

**SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART  
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
REGULAR SESSION MEETING  
October 3, 2024**

The Board of School Trustees of the School City of Hobart met in regular session on October 3, 2024, in the Board Room at Hobart High School, 2211 East Tenth Street, Hobart, Indiana.

**ROLL CALL:** In the absence of President Terry Butler, Vice President Rikki Guthrie asked Board Members to log in. The following Board Members and Administrators were present or absent as noted:

Board Members Present:

Rikki A. Guthrie  
Sandra J. Hillan  
Frank Porras  
Karen J. Robbins  
Donald H. Rogers  
Stuart B. Schultz  
Kayla Davis, HHS student representative (after the meeting began)  
Isis Fleming, HHS student representative

Administrators Present:

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

Board Member Absent:

Terry D. Butler

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Vice President Rikki Guthrie indicated that the Board not meet in executive session prior to the regular session meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rikki Guthrie, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

**AUDIENCE:** The following were present in the audience:

Bradley Keehn, Joan Martin School and Hobart Middle School parent  
Amanda Guthrie, high school student

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Karen Robbins moved and Stuart Schultz seconded that the Board approve the regular session minutes held on September 19, 2024. Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, and Guthrie. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Rikki Guthrie, Vice President, indicated there were no financial reports for the Board's consideration.

**COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Vice President Guthrie asked for comments on the listed agenda items. There were none.

**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.

Sandra Hillan moved that the Board approve the Personnel Reports, as presented. Frank Porras seconded. Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, and Guthrie. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

The approved personnel items are as follows:

Homebound Teaching Contracts –

September 16/October 11, 2024: Jennifer Gornick, math and ELA, two hours per week, \$58.04 per hour

September 16/December 19, 2024: Carol Fonner, math, one hour per week, \$54.62 per hour

Contract for Extracurricular Services (Club Duties) –

Early Learning Center @ George Earle – August 14, 2024/June 4, 2025:

Cynthia Helminski, Lego, \$1,080.00

Joan Martin School – August 14, 2024/June 4, 2025:

Audrey Amsler, Choir, \$513.00; and Audrey Amsler, Drama, \$1,215.00

Katelynn Davis, Student Council, \$972.00  
Erika Duncil, Choir, 5th, \$270.00  
Jamie Edwards, Choir, 5th, \$270.00; and Jamie Edwards, Drama, 4th, \$1,620.00  
Nathaniel Lacny, Drama, 4th, \$1,620.00  
Nicole Leonard, Girls on the Run, \$1,620.00  
Heather Paulson, Brickie Leaders, \$1,080.00; and Heather Paulson, Study Tables, \$1,620.00  
Rachel Sieffert, Brickie Leaders, \$1,080.00  
Beth York, Study Tables, \$1,620.00  
Veterans School @ Mundell, August 14, 2024/June 4, 2025:  
Stefanie Osika, Drama Club, \$1,215.00  
Dominique Shirey, Girls on the Run, \$1,350.00  
Hobart Middle School, August 14, 2024/June 4, 2025:  
Jane Griffith, Robotics, \$1,944.00  
Randal Griffith, Robotics, \$1,944.00  
Catherine Patterson, Art, \$ 540.00  
Josh Reno, Chess, \$1,350.00  
Laura Weller, Math homework help, \$1,458.00  
Hobart High School, August 14, 2024/June 4, 2025:  
Madison Price, Brickie Buddies, \$324.00  
Sallie Thomas, Multicultural, \$1,080.00  
Dawn Vidt, Chess, \$675.00

Request for Leave of Absence –

Michelle Brawley, Early Learning Center @ George Earle/aide-student supervisor, unpaid medical leave, beginning October 4, 2024, and will return to work on January 6, 2025

Resignations –

Linda Conley, Service Center/school bus aide, effective October 17, 2024  
Cassandra Allen, Service Center/school bus driver, effective October 11, 2024  
Guadalupe Ortiz, Early Learning Center @ George Earle/aide-student supervisor, effective October 15, 2024

Extracurricular Club Duty Contracts –

Early Learning Center, 2024-2025 School Year:

Michele Frazee, Friendship Club, \$810.00; and Michele Frazee, Lego Club, \$1,080.00  
Cortney Harris, Friendship Club, \$810.00

