

**NOVEMBER 13, 2017  
WILMETTE, IL  
REGULAR MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, November 13, 2017 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,

Members Absent: Ellen Sternweiler

Administrators Present: Ray Lechner, Gail Buscemi, Heather Glowacki, Katie Lee, Denise Thrasher

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Principal Sue Kick introduced Harper students who have studied Spanish throughout their K-4 curriculum. The students first lead the Pledge of Allegiance in Spanish and then in English.

**ARTWORK**

Mr. Steen noted Harper Elementary School students learned a variety of drawing techniques this semester. Fourth graders examined the difference between observational drawing and using their imaginations, in their “Fancy Feet” shoe projects. Third grade students looked at Vincent van Gogh’s bedroom and chair paintings as a starting point to design a pop-up chair and bedroom scene. Second graders practiced persistence, creativity, and celebration of art forms from other cultures in their henna hand drawings.

**APPROVE THE MINUTES**

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mrs. Schaff, to accept the minutes of the October 23, 2017 Regular and Executive Session Meetings. The minutes were approved as submitted by **General Consent**.

Mr. Steen stated before proceeding to the public comment session, he had some procedural announcements. The Board members met at the Committee of the Whole meeting and discussed how the meetings should be run. The Board agreed to adhere to certain norms such as when to respond to comments and to be respectful in allowing others to speak. All board members agreed to this meeting procedure. Mr. Steen noted the Board recommended changes to Policy 2:230 which would be presented as first read on this agenda. He stated the public comment sections were changed to allow more opportunities for participants to speak. He noted this would be approved as second read in December and put into effect for that meeting. The current policy, however is still in effect for this meeting, which allows each person 5 minutes to address the Board. He noted the District’s standing policy is to limit topics to 15 minutes. Mr. Steen stated as Board President, he would waive the 15 minutes per topic rule for comments on the levy to allow the number of people present a chance to speak. He requested speakers be brief and to only speak once to allow everyone an opportunity. He reminded the guests that this is a public meeting and everyone is among their neighbors and residents. Mr. Steen reported the Board agreed and stressed the importance of appropriate conduct from everyone, and to restrain from cheering, booing, or talking out of turn.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Raquel Klibanoff, Wilmette, strongly supported extending the tax levy to keep pace with inflation. She added that keeping the levy the same while costs of goods and services continue to increase would actually be a cut to education funding.

Michael Lieber, Wilmette, spoke about the uncertainties in Illinois politics that may affect education funding along with addressing inflation costs for today and for the future. He noted his family and other families moved to Wilmette for the quality public education.

David Ford, Wilmette, stated his understanding is that the budget for next year is fully funded with no levy increase. He noted the levy has gone up 32% in eight years, three times that of CPI, twice the increase of Wilmette's median household income. He stated many suburban Chicago schools perform better and rank higher on fewer dollars spent per student. He said since 2007 D39 has incurred \$137,000 in fines from the State for spiking salaries prior to teacher retirements contributing to pension crisis. He was not in favor of the levy and suggested the District go to referendum if/when the need for funding arose.

Maya Crystal, Wilmette, graduate of District 39 spoke in support of band sectionals and band grades. She spoke of her musical experience beginning at Highcrest where many students don't have private teachers and felt sectionals were essential. She felt instrumental music grades are beneficial to inspire students to work harder to obtain recognition. She noted band is a graded elective at New Trier.

Laurie Goldstein, Wilmette, stated her three children are D39 alumni and they received an excellent education. She thanked Dr. Lechner for his excellent service. She stated to ensure children continue to receive an excellent education she supported the extension of the tax levy.

Kevin Feeley, Wilmette, urged the District to not extend the levy as the existing tax base provides sufficient funding for the budget and therefore there is no reason to raise the taxes. He noted there was a 37% increase in revenues to the District over the last nine years, which is three times the rate of inflation. He felt the uncertainty regarding the State was conjecture. He noted the State increased income taxes by 33% and felt there would also be raise in federal taxes.

Kathy Myalls, Wilmette, stated in response to the "keep pace with inflation statement" she noted CPI is 2.1% and Board is seeking 4.36% which is double the rate of inflation. She stated property taxes have doubled while home values have decreased. She said Illinois property taxes are the second highest in country and asked the Board to not extend the levy.

