MINUTES OF MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF CLAY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

A Regular Session of the Clay Community Schools Board of Trustees was held at North Clay Middle School, 3 West Knight Drive, Brazil, IN 47834, on Thursday, January 8, 2009. Forrest Buell, Dottie King, Tina Heffner, Jennifer Kaelber, Brian Atkinson and Terry Barr were present. Ted Jackson was absent.

I. <u>Call to Order</u>

Mr. Atkinson, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Barr offered the prayer.

Prior to approval of the consent agenda, Dr. Schroeder noted that there was an add-on item, Item VIII. F. 1 a, the rescinding of Jon Russell's letter of resignation dated 11/16/2008. Also, the board has had conferences with Dr. Allen and has elected not to go forward with non-renewal. If the board approves the rescinding of Mr. Russell's resignation, then both individuals will have a contract as an administrator for the 2009-2010 school year.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Claims

B. Board Meetings

Regular Session Minutes for December 10, 2008 Executive Session Certification for December 10, 2008

C. Field Trips None at this meeting

Mr. Atkinson moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and Dr. King seconded. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

III. <u>Comments from Patrons</u>

Mr. Leo Southworth addressed the board regarding the fact that money is getting tighter every day throughout the nation, and the corporation needs to do a lot of educating with very little money. He noted that the corporation had just started going forward with a \$26,000,000 building project, and the two buildings that need work the most were removed from the project. He deemed this to be not cost-effective management, and he believes that it starts a cycle again. His example of this cycle was the case of the elementary schools being neglected because bonds were out on Northview and Clay City. Those bonds are just now being paid off. He is concerned that the corporation will keep riding the pendulum of debt and major work and never be able to systematically maintain buildings, buses, and the educational system.
Mr. Ron Scherb had two items to comment upon. First, he suggested that the board table the motion to demolish the transportation/maintenance building due to some very serious questions that have been raised about that. Second, he asked the board to consider setting up a committee to study all the options that the maintenance

building/bus garage has to offer. He believes that if the seven board members would appoint one person from the county to pool their ideas and present them to the board, it would really help. As Mr. Scherb sees it, the problem with demolishing this building now is that there have been a lot of questions raised about the insurance. He asked if a second opinion about insuring the building had been obtained. Mr. Scherb shared a comment that he had heard in the coffee shop suggesting that next year the corporation would declare that the administrative building had been condemned. In his opinion, the board can reassure the community that this isn't some type of a plan to get the buildings destroyed because there isn't a choice. He suggested getting the community involved in the school business. He urged the board members to take the opportunity to prove to the community that it is willing to listen to what the community wants and look at all options and not let one or two employees tell the board what to do. He repeated his requests to table the decision on the transportation/maintenance building and to get a second opinion on insurance and prove the coffee shop comment wrong.

IV. Old Business

A. Transportation Office/Facility Maintenance Building Demolition and Backfill Dr. Schroeder stated that there were three quotes, and Barrett Excavating was the lowest at \$25,000. He recommends approving Barrett Excavating to complete the project with the creamery building only and not the Quonset hut where bus repairs are made. The structural engineer stated that the creamery building must be vacated within a year, and Indiana Insurance acted on the structural engineer's recommendation.

Under discussion, Mrs. Heffner asked Mr. Fowler to share information about insurance. Mr. Fowler stated that property/casualty and workmen's comp insurance had been bid out for the entire corporation with another carrier approximately 18 months ago. The corporation pays \$350,000 for this insurance, and the other carrier large enough to handle the size of the school corporation bid \$400,000. So, there is an opportunity to go with another carrier; however, that carrier is going to cost \$50,000 to \$60,000 more per year to have the same insurance.

Mrs. Barr clarified that in the public meetings, the transportation needs were discussed several times. When the board members first got the notice that the insurance company would not insure the building until a structural engineer deemed it safe, the board originally said that the money did not need to be spent on a structural engineer because it could be seen that the building was not safe. However, it was later decided that the board would have the structural engineer brought in, and he determined that the building was not safe. Mrs. Barr does not know where to go with the rest of the needs in the transportation/maintenance facility, but she does not feel that the demolition of the creamery building is not safe, she feels by looking at it that it is not safe, and she has been concerned for the last year that people have been going into the building while it is unsafe. She has no problem demolishing the building; the transportation project and what happens to it is a totally different issue.

