

FEBRUARY 25, 2019
WILMETTE, IL
REGULAR MEETING

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, February 25, 2019 at the Mikaelian Education Center, 615 Locust Road, Wilmette, Illinois. President Mark Steen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mark Steen, Jon Cesaretti, Tracy Kearney, Frank Panzica,
 Alice Schaff, Lisa Schneider-Fabes, Ellen Sternweiler

Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Ray Lechner, Ellen Crispino, Romy DeCristofaro, Heather Glowacki,
 Katie Lee

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Principal Becky Littmann introduced Central fourth grade Green Team students who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Students on the Green Team introduced themselves and noted several environmental initiatives including maintaining the school garden, helping endangered animals, reusing school supplies, and encouraging proper recycling. The Green Team would also participate in the Going Green Fair on March 10th.

ARTWORK

President Steen stated Jaime Bergard displayed Central students' artwork. First graders contributed their colorful community collages. Second graders shared community themed artwork focusing on artistic details. Third graders created self-portrait drawings, inspired by contemporary artist Romero Britto. Fourth graders contributed their awesome self-portrait collages, inspired by Roy Lichtenstein, using enlarged dots, painted with bold black outlines, and flat primary colors.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Steen reminded everyone that this is a public meeting and all are among neighbors and fellow residents. He stated appropriate conduct is expected from everyone. He asked that people speak only when called upon, that everyone treat each other kindly and with proper respect, and refrain from distracting behaviors such as such as loud conversations, cheering, clapping, or booing.

APPROVE THE MINUTES

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mrs. Schaff, to accept the January 28, 2019 Board of Education and Executive Session minutes. The minutes were approved as submitted by **General Consent**.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

School Finance – Mr. Panzica reported the committee did not meet in February but would meet as part of Committee of the Whole in March.

Facility Development – Mrs. Schaff reported the committee met as part of Committee of the Whole on February 11th. Todd Main of Future Green presented a proposal on ways to add solar power to reduce energy expenses and emissions. Future Green is a non-profit initiative of the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) and the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO) formed to provide renewable electric power solutions. Mrs. Schaff said the construction manager provided refined budget estimates for Kindergarten Enrichment at Harper Elementary. Harper construction bids are due March 11th and will be approved in April. She reported that Highcrest Phase II construction bids were received and would be presented later in the meeting. The committee also discussed a shared facilities contract between District 39 and Regina Dominican High School and the Village storm water construction project planned for the field between Highcrest and Wilmette Junior High. The next meeting is March 11th.

Strategy Committee – Mrs. Schaff reported the committee met as part of Committee of the Whole on February 11th. Members held a brainstorming session to suggest strategic priorities for development of a strategic plan with the new superintendent.

Mrs. Schaff reported the Outdoor Classroom Committee discovered in January a priority in redevelopment of Highcrest outdoor classroom was to design the basic hardscape and drainage. Kelly Jackson and Ellen Crispino worked with STR Architects to design those plans. The garden will be finished in spring of 2020 following completion of the learning commons. Phase III would extend the garden into other spaces at Highcrest.

Community Review Committee (CRC) – Mr. Panzica reported the committee met February 4th. They have completed their basic research and are assembling the final report. The next meeting is March 4th.

Educational Foundation – Mr. Panzica stated the Science Olympiad held an open house to demonstrate some of their projects, and the Foundation’s Trivia Night at St. Joseph’s was a success. The next event is Bingo Night on March 1st, which has sold out. The next meeting is March 20th.

Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB)

Mrs. Sternweiler reported that the Alliance Leadership Summit would be held this week in Springfield to discuss and advocate for public education issues. She noted a North Cook Division Dinner meeting would be held March 20th on “Building Resilience in Students through Trauma Informed Practices” at Niles West High School.

Insurance Advisory Committee – Mrs. Schneider–Fabes reported the committee met February 4th. She stated the District belongs to the Cooperative 90’s health insurance group. They discussed preliminary changes to premiums and benefits for the upcoming insurance plan year beginning June 1, 2019. She noted at the time of the meeting decisions regarding premium costs had not been determined, however, HMO premiums are expected to decrease and PPO premiums are expected to increase. The committee also discussed moving to Cooperative 90’s dental insurance group, which would be reported later in the meeting. Open enrollment begins in April.

