair sold \$10,829.12 worth of books and fun items for kids. A big shout out to Stacy Grauer and Tori Ferguson for adjusting and managing the book fair when Jen Carley was out sick.

Winter Blues: Cyndi Wurmnest, elementary school social committee chair, organized a staff get together on Friday , February 23 at the Countryside Campground. 70 staff and significant others participated.

Ava Mead: Ava rang the bell over the intercom on February 2 to celebrate her ending treatment.

5 Essentials: 95% of the 4th and 5th grade students have completed the survey which is over the required threshold.

Interviews: A full day of interviewing prospective teachers took place on February 11. Current staff was complimentary of what is currently offered to staff at GCMS and several of the prospects were impressed with the overall benefits of working at GCMS.

Special Education Director, Jesse McFarling:

- The FCSEC Executive Board met on February 28, 2024. Director McFarling reported on these agenda items:
- Update of the FY24 Excess Cost reporting to the Illinois State Board of Edu
- Update on the School Psychologist search for the 24-25 school year
- Hearing Itinerant services
- Information on possible future Board Certified Behavioral Analyst position
- Ongoing IEP meetings and initial evaluations numbers
- Consideration of action for IDEA consolidated grant amendments for GCMS
- Consideration of action for IDEA consolidation grant amendments for PBL

Total District Numbers

Current IEP's for the District: 158

Speech Only: 20

Referral for an initial evaluation: 4

Referral for a re-evaluation: 4

IEP meetings this month: 28

IEP dismissals: 1

Speech only dismissals: 1

Initial IEP students: 2

Moved into District: 4

Moved out of District: 4

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Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction - Erin Nuss

SIP Workshops: Two professional learning opportunities were offered so that staff could choose what best fit their needs and interests. Some staff attended the HOIC Keynote speaker and saw Mrs. Angie Funk honored. Staff who stayed at GCMS participated in a “Professionalism Through the Generations” activity led by Mrs. Nuss. There were meaningful conversations and those involved learned a lot about each other.

Professional Development

- Lunch and Learn led by Ashley Schwenk on “Expired Math Rules”
- “Whole Brain Teaching” led by Joanna Willis
- Co-Planning Co-Teaching Workshops continue to be very well attended!
- “Grading with Equity Re-visited” led by Ashley Schwenk and Michelle O’Neal

Assessment: English Learner testing is completed and preparation for all the other mandated state testing continues.

Annual Report: Curriculum department assembled a brief document highlighting major data from the district for this year. The goal was to push it out in small, manageable chunks while providing a clear picture of all that the district does and offers.

Upcoming Events: The Title I program is hosting an author visit from Margaret Peterson Haddix on March 5. She will speak with students about reading and writing books and will talk to parents about the importance of reading with your children.

Technology Director - Walker Willis

Chromebook Repairs

- 1st Quarter - 37
- 2nd Quarter - 32
- 3rd Quarter as of 2/21/2024

23 Upcoming Projects

New High School Copier: The new copier has been received and installed. The copier formerly in the High School Office has been moved to the Ag Office.

ESports Club: Mr. Benison’s eSports club has successfully started with a limited number of invite only students. New opportunities to expand the club are being discussed, and will be upgrading more computers in the ES Lab to meet the system requirements for the games being played.

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2024-2025 Chromebook Orders: New Chromebooks will be purchased for the incoming 6th and 10th grade students. Devices will be upgraded in 1st grade which are nearing the end of their life cycle. Tech department has begun comparing models and gathering quotes.

Technology Highlights

Phishing Emails: In January there was an increase in phishing email attempts being directed at staff members. The tech department updated their email filters which appears to be preventing more of these messages from getting through. Managing these threats is an ongoing process that continues to be monitored. During the third week of January, a phishing campaign was completed where test emails were sent to all staff. Less than 10% of staff members clicked on any of the links in the test emails, which is overall a good result. That said, information from the phishing campaign and the recent attempts at attacks are being used as opportunities for continuing education for staff and students.

Musical Preparation: The GCMS High School presentation of Catch Me If You Can will be performed on March 8-9. There is more technology involved with this show than any previous show. Multiple GCMS alumni with experience in lighting and sound design have volunteered to assist in the production, including Dan Schultz, Nick Day, and Shannon Spangler.

Superintendent Report

GCMS Certified Teacher Seniority List

The 2023/2024 GCMS Certified Teacher Seniority list was provided to the GCMS Education Association for review and accuracy.

Motion to approve the GCMS Certified Staff Seniority list as presented. Motion was made by board member Friday and seconded by board member Elder. Motion carried by roll call with all members present voting yes.

GCMS RIF Notification

Darnell shared that this is formal notification that there will not be any RIF's this contract year of certified staff members.

Solar Update

Superintendent Darnell reported that the first litmus test of the solar panels will be when the ES panels are turned on over spring break. Additional buildings will follow suit. Darnell also shared that he is getting more information from the performance contractor on the federal rebate process. The district is anticipating roughly \$2 million of this project to be rebated back to the district.

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Summer Projects

- Press Box - \$600,000
- Asphalt parking lot at the new maintenance (includes walkway to the new press box - \$100,000)
- Concrete additions at the Elementary School - \$50,000
- Painting projects - \$20,000 (materials only)
- High School science rooms - new gas lines - \$40,000
- High School Principal's office wall repair - \$300 (material only)
- New Middle School kitchen faucets - \$2,000 (materials only)
- High School classroom window blind replacement - \$3,000 (materials only)
- High School restroom door replacement - \$1,000 (materials only)
- Elementary School sensory room - installation of heat - \$2,500 (materials only)
- Middle School workroom - door window addition
- Elementary School cafeteria pain and sound panels - approximately \$12,000 to \$14,000 (materials)

Historically, the school district budgets/spends approximately \$300,000 - \$350,000 each summer on building projects and maintenance. The committee discussed the Operations, Building and Maintenance fund balances for the year which also includes the summer building maintenance projects.

Press Box Timeline

- May 13-17: Demolition of the current press box by Lee Excavating
- May 13-24: Boring and electrical work.
- May 28-June 28: Press box installation by Dant Clayton.
- July 1 - 19: Paved walkway installation, electrical connection, ground finishing and fence repair/addition.
- July 1 - 30: Sound System installation/technology work by Heart Technology. MCS will manage network equipment installation and connections.

The total project cost, which has already been approved, is approximately \$600,000.

A motion to adjourn the regular session meeting was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Elder at 7:24 p.m. Motion carried by voice vote, with all members present voting yes.

Executive Session

A motion to **go into executive session** was made by board member Leonard and seconded by board member Whitehouse at 7:30 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 or legal counsel for the district, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged

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against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1)

A motion to adjourn the second executive session meeting was made by board member Whitehouse and seconded by board member Leonard at 7:40 p.m. Motion carried by voice vote, with all members present voting yes.

Board President Josh Johnson

Secretary to the Board Lori H. Kristensen