Joan Martin School, 2024-2025 School Year:

Tina Anderson, Drama Club, 4th, \$1,620.00  
Elizabeth Heim, Cardio Drumming Club, 2nd, \$135.00; Elizabeth Heim, Cardio Drumming Club, 3rd, \$135.00; Elizabeth Heim, Cardio Drumming Club, 4th, \$108.00; Elizabeth Heim, Cardio Drumming Club, 5th, \$135.00; Elizabeth Heim, Chess Club, \$1,350.00; Elizabeth Heim, Girls on the Run, \$1,620.00; and Elizabeth Heim, Kickball Club, \$405.00

Jennifer MacDonald, Girls on the Run, \$1,620.00

April Young, Girls on the Run, \$1,620.00; and April Young, Kickball, \$405.00

Veterans School @ Mundell, 2024-2025 School Year:

Nicole Zymbak, Girls on the Run, \$1,350.00

Custodial Department – Adjustments of position, hours, and/or pay rate –

Starlisa Chavers reassigned to the second shift at the high school, Class II Assistant Head Custodian and paid at the Class IV rate of \$19.24 per hour, effective September 19, 2024.

Food Services Department – Adjustments of position, hours, and/or pay rate –

Patricia Steele transferring to a different position (server/prep) at the high school, hours increased to 5.75, pay rate remains the same at \$12.67 per hour, effective September 23, 2024.

New Employees –

Nancy Cordova, Liberty School/aide-student supervision, part time, September 23, 2024, \$12.67 per hour

Crystal Crunk, Hobart Middle School/food services – dining room attendant, effective September 24, 2024, \$12.67 per hour

Dawn Moslander, Liberty School/school nurse, full time, effective September 20, 2024, \$30.52 per hour

Alyssa Candiano, Hobart High School/food services – dish room, effective September 30, 2024, \$12.67 per hour

ECA Resignation –

Michael James, Hobart High School/boys basketball assistant varsity, effective October 1, 2024

Supplemental Service Contracts –

Hearing Officers, July 1, 2024/June 30, 2025: Mathew McKee, \$5,000.00; Amy Turley, \$2,500.00; Lori Anderson, \$2,500.00 (Residency); and Nikki Neeley, \$2,500 (Residency)

**PUBLIC HEARING: Pre-Formal Bargaining Public Hearing of the School City of Hobart and Hobart Teachers Association:** Vice President Rikki Guthrie noted that after July 1 and before Formal Bargaining, 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 as described in Indiana Code 20-29-6-1(a).

I. Superintendent Peggy Buffington opened the Pre-Formal Bargaining public hearing. She noted there was no one from the Hobart Teachers Association present in the audience.

Dr. Buffington indicated that the first collective bargaining meeting would be held next Tuesday, October 8. She commented that the school employer wants the best for its teachers and said they received a good, one-year contract last year. The contract had a good wage and benefit package, and the teachers were offered the option of splitting the salary increase over two years. They chose to take it all last year. Usually, the collective bargaining contract has been a two-year agreement, but because of the loss of ADM last year and the unknown ADM for this year, as well as the reduced state support for this year, Dr. Buffington indicated the school district could not make a commitment to a two-year contract. She said this year's ADM count was down 34 from the February count and 66 from last fall. It was noted that ADM was a prime factor in determining state funding, and the school district's self-insurance fund's recent major claims loss reduced the self-insurance balance by \$750,000.00. Dr. Buffington said the re-opener for this year was ADM, and there was not anything there to offer. She said they would meet in "good faith" with them and see what their concerns were.

II. Dr. Buffington opened the floor for public testimony. There were no comments from the audience or Board members.

III. Their being no public comments/testimony, the public hearing was closed.

**PUBLIC HEARING: 2025 Budget and 2025 School Bus Replacement Plan:** Business Manager Bob Glover made a brief comment on the purpose of the public hearing. He indicated this was the next step in the budget process and noted the 2025 Budget and 2025 School Bus Replacement Plan would be adopted at the next Board meeting. Mr. Glover indicated that the Form 3 Notice to Taxpayers and the Bus Replacement Notice to Taxpayers were submitted to Gateway on September 20, 2024, and the 2025 advertised budget also appears on the school corporation's website. This information was included as part of the meeting's electronic information.