Evan Canel, Wilmette, spoke regarding removing band grades and removing band/orchestra from the school day. He noted by making the recommendation that the District remove grading from band and orchestra and by removing band and orchestra from the school day puts conclusion before process and makes seeking community input a fishing expedition to find support for what has already been decided. He stated he had a petition that argues band is not curricular but referred to as co-curricular or extra-curricular. He continued with questions and answers about instrumental music curriculum, standards, and certification.

Jill Williamson, Wilmette, noted her three children are in band, jazz band, and three ensembles at New Trier. She referenced the statement of recommendation approved by the Board in October. She stated on the District websites Instrumental Music is listed as a curricular subject. She stated she was asked to participate in parent meetings and collected feedback about the program on November 6<sup>th</sup>. The statement by the Board was presented October 23<sup>rd</sup>. She requested reasons and data for the statement recommendation.

Jennifer Lindt, Wilmette, requested to not cut funding and was wholeheartedly in favor of extending the levy. She noted her children were well prepared for college due to education received in District 39.

Tom Nathan, Wilmette, served in the 1980s on CRC and 1989-1997 on the school board. He offered a historical perspective. In 1990-1991, the Board faced the same issue about the tax levy. He stated the challenge is raising the levy to the amount authorized, or not do it and run the risk of the consequences. He said in 1990-91 the Board voted down the extension of the levy. As a result, drastic cuts were made, student fees were raised, and the Educational Foundation was created. He stated cuts in staffing caused District stress with five teacher negotiations in eight years, hideous morale, and the inability to attract new teachers to the District. He stated it took almost ten years to recover from that decision. He asked to not repeat history and extend the levy.

Katie Hauser, Wilmette, shared her perspective as a real estate agent with prospective homebuyers seeking communities with quality schools. Failing to increase the tax levy would deviate from the Board's past practice of maintaining a consistent investment in education. Prospective buyers do not like uncertainty about stability, commitment to education and school funding.

Ben Phillips of Wilmette, moved here for the schools. He said the tool of the levy was given to the Board by the voters and he hoped for an extension of the levy.

Nancy Warner, Wilmette, urged the Board to extend the levy. She noted Mr. Nathan's comments should be kept in mind regarding the consequences of not extending the levy.

Thomas Reed, Wilmette, Professor at Northwestern noted the hypocrisy of this board hiring lawyers to reduce their personal taxes and at the same time increasing the tax burden to others.

Mark Weyermuller, Wilmette, opposed the tax levy increase and disputed the previous real estate agent's comments. He spoke about the 17 different levies on his tax bill. He touched briefly on pensions, 401K, tax appeals and the band issue.

Cara Gaziano, Wilmette, stated her four children received wonderful education in District 39 and fully supported the levy. She apologized to the Board for the personal attacks and rude behavior when the Board members devote so much time and energy looking out for Wilmette schools and the community.

Bill Arnold, Wilmette, gave a grandparent perspective. He stated his daughters and grandchildren attended and attend schools in District 39. He pleaded for an extension of the levy to keep the District fiscally sound for the next generation.

John Powers, Wilmette, spoke regarding a Tribune story about pension raises for teachers in their last few years of service referred to as "spiking". He stated the District received \$135,000 in penalties although no distinction was noted on whether this was for one year or multiple years. He asked if this practice continues while District is asking for tax increase and if the pension increases and penalties are included in the budget. He added the community should be able to see where the money is being spent.

Karleen McAllister, Wilmette, was grateful for the many services provided by the District for her four children, such as the screenings that take place three times a year to catch student issues. She noted that all of the teachers' salaries and budgets are on line so there isn't a lack of transparency. She noted growing up in New York when citizens voted no on the budget they were asked which programs could be cut. She said everyone wanted all of the programs. She thanked the Board for fiscal soundness in the District.

Jason Klingler, Wilmette, grew up in Chicago public schools and remembered days of not having lunches, and having 40-50 kids in a classroom. He stated there were no opportunities for band until high school. He said Wilmette is a great community with many opportunities for children.