Board Agenda Items

Legislative Update

Mrs. Kearney stated the minimum wage bill of \$15/hour by year 2025 passed. She noted Governor Pritzker gave his first State of Union address with budget priorities being the main focus with concentrated efforts in education, health and human services, and public safety.

INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Written Communication

The Board did not receive any written communication this month.

B. Administrative Announcements

Dr. Lechner stated with Dr. Sue Kick is retiring on June 30th, 2019 the District was proud to announce Aaron Dubnow as the new principal for Harper Elementary School. Mr. Dubnow completed his bachelor's degree at University of Illinois followed by a master's degree in school administration from National Louis University. Mr. Dubnow began his career in education in District 39. For seven years Mr. Dubnow served as an 8th grade math, science and social studies teacher at Wilmette Junior High. In 2015 Mr. Dubnow was appointed 5th grade assistant principal at Highcrest Middle School (HMS). At HMS he's had numerous accomplishments including significant improvements with 4th to 5th grade transition process. Mr. Dubnow has established positive connections with students, parents and staff.

Mr. Dubnow thanked the Board for this opportunity and was humbled to follow the strong leadership of Dr. Kick. He thanked the Highcrest team, teachers, students, and community. He thanked Dr. Lechner for sharing his vision and Principal Jackson for her mentorship, guidance, and friendship.

Dr. Lechner stated Summer Enrichment Program registration remains open until March 18th. He noted popular classes such as Kids in the Kitchen, Sculpture & Ceramics, 3D Printing & Engineering and Coding are approaching maximum limits. He suggested District 39 parents register their children soon.

C. Strategic Plan Updates

1. Instrumental Music Student Survey Update

Dr. Lechner stated this year, to address student/parent concerns about Instrumental Music sectional rotations, administration implemented an improved pull-out schedule for band/orchestra students. The new schedule allows for the same number of rehearsals, but not miss more than four classes per content area. Students were surveyed to collect feedback on the new schedule.

Ms. Lee stated due to parents' dissatisfaction with students being pulled from core content classes and early morning rehearsal times, District worked with survey consultant Shannen Mitchell. Ms. Mitchell identified three barrier points for participation in the program: getting up early for rehearsals, participation in a lot of other activities, and missing other classes for instrument specific small group lessons. Administration has implemented a later start time for morning rehearsals and instrument-specific lesson rotation schedule that ensures students would not miss more than four core classes.

Ms. Lee reported 89% of students are able to complete missed work for classes due to music instruction and report a positive experience with new schedule approach. 72% of students felt it was easy to reschedule instrumental instruction in the event of a conflict. Ms. Lee stated while results are favorable, more attention will be taken to improve students' ability to reschedule lessons and manage missed work. Parents would be surveyed next.

Board discussion ensued regarding percentage of participation and drop outs, if students with executive functioning issues are experiencing higher frustration with the new changes, making sure all students feel easy with rescheduling due to conflicts, tracking participation by grade level to observe the drop-out rate, rate of progress with the Avoca music instruction relationship, and to proceed cautiously with survey participation and consider results appropriately.

2. 2018-2019 Strategic Plan Updates: Continuing Strategic Initiatives

Dr. Lecher stated on September 24, 2018, the Board of Education approved the implementation of the 2018-2019 District 39 Strategic Plan. The administrators presented the executive summary report, which focused on mid-year updates for Continuing Initiatives: Kindergarten Enrichment, Personalized Learning, School Climate, Student Growth, School Attendance, and Learning Commons.

Ms. Lee stated construction design plans have begun at Harper and Central Elementary Schools to offer optional Kindergarten Enrichment in fall of 2020. Dr. Kick said a Kindergarten Enrichment Committee made up of administrators and kindergarten teachers explored kindergarten enrichment programs in other districts. The committee is developing a draft statement of program goals and objectives and will address registration and transportation processes. The committee will next develop lesson plans, review resources, and prepare a communication plan to be fully prepared for fall 2020 implementation.

Mr. DeMonte reported last year administrators learned about personalized learning by sharing research obtained through articles and books, interviewing other districts, and conferences and workshops. This year the District conducted an audit of current practices and reflected on how to strengthen the attributes within a personalized learning framework. The District will provide more professional development on use of records and reports for instructional planning and collaborative discussion; study more ways or tools to engage and empower students to lead their own learning; and while there is a well-established system of assessments, District 39 will continue to learn about assessments and the resulting data provided.