Vice President Rikki Guthrie then opened the public hearing and asked if anyone in the audience wanted to make any comments about the 2025 Budget or the Bus Replacement Plan. There were no comments from the audience or Board members. Hearing no public comments, Mrs. Guthrie closed the public hearing and directed that there being no public objections/testimony be made part of the budget information to be presented to the Department of Local Government Finance.

Vice President Guthrie called for Board action.

Stuart Schultz moved that the Board direct the 2025 Budget and Bus Replacement Plan to be placed on the October 16, 2024 meeting agenda for formal adoption. Donald Rogers seconded. Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, and Guthrie. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

**AUTHORIZATION: Transfer of Funds from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund:** Bob Glover, Business Manager, told the Board that for the budget year 2024, \$5,936,055 was approved for transfer from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund. He said to date, \$2,775,000 has been transferred. Mr. Glover requested \$1,100,000 be transferred from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund and said this would leave a balance of \$2,061,055 available for transfer through the end of the calendar year. In addition, he noted that the transfer was right at the 15% allowed and said that probably there would be one last transfer request in December. A copy of the Authorization Request was included with the electronic meeting information.

Karen Robbins moved and Donald Rogers seconded that the Board approve the transfer as presented and authorize the Treasurer of the School City of Hobart to transfer \$1,100,000 from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund. Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, and Guthrie. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

The Authorization to Transfer \$1,100,000 from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund, as presented, shown on the screens in the Board Room, and approved, is as follows:

AUTHORIZATION TO TRANSFER \$1,100,000 FROM THE  
EDUCATION FUND TO THE OPERATIONS FUND

WHEREAS, the Board of School Trustees is the governing body of the School City of Hobart, Lake County, Indiana, and

WHEREAS, on October 19, 2023 the Board of School Trustees passed resolution 2023-28 authorizing up to \$5,936,055.00 to be transferred from the Education Fund to the Operations fund during the 2024 budget year, and

WHEREAS to date, \$2,775,000.00 has been transferred leaving \$3,161,055.00 available for transfer.

THEREFORE the Board of School Trustees authorizes the Treasurer of the School City of Hobart to transfer up to \$1,100,000.00 (one million one hundred thousand dollars) from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund.

This authorization was approved by the Board of School Trustees on October 03, 2024.

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President, Board of School Trustees

ATTEST:

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Secretary, Board of School Trustees

**RESOLUTION: Transportation Department Recognition Day:** Superintendent Peggy Buffington presented Resolution No. 2024-26 for the Board's consideration. The resolution designated October 16, 2024, as Transportation Department Recognition Day. She noted that normally this day is celebrated during National School Bus Safety Week, but this year that week falls during this year's fall break week, October 21-25, 2024, so the department will be recognized the week before. Dr. Buffington asked the audience members if there was any objection to only reading the title of the resolution, and there were no objections. A copy of the resolution was included with the electronic meeting information.

Secretary Sandra Hillan read the title of Resolution No. 2024-26 aloud, as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-26

TRANSPORATION DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION DAY

Vice President Rikki Guthrie requested Board action and a roll call vote.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board adopt Resolution No. 2024-26 recognizing Transportation Department Recognition Day on October 16, 2024. Frank Porras seconded.

In the discussion, Dr. Buffington noted the bus drivers have a challenging job every day, and she was proud of the work they do. It was noted that bus drivers and bus aides were the first employees to greet the bus riders with a smile each morning and the last in the afternoon.

Vote on motion: Secretary Sandra Hillan called roll on the vote, as follows: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, Guthrie, and Butler Absent. Nay: No one. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

Resolution No. 2024-26, as presented, displayed on the screens in the Board Room, and adopted, is as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-26

TRANSPORATION DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION DAY

WHEREAS, the week of October 21-25, 2024, is designated as National School Bus Safety Week and this year's theme is "Driving Safely into the Future"; and

WHEREAS, Hobart's transportation department is an integral part of the daily process of educating children by following the laws of the road to maximize the safety of those on-board; and

WHEREAS, the school bus drivers and aides act as mentors by serving as upstanding examples of safety, courtesy, discipline and communicating effectively; and

WHEREAS, for many students their school bus drivers and aides are the first employees they see every morning and the last every evening; and

WHEREAS, this year National School Bus Safety Week falls within the district's Fall Break Week so we celebrate the week before, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that October 16, 2024, is designated as *Transportation Department Recognition Day*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the School City of Hobart expresses its deep appreciation to these valuable employees and commends their excellence in safely transporting our students to and from school each day.