Amy Newman, Wilmette, grew up in Wilmette, has a son in District 39, and is currently a teacher in a neighboring district. She said Wilmette prides itself on providing education for all and any cuts would be seen as cuts to public education, which is not the message the community wants to send.

Keith Dronen, Wilmette, stated he was a member of the school board 2007-15 including two years as president and served as the finance chair. He supported the levy and offered direct knowledge of the history of the District. He noted the inaccurate comments made and suggested the District adopt a resolution increasing the current 30% fund balance target amount to reflect the current Board practices and to maintain the financial health of the District. He noted after significant budget cuts made in 2009-2010, the Board voted unanimously for a referendum in 2011. The Board also requested to limit the amount asked for the referendum, adopted a resolution establishing a goal of sustaining minimum operating fund balances at a level of 30% of operating expenditures. He stated the Board asked the community how to move forward; increase revenue and invest in schools, or cut the budget. He noted 63% voted in favor of the referendum in April 2011. He stated the community requested to consider all options so expenditures do not exceed revenues. He noted the Board's 2013-2016 collective bargaining agreement with Wilmette Education Association was innovative in that it eliminated "Step" and provided compensation be CPI-based. Mr. Dronen urged the community to read the excellent summarization report on the levy presented. He corrected misinformation about local property taxes. He stated that in addition to teacher and labor costs, the District has to maintain six school buildings and the administration building. To forgo a levy increase would be a budget cut that would require staff reductions and a draw down on reserves. He noted comparable districts have much higher reserve targets.

## **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Facility Development committee – Mrs. Schaff stated the committee met November 9<sup>th</sup> as part of the Committee of the Whole. The committee discussed the proposed Highcrest construction that includes a four-classroom addition and a secure front office entrance. The committee discussed exterior design decisions to allow the architect and construction manager to prepare bid packets to solicit bids. The next Committee of the Whole meeting is on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

School Finance Committee – Mr. Panzica stated the committee met November 9<sup>th</sup>. The committee discussed FY19 draft student fees and the special education bus transportation bids. The other topics discussed were the audit and the levy which would be presented later as part of the agenda. The next Committee of the Whole meeting is on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Community Review Committee – Mr. Panzica stated the committee met November 6<sup>th</sup>. The committee is working on identifying the differences between differentiated learning and personalized learning. The next CRC meeting is on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

WCSEA: Mr. Steen read the report on behalf of Mrs. Sternweiler who stated the committee met at Marie Murphy school on November 6<sup>th</sup>. The Advisory Board accepted the FY17 Annual Financial Report and approved the Fiscal Year to Date Activity. The location and dates of the Summer Enrichment Program were presented. The sessions would be held at WJHS and Romona schools between June 20 –July 4<sup>th</sup>. The Board discussed the function of WCSEA, outside of the fiscal sharing, as collaborating and providing services for students with Individual Educational Plans. This partnership is greatly needed and appreciated by both districts. The next meeting is March 19<sup>th</sup> at MEC.

## **Board Agenda Items**

### **Legislative Update**

Mrs. Kearney reported SB851 passed through the House and would resurface in January. Details of this bill would impose a mandatory two-year property tax freeze for Cook and collar counties for 2017 and 2018. It would also allow districts to extend the levy tied to debt payment or pension obligation.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. Written Communication**

Dr. Lechner noted the Board received a significant amount of written communication regarding the levy. All of this written communication has been posted online. Other written communication received was from Beth Feeley regarding addressing results of the 2017 School Climate Survey and types of training materials used; Lynne Abbot regarding over reliance on electronic devices; Sylvie Légère regarding operational excellence, taxes, and personalized learning.

### **B. Administrative Announcements**

Dr. Lechner announced Wednesday, November 15, 2017 is designated as “School Board Members Day” in Illinois. This is the District’s and community’s opportunity to thank the board of education members for their commitment in providing a local governance for public schools.

Dr. Lechner reported District 39’s Parent Teacher conferences were held last week and were very well attended. Conferences provided an opportunity for families and teachers to discuss student progress, and provide guidance on how to reflect and set goals.