In regard to a committee, Mrs. Heffner had thought about a three-member advisory panel for the transportation office, not including the demolition issue. She would like to have three professionals who could address issues, i.e. EPA issues, architectural issues, to get the most out of property that the corporation already has. Mrs. Heffner added that Mr. Reberger graciously answered questions for her this afternoon. She asked Mr. Reberger if there had been an update on the estimate that Barrett Excavating had provided. Mr. Reberger replied that Mr. Barrett had signed the bid as a "not to exceed" quote.

Dr. Buell asked if there was any asbestos in the building, to which the reply was that there was no insulation, so there was no asbestos. In response to Dr. Buell's question as to how one would know if there was asbestos, it was stated that there is no insulation or plaster; the building is metal and wood. Dr. Buell opined that it is not 100% for certain that there is no asbestos. He recommended having the EPA investigate to make sure because if there is asbestos it shouldn't be touched. Mr. Reberger stated that to his layman's knowledge there are no surfaces that could contain asbestos because the roof decking is wood, the walls are masonry, and there are some metal surfaces. To his knowledge, asbestos would have to be contained in plaster or something to that effect. Dr. Buell reasserted that he would like to have EPA investigate, and if they agree that there is no asbestos, he has no problem.

Mrs. Heffner made a motion to demolish the building. Mrs. Barr seconded, and the motion was approved by a 5-1 vote with Dr. Buell opposed.

B. Public Hearing on Multi-Track Year-Round School and Lease

Mr. Jeff Qualkinbush reiterated information presented at the initial public hearing on multi-track year-round school held during the December 10, 2008 school board meeting.

Mr. Qualkinbush then referred to the public hearing on the lease by noting that the public notice had not yet been published, and he asked for a date for a special board meeting during which the public hearing on the lease could be held. It was agreed that the special session would be held on February 17, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. At that time, the board will also be presented with a resolution of the approval of the feasibility study, execution of the lease and related matters as well as approval of the master lease for the building project.

Mr. Qualkinbush concluded his comments by stating that the general obligation bonds had been closed for the first phase of the financing. Extremely favorable rates of around 3.1% were received.

Board President Atkinson opened the public hearing on multi-track year-round school. Mr. Leo Southworth made the only public comment. He believes that multi-track yearround school is not cost-effective: It increases the cost of education and does not improve anything academically except the possibility of including more remediation.

The hearing on multi-track year-round school was then closed.

C. Resolution of the Approval of the Feasibility Study, Execution of the Lease and Related Matters

This item will be presented for approval at the February 17, 2009 special session board meeting.

D. Approval of Master Lease for Building Project

This item will be presented for approval at the February 17, 2009 special session board meeting.

V. <u>Superintendent's Report</u>

Dr. Schroeder commended Daniel Reberger of North Clay Middle School for being selected to participate in the first All-State Middle School Honor Band. Also, he shared that Cassandra Ronaldson, a Meridian Elementary student, has been honored as the number one person in Indiana and number twenty-four in the nation for a web-based reading program, "Ticket to Read". Dr. Schroeder next congratulated Clay City Jr/Sr High School for being named a "Best Buy" school for the third year in a row. Clay City was one of 31 schools on the Honor Roll. This is determined by a formula and the resulting index indicates that the corporation is getting very high achievement for the money spent. He concluded the superintendent's report by noting the very moving program that was put together by Mr. Pete Kikta and Dr. Jeff Allen at North Clay Middle School as a send-off to the local guard unit that has been deployed to serve in Iraq for a year. Over 1,000 people attended the ceremony.

VI. Board Member Comments

Dr. Buell asked Dr. Schroeder if he did or did not direct Mr. Russell to transfer a teacher from Clay City Elementary School's fifth grade to a third section of kindergarten. Dr. Schroeder stated that Carolyn Kumpf had asked Mr. Russell to do that. However, Dr. Schroeder did not direct Mr. Russell to transfer a teacher: He instructed Mr. Russell to deal with the problem with existing staff. It was up to Mr. Russell to make that decision, just as other elementary schools have moved people around to handle staffing needs. Dr. Buell does not feel that he received a valid answer to his question, and he finds it confusing. Dr. Schroeder reminded Dr. Buell that his response to Dr. Buell's question had been shared in executive session with all of the board members as well as in an e-mail. Dr. King interjected that it is inappropriate to discuss a personnel item in public.

