

March 2024 Regular Board of Education Meeting

Pioneer Career and Technology Center Board of Education Meeting

Pioneer CTC Board of Education Conference Room

Monday, March 18, 2024

6:00pm

Present: Sandy Grau, EAP President; Gavyn Bazley, Treasurer; Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member; Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member; Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member; Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member; Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member; Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member; Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member; Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member; Mrs. Erin Stine, Board Member; Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President; Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member; Gregory Nickoli, Superintendent; Kowalski Kris, Director of Business Affairs; Clay Frye, Director of Operations; Jolene Young, Asst. Director, High School

1 ROLL CALL

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member	X		
Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member	X		
Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member	X		
Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Erin Stine, Board Member	X		
Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President	X		
Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member	X		

2 PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

3 MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

4 CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Minutes:

No discussion - Moved to Vote

Result: Approved

Motioned: Mr. Bill McFarland

Seconded: Mr. Mike Grady

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member	X		
Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member	X		
Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member	X		
Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Erin Stine, Board Member	X		
Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President	X		
Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member	X		

4.1 Approve February 19, 2024 Board of Education Meeting Minutes

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Attachments:

[Feb 2024 Board Mtg Minutes.pdf](#)

4.2 Adopt Resolution Accepting Tax Amounts and Rates and Authorizing Necessary Tax Levies and Certifying them to the County Auditor

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Attachments:

[Resolution Tax Amounts.pdf](#)

4.3 Adopt 2024-2025 School Calendars

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Recommendation of Superintendent Gregory D. Nickoli that the attached calendars be adopted for the 2024-2025 school year.

- Pioneer CTC High School Calendar
- Pioneer CTC Preschool Calendar and Fee Schedule

- Pioneer CTC Adult Education Calendar

Attachments:

[2024-25 HS Calendar - For Board Approval.pdf](#)

[ADE 2024-25 CALENDAR - For Brd Apprvl.pdf](#)

[Preschool Calendar Fees 2024-25 - For Brd Apprvl.pdf](#)

4.4 Accept Donations

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Recommendation of Superintendent Gregory D. Nickoli that the following donations be accepted:

- **Scott & Karen Donahue, Shelby;** generous monetary donation of \$50 to be deposited into the Art Barr Scholarship fund and used for annual student scholarships.
- **Ed Olson, Soldiers & Sailors Memorial, Mansfield;** generous donation of lumber valued at approximately \$200 to be used by our construction programs.
- **Tim & Michele Starkey, Mansfield;** generous donation of clothing items to the Pioneer Sharing Closet.
- **Dawn Wright-Smith, Blackbaud Giving Fund, Charleston, SC;** generous monetary donation of \$90 to be deposited into the Alumni Endowment fund and used for annual student scholarships.

4.5 Approve Student Participation in Competitive Events

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Recommendation of Superintendent Gregory D. Nickoli that the following students be approved for participation in competitive events:

State SkillsUSA Competition, Hyatt Regency, Columbus, OH; April 9-10, 2024

STUDENTS: Brayden Pence, Willard HS, Industrial Diesel; William Naylor, Northmor, Precision Machining; Jacob Brinley, Homeschool, Precision Machining; Austin Estridge, Buckeye Central, Precision Machining; Colton Worden, Wynford, Industrial Diesel; Lita Frost, Ontario, Homeland Security; Phoebe Oswalt, Lucas, Graphic Arts; Raina Kelly, Crestline, Graphic Arts; Autumn Holmes, Galion, Graphic Arts; Vanessa Woods, Northmor, Criminal Justice; Elleciyanna Webb, Galion, Criminal Justice; Josh Porter, Ontario, Criminal Justice; Dyonna Ball, Shelby, Criminal Justice; Emily Cantrell, Northmor, Criminal Justice; Dylan Sweitzer, Wynford, Graphic Arts; Kortney Eaton, Lucas, Media Communications; Lillian Ebner, Galion, Performing Arts; Douglas Garriss, Northmor, Performing Arts; Kaydence Payne, Lucas, Performing Arts; Matthew Bennett, Galion, Masonry; Annjolina Gonzalez, Crestline, Engineering Design; Diondre Cantey, Ontario, Engineering Design; Tyler Mason, Buckeye Central, Engineering Design; Erin Lindsey, Shelby, Engineering Design; David Hoover, Northmor, Engineering Design; Wilson Tallman, Lexington, Engineering Design; David Cooperrider, Ontario, Engineering Design. **CHAPERONES:** John Burgess, Government Instructor/Skills Co-Advisor; Grant Brocwell, Masonry Instructor; Anne Kurtzman, Performing Arts Instructor; Jeremiah Howe, Career Tech Supervisor.