Dr. Lechner stated the Illinois School Report card was released on October 31<sup>st</sup>. He stated District 39’s report card is posted on all of the District’s websites. Data involving student academic growth and achievement, such as PARCC, is included. He added per ISBE requirements, the District’s local achievement data would be presented in detail later tonight. Parents or community members without access to a printer may request a hard copy by contacting the District office.

### **C. Annual Business**

#### **1. Fiscal Year 2017 Financial Audit**

Dr. Lechner stated for the 16<sup>th</sup> year in a row District 39 has earned the highest financial rating “Financial Recognition” for exhibiting financial stability. The District’s weighted score was 4.0 out of 4.0. Scott Duenser presented the District’s financial report.

Mr. Duenser of Klein Hall Associates shared highlights of the audit report. He reported the District was issued an unmodified opinion of the District’s financial statements and the District is fiscally stable. Mr. Duenser stated the Comprehensive Financial Report is the most detailed, transparent document that a government entity can produce to present the results of its operations for the year. He commended the District on compiling this report for the public.

Mr. Cesaretti suggested for the future including more financial ratios/data versus other comparable districts and making pension disclosures more transparent.

Mr. Panzica asked at what point does the reserve level impact the financial rating score and if it is for the current year or the trend. Mr. Duenser noted there are five components in ISBE financial score that are weighted individually.

2. 2018-2019 Draft Student Fees

Dr. Lechner stated with the exception of a \$10 increase to 7<sup>th</sup> grade instructional material fees, no other fee increases were recommended for the next school year. He noted the \$10 increase covers iPad insurance.

Dr. Lechner stated there would be a change in practice for bus registrations for next year. The District would extend the required registration deadline to July 13<sup>th</sup> and then have a hard cut off. Students registered after that date would be added to a bus route two weeks after school begins. He noted 266 families signed up after the deadline this year, which negatively impacted bus routes.

3. Approve 2018-2019 Solicitation of Bids for Highcrest Addition

Dr. Lechner stated the Facility Development committee reviewed the Highcrest addition project and is ready to solicit bids. The estimated cost of Phase 1 projects is \$5.2M and would be paid out of reserves in the Operations & Maintenance Fund. He noted this approval does not approve the final project. The final decision on the addition would be made in February 2018.

Mrs. Kearney asked about the cost of air conditioning and requested bids be received with and without air conditioning. Dr. Lechner stated past practice has been to add air conditioning when adding new spaces to existing buildings but would request both price options be obtained.

4. 2017 Fall Assessment Report

Dr. Lechner stated the 2017 Fall Assessment report is an executive summary of Performance Series and PARCC assessment results from spring of 2017. He noted that spring of 2017 was the last administration of Performance Series as the District now uses Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA Map).

Ms. Lee stated the 2015 spring Performance Series testing was eliminated due to the addition of the Performance Series and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment. She provided District average scaled scores, percentage of students' scores in the average or above average range nationally, and the percentage of students who have met gains targets in both reading and mathematics. She reported that for both Performance Series reading and mathematics, District 39 students average scaled score for each grade level is above the upper threshold of the national average range. This was the final report of data for Performance Series.

Ms. Lee explained the State determined the time frame in which to administer the PARCC assessment which has varied over the past three years. The PARCC assessment baseline data scores are from 2015. The percentage of District 39 students meeting or exceeding grade specific standards is well above statewide results in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. She then reviewed Districtwide trends and the upcoming assessment calendar.

Board discussion ensued regarding separating meets/exceeds category to identify trends; identifying statistical differences for boys versus girls in ELA; discussing trends at the next Strategy committee; Performance Series data breakdown by gender; if this was the first year measuring the meeting growth target; and an explanation of the growth data. Mr. Steen explained the consultant took seven years of growth as a beginning period of achievement and created a model of that historical growth data. The number represents how many students met the expectation level of 75%. He noted levels above 75% mean the achievement is better than what was expected and below 75% achievement require additional work. He explained the numbers are

based against the achievement over the past seven years. Dr. Lechner noted the new NWEA Map assessment allows for a comparison of like districts.

