

**SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART  
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
REGULAR SESSION MEETING  
September 2, 2021**

The Board of School Trustees of the School City of Hobart met in regular session on September 2, 2021, in the Board Room at Hobart High School, 2211 East Tenth Street, Hobart, Indiana.

**ROLL CALL:** Terry Butler asked Board Members to log in. The following Board Members and Administrators were present or absent as noted:

**Board Members Present:**

Terry D. Butler  
Karen J. Robbins  
Rikki A. Guthrie  
Sandra J. Hillan  
Donald H. Rogers  
Stuart B. Schultz  
Frank Porras  
Olivia Garcia, HHS student representative  
Morgan Sanchez, HHS student representative

**Administrators Present:**

Peggy Buffington  
Bob Glover  
Christopher N. King  
William J. Longer  
Jonathan Mock  
Tim Krieg

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** President Butler indicated that the Board met in executive session prior to the regular session. As published, the meeting was held in accordance with I.C. 5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(1) where authorized by federal or state statute; (3) for discussion of the assessment, design, and implementation of school safety and security measures, plans, and systems; and (7) for discussion of records classified as confidential by state or federal statute.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Terry Butler, President, called the meeting to order around 7:01 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** President Butler led everyone present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AUDIENCE:** President Butler read the names of those persons who had signed the Visitors Directory and indicated they wanted to make comments at the end of the meeting and confirmed they were residents of the school district. President Butler indicated that each of them would have three minutes to speak at that time.

The following were present in the audience:

Janice Hamady, Chief Negotiator, Hobart Teachers Association  
Laurie Gonzales, parent  
John Young, parent  
Louis G, Hobart High School Key Club  
Gianna R, Hobart High School Key Club  
Brandon Shearer, parent  
Tanya Meagher, parent  
Jennifer Williams, parent  
Faith G, elementary student

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Rikki Guthrie moved that the Board approve the regular session minutes of August 19, 2021. Stuart Schultz seconded. Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Hillan, Schultz, Guthrie, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 7-0 in favor.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:** There were no financial reports for the Board's consideration.

**COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:** There were no comments from the audience on the listed agenda items.

**PERSONNEL:** Jonathan Mock, Director of Human Resources and Compliance, indicated the Personnel Report and Personnel Report Addendum were included in the electronic meeting packet for the Board's consideration.

Mr. Mock recommended approval and requested Board action.

Donald Rogers moved that the Board approve the Personnel Reports as presented. Seconded by Sandra Hillan.

In the discussion, the Board thanked Mr. Mock for the good job he had been doing with all of the personnel work that he had completed the past few meetings.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Hillan, Schultz, Guthrie, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 7-0 in favor.

The approved personnel items are as follows:

Corrections to August 19, 2021 Personnel Report Addendum –

Change in Contract Status: The JROTC instructor contracts should have been effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 – 260 days; and correct Darren Sandilla's contract amount to \$51,688.00.

Resignations –

Carolyn Bernal, Service Center/school bus driver, effective August 26, 2021  
Jim Fedyna, Service Center/school bus driver, effective September 10, 2021  
Brandy Sinclair, Joan Martin School/food services, effective September 10, 2021  
Tawana Chhutani, Hobart Middle School/food services, effective June 1, 2021

Homebound Teaching Contract –

August 23/December 17, 2021: Jackie Keefe, math, English, life skills, two hours per week, \$40.08 per hour

Requests for Leave of Absence –

Beth Dixon, Liberty School/teacher, FMLA, effective August 16 through November 10, 2021  
Maria Gallardo, Hobart High School/food service, unpaid medical leave, effective August 16, 2021 until January 3, 2022  
Joanna Montemayor, Joan Martin School/teacher, FMLA extension (from 27 days to 54 days), effective November 5 through December 17, 2021

Teacher Contract –

July 1, 2021/June 30, 2023: Tammy May, Service Center/Technology Professional Development Coordinator, 202 days, \$68,644.00

Salary Adjustments – 2021-2022 –

Madison Price, Hobart High School/teacher, Early College Dual Credit instructor for Hobart University – salary increase of \$5,000.00 for a new salary of \$49,891.00  
Lori Anderson, Administration Office/Director of Elementary Curriculum, increase her contract days from 212 to 215 days, \$86,527.00

ECA Resignations –

Eden Alexander, Hobart Middle School/English Super Bowl for the 2021-2022 school year  
Tony Curatolo, Hobart High School/assistant varsity baseball, effective August 30, 2021