Mrs. Barr stated that as a board member, she would like to protest. She added that this is an opportunity for board members to make their comments and move on and not sit here and have an argument. Mr. Atkinson reminded Dr. Buell that he was getting into an area that can't be discussed publicly.

Dr. Buell then asserted that Dr. Schroeder and Mr. Atkinson had denied him from having a cracker barrel public general meeting. He claimed that he had asked for an agenda item since September and as of December he could not get it on (for reference: see minutes of September 11, 2008, Item VII. A. Public Input). Mrs. Barr suggested adding the request as a future agenda item so that the board members could have a

discussion as to whether they would all like to do it or not. She reminded Dr. Buell that the board had never voted as a board whether to do such a meeting or not. Dr. Schroeder and Mr. Atkinson cannot deny it, and Dr. Buell cannot demand it; it must be a board vote. At the conclusion of Dr. Buell's board member comments, Mr. Atkinson offered to remind Dr. Buell at the end of the meeting during future agenda items in order to add his request for a cracker barrel session to the agenda for the next meeting.

Dr. King joined Dr. Schroeder in his positive comments about the send-off for the troops going to Iraq. She stated that it was not only nice for the soldiers and families involved; it was also a nice thing for Clay County to be known to do. Dr. King then reminded everyone of how the board got to this point in the building project. She reviewed the process: 1) it started with 10 building-level committees made up of the building administrator, teachers, parents, community members, and students who were asked to put together the physical needs of their building; 2) those lists came to a central committee comprised of community members chosen by board members and building committees; 3) anyone could come to the meetings of the committees; 4) the central committee, after several meetings and several hours of work, came up with a plan, which was more expensive than what the committee thought could be afforded; 5) the central committee reduced the plan by prioritizing, keeping in mind the desire to not raise the tax rate; 6) safety and security was at the top of the list of needs; 7) creating an equitable situation for elementary students was the next priority; 8) architects came back with a plan that would not raise the tax rate; 9) the community asked to leave out the transportation and central office buildings in the proposed projects, which was done; 9) the community asked that the project be pared down into two phases, which was done; 10) there were three public meetings—one at Clay City and two at the north end, which were advertised in the newspaper; 11) the board was "promised" that if they compromised, there would be no remonstrance; 12) there was a remonstrance, which was defeated by a margin of 5 to 1. Dr. King observed that the board still continues to have questions about whether the board is involving the public. She doesn't know what more the board can do.

Mrs. Heffner repeated her desire to form an advisory panel with three professionals linked to that type of project within the community. She understands fully what Dr. King was sharing. However, Mrs. Heffner's concern is that property taxes for farmers have gone up considerably while the majority of the taxes have gone down. She believes that the school corporation has done its best to stay within the debt service rate for the bond issue, which she appreciates, but she believes the board has to consider that a small percent of taxpayers cannot always be the ones to fund everything. She feels that the board is managing available money to the best of its ability. She hopes to be able to come up with some good options for the maintenance garage that is needed. She stated that she would like to see the cost around \$1 million, no more. For the next board meeting, she would like to address publicly the issue of drug-screening for athletes if it is felt there is a need.

Mrs. Barr also reviewed the part the public played in the planning for the building/renovation project. Last December she had e-mailed principals at each building and asked them to send her information regarding how many meetings they had, how many people they had on their committees, and whether the meetings had