Additional Board discussion took place regarding when to change the average if results are well above the 75%; and the many differences between PARCC and NWEA Map assessments, and results, including the ability to interpret data, trends, and growth ranges.

#### 5. Long Term Enrollment Projections

Dr. Lechner reported District 39's move-in rate continues to be strong, which balances lower birth rates. The District continues to have the largest enrollment increase from Kindergarten to first grade, with a steady 2-4% increase for each successive grade. The administration continues to project that overall enrollments are relatively stable.

Mr. Steen asked if the administration would predict over 3,400 students in 2022 though the projections expect approximately 3,300 students. Dr. Lechner explained the prediction is enrollments would increase yet that trend hasn't happened. Kindergarten through fourth grade enrollments are solid and move-ins occur especially for fifth grade.

#### 6. Levy Update

Dr. Lechner explained how the levy process works. He stated the levy request is for a specific dollar amount not a specific percentage or tax increase. The two components for the levy request are Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus new construction. The percentage increase in a property owner's tax bill is not based on the percentage increase in the levy. The major component of change in a property tax bill is based on the individual's property value. He reviewed the financial philosophy of the District since the 2011 referendum with budget cuts, deficit spending and cost per pupil. The District's guiding principals were to maintain or improve excellence while living within means; target minimum fund balance of 30% total operating expenditures; to budget conservatively; and connect expenses to revenues. The Board then targeted at least five years until the next referendum, which was surpassed.

Dr. Lechner reviewed the outcomes of those resources being the Wilmette Junior High Science wing; renovated five libraries; 1:1 Mobile Learning program; expanded foreign language offerings; early childhood program at Romona; and roof maintenance and boiler replacements. Dr. Lechner reported the target to maintain a minimum fund balance of 30%, while township districts have fund balance targets of 50% or more. He stated fund balances below 25% result in Illinois State Board of Education financial watch list and lowered bond ratings. Board is committed to a slow decline of fund balances.

Dr. Lechner stated due to uncertainty in State funding due to SB 851 with possible pension cost shift and a proposed property tax freeze for 2018 and 2019. He noted all salaries are tied to CPI with an average increase of 2.8% each year.

Dr. Lechner stated the levy decisions balance the needs for students' education with the interest of taxpayers. The Districts past levy practice includes the annual CPI increase based on individual property values and properties with new construction. He noted changing past levy practices would limit revenue increases resulting in faster declining fund balances. He reviewed current baseline forecast for fund balances as well as the same baseline forecast using SB 851 property tax freeze for 2018 and 2019. He then presented a forecast without the CPI increase including property tax freezes.

Mrs. Kearney had questions and comments regarding whether all phases of Highcrest construction were included in the current baseline forecast; all phases being independent allowing the opportunity to not proceed with other phases of construction; discussion on the construction costs per phase; not increasing the levy and going to referendum for added construction; SB 851 allowing an extension of the levy for pension costs and debt payments; building assumptions into budgets and spending the money on other projects when assumptions don't occur.

Mr. Panzica commented the assumptions presented in the third report were different than the 2011 referendum. He noted the point was to have more control of the future by having 30% of reserves as 25% is where ratings begin to decline. He stated with current State finance issues and proposals being presented not under local control means in two years the District would have to go to referendum and if it failed, 10% would have to be removed from the budget the next year. He said the current five-year budget has a smoother trajectory allowing a cushion. He added that with the CPI and property tax freeze the entire construction plan would have to be cancelled after the first phase. He commented the Board would have to dive deeper into exactly what would be tied to the consequence of reducing the levy at the next finance meeting.

Mr. Cesaretti acknowledged Mr. Panzica's request to discuss the budget, levy request, and construction costs at the next finance meeting. He noted that while the Board agrees the construction at Highcrest is needed, it may be cut.

Dr. Lechner stated an audience member brought up the topic of pension spiking and noted a report would be presented at the December Board meeting. He added there are no projections included in the budget for pension spiking as it is out of the District's control.

Mr. Steen said it has been said that the budget is fully funded but there isn't a budget yet as that comes later in the process. He asked for clarification whether revenues or expenditures are greater in the projections. Dr. Lechner clarified in the current baseline forecast that the expected expenditures are greater than the revenues for the next five years.