Transfer of Assignment –

Sam Valdez

From: Service Center/Maintenance Intern

To: Service Center/Maintenance and Grounds, effective August 23, 2021, Maintenance 2 position – \$18.52 per hour; upon completion of his Associate's Degree, \$20.00 per hour on January 1, 2022; \$21.00 per hour on August 23, 2022; \$22.00 on August 23, 2023; and \$23.03 per hour on August 23, 2024 or whatever maximum hourly rate is for this position as of August 23, 2024

New Employees –

Alyson McDonald, Hobart High School/swim pool supervisor, part time, effective August 25, 2021, \$11.67 per hour and no probation period  
Shirley Kosich, Hobart High School/Main Office – secretary, effective September 1, 2021, \$17.09 per hour and no probation period  
Cade Brumley, Service Center and Maintenance and Grounds, effective August 23, 2021, Maintenance 2 position – \$18.52 per hour with step increases yearly to maximum pay rate of \$19.66 or whatever the maximum hourly rate is for this position at his four-year anniversary  
Donna Beres, Joan Martin School/food service, helper effective August 16, 2021, \$10.70 per hour with a probation period of 90 calendar days

Sara Ford, Early Learning Center @ George Earle/food service, dining room attendant, effective August 16, 2021, \$11.76 per hour with a probation period of 90 calendar days  
Veronica Kelleher, Hobart Middle School/food service, server, effective August 16, 2021, \$10.70 per hour with a probation period of 90 calendar days  
Kirsten Lynch, Hobart Middle School/food service, helper, effective August 16, 2021, \$10.70 per hour with a probation period of 90 calendar days  
Eileen O'Neill, Service Center/bus aide and school bus driver, effective August 23, 2021, \$13.78 per hour for bus aide and \$15.31 per hour when CDL is received for bus driving

Contracts for Extracurricular Services –

Hobart High School:

Daniel Craig Osika, varsity football, August 2/November 27, 2021, \$7,729.00 and conditioning coach, September 1, 2021/August 31, 2022, \$7,361.00  
Shaun Zoldaz, assistant varsity football, August 2/November 27, 2021, \$4,838.00

Contract for Extracurricular Services (Club Duties) –

Early Learning Center @ George Earle, August 18, 2021/June 2, 2022: Alexis Deter, School Safety Academy (SSA), 22 hours, \$550.00

Extra Duty Contracts – 2021-2022 –

Hobart Middle School:

August 9/October 21, 2021: Joe Clemmons, 7th grade football, \$2,860.00  
August 23/October 13, 2021: Stacie Gulley, 8th grade volleyball, \$2,010.00; Kirsten Cooper, 7th grade volleyball, \$2,932.00; and Lisa Flynn, 7th grade volleyball, \$2,010.00  
August 24/October 23, 2021: Jennifer Crespo, gymnastics, \$2,882.00; and Jose Crespo, gymnastics, \$2,882.00

**RESOLUTION: Technology Department Recognition Day:** Superintendent Peggy Buffington presented Resolution No. 2021-36 for the Board's consideration. She noted the third Tuesday in September is celebrated as National IT Professionals Day and the resolution designated September 21, 2021, as Technology Department Recognition Day. She noted that the Technology Department went above and beyond with all of their efforts to support teachers and students during the pandemic last school year, and this recognition was a way to acknowledge the Technology Department for all of the outstanding work they do for our students and staff. Resolution No. 2021-36 was included in the electronic meeting information for the Board's review.

Secretary Guthrie asked Attorney William Longer whether it would be okay for her to only read the title of the resolution since it was displayed on the screens in the Board Room, and he indicated it would be okay to do so. Rikki Guthrie, Secretary, read the title of Resolution No. 2021-36 aloud, as follows:

SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-36  
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION DAY

President Butler called for a motion and a roll call vote.

Stuart Schultz moved that the Board adopt Resolution No. 2021-36 recognizing our Technology Department. Frank Porras seconded.

In the discussion, the Board extended their appreciation to the Technology Department for everything they do for students and staff, and Mr. King was asked to relay this to his department.

Vote on motion: Secretary Rikki Guthrie called roll on the vote, as follows: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Hillan, Schultz, Guthrie, Robbins, and Butler. Nay – No one. Motion carried 7-0 in favor.

