

**From:** Mark Steen <[steenm@wilmette39.org](mailto:steenm@wilmette39.org)>

**Subject: Re: Levy increase**

**Date:** December 11, 2018 at 8:20:13 AM CST

**To:** C H <[chopman1@gmail.com](mailto:chopman1@gmail.com)>, Ray Lechner <[lechnerr@wilmette39.org](mailto:lechnerr@wilmette39.org)>

Dear Mr. Hopman,

I apologize for my delayed response.

On behalf of the entire board, I want to let you know that we appreciate hearing from all of D39's constituents and always consider heartfelt and thoughtful communications, like yours. As you know, this issue has passionate views on both sides and it is helpful to us to know what the district's citizens want. Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Steen

President, D39 Board of Education

On Fri, Dec 7, 2018 at 2:45 PM C H <[chopman1@gmail.com](mailto:chopman1@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear board members,

I want to thank you again for your volunteer hard work.

I heard that the district is planning to again raise the levy by the maximum allowed by law.

The Illinois property taxes are already the highest in the country. Illinois is losing taxpayers every year, and not because of its schools.

The public schools salary are equivalent to the market level (private schools) for teachers when they begin. However, they are much higher due to automatic raises with seniority. These are not at all the best for the children, since teachers do not mechanically become better with age. Indeed, a better mechanism would be to give teachers a higher initial salary with lower raises later on, to attract the best teachers from day one. The current mechanism will also soon backfire on school districts once the expensive retirements have to be paid by the district.

Given the abnormally high level of compensation for public school teachers (other than recent hires), there is a lot of room to continue to keep a quality education with a constant, or even a lower levy.

I hope you will do your duty for taxpayers and consider other options than the maximum increase.

Thank you for your consideration,

Carl Hopman.

D 39 resident and parent of three school-age children.

**From:** Mark Steen <[steenm@wilmette39.org](mailto:steenm@wilmette39.org)>  
**Date:** November 24, 2018 at 3:37:10 PM CST  
**To:** [jpollack200@gmail.com](mailto:jpollack200@gmail.com), Ray Lechner <[lechnerr@wilmette39.org](mailto:lechnerr@wilmette39.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Superintendent Search -- Dr. Palzet

Ms. Pollack,

On behalf of the entire Board, thank you for your thoughtful input into our selection. As you're probably aware, we have been going through a well-defined search process since last spring. We have accumulated applications for several months now and will be interviewing candidates over the next few weeks. We have had input from many constituents on the characteristics we should look for in our next Superintendent and will consider them all as we go through the rest of our process.

Thank you again for your thoughts and your continuing support of the District.

Sincerely,  
Mark Steen  
President, D39 Board of Education

On Fri, Nov 23, 2018 at 7:21 AM Joyce Pollack <[jpollack200@gmail.com](mailto:jpollack200@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Dear School Board Members and Dr. Lechner,

I am writing regarding your upcoming decision concerning the new superintendent for District 39. I believe that you are in the midst of the selection process. If Dr. Dave Palzet is among the top candidates, which I believe he should be, Dr. Palzet should be chosen to succeed Dr. Lechner as the leader of Wilmette 39.

I have been a District 39 parent since my oldest child started kindergarten at Romona in 2008. Now, my oldest child is at New Trier, my middle child is in 8th grade at WJHS and my youngest child is in 1st grade at Romona. I have been, and will continue to be, a District 39 parent for a long time. In my time as a District 39 parent and as a community member, I not only saw how Dave interacted with students, but I worked with Dave in my role of chairing the League of Women Voters Student and Government Leaders program for 8th grade students. During that time, Dave encouraged and supported the program. Under his leadership, we grew the program from a program that previously had only about 20 participants to a program with close to 90 participants. We did that in the first year that we worked together on the program. Dave created the vision for the program, and then let his talented team at WJHS run the program and re-imagine and re-vitalize its contents. Dave was an exceptionally organized and inspirational leader. He guided the program while giving the administrators and teachers the space to make changes, attend to details and to learn. Dave is an exemplary leader and motivator.