DATED this 3rd day of October, 2024.

SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART  
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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

ATTEST:

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Sandra Hillan, Secretary

**RESOLUTION: National Principals Month:** Dr. Peggy Buffington present Resolution No. 2024-27 for the Board's consideration. The resolution recognized October as National Principals Month, and the contribution of school principals to the success of our students. She said that the district has always celebrated all of their administrators, not just the principals. She noted that the all of the district's administrators were educational leaders. Dr. Buffington said they learn and grow just like their students. She said that people do not realize how connected they are to their job. She was thanked for her leadership and "growing other leaders" in the district. A copy of the resolution was included with the electronic meeting information.

Secretary Sandra Hillan read the title of Resolution No. 2024-27 aloud, as follows:

School City of Hobart  
Resolution No. 2024-27  
"National Principals Month"

Vice President Rikki Guthrie requested Board action and a roll call vote.

Donald Rogers moved and Stuart Schultz seconded that the Board adopt Resolution No. 2024-27 for National School Principals Month, as presented. Vote on motion: Secretary Sandra Hillan called roll on the vote, as follows: Aye – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, Guthrie, and Butler-Absent. Nay – No one. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

Resolution No. 2024-27, as presented, displayed on the screens in the Board Room, and adopted, is as follows:

School City of Hobart  
Resolution No. 2024-27  
"National Principals Month"

Whereas, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) have declared the month of October 2024 as "National Principals Month;" and

Whereas, school leaders are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, and guardians of various legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives as well as being entrusted with our young people, our most valuable resource; and

Whereas, principals set the academic tone for their schools and work collaboratively with teachers to develop and maintain high curriculum standards, develop mission statements, and set performance goals and objectives; and

Whereas, principals work tirelessly to maintain academic accountability, to ensure a safe and productive learning environment, and to encourage and facilitate teachers' and parents' efforts to make a positive difference in the lives of our young people; and

Whereas, the vision, dedication, and determination of a principal provides the mobilizing force behind any school reform effort; and

Whereas, leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school, according to research conducted by the Wallace Foundation; and

Whereas, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that approximately 1 in 3 principals works more than 40 hours a week and often works an additional 15–20 hours each week supervising school activities at night and on weekends; and

Whereas, the NAESP National Distinguished Principals program honors exemplary elementary and middle level public, private, and independent school leaders as well as leaders from the U.S. Department of Defense Schools and the U.S. Department of State Overseas Schools, for outstanding leadership for student learning and the profession; and

Whereas, the NASSP Principal of the Year program began in 1993 as a means to recognize outstanding middle level and high school principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as their exemplary contributions to the profession; and

Whereas, in celebration of “National Principals Month” would honor elementary, middle level, and high school principals and recognize the importance of school leadership in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Board of School Trustees honors and recognizes the contribution of school principals to the success of students in our Nation’s elementary and secondary schools and encourages the citizens of Hobart to observe “National Principals Month” with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of school leadership in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education.

Adopted this 3rd day of October, 2024.

SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART  
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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Terry D. Butler, President

ATTEST:

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Sandra J. Hillan, Secretary

**RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT: Indiana Department of Education Alternative Education Grant:**