Resolution No. 2021-36, as presented, displayed on the screens in the Board Room, and adopted is as follows:

SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-36  
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION DAY

WHEREAS, the members of the Technology Department are committed to providing properly maintained computer equipment to the district's staff and students, which is an essential part of the classroom's learning environment; and

WHEREAS, the Technology Department's staff assists our students and staff with the operation of the computer equipment and its programs, as well as supporting professional development for the staff; and

WHEREAS, the Technology Department provided exemplary care of the technology needs of students and staff last school year during the COVID-19 pandemic, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that September 21, 2021, be designated as *Technology Department Recognition Day*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the School City of Hobart expresses its very deep appreciation to these valuable employees and commends their excellence in work on behalf of our students and staff and for all of their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic last school year.

DATED this 2nd day of September, 2021.

SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART  
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Terry D. Butler, President

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rikki A. Guthrie, Secretary

**PRESENTATION: Hobart High School Key Club:** Superintendent Peggy Buffington welcomed Gianna R and Lewis G, representatives from the Hobart High School Key Club. She indicated that they were going to make a presentation on Key Clubbers Got Talent for 2021. Gianna noted that Key Clubbers Got Talent was a student-led organization of Key Club members from the Indiana District that came together to host an online talent telethon to raise money for Riley Children's Hospital located in Indianapolis. Last year was the first year for the telethon, and they have decided to "continue the legacy" this year and go district wide. Last year the fundraiser collections were just a little over \$8,000, and their goal for this year is to raise \$15,000 with all proceeds being donated to Riley Children's Hospital. Gianna told the Board that she had just found out that they are more than half way to reaching their goal. The telethon will be held on Saturday, October 9 from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm (EST), and they handed out save the date cards for the event.

Karen Robbins noted the Key Club does other service work in addition to the telethon and one of those projects is assisting the Hobart Food Pantry. She indicated that student organizations like the Key Club and JROTC and other high school clubs always assist with the city-wide food drive of the Kiwanis Club, and the food pantry would not be able to do the drive on their own. Gianna indicated that she was honored to be serving her Key Club, as well as servicing the community. She noted that she had personally grown and said that a couple of years ago, she would not have been able to make a presentation to the Board. Lewis noted that Hobart has three vice presidents at the state level, and he is one of them. He highlighted some of his responsibilities as one of those vice presidents, as well what responsibilities he has in the local Key Club.

Dr. Buffington asked them what she could do to assist them with their project. She asked them to send her information that could be posted on the district's social media and website. She said that if they wished to speak to elementary students about the project, that probably could be done since the high school dismisses around 2:35 p.m. and the elementary school dismiss at 3:35 p.m. The Board was told that the club received their "red wagon" last year. There are three different levels for monetary donations, and they will have t-shirts. It was noted that any student could submit a talent for a \$5.00 fee. Dr. Buffington indicated that Gianna and Lewis were role models for their fellow students as well as for the younger students in the district. The Board extended their congratulations to them for being the "movers and shakers" in putting together last year's telethon and wished them success with this year's telethon. Don Rogers complimented the students on their presentation.

Terry Butler indicated that he had 2,500 bags in his truck for the Kiwanis City-Wide Food Drive for the Hobart Food Pantry, and he said that he had already delivered 5,000 bags to the Maria Reiner Center. He

indicated that besides the Key Club and JROTC other clubs at the high school assist with the food drive, and he appreciated all of the students' service and involvement to help others.

**PUBLIC HEARING: Pre-Formal Bargaining Public Hearing:** President Terry Butler indicated that between July 1 and Sept 15, a public hearing was required to be conducted jointly by the school employer and the teachers' exclusive representative. The public was welcome to give testimony on subjects of bargaining and statutory subjects of Discussion as described in I.C. 20-29-6-1(a).

- I. President Terry Butler opened the meeting for the Pre-Formal Bargaining public hearing.
- II. Terry Butler opened the floor for public testimony.

Janice Hamady, Chief Negotiator for the Hobart Teachers Association (HTA), was present and indicated that the HTA represents the K-12 teaching staff and provides a working contract agreement for them with the school district. She noted the good working relationship that they have with the administration. President Terry Butler commented that the Board would like to pay the teachers more but noted that the district only gets a set amount of funds from the state. He commented that the HTA and administration amicably work together to reach agreement. Dr. Buffington indicated that Ms. Hamady was the HTA Chief Negotiator for fifteen years and noted she has a very good understanding of school finance that she was then able to share the information with her membership. Dr. Buffington said the negotiation teams work together very well, and even though some obstacles may arise, they work through them together. She indicated the district cannot go into deficit financing so they would give the teachers as much as they possibly could. She indicated they use the interest-based bargaining model and said the district had not been in binding arbitration because they do resolve their issues together. She thanked Ms. Hamady for the great job she has done and was looking forward to working with her and her team next week. Ms. Hamady thanked Dr. Buffington for all everything she does and noted that some of the decisions were not always easy but said they were always about "what's best for students."