Dr. DeCristofaro stated as part of the strategic initiative to create a culture of empathy, social emotional screeners were implemented this fall. Second and fourth grade teachers utilized the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) screener for their students. Fifth through eighth grade students self-reported using Mindsets, Essential Skills and Habits (MESH) screener. Overall students demonstrated strong social emotional competencies with 94% scoring in “typical” or “strength” category with 6% identified as “needs instruction.” Areas often noted for support were personal responsibility and goal directed behavior. Ms. DeMay reported District 39 students performed at or above the 80% national average for the MESH screener. She noted both screener assessments will be given again in spring to measure growth and progress.

Mrs. Jackson reported fifth through eighth grade students participated in a school culture survey that assessed perceptions relating to sense of belonging, school safety, and teacher-student relationships. She said promoting a sense of belonging is an area of focus for sixth through eighth grades as the results were under the national average. Staff utilize the relationship mapping process, which identifies students at risk and then create plans for connecting to those students.

Ms. DeMay stated the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee analyzed data from the social emotional screeners and reviewed the current curricula including the effectiveness of Facing History in Ourselves and the appropriateness of Second Step for fifth through eighth graders. They noted many lessons were geared for older students. The committee identified current positive behavior supports by CASEL domain and created a continuum of social emotional competencies for all grades, Kindergarten through eighth. They agreed additional resources were needed to focus on students having a positive sense of belonging in the school setting.

Ms. Lee noted District 39 has acquired new tools to further support student growth and monitor progress. She stated the eduCLIMBER dashboard allows easy access to all data assessments in one location. The dashboard is personalized for each teacher, specialist, and educator and can be viewed at many levels including, student, class, grade, school, and district. The NWEA MAP assessment and aimswebPlus provide progress reports useful for instructional decisions. Aimsweb Plus monitors progress for students receiving support interventions. Ms. Lee said Intervention Leadership Teams were restructured to include representatives from each grade level and embedded the inclusion of student growth data to the Response to Intervention (RtI) process.

Dr. DeCristofaro stated for the past three years of implementation, the District has made progress in increasing positive attendance to 75%. Positive attendance means a student is present 95% or more of the time or fewer than five absences or tardies. A student is considered chronic if absent or tardy 10 days or more. As of February 15th, 75% of students were in the positive attendance category. Continued efforts focused on routine monitoring of student attendance paired with a tiered system of supports, increased parent communication, and teacher awareness.

Mrs. Jackson stated due to construction timing, the district worked with STR Partners for initial hardscape/drainage design for the outdoor classroom and discussed a phase-in plan for the garden. Phase 1 included the hardscape design for the outdoor classroom; Phase 2 will be the green/planting design for the outdoor classroom and plans for excavation/salvaging of current plants; Phase 3 includes additional planning for exterior gardens. The Outdoor Classroom Committee will meet in March to begin Phase 2 and identify a landscape company. The outdoor planting will be done following completion of Learning Commons construction in spring of 2020.

Principals Cindy Anderson, Becky Littmann, and Rachel Filippi presented examples of how each learning commons is being used and presented visual examples of engaging activities at Romona, Central, and McKenzie. They also reported learning spaces in the classroom environment are changing to promote communication, creativity, critical thinking and collaboration. Flexible classrooms offer a variety of tables/desks for small group activities as well as using cushions, ball chairs, and stools for a variety of seating arrangements. Flexible classrooms engage student voices, increase student engagement, and heighten collaborative learning.

Board discussion included how to include parents in personalized learning process, if reflection would be the next step, if the District was surprised by how many students lack a sense of belonging in school climate, if a social emotional growth chart is used and if it is shared with parents, chronically absent/tardy numbers increase as students' progress to junior high, which affects high school attendance as well, engaging in a deeper discussion on the student growth dashboard, if there was a plan to pilot flexible classroom environments, the progression for student growth professional development, kindergarten enrichment mission statement reflect school climate goal toward empathy and resilience, ability to monitor teacher usage of the dashboard, observing school climate screener and survey data and weighing data against ourselves versus national norms, and including data regarding gender differences.

D. Annual Business

1. Summer 2019 Highcrest Construction Bids

Dr. Lechner said the District received many qualified bidders for Highcrest construction, and the bids came in lower than estimated. The renovations at Highcrest Middle School will begin June 2019. The special education classroom renovation is scheduled to be completed in August 2019 and the Library/Media/Technology Center will be completed in November 2019.