been advertised in the newspaper. Mrs. Barr has copies of her e-mails if anyone would like to have a copy. The responses indicated that the meetings had been advertised in the newspapers, mentioned in newsletters that were sent home, and discussed at PTO meetings. The project was discussed in public meetings, is in board meeting minutes, and has been on the web site. Her totals show that there were over 20 public meetings and over 131 people involved. Mrs. Barr stated that everything appeared to be fine until the proposed project hit the headlines of the newspaper. She added that she felt bad for the people that worked on the steering committee who worked very hard and put in a lot of time. There were 28 members on this committee and they met at least six times. Mrs. Barr knows the meetings were long, there were a lot of things discussed, and the discussions sometimes became heated. The schools presented lists of their concerns, their needs, and their wish lists. Mr. Reberger also developed a list of concerns and needs. The architectural firm was then asked to evaluate these same areas. Mrs. Barr found it interesting that all three groups coincided in what they believed to be needs. When the renovation plan hit the newspapers, people came out and said they didn't know anything about it and it couldn't be done with their tax money. The Farm Bureau became involved, so the transportation garage and central office were cut out. It was a unanimous decision because no one wanted to cut out a building that housed students. The people that Mrs. Barr has heard from are a lot of the same people that say they shouldn't have to pay for the schools because they don't have children in the schools. Her reply to that is that we are a community. She doesn't use the jail either, but she supports it as a part of the community. Mrs. Barr also noted that the remonstrance had failed, but the same arguments are still going on. She added that this process was started in 2005. She would like to guit arguing and wasting time and move forward. Having been a board member for six years and having attended board meetings two years prior to becoming a board member, Mrs. Barr realizes that the corporation cannot keep putting "band-aids" on the buildings. Generations past have made sacrifices to provide the schools that the corporation has now. They have been taken care of the best that could be done. There is an option now to renovate them and take care of the physical needs. The project does not address the educational needs of the student; that happens with the teacher. The project provides another tool and provides safety and an environment in which students can learn. Mrs. Barr feels that it is time to step up to the plate and provide for the students of today and the ones that are coming up tomorrow.

VII. <u>New Business</u>

A. CAPE Endowment Fund Check

Mr. Mike Lawson representing the Clay County Community Foundation presented a check for \$92,200 to the school corporation. Mr. Lawson explained that the original \$5 million CAPE grant from the Lilly Foundation and the subsequent \$800,000 extension grant, which were both earmarked to address literacy needs in Clay County, have been placed in an endowment fund which guarantees that these types of monies will be available to address literacy issues in years to come.

B. NHS ECA Purchases

There has been a request to purchase a portable batting field for the baseball program at Northview in the amount of \$3,800 to be paid out of the baseball account. Also, there has been a request to purchase a TV for approximately \$759 out of the Northview ECA accounts. Approval is recommended.

Mrs. Heffner moved to approve the purchases. Dr. King seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

C. Life Insurance and Long-Term Disability

Mr. Mike Fowler presented a recommendation regarding life insurance and long-term disability insurance. He explained that, currently, non-certified staff members within the corporation receive \$25,000 of life insurance, administrators receive \$30,000, and the corporation pays everything but \$1 per individual per year. The rates through Indiana Insurance are going from 26¢ per thousand to 36¢ per thousand. The corporation has the ability to join a trust which would reduce the rate to 12¢ per thousand. The recommendation is to double the amount of life insurance for non-certified staff from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and leave the employee contribution at \$1 per year. For administrative staff, the recommendation is to increase life insurance from \$30,000 to \$50,000 and use the savings to offer long-term disability insurance. The savings from the change in life insurance does not fully cover the cost of long-term disability insurance, so the recommendation is to charge them \$6 per pay for this coverage. In summary, the insurance coverage would double for some classifications, offer more insurance for others and still save the corporation over \$11,000 per year.

Mrs. Barr moved to approve the recommendation. Dr. Buell seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

D. Enrollment

Dr. Schroeder referred to enrollment numbers that had been provided in the board packet. The ADM for the September 12 count was 4,359, and the corporation has held more constant this year than in past years. He stated that every year the corporation loses enrollment, but it comes back up in September. The latest elementary enrollment figures were also in the board packet.