HOSA State Leadership Conference, Glass City Center, Toledo, OH; April 10-11

STUDENTS: Mia Felder, Galion HS, Dental Assisting; Maggie Lantz, Crestview HS, Dental Assisting; Makayla Dickson, Ontario HS, Dental Assisting; Rayna Clayton, Bucyrus HS, Dental Assisting; Jahniya Likely, Ontario HS, Dental Assisting; Aiden Green, Lucas HS, Exercise Science; Ryan Diehl, Northmor HS, Exercise Science; Mason Diaz, Lexington HS, Exercise Science; Manae Tatum, Ontario HS, Exercise Science; Emma Mies, Ontario HS, Exercise Science; Baylee Black, Ontario HS, Exercise Science; Olivia Hardy, Col. Crawford HS, Exercise Science; Lorelei Reed, Shelby HS, Medical Technologies; Addyson Whitesel, Lexington HS, Medical Technologies; Kalie Carr, Bucyrus HS, Medical Technologies. **CHAPERONES:** Mike Millward, Exercise Science Instructor/HOSA Lead Advisor;

FCCLA State Leadership Conference, Ohio Expo Center, Columbus, OH: April 25-26

SHELBY MS STUDENTS: Mia Mullins, Makenzie Couch, Kayla Lykins, Matalyn Byrd, and Ethan Beck. **CHAPERONES:** Gwen Schwemley, Shelby MS FCCLA Advisor, Sandy Cornett, and Jill Couch.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT

Gavyn Bazley, Treasurer

Minutes:

Treasurer Bazley reported to the Board as follows:

On March 7th, the Ohio Board of Tax Appeals ruled the State Tax Commissioner's expert's appraisal of the Rover pipeline was the best evidence of its value for property tax purposes. The case now goes to the Tax Commissioner to assess the pipeline consistent with the expert's appraisal. The Tax Commissioner is starting settlement negotiations with Rover in accordance with that ruling. The Lorain County Auditor's appeal of the Nexus pipeline settlement is still pending in the Ohio Supreme Court, the issue in that case is whether a single county auditor has legal authority to appeal a settlement reached by the State Tax Commissioner. The Nexus ruling could have an impact on any Rover settlement, although it remains to be seen if any county auditor would oppose a Rover settlement. This saga may be coming to an end soon!

We're going to notice an adjustment to our College Credit Plus deduction this year and next. North Central State missed the deadline to report their fall courses this past December and therefore our deduction was not updated, nor will it be until this upcoming August because the state only pays the colleges twice a year. Mr. Burtcher noticed it and had Mr. Nickoli reach out to NC State. We were hoping they would've updated it with our March payment, but the state "can't do that because they'd then have to run new payments for the whole state". We will see a one time adjustment to our state foundation payment in August of around \$270-\$280,000. In short, we'll look \$270-\$280k better off this fiscal year and that same amount worst next fiscal year due to this. I raised a complaint to Ohio Budget and Management but of course only got an apology and assurance that NC State gave their new registrar training to avoid this issue happening again.

Interest continues to pay well as Star Ohio has stayed around 5.48%. Our fiscal year to date interest earnings stands at \$845,554.68 overall. Higher than expected January inflation will likely push a slight interest rate cut back, the June meeting looks like the safest bet for a small rate cut. Overall trend in inflation is down, price gains aren't waning as fast the Fed would like and will want to see more progress before proceeding with a rate cut. From what I've read we'll only experience a moderate drop in rates this year. We probably won't see the interest earnings next year the way we have this year, but as to what kind of difference that will be remains to be seen.

As far as regular business for the month of February, we received one tax settlement payment from Richland County, which was an advance that was requested. I hope to see the final payment this month or early April at the latest. The revenue variance this year compared to last is higher mostly because we did not have a tax advance in February last year, as Linda was trying to get all the banking information switched. The beginning of the year is usually slow revenue wise, but should start to pick up as we start to see real estate tax settlements start to roll in. As of our meeting, we have received settlements from Crawford, Wyandot, and Huron.

We have two journal entries for approval this month, the transfer to the Maintenance fund of \$425,360 (I have the certification letter for the auditor of state ready to be emailed after approval) and the adjustment of the stipend paid to Mike Grimwood from the general fund to the ARP Homeless fund for getting the Ready Room prepared.

Result: Approved

Motioned: Mr. Royden Smith

Seconded: Mrs. Robyn Almanson

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member	X		
Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member	X		
Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member	X		
Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Erin Stine, Board Member	X		
Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President	X		
Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member	X		

Attachments:

[February 24 Financial Report.pdf](#)

6 RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Gregory Nickoli, Superintendent

7 EAP REPRESENTATIVE

Sandy Grau, EAP President

8 PUBLIC INPUT

Gregory Nickoli, Superintendent

Board Policy Section 0164

Minutes:

No Public Input

9 CORRESPONDENCE

Gregory Nickoli, Superintendent

10 REPORT ON 2023-2024 BOARD GOALS

Minutes:

Director Clay Frye reported as follows:

Pioneer BPA students competed at the State Leadership Conference in Columbus on March 7th and 8th. Four students placed in the top 5 in the state and earned a chance to compete at the National Contest from May 9th to May 14th in Chicago.