- III. President Butler asked if there were any other comments from the audience and hearing none he closed the hearing

**RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT: Consulting Contract:** Dr. Peggy Buffington presented a consulting contract for Ted Zembala effective August 20, 2021, through June 30, 2022, and she indicated that Mr. Zembala was sharing his expertise about the upcoming budget season and negotiations. A copy of the contract was included in the electronic meeting information for the Board's review.

Dr. Buffington recommended approval of the contract for a monthly salary of \$1,650 per month and requested Board action.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board approve the consulting contract with Ted Zembala, as presented. Stuart Schultz seconded.

In the discussion, it was noted that Mr. Zembala's knowledge would be beneficial in assisting Bob Glover, as he learns about all of the aspects of his position. Mr. Butler commented that Hobart was not the only school corporation wanting his services.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Hillan, Schultz, Guthrie, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 7-0 in favor.

**UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS:** The Board received the following information:

- School Information – weekly agendas from the Early Learning Center, Liberty School and Veterans School, and the weekly BricksCenter newsletter from that HHS Athletic Department.

**COMMENTS - RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN: BRICKIE FORWARD 2021-22:** The Board had not received any comments from the public on the Brickie Forward Plan 2021-2022, nor had Dr. Peggy Buffington, Superintendent. The link to the Return to In-Person Instruction Plan: Brickie Forward 2021-22 was noted in the write-up for the meeting.

Dr. Peggy Buffington noted that the district's Return to In-Person Instruction Plan: Brickie Forward 2021-22 that the Board approved earlier this year indicated when community spread reached orange and red zones, the wearing of masks was an option. She noted that she prepared and released the weekly



information this afternoon that she normally would have done Friday. Because of Lake County was now in the orange and to mitigate the spread, she indicated that staff and students would be required to wear masks beginning tomorrow. She reviewed the district's COVID information, as of September 1, with the Board and said that positive cases increased from 10 to 30 in one week, and quarantine numbers doubled in the same period. Like any communicable disease, she said when 20% of our students are absent due to a communicable disease, the absences have to be reported to the state and the state health department, and they could then decide to close the schools, and students would have to go to virtual education. By implementing mitigation strategies at this time, it might reduce district numbers so that students can continue in-person schooling like was done last school year. Dr. Buffington indicated that this was what she wanted for the students because in-person schooling was more effective and beneficial for them. She indicated that 99% of the COVID hospital cases in our area were the Delta variant and was very active in school age children. She noted that students want to stay in school. She said when masks are worn, it would not be necessary to quarantine a student who may have been sitting next to a student who tested positive for COVID if they were not systematic. Also, our school nurses were trained to administer BinaxNOW testing. She said reducing the quarantine numbers would offer relief, and hopefully, the district would not reach the 20% mark that would require the district to go to virtual education. Dr. Buffington noted the updated information was available on the district's website, if anyone wanted to review it.

President Butler reminded those speaking that their comments would be limited to three minutes. Laurie Gonzales and John Young indicated that they did not wish to speak, and they were at the meeting for the Key Club presentation. Dr. Buffington complimented the students for their great presentation.

The speakers were as follows:

Brandon Shearer, parent of a high school student, was against the wearing of masks and indicated that his daughter would not be wearing one. He indicated that statistics do not support that wearing masks had any effect on reducing COVID-19 cases. He shared statistical information about the lack of effectiveness of masks and indicated there was hardly any difference "with or without a mask." In addition, he cited death statistics of child as related to COVID-19. He asked the Board not to approve the mask mandate. President Butler noted the need to stop the spread of the coronavirus in hopes that student absences would stay below 20% so that virtual learning would not be activated. The administration and Board are not medical doctors but are trying to take steps to reduce the spread. Due to legislation, the boards of health cannot mandate the wearing of masks. They can only make recommendations, which they have done. The Lake County Board of Health will be requesting that the Lake County Council mandate the wearing of masks at their upcoming September meeting.

Tanya Meagher, parent of three children, spoke to the Board about how the coronavirus had affected her children last year and this year. Her oldest has worked hard both academically and athletically, and she did not want him to miss out on the recognition he deserves and scholarship opportunities. She mentioned the quarantine process and the stress involved, and she did not think the E-Learning opportunities were working as well as last year. She did not blame teachers and mentioned that her husband was an educator in a neighboring school district. She preferred that masks not be worn and did not favor forced vaccinations.