Ms. Crispino reported the bid opening was held on February 13th. The Highcrest renovation includes the Library/Media/Technology Center addition with large space air conditioning and special education classrooms. She stated the bids came in at \$3.5M dollars, which is \$275,000 less than estimated. Included in the base bid is \$390,000 for large space air conditioning.

2. Addressing E-Cigarette Use in District 39

Dr. Lechner stated in response to a Board member's request, this report summarized efforts District 39 has taken this school year toward E-Cigarettes (vaping). Since the beginning of the school year there have been several reports of e-cigarette use in District 39, specifically at Wilmette Junior High.

Mrs. Jackson reported E-Cigarettes usage is on the rise. She said last year there were five reports of E-cigarette usage, but none occurred on school grounds. She stated one confirmed incident took place last year on a school bus. This year staff have had more reports of vaping activity with three confirmed incidents on school property. Incidents were cited through the confidential reporting form, parent phone calls, and students' verbal reports. She reported the village had limited sales of tobacco products to persons age 21 and older, however, products can be easily purchased online. Mrs. Jackson stated the District is proactively addressing vaping by enhancing education, hosting guest speakers from Linking Efforts Against Drugs (LEAD), teaching student awareness about corporations marketing to younger kids, providing resources for families, and monitoring trouble spots. The District also installed vaping detectors in bathrooms. Disciplinary action includes in and out of school suspensions followed by regular check-ins with administrators, behavior management specialist, or through the social worker.

Board discussion ensued on disciplinary action being determined on a case by case basis not just for vaping but verbal/physical aggression as well, informative parent presentations as vaping is relatively new, parent and student reactions, surveying parents regarding the vaping issue and education, and confirmed reports taking place inside school buildings not outside during recess.

3. Cooperative 90's Dental Plan Agreement

Dr. Lechner reported the Mrs. Schneider-Fabes provided a summary of the Insurance Advisory Committee meeting earlier. The administration researched the option for changing from the current dental insurance plan to Cooperative 90's Dental Plan.

Dr. Glowacki highlighted advantages to changing to Cooperative 90's dental plan, which included cheaper premiums, no deductible for PPO network dentists, an increase from \$1,000 to \$2,000 in annual benefit maximums and an increase from \$1,000 to \$2,000 in lifetime orthodontia benefits. She also noted the District would have a required three-year membership period, additional claim costs may be incurred during the first three years affecting premiums, and the District would pay the proportionate share of reserves for the cooperative, which would be refunded if the District leaves from the cooperative.

4. Shared Services Agreement with Regina Dominican High School

Dr. Lechner stated Regina Dominican High School approached District 39 to request the use of the softball diamond located east of the Romona School playground. Regina would use the ballfield for their spring softball season. Their season begins in early spring and is over by the end of the District 39 school year.

In exchange for using the baseball field, Regina will make improvements to the field and surrounding land, as well as provide field maintenance during the season. District 39 utilize Regina's theatre and adjacent spaces free of charge for 16 hours during the school year. This arrangement saves the District approximately \$6,000 in theatre rental fees. The four-year Shared Services Agreement has been reviewed by attorneys.

E. Board Policy Review

1. Second and Final Reading of Board of Education Policies 2:80, 4:30, 4:40, 4:40, 4:45, 4:46, 4:50, 4:51, 4:60, 4:61 and 4:62

Dr. Lechner stated the suggested Board edits were incorporated for second and final read of these policies.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Erin Stone, Wilmette, commended the people who presented at the Educational Foundation's Science Olympiad Open House. She enjoyed the opportunity to share passions and build community with participants.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Consent Agenda