Gabe Melvin, Senior, IT Support, Homeschooled, placed 5th in Computer Network Technology

Jason Lambert, Senior, Cybersecurity, Goal Digital Academy, placed 4th in Server Administration

Bradon Stidam, Senior, Cybersecurity, Shelby HS, placed 2nd in Server Administration

Brice Browning, Senior, Cybersecurity, Celeryville Christian School, placed 1st in Computer Security - defending state and national champion

Pioneer honored 20 outstanding students during our National Technical Honors Society Induction Ceremony on Tuesday, March 5th. These 20 students represent the top 2% of Pioneer's student body. Seven students were honored as two-year members and thirteen students were inducted as first-year members. A huge thank you to Vickie Hunt, Emma Jenkins and Jeremiah Howe for their dedication to this event.

Pioneer's Spring Job Fair for students took place on Friday, March 15th. Over 60 local businesses, colleges and organizations were represented. All of Pioneer's labs were scheduled for a time to bring their students with their updated resumes to make contact with possible employers, post-secondary institutions and support organizations.

Student placement and application review for the 2024-2025 school year is in full-swing. Application numbers have increased this year again. Student Services is working hard to place students at this time. Associate School Counselors will receive acceptance letters to distribute to next year's incoming class soon. The Board and Mr. Frye discussed the percentage of applicants that will get one of their first three lab choices and then how they place those students whose first three choices were full.

11 PRESENTATION

Jeremiah Howe, Career Tech Program Supervisor

Attachments:

[Cayden Moore Board Meeting Presentation .pptx](#)

12 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member

Attachments:

[03-24 Student Achievement.pdf](#)

13 LEGISLATIVE LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member

Minutes:

Board Member Mike Grady reported as follows:

The Joint Committee on Property Tax Review met on February 28 and heard invitation-only testimony from the following groups:

National Conference of State Legislators, a "nonpartisan public officials' association composed of sitting state legislators"

Council on State Taxation, a non-profit trade association based in Washington, D.C. consisting of approximately 550 multistate corporations engaged in interstate and international business.

Zaino, Hall & Farrin LLC, an Ohio law firm whose website declares, "When the government doesn't work, we do."

They addressed the Ohio property tax system in Ohio and how it compares to other states.

Tom Zaino, a partner in the invited law firm, served as tax commissioner under Governor Taft.

His conclusion at the end of his testimony is, "We believe H.B. 920 is broken. Because 343 of Ohio's 611 school districts were at or below the 20 mill floor in 2022, many Ohio property owners are experiencing unexpected, dramatic and unvoted tax increases."

Among his firm's suggestions that the joint committee should consider are:

–Factor in emergency and substitute levies when determining whether a district is at the 20 mill floor.

–Factor in school district income taxes toward the 20 mill floor.

–Smooth out the valuation process. Jumps in property taxes every three or six years can stun property owners with higher taxes. One way to address this problem is to reevaluate property on a more frequent basis.

In separate testimony by a representative of the National Conference of State Legislators it was pointed out that 35 states reevaluate property every year.

The third testifying organization, the Council on State Taxation, addressed the frequency of reevaluation by stating, "adjustments should be made annually and in periods of strong growth of property valuation, this reduces the "sticker shock" of valuation increases that are made less frequently. This Committee should consider requiring more detailed review by the county assessors at least every two years, instead of the three-year review process that is currently utilized."

You will recall that this 10 person committee must submit a report by the last day of this 135th General Assembly which is December 31.

14 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Gregory Nickoli, Superintendent

Minutes:

Superintendent Nickoli reported as follows:

On a very positive note, new student enrollment is once again extremely high this year. The overall sophomore class has stabilized compared to last year so our percentage of applications is growing. At our Priority Enrollment Date, we had 828 applications, up from 783 last year. We are currently at 883 applications, up from 830 at this time last year. Our staff did an outstanding job this year to prepare for our sophomore visitation experience.

As I mentioned at the February Board Meeting, I am asking that you approve April 8 as a paid day off for all staff scheduled to work that day. You probably remember that it's the day of the Solar Eclipse for our area and local Emergency Management Agencies are anticipating severe traffic congestion, cell phone outages, and interruptions in internet services as well as other logistical concerns.

