

CPSD Board swears in new President, discusses upgrades to Apple products

By Taylor McKay Hathorn

Dr. Matt Thomas gavelled in for the last time as President of the Clinton Public School District's Board of Trustees, passing his seat at the head of the table to Board Member Bernard Kines. Kines said he was grateful for the opportunity to serve the Board as its president, remarking, "This is one board that comes up with decisions that end with 'we.'"

The Board then began the recognition portion of its monthly meeting, acknowledging Nathan Ball, Kenny Lewis and Todd Livingston as its community partners of the month for their work with the mentorship program for young men at Clinton Junior High School. The Board also recognized five Clinton High School students for becoming National Merit Finalists, noting that all five students were the only Clinton students to be given the designation of National Merit Semifinalist in the previous year and all five had gone to receive the finalist accolade together. The Board also celebrated the Arrow soccer teams, as both the boys' and girls' teams clinched state championship victories earlier in the year, with the Lady Arrows edging out

Gulfport 1-0 to take home the state title and the boys defeating rival Brandon 2-1 to bring the golden ball back to Clinton.

The Board then heard from Financial Director Libby Callegan regarding the termination of a 507.4-acre hunting lease. The lessee had originally entered into the agreement through October 2025 but requested to be released from it, which the Board approved by a 5-0 vote. Callegan noted that the District was not planning to enter into another lease agreement right away, as they wanted to explore options, such as breaking the land into two parcels and using the space for potential solar projects. Callegan emphasized that both potentialities were still in the "fact-finding" stage.

Callegan also brought the Board three options regarding the District's Apple devices, which will reach the end of their three-year AppleCare agreement in October

and November. The first option is to refresh the devices this summer, in advance of the October and November AppleCare termination. Callegan noted that this would be costly for the district and would also make for a tight turnaround with the new modified calendar.

The second option would be to refresh all of the devices in the winter, immediately following the termination of the AppleCare policy, which would again create a tight turnaround, given the number of devices and the time crunch of the winter holidays.

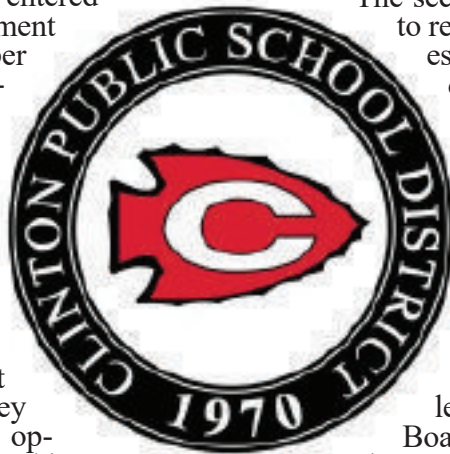
The third option Callegan presented to the Board was to wait until the summer of 2024 to refresh the devices, meaning that the district would go six months without AppleCare, but that they would be able to avoid making another \$1.5M lease agreement this fiscal year.

After a lengthy discussion in which the Board ultimately eliminated option one out of hand, as they would be unable to sell back

their devices while they were still covered by AppleCare, the Board ultimately decided that the turnaround time – particularly with the District's testing windows – for option two would prove too much of a hassle, as well. Although selecting option three would leave the District without damage insurance on the devices for roughly six months, Callegan estimates that repair costs would only total around \$150,000 – still a net gain for the District, considering that there would be no new contract until the next fiscal year.

In his report to the Board, Superintendent of Education Dr. Andy Schoggin reminded the Board of their plans to visit a school district currently making use of an "intercession week" (the breaks in the modified calendar that the District will use during the 2023-2024 school year) in order to glean ideas and observe current practices. Schoggin also updated the Board on a Senate Bill aimed at fully-funding MAEP – the first time in sixteen years – that passed the Senate unanimously, 52-0. The bill now heads to the House, and Schoggin pledged to keep Board members apprised of its progress.

The next meeting of the Board is slated for April 11 at 6 p.m.



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