Superintendent Buffington highlighted the Alternative Education Grant that Debbie Matthys, Director of Social Emotional Learning, submitted for the 2023-2024 school year. The district received \$15,158.00 from the state to be used towards the program. The FTE disbursement maximum that can be granted to a school corporation is \$750.00 per FTE, and the funding amount was \$505.29 per FTE for the 2023-2024 program. Last year's reimbursement rate was \$602.02 per FTE. Eighty students participated in the program with each student receiving three hours of instruction each day at the high school. Two full-time teachers and an aide worked with the students, and a 15:1 ratio of students to teacher is allowed per the Alternative Education grant. Included with the electronic meeting information was the email from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) pertaining to the grant award. Dr. Buffington noted that a lot of work goes into the district’s most “at-risk population” trying to meet the state’s requirements of the program. Working with them to get all of their necessary credits, finding a job, doing community service, and getting into a trade program. The dollars in no way match all of the effort that is put to these students graduated. She extended her appreciation to Debbie Matthys for her work with the grant and for submitting it. A copy of the IDOE email concerning the grant award was included with the meeting’s electronic information.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board accept the Indiana Department of Education Alternative Education Grant, as presented and authorize the superintendent to execute the necessary documents for the grant. Seconded by Donald Rogers.

In the discussion, Sandi Hillan asked whether the students stuck with the program or dropped off. Dr. Buffington replied it was some of both. She told the Board that it was a lot of work keeping them on track and said student status meetings were held every two weeks just as is done with the Early College students. They check each student’s status what was needed to meet their next goal and so forth. She noted this was a huge amount of effort on the staff’s behalf to help these students to succeed and get their high school diploma.

Vote on motion – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, and Guthrie. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

**PRESENTATION AND RECOMMENDATION: District and School Strategic Plans for 2024-2025:**

Dr. Peggy Buffington presented the District and Schools Strategic Plans for 2024-2025 that were posted on the district’s website. The listed links on the left panel could be accessed to view each school’s individual plan. She highlighted the district’s plan and some of the information she shared with the Board is as follows:

- The plans (the district’s and each of the schools) are reviewed and updated every year.
- The plans are researched-based practices and organizational conditions of improving schools.
- The four areas of the district’s mission statement:
  - A. Our Schools Equip Children for Adulthood
  - B. Our Schools Address the Needs of Individual Students
  - C. Our Schools Are Community Schools
  - D. Our Schools Are Committed to Success
- 2024 ELA Net Proficiency (ILEARN Net Proficiency) 0.96%
  - Gain (growth) 9.96%, and No Change x 46.79%
- 2024 MATH Net Proficiency (ILEARN Net Proficiency) **-4.90%**
  - Math was a struggle. Regrouping, assessing, and implementing academic assist to get the scores backup. Hope to see good growth.
- Hobart High School College-Going Scorecard (First-year college results for students who graduated from high during the previous academic year: 2022
  - 46.5% of students enrolled in college
  - 48% of students enrolled in public college and met all early college success benchmarks (2021 cohort – During COVID and students took a gap year[s])
    - 98% of student did not need remediation
    - 52.9% of students completed all coursework attempted
    - 71.6% of students persisted to the second year
- High School Graduates Enrolling in College
  - INCollegeCore – 98%
  - Free or Reduced Lunch 40.8%
  - Non Free or Reduced Lunch 50.3%
  - Black 60.9%
  - Male 41.1%
  - Female 51.6%
- High School Graduates Enrolling in College
  - A graph from the years 2008 through 2022 The graphed ranged from 61.5% in 2008 to 46.5% in 2022. It was noted that enrollment had not recovered since COVID.
- % Enrolled in College by County
  - Lake County – 51.1%
  - Porter County – 54.6%

Dr. Buffington indicated that she and her directors worked together to get the district’s plan, and the individual schools’ plans completed. They have a three-year template for each plan that has four goal areas: curriculum assessment, problem solving, college and careers, and citizenship. Each person compiles the information that pertains to their particular area. She indicated that it gets “very intense” to get the plans completed. She extended her compliments and thanks to Tim Krieg, Lori Anderson, Chris King, Jon Mock, and Danielle Adams for their involvement in the process and fact-checking all of their particular information. There was discussion along with Dr. Buffington’s presentation, and Vice President Guthrie thanked Dr. Buffington and her team for all the work they did in compiling the report.

Dr. Buffington requested Board action.

Sandra Hillan moved that the Board adopt the 2024-2025 Strategic Plans of the schools and district. Karen Robbins seconded. Vote on motion – Porras, Rogers, Robbins, Schultz, Hillan, and Guthrie. Motion carried 6-0 in favor.