Jennifer Williams, parent of an elementary student, shared some of the history and problems of her child during the pandemic. She was against the mask mandate and recalled a specific scary incident with the Board. She indicated if the district ever had a vaccination mandate, she would withdraw her child. She felt that masks were stressful for young students and interfered with their learning process, especially for those with learning disabilities. She voiced her displeasure with the cleanliness of her child's desk when school opened. She felt the cleanliness of the school was better last year and noted one custodian who she felt when above and beyond to do this was no longer working for the school district. She was concerned if her son had a health episode while wearing his mask while on the playground or in gym class. Mr. Butler noted that the rooms were fogged every night, and Mrs. Williams indicated the inside of her son's desk was filthy when school began. Mr. Butler noted that foggers have salt water in them and that does leave a residue. She was also told that masks did not need to be worn at recess or in gym class. Ms. Williams indicated that was not always so and Mrs. Meagher concurred. Mr. Butler indicated that Dr. Buffington would look into Ms. Williams' concern so that it was rectified.

President Butler thanked the parents for their comments. He indicated that masks would be required tomorrow, and if any student chooses not to wear one, the student would be sent home.

**COMMENTS:** From the administration, Peggy Buffington told the audience members that she appreciated their comments. There are different views on wearing masks and the legislative changes have not made things any easier. However, one thing remains and that is that school districts were still required to report their communicable disease absences. Students will do as they are asked and will wear masks so they can stay in school. Hopefully, the COVID levels will be reduced so the mask requirement could be retracted because she knows no one wants to wear a mask, including herself. Bob Glover noted it was a

difficult situation and understands the parent view from seeing his children the past year, but “at the end of the day we have to do what we have to do” to keep students in school. Tim Krieg extended his compliments to the high school’s Key Clubbers for raising \$8,000 for Riley Children’s Hospital last year and their expanded plans to raise \$15,000 this year with their motto of “Every Child Deserves a Chance.” He appreciated everyone’s comments.

From the Board, Frank Porras appreciated hearing the Key Clubbers presentation, appreciated their support of Riley’s and noted that he has a family member who works there. He noted that he works for the School City of East Chicago and said they have been wearing masks since the first day of school. Hopefully, wearing them now will allow us to be able to not wear them sometime in the future. Sandi Hillan offered “kudos” to the Key Club, and she complimented their presentation and how poised they were. She was impressed and said the presentation was like something that college students would do. Mrs. Hillan noted that the relationship between the Hobart Teachers Association and the administration was impressive and very professional when she served on the negotiating team. She complimented Janice Hamady for how she represents the teachers and also Dr. Buffington for how she represents the administrative team. She noted the importance of following state directives and keeping students in school. Stuart Schultz thanked everyone for their comments. Olivia Garcia appreciated the comments and view points of the parents. However, she spoke from a student’s viewpoint and said she was willing to do whatever was necessary to remain in school and felt the school district was limited by state requirements. Morgan Sanchez complimented Gianna and Lewis on their amazing presentation on Key Clubbers Got Talent. In addition, she mentioned some of the things Gianna and Lewis have done or are doing with the Key Club. She, too, would rather wear a mask to stay in school, than have virtual learning, as would many other students. Being a senior, she wants to have a Prom because it would be one of her last memories before graduation. She already knows she is attending college out of state and did not know if or when she would be able to reconnect with her classmates after she leaves. If wearing a mask, allows this to happen that was what she would prefer rather than having virtual education. Terry Butler explained to the audience that Olivia and Morgan were senior students who were non-voting members of the Board. They can participate in discussions and offer their thoughts/ideas from their perspective, and those of their peers at the high school. Rikki Guthrie thanked the audience for sharing their thoughts and comments. She noted she was “a nurse, parent, and school board member” and thought it was “not about who is right and who is wrong” She offered condolences to the Hicks family on the loss of Jerry Hicks, a long-time teacher, athletic director, and coach, who recently passed away. Karen Robbins noted the student service for the annual food drive and commented that students recognize the drive’s importance and were respectful of all those involved. She was very proud of them. She told Chris King that he and his department were “rock stars” and appreciated how the negotiations process has been handled. Terry Butler commented that he only had a cold that he caught from his wife and did not have COVID. He noted that he, too, preferred not wearing a mask but indicated they needed to be worn at this time.

There were no further comments from the audience.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the Board, President Butler adjourned the meeting around 8:08 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next regular session meeting is September 16, 2021.

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Terry D. Butler, President

ATTEST:

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Rikki A. Guthrie, Secretary

Submitted for Approval: September 16, 2021