I also experienced Dave as the principal of my Highcrest student. Dave's communications with parents were insightful, thought-provoking and educational. I looked forward to receiving them and felt more knowledgeable after reading them. I felt the same way after hearing Dave speak at events. I always walked away feeling thankful for his leadership, intelligence and charisma. Mostly, I was thankful that he was a part of our District. We were lucky to have him.

Dave made extraordinary efforts to connect with the students as well. Whether it be from his yearly personalized e-mail birthday messages to each student to his interactions with them in

the hallway, the students felt connected to him not only as their principal but as a person. That is a rare quality in an administrator of middle and junior high school students.

I also worked tirelessly to pass the last referendum. Passing that referendum was a herculean effort. I cannot quantify the number of hours that I and the other volunteers spent in working on the referendum. Dave would be a fine financial steward of the District. He would spend the limited dollars wisely, putting off another referendum for as long as possible. When the time comes for another referendum, and it will, Dave would be a great partner in educating the community about the need and would be a wonderful leader for the District.

Dave Palzet is a visionary educational leader. He would make an excellent superintendent. District 39 would be lucky to have him as its leader.

Thank you.

Joyce Pollack

Dr. Haut,

Thank you for taking time to share your views on this matter. I appreciate the references and your thoughtful reply.

Ray



**Dr. Ray Lechner**  
Superintendent  
Wilmette Public Schools District 39  
www.wilmette39.org | 847.512.6030

On Nov 12, 2018, at 6:13 PM, Allyson Haut <[aehaut@earthlink.net](mailto:aehaut@earthlink.net)> wrote:

Dear Dr. Lechner, Board President Steen and District 39 School Board members,

As I am unable to attend tonight's meeting, I writing to provide my comment regarding an agenda item.

I am writing to voice my adamant opposition to arming teachers and staff in schools and therefore urge you to instruct the District 39 delegate to the Illinois Association of School Boards Conference this November to vote "NO" on Resolution #2, the resolution to provide firearms and training to teachers and staff.

As a scientist and health care professional; as the immediate past president of the League of Women Voters of Wilmette and member of the board of the League of Women Voters of Illinois; as a parent and community member; I find the risks to life and psychological well being inherent in the introduction of firearms into the schools completely unacceptable.

As you are well aware, professional organizations entrusted with the well being of our children, including the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, and the National Association of School Resource Officers, are opposed to arming teachers and staff in school. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in its March 2018 Annual Leadership Forum identified as their #1 resolution, advocacy for schools to remain gun-free, entitling their resolution: "Schools as Gun-Free Zones - Arming Teachers is not the Answer!" The AAP states "The absence of guns from children's homes and communities is the most reliable and effective measure to prevent firearm-related injuries in children and adolescents."

The issue of gun violence is a public health crisis of major proportion. The response to this crisis must be through improved regulation of the manufacture, sale, use and availability of firearms; not the introduction of firearms into the school setting. Please continue and advance the thoughtful and careful work you do everyday to maximize the safety and security of all in District 39 schools. I hope you will be role models and advocates for these approaches with colleagues far and wide.

In appreciation for all you do for the children and families of our community,

Allyson Haut, Ph.D.  
Allyson E. Haut, Ph.D.  
[aehaut@earthlink.net](mailto:aehaut@earthlink.net)

Thank you for taking time to reach out and share this information. Also, thank you for acknowledging the numerous safety steps we have already put in place.

Ray



**Dr. Ray Lechner**  
Superintendent  
Wilmette Public Schools District 39  
www.wilmette39.org | 847.512.6030

On Nov 12, 2018, at 11:12 AM, Karleen <[karleensm@gmail.com](mailto:karleensm@gmail.com)> wrote:

To Wilmette District 39 Superintendent,  
School Board President & Board Members:

As a Wilmette community member and parent of four District 39 graduates, I urge you to reject any resolution by the Illinois Association of School Board (IASB) to allow or promote arming of teachers in the state.

As you know, a resolution on arming teachers will be considered at the Nov 16-18 IASB conference, and other school boards in Illinois are considering this issue. Elgin and Oak Park/River Forest will be opposing the resolution. Wilmette should too.