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

- Date Change of The Next Board Meeting – Vice President Guthrie noted the next October meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, rather than on Thursday, October 17th.
- School Information – weekly agendas from the Early Learning Center, Liberty School, Veterans School, Hobart Middle School, and Hobart High School.
- Upcoming Activities/Events – the latest list of upcoming activities/events. Dr. Buffington highlighted the following upcoming activities/events, and follows:

- October 1 – All Pro Dad Chapter Meeting @ Veterans School, 5:00 pm – Dr. Buffington said the All Pro Dad Chapters were going well, and the hope was to get more fathers to join.
- October 4 – Red Cross Blood Drive, in memory of Steve Balash, sponsored by HOSA at Hobart High School Field House, 8 am – 2 pm
- October 7 – Human Growth & Development Parent Night, HHS Board Room, 7:00 pm
- October 8 – All Pro Dad Chapter Meeting @ Joan Martin School, 4:00 pm

October 9 – All Pro Dad Chapter Meeting @ Liberty School, 5:00 pm

October 16 – All Test Day @ Hobart High School, dismissal @ 12:45 pm

October 17 – All Pro Dad Chapter Meeting @ Hobart Middle School, 5:00 pm

October 21-25 – Fall Break – Dr. Buffington commented with a week off of school, she did not want to see students and staff miss the Friday before the break or the Monday after the break to extend the time off.

October 22-24 – City of Hobart Parks & Recreation Department, Fall Break Camp for Kindergarten – Fifth graders @ Robinson Lake, 9:00 am – 2 pm

October 26 – Bingo Night Fundraiser for HHS Athletics, Hobart Moose Lodge, Doors Open @ 5:00 pm and Bingo Starts @ 7:00 pm

November 13 – Hobart Educational Fundraiser, *Harvest Homecoming* at County Line Orchard, 5:00 – 8:00 pm

**COMMENTS:** From the administration, Dr. Buffington told the Board it had been “a really great couple of weeks.” The big event last week was having the “60 Minutes” filming crew and Anderson Cooper at Hobart High School. She extended her thanks and appreciation to Chris King and Russ Mellon for all of the time they put in and said, “They did a great job,” as did the custodial staff at the school. In addition, she expressed her appreciation to Melissa Higgason, Valentine Torres, and Maddie Sullivan, as well as their students, for all of their work and preparation for the news segment. She was not aware of when the broadcast would be because they are in the process of fact checking. However, they did tell her it probably would be after the upcoming national election. Dr. Buffington mentioned that almost 400 BEOP awards have been given out so far this school year. She told the Board that one of them was for a high school student who turned in \$250.00 cash that was found in the pocket of some donated clothing. The student turned in the money, and it was returned to its owner. When his BEOP was awarded, she spoke about “integrity,” and the importance of doing the right thing “when no one is looking.” She said many great things were happening in the schools. Bob Glover wished the football team “good luck” at tomorrow night’s game. Chris King brought Milo, the Robokind robot, for the Board to view. Milo was activated before the meeting so everyone could see his movement and the motion of his eyes and facial expressions. Mr. King had to shut Milo down when he had “a little tantrum” shortly into the meeting. Mr. King told the Board that Milo was used at Joan Martin School for use with the autistic students. He commented on “60 Minutes” being here was unreal, but it was an outstanding experience. He said their interviews went well, and as did Dr. Buffington's podcast interview with Anderson Cooper. Dr. Buffington gave the Board an overview of the happenings on Sunday’s preparations and Monday’s filming at the school. She mentioned that the podcast was not planned, it just happened. She had been talking with him and thanked him for his interaction the students and sharing things about his life, and how he became a newscaster. She told him that she had been doing podcasts of alumni speaking about their careers, and how they reached their goals. She mentioned it was too bad, he couldn’t share his story. He suggested they should do it, asked how long it would take to set it up, and Chris King responded, “one minute.” The rest is history. Dr. Buffington noted the podcast was totally unscripted, and she appreciated his message for the students and ended the podcast with our “work, work, work” slogan. He noted the importance of having a work ethic and “making opportunities for themselves.” She noted the podcast had to be edited because she had mentioned why “60 minutes” was there. She thanked Greg Crouch for his editing skills” in removing it from the podcast. Dr. Buffington thanked everyone that was involved and noted everything “went off without a hitch.” Bill Longer extended his congratulations on the recent events. Jon Mock noted it has been a busy few weeks and complimented everyone for all that they do in taking care of students and staff. Tim Krieg commented that many great things were happening and noted some of his colleges were excited about their invitation to read at the Early Learning Center tomorrow where he will be wearing white shoes for reading the book, *Pete the Cat*. He noted that some of the other participants will be “dressing the part.”