E. ISTEP+ Report

Mrs. Knust and Ms. Tucker presented information regarding ISTEP+ results and trend information. Mrs. Knust noted that between 1999 and 2004 the test results for math moved from being low to being slightly above state average. The corporation's worst year was 2005-2006 when results were 4.5 points below state average. Dr. Schroeder became superintendent at the start of the 2006-2007 school year and scores began to increase. Administrators met during that year to establish corporation goals and strategies that would cover 2007 through 2009. In 2005-2006 math scores were 4-5 points below state average. Strategies were put into place at that time, and during 2006-2007 the corporation's math test results were 2.4 points below state average. In 2007-2008, the results were 2.8 points below state average. For the 2008-2009 school

year, the corporation is .3% above the state average in math. Regarding English/language arts scores, the trend is remaining stagnant at about 2.5 points below state average for the past two years. Scores have been increasing since 2005-2006 when they were 3-8 points below state average.

Mrs. Knust pointed out that when looking at ISTEP+ data, there are many things that must be looked at: general population; special education population; free/reduced lunch population; and, high achieving students. The corporation's most difficult battle in raising test scores has been in the special education population. Mrs. Knust noted that the corporation is above the state average in the number of special ed students.

Dr. Schroeder summarized a few key points in the data: the corporation scores are the highest they have ever been in math; scores are above state average in math; scores are tied for second-highest scores ever within the corporation in English/language arts; state scores have gone down this year, but the corporation's scores have not; the corporation has a higher percentage of free/reduced and special ed, but when looking at the general education population, scores are above state average for those students that aren't on free/reduced lunch or in special ed. A major task is to increase special ed scores. Although the corporation scores are not as high as would be desired, Dr. Schroeder is encouraged by the movement that is being made. He thanked all the administrators and teachers that have worked hard to this point and encouraged them to continue working to raise the scores even more.

Ms. Tucker presented a condensed version of what strategies are being used to improve ISTEP+ scores, which includes curriculum mapping, Response to Intervention, Annual Growth NWEA strategies, before- and after-school tutoring at North Clay Middle School throughout the spring semester and resource homerooms for 7th and 8th grade students at Clay City Jr/Sr High School, use of NovaNet remediation software for students at Northview and Clay City, and exploration and discussion of best practice testing environments and motivational techniques. Ms. Tucker also presented a summary of scores that were at or above state average in the schools throughout the corporation. She congratulated the students, teachers, and principals for the effort that they put in this year. Mrs. Barr, on behalf of the board, offered admiration and thanks for the job that the principals, teachers, volunteers, and community members have done. She added that it is really nice to see the improvements. Mrs. Heffner encouraged the teachers to keep trying new things.

Α.	VIII. <u>Personnel</u> Leaves of Absence 1. Certified		
	a. Extended Maternity Leave 2. Non-Certified	FPE	Allyson Wegner
	a. Extended Medical Leave b. Medical Leave c. Medical Leave	NCMS ESE NHS	Candace Thompson Juanita Crosley Debbie Sneddon

B. Retirements

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	1. Certified 2. Non-Certified 3. Place on Retirement Index	None None None		
C.	Resignations 1. Certified 2. Non-Certified	None		
	a. Custodian (6 hrs/evening) 3. ECA Resignations	FPE None	Susan Kellum	
D.	Transfers 1. Certified 2. Non-Certified	None None		
E.	Employment 1. Certified			
	a. Teacher – Special Services	NHS	Thomas J. Wills	
	2. Non-Certified a. Bus Driver b. Instructional Assistant c. Instructional Assistant (50%)	TRANS JTE CCE	Vicki Templeton Kathy Short Linda Haas	
	3. Extra-Curricular Certified a. Track Coach – Girls b. Science Fair Co-Chair (50%) c. Science Fair Co-Chair (50%)	NCMS NHS NHS	Nathan Hopf Jamie Elwell Rachel Sparks	
	4. Extra-Curricular Non-Certified None 5. Extra-Curricular Lay Coach/Lay Sponsor			
	 a. Softball – Varsity Girls b. Wrestling – Head c. Wrestling – Asst. (50%) d. Wrestling – Asst. (50%) e. Basketball – Boys 6th Gr (60%) f. Basketball – Boys 6th Gr (40%) g. Elementary Sport (60%) h. Elementary Sport (40%) 	CCHS NCMS NCMS NCMS CCE	Roger Rhodes Antonio Sanabria Beau Pingleton Zachary Stultz Matt Ames Stephen Johnson Matt Ames Stephen Johnson	
	6. Extra-Curricular Volunteers a. Wrestling b. Wrestling c. Wrestling d. Wrestling e. Basketball – Girls f. Basketball – Girls g. Basketball – Girls h. Basketball – Girls i. Basketball – Girls	NHS NHS NCMS/NHS NCMS NCMS NCMS NCMS NCMS NCMS	Zachary Stultz Beau Pingleton Antonio Sanabria Michael Nicosin Jeff Buell Dennis Halfhill Kenny Rowan Danny Brent Potter Kevin Timberman	

F. Changes

1. Certified

a. Jon Russell rescinds his letter of resignation dated 11/16/2008.