#### LOCAL MOMS DEMAND ACTION

I'm a local leader of Moms Demand Action (with 350 Wilmette supporters), and I can tell you that Moms are concerned about keeping our students safe from gun violence. But arming teachers is not the solution, as explained in this Everytown fact sheet: <https://everytownresearch.org/arming-teachers-dangerous-proposal/>

#### STUDENT ACCESS

One objection that resonates for our district is that children figure out where guns are stored and are inventive about getting access, especially if guns aren't stored properly. Since a Wilmette Jr High School student allegedly took guns from a grandparent as part of a thwarted school shooting plan, it's easy to see how, even if adults have good intentions, students could get access and cause harm.

#### TEACHERS SHOULD TEACH

I'm also a parent of a teacher (my daughter taught fourth grade in Washington, DC), and I can tell you that nothing would be more terrifying or misguided than forcing my daughter to carry a gun to work. On a good day, with help, she managed to track school materials, stay on top of classroom management, and help students learn. Forced to carry a gun? Impossible to imagine. Nothing good would come of it. If forced to be responsible for stopping shooters, I imagine many good teachers will quit.

#### PROFESSIONAL OPPOSITION

Professional groups, including American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, and the National Association of School Resource Officers, have come out against

arming teachers. They've studied the issue extensively, and they are deciding for the health and safety of their members and students.

#### NO TO ARMING TEACHERS--YES TO GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

In conclusion, an attempt to arm teachers would be a waste of time and money, and possibly even increase the danger of gun violence for our educators and students.

Our district and educational leaders are better off investing in proven school security measures and better gun laws, like the ones Moms and other gun violence prevention groups have been promoting (e.g., legislation related to "red flag" gun removal, holding periods for gun sales, and state gun dealer licensing).

#### AN INVITATION...

Since you've worked with experts to improve Wilmette District 39 school door locks and security systems and protocols, then clearly you care.

Since you are willing to take up consideration of a proposal from the gun lobby to arm teachers, then clearly you care.

So I invite you to follow up by visiting [Moms Demand Action](#) and related [Everytown](#) sites. And join your peers from around the country as part of Educators Demand Action, to find out what else you can do: <https://everytown.ngpvanhost.com/>

Thank you for all you do to educate our children, and keep them safe.

Karleen

--

Karleen Stevens McAllester  
Wilmette District 39 Parent  
& Local Leader for Moms Demand Action

**From:** Mark Steen <[steenm@wilmette39.org](mailto:steenm@wilmette39.org)>  
**Date:** November 11, 2018 at 2:45:31 PM CST  
**To:** Katie Arnold <[katiea123@gmail.com](mailto:katiea123@gmail.com)>, Ray Lechner <[lechnerr@wilmette39.org](mailto:lechnerr@wilmette39.org)>  
**Subject: Re: Board Meeting - Oppose Arming Teachers**

Dear Ms. Arnold,

On behalf of the entire Board, thank you for sending your thoughts and the video - I have watched it, and I'm confident other Board members will, as well.

The safety of our students, staff and entire D39 community is our highest priority, and a subject which we assess and address frequently in a number of different ways, Monday's discussion being just one example.

Whether you are able to attend or not, we appreciate your voicing your opinion.

Yours sincerely,  
Mark Steen  
President, D39 Board of Education

On Sun, Nov 11, 2018 at 2:15 PM Katie Arnold <[katiea123@gmail.com](mailto:katiea123@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Hi D39 Board of Directors,

It was brought to my attention that at the board meeting this week you are considering a proposal to send a representative to the Illinois Association of School Board (IASB) conference in Chicago, Nov. 16-18. At this conference, the IASB will be considering a resolution to allow school boards to arm teachers in schools under certain conditions. Other school boards in Illinois have been considering this issue.

I will do my best to attend the board meeting tomorrow night but I wanted to share that I am strongly **OPPOSED** to arming teachers in our schools. I wanted to share that as an adjunct faculty member of Northwestern University, Kellogg School we were recently sent the below **ACTIVE SHOOTER** video. As faculty at NU, we are being **trained to run, hide, and lastly fight so we can help students make wise decisions and survive a mass shooting, not get into a gun battle on school property.**

This video illustrates how truly idiotic it is to think that a teacher with a gun would be at all effective in the setting of an active shooter.

<https://www.northwestern.edu/up/your-safety/emergency-procedures/active-violence.html>

Thanks for taking the time to watch the video, if you have not already.

Best,  
Katie  
Katie Arnold