From the audience, Brad Keehn commented that the recognition of the transportation department was well-deserved because of the families who rely on them to get their children to and from school. He also noted that recognition of the administrative team was well-deserved and noted that their jobs involve many different things. He extended his congratulations to Mike Black for his award and noted the great job that he does. Dr. Buffington said that he will be recognized at a future Board meeting.

From the Board, Frank Porras was glad that everything went well with the 60 Minutes filming and the podcast with Anderson Cooper. He thanked those on the other side of the room for the work with the district’s strategic plans for this year. Don Rogers offered congratulations on “60 minutes” being at the high school and noted the importance of the school system being recognized because of all of the work that people have done and its leader who works 24-7. He was glad to see Milo. He extended his congratulations to Mike Black who does a great job. Dr. Buffington commented that he was “so worthy” of the recognition. Karen Robbins extended her congratulations to Mr. Black and thanked all of the bus drivers for the work they do. She mentioned they are the “first smile” students see each morning and the last in the afternoon. She thanked Dr. Buffington for all that she does and said “our superintendent is cooler than yours” and Mrs. Guthrie concurred. She noted that some high school special education students volunteer at the food pantry and said their supervisor was “amazing with them.” She said that she and Rikki Guthrie had tickets for the School City of Hobart Educational Foundation’s fundraiser, “Harvest Homecoming” if anyone needed some. Stu Schultz could not think of anything additional to say, other than the podcast was great and could not wait to see the TV program. Kayla Davis noted it was the end of the first nine weeks, offered her congratulations to the transportation department and administrators, and said all of the homecoming activities turned out very well including the dance. Isis Fleming appreciated the recognition of the transportation department and noted that in elementary school she broke wrist, and her bus



driver was the first person who volunteered to sign her cast. She told everyone that the boys tennis team won their sectional earlier this evening, and she was very proud of them and how hard they worked to make it happen. Sandi Hillan extended her appreciation to all of the bus drivers and commented that she could not image driving a school bus let alone having to keep track of the students and watching out for the other vehicles on the road. She noted that it takes special people to do the job. She commented on the amount of time that the principals and administrators, as well as the leadership they provide, and being on call 24/7. In addition, she appreciated the time spent at the ISBA conferences and getting to know one another and bonding as a team. She mentioned that some people from the classes 1980 and 1981 were reaching out to classmates living in different areas affected after the latest hurricane seeing they were okay and letting other classmates know about their status. Rikki Guthrie noted that Anderson Cooper being here speaks to what is done here, and the district being recognized was because of Dr. Buffington’s leadership, thoughtfulness, and all that she does for our students was phenomenal. She complimented the administrative team and noted soon everyone would know about the district. Dr. Buffington commented that the producer for the show was “very pleased” and complimentary that they were not being “bombarded with people” during the production of the show. Dr. Buffington thanked everyone for all of the work they had done on the “60 Minutes” project. In addition, she told the Board that she did “Cooking with Dr. Buffington and Friends” on Tuesday for their monthly “Voice and Choice” session. Mrs. Guthrie couldn’t believe she would be able to do the cooking session. Dr. Buffington asked Amanda what her favorite sandwich was, and she indicated the grilled tomato sandwich from Dr. Buffington’s group. Mrs. Guthrie complimented Mr. Black on his recent award and noted that he had been basketball coach and chemistry teacher and does a wonderful job as the athletic director. She noted that Pam Friemuth, Mr. Black’s secretary, does a wonderful job working with parents and students.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the Board, Vice President Guthrie adjourned the meeting around 8:15 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next regular session meeting is October 16, 2024.

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART

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

ATTEST:

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra J. Hillan, Secretary

Submitted for Approval: October 16, 2024