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mrs. Schaff, to approve the personnel report dated February 25, 2019, which included licensed full-time employment of **Carole Deitchman**, effective February 11, 2019; educational support personnel full-time employment of **Herman Andrango**, effective February 25, 2019; **Syzana Arifi**, effective February 25, 2019; **Kimberly Burns**, effective February 21, 2019; **Rebecca Cochran**, effective February 18, 2019; **Natalie Dolan**, effective February 6, 2019; **Mary Holtz**, effective February 25, 2019; **Elizabeth Kim**, effective February 11, 2019; **Sarah Lancaster**, effective February 6, 2019; **Catherine Morris Priest**, effective February 25, 2019; **Andrea Roberts**, effective February 12, 2019; **Lisa Skarbek**, effective February 20, 2019; **Jacqueline Soto**, effective February 11, 2019; educational support personnel resignation of **Beeta Azarnoosh**, effective February 22, 2019; **Michael Egan**, effective January 28, 2019; release of a probationary employee, **Anoush Bargamian**, effective February 8, 2019; educational support personnel retirement (revised date) for **Fran Rosenthal**, effective the end of the 2018-19 school year; personnel agreement, to approve the personnel agreement between **Employee 16519** and District 39 dated January 28, 2019: to award base bid package per bid specifications for the Highcrest Middle School Library/Media/ Technology Center addition with large space air conditioning and special education classroom renovation for a total of \$3,527,632. This total includes an estimated \$390,000 for Large Space HVAC in the Library/Media/Technology Center. The contract value listed includes base bid only. Albrecht Enterprises for an amount not to exceed \$484,900; Midwest Masonry for an amount not to exceed \$162,500; McKinney Steel for an amount not to exceed \$177,194; RB Construction for an amount not to exceed \$499,000; L. Marshall Roofing for an amount not to exceed \$328,500; Rock Valley Glass for an amount not to exceed \$189,000; Monarch Construction for an amount not to exceed \$457,800; Nelson Fire Protection for an amount not to exceed \$47,738; Hartwig Plumbing & Heating for an amount not to exceed \$96,000; DeKalb Mechanical for an amount not to exceed \$565,000; Shoreline Electric Company for an amount not to exceed \$520,000; total Highcrest Middle School Project Cost: \$3,527,632: to execute the Cooperative 90's Dental Plan Agreement: approve the Shared Services Agreement with Regina Dominican High School as presented in the report dated February 25, 2019: to approve as second and final reading of Board of Education Policies 2:80 *Member of the Board of Education Oath and Conduct*; 4:30 *Revenue and Investments*; 4:40 *Budget As Spending Plan*; 4:40 *Incurring Debt*; 4:45 *Insufficient Fund Checks*; 4:46 *State and Federal Funds*; 4:50 *Paying for Goods and Services*; 4:51 *Tuition Fees*; 4:60 *Purchases*; 4:61 *Local Purchasing*; and 4:62 *Requesting Goods and*

Services: approve the accounts payable for bills listed between January 29, 2019 – February 25, 2019 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$390,495.68; O & M Fund \$333,956.98; Debt Service \$1,500.00; Transportation Fund \$148,253.53; Capital Projects \$269,010.00; Tort Fund \$18,445.50; total all funds: \$1,161,661.69; approve the manual checks issued between January 29, 2019 and February 25, 2019 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$558,953.89; O & M Fund \$3,413.79; Transportation Fund \$708.98; total all funds: \$563,076.66.

On a roll call vote on the motion, voting “yea” – Jon Cesaretti, Tracy Kearney, Frank Panzica, Alice Schaff, Lisa Schneider-Fabes, Ellen Sternweiler, Mark Steen; voting “nay” – none; absent – none:

Motions Carried.

CONFERENCE ITEMS

Old Business

None

New Business

Mr. Cesaretti cited a recent article in the Chicago Tribune about the Avoca district boundary. He asked if there was any interest in approaching a dialogue rationalizing the school districts’ boundaries within the township.

Mrs. Kearney said from a board level she would be more interested in consolidating resources with area school districts rather than haggle over boundaries.

Mr. Steen stated this conversation arises periodically and District 39 has not hesitated in proceeding but other area districts were not interested.

Mrs. Kearney noted this might be a unique opportunity with Carson’s having left the area, decreased funding would significantly impact other school districts.

Mr. Steen agreed that consolidating would provide improved efficiencies and benefits to taxpayers.

Good and Welfare

None

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mrs. Schaff to adjourn to executive session to discuss school safety and collective bargaining.

On a roll call vote on the motion, voting “yea” – Jon Cesaretti, Tracy Kearney, Frank Panzica, Alice Schaff, Lisa Schneider-Fabes, Ellen Sternweiler, Mark Steen; voting “nay” – none; absent – none: **Motion Carried.**

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 9:08 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting of the Board of Education at 9:46 p.m.

Being no further business, Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mrs. Schaff, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education. It adjourned at 9:50 p.m. by **General Consent.**

President

Secretary