Several weeks ago, I was contacted by the Louisville office of the Army Corp of Engineers requesting permission to access Board of Education owned property to re-conduct soil sampling since this land once served as a military air base. It was explained to me that, even though we were provided with a Feasibility Study during the 2009-2012 renovation, our site, along with others around the country, was never closed and they need access to reassess the property since so much time has passed.

Important Calendar items upcoming:

03/21/24 - All-Board Dinner

04/11/24 - Negotiations (Issues Exchange)

04/13/24 - Prom

04/17/24 - Business Advisory Council/Superintendents' Meeting

04/19/24 - Community Service Day
04/24/24 - Honors' Night Program
04/25-26/24 - Negotiations

I am excited to recommend Joy Downing and Mrs. Jennifer Verspoor as Intervention Specialists. Mrs. Downing comes to us from the Marysville Exempted Village Schools where she has been an Intervention Specialist for the past 4 years. Mrs. Verspoor joins Pioneer from the Lexington Local Schools where she has also been an Intervention Specialist for 4 years. I am confident that they will both do an outstanding job of serving our students with disabilities and be very positive members of our instructional staff.

Additionally, I am recommending that you re-employ Ms. Leann Bauerdick as a Math Instructor. An exhaustive search failed to yield a candidate that was able to come to Pioneer who we felt was also a good fit for our students and staff.

I am also pleased to recommend 3-year contracts for Shannon Sprang, our Academic Supervisor and Kevin Vargyas as one of our Career-Technical Supervisors. They continue to do an outstanding job on behalf of our students and staff.

I am also recommending that you retroactively approve Mr. Brent Tyrell for paternity Leave for January 16 through February 5. Brent and his wife welcomed a baby boy to their family earlier this year.

All other personnel are common for this time of year.

Attachments:

[Greg Support Document.pdf](#)
[Supt Report 03-24.pdf](#)

15 PERSONNEL REPORT

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Recommendation of Superintendent Gregory D. Nickoli that the following personnel recommendations be approved:

- Approve Employment of Administrative Personnel
- Accept Resignation of Certified Personnel
- Approve Employment of Certified Personnel
- Approve Paternity and Revised Paternity Leave Request for Certified Personnel
- Approve Stipend Contracts for Certificated Personnel
- Approve Employment of Substitute Instructor
- Approve Employment of Classified Personnel
- Approve Employment of Part-time Classified Personnel
- Approve Employment of Substitute Classified Personnel
- Approve Employment of Adult Education Personnel

Minutes:

No Discussion - Moved to vote

Result: Approved

Motioned: Mrs. Erin Stine

Seconded: Mrs. Robyn Almanson

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member	X		

Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member	X		
Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member	X		
Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Erin Stine, Board Member	X		
Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President	X		
Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member	X		

Attachments:

[03-2024 Personnel Report - FINAL.pdf](#)

16 APPROVE APRIL 8, 2024 AS A PAID DAY OFF

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Recommendation of Superintendent Gregory D. Nickoli that April 8, 2024 be approved as a paid day off for all employees scheduled to work. This is in compliance with the recommendation by the Richland County Emergency Management Agency related to the Solar Eclipse.

Minutes:

No Discussion - Moved to Vote

Result: Approved

Motioned: Mr. Mike Grady

Seconded: Mr. Bill McFarland

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member	X		
Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member	X		
Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member	X		
Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Erin Stine, Board Member	X		
Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President	X		

Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member	X		
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17 ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Recommendation of Superintendent Gregory D. Nickoli that we enter into Executive Session to discuss the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of an employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against an employee, official, licensee or student, unless the employee, official, licensee or student requests a public hearing. In addition, we will be preparing for, conducting or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with employees.

Minutes:

No Discussion - Moved to Vote

After the vote, Mike Grady moved to return to Regular Session. Bill Hope seconded and the Board voted to return to Regular Session.

Note: Erin Stine had to leave during Executive Session.

Result: Approved

Motioned: Mr. Dennis Long

Seconded: Mr. Bill McFarland

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member	X		
Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member	X		
Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member	X		
Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Erin Stine, Board Member	X		
Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President	X		
Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member	X		

18 ADJOURN MEETING

Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President

Minutes:

No Discussion - Moved to Vote

Result: Approved

Motioned: Mr. Bill Hope

Seconded: Mr. Bill McFarland

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
Mr. Ben Blubaugh, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Robyn Almanson, Board Member	X		
Mr. Mike Grady, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill Hope, Board Member	X		
Mrs. Morgan Jones, Board Member	X		
Mr. Dennis Long, Board Member	X		
Mr. Bill McFarland, Board Member	X		
Mr. Royden Smith, Board Member	X		
Mr. Douglas Theaker, Board President	X		
Mrs. Mary Jean Theaker, Board Member	X		