2. Non-Certified None

G. Termination

1. Certified	None
2. Non-Certified	None

H. Information Only

1. Delores Ray will be working 18 hours per week at the LEAAP Center as a clerical/child care worker. She has already passed her Criminal History Check and has been approved by the board as a volunteer.

I. Classroom Volunteers

North Clay Middle School Jane Jackson-Mace John Mace LEAAP Center Kay Harper

Dr. King moved to approve the personnel items. Dr. Buell seconded, and the motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

IX. Future Agenda Items

Dr. Buell is not satisfied with the manner in which the elementary school project has been developed. He is concerned about the cost, lack of any educational improvements, the economy, and lack of public input. He has contacted the area's state representative who referred him to Governor Daniels' office. He prepared a letter to Governor Daniels' office asking for help in evaluating the project's planning. He is waiting for an answer and he hopes to have that by the next meeting. He would like to have discussion of the response as an agenda item.

Dr. Buell then asked if the board would be taking any action on the principals tonight. Dr. Schroeder clarified that it was stated at the beginning of the meeting that Dr. Allen would be renewed for another contract and, in the just-completed personnel items, Jon Russell rescinded his resignation. The item was voted on and it was approved. It has been taken care of at this meeting. Dr. Buell then stated that the Clay City people would be upset because they expected action to be taken tonight concerning the principals. When told that the board did take action, Dr. Buell asked what the action was. Mrs. Barr clarified that Jon Russell had rescinded his letter of resignation and Dr. Schroeder had stated that the board had decided to have Dr. Allen's contract renewed. Dr. Buell then stated that this was where the cracker barrel session comes in. He wants to address the board's approach to bringing Mr. Russell back to his job, and he requests establishing monthly cracker barrel sessions with Mr. Russell, the parents, and the teachers as he returns to his work and let them thrash together. Dr. Buell believes Mr. Russell will have a very difficult time, and he believes this is an ideal situation to let them sit down around the table. He is sure the parents will be happy to participate in a cracker barrel session.

Mrs. Heffner would like to have a report on drug screening for athletes.

Mrs. Barr stated that, regardless of what has to be done as a stop-gap measure for the transportation/bus garage in the immediate future, before a decision is made long-term she believes that the board needs information based on feedback from the community. She would like estimates of the following options: what it would cost to purchase the Romas building as it stands and the cost to renovate it to meet the criteria and the safety standards of EPA requirements as well as the increase in transportation costs annually for all buses, ECA and regular routes, based on present fuel prices; what it would cost to build on property that the corporation already owns, such as Van Buren Elementary or Jackson Township Elementary plus the increase in transportation costs if moved from the present location; and, what it would cost to take the area that the bus garage is presently in and do whatever would be needed to keep it there (buildings, property, etc.). She does not necessarily need this information for the next meeting, but when options are being looked at, she believes the board needs this information. Dr. Schroeder asked whether she was talking only about the bus garage or everything that is presently at that location. Mrs. Barr clarified that she wants to include anything that is not a short-term fix. Mr. Atkinson added that there is a need for maintenance storage and the buses. Dr. Schroeder suggested coming up with a two-pronged proposal: 1) a proposal for replacing the creamery building and getting Mr. Reberger the storage he needs; and 2) the transportation building, which right now is the Quonset hut, and what it would cost if it is put on different sites and what the transportation costs would be.

X. Adjournment

Mrs. Heffner made a motion to adjourn and Dr. Buell seconded. With a 6-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:19 pm.

The meeting was audio and video recorded and copies may be requested by contacting the Central Administration Office.