Mrs. Kearney asked when the referendum failed; mid to late 1990s. She referenced Mr. Nathan's comments regarding the year the Board voted not to extend the levy followed by the year the referendum did not pass. She also noted in 2011 the referendum passed and the economy and political climate was entirely different than in 2016. She said the Board can continue to ask the community if more funding is needed.

Mr. Steen asked Mrs. Kearney about her statement about 'when budgeted assumptions don't occur the District spends that money on necessary projects'. He asked, as she was on the Board for two years and voted, which projects she felt the District should not have spent money on. Mrs. Kearney responded that she voted against the learning commons projects and was not a proponent the accelerated rate of library renovations.

Mr. Steen discussed the scenarios in the report regarding tax freezes and costs per phase of Highcrest construction. He noted the cost of a one year tax freeze equals the cost of HMS Phase 1 construction. He also stated with the cost of a two-year tax freeze cutting construction would not be sufficient, and with a levy freeze and tax freeze the loss of revenue would be about \$17M which would lead to finding additional budget cuts beyond construction.



Ms. Schneider-Fabes noted her appreciation for the principles by which the district operates and appreciated the serious discussion on whether to raise the levy. She also stated as Board members are stewards of the District they need to consider the District's needs. She added that when considering needs of the District, members may not agree but they all care. She stated they need to maintain the greatness of the District as a high performing district which involves constantly being innovative and changing and that comes with a price. Ms. Fabes stated that she feels it's a "pay now or pay later" situation. If you defer capital improvements they end up costing more. She stated that discussion regarding the need for a levy is a nuanced conversation requiring serious reflection and she feels all the members are doing just that.

Mrs. Schaff agreed and stated putting together the detailed levy report was a great exercise in taking a step back to review the how and why of the levy and the principles involved allowing a more thoughtful process.

### **E. Board Policy Review**

1. First Reading of Revised Board of Education Policies 2:230, 6:70, 6:80, 6:100, 6:110, 6:120 and 6:140

Dr. Lechner stated these are the next set of policies to be revised. In consultation with Katie Lee, Denise Thrasher, Heather Glowacki, and the attorneys, the revisions reflect current District practice as well as legal requirements. He noted several of the policies have recommended title changes. Questions and suggestions regarding revisions will be addressed for the second reading.

Board members had suggested edits to policies for second reading. Mr. Steen noted for the public that Policy 2:230 under review suggested changing the public comment section to three minutes per person, which Mr. Steen noted was the average speakers time today. Another change is speakers may speak for three minutes during the first comment section and if the same person returns during the second comment section they will be limited to one minute to allow new speakers an opportunity. The fifteen minutes per topic rule would be eliminated. He added the Board's intention is to present the second read vote at the beginning of the December meeting to enact the policies for that meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Karen Donnan, Wilmette, spoke in support of the levy as a parent of students attending school in 1990s when the levy wasn't supported and the referendum failed. She stated those failures not only impacted buildings not being repaired, boilers not being maintained, and roofs leaking. The biggest impact was increase in class size. She reported that supports for children stopped, enrichment disappeared. Parents sought tutoring outside of the District for remedial, enrichment, speech and language, and occupational services. The financial instability and teachers not having contracts caused massive teacher turnover. She noted one year 30% of staff at Highcrest were new teachers. The culture of the school suffered with that many new teachers and caused a chaotic environment without year over year student growth due to lack of educational staff.

Steven Schwartz, Wilmette, moved here for the schools and noted he invested ten years before having a child attend District 39 schools. He spoke in favor of the levy. He is extremely impressed with the quality of teaching, support staff, and the administration. He stated "you get what you pay for, no one likes to pay taxes". He said he understands his tax bill and knows where his money is going. He believes the District is not overspending and is doing a phenomenal job especially looking toward the future to provide a stable

funding environment. He reflected on his high school experience in Los Angeles Grew where in 1978 California amended its constitution and passed Proposition 13 which froze property taxes and limited increases to no more than 2% annually, which caused the public schools to limit class offerings and had limited teaching staff.

John Marshall, Wilmette, stated his three children attended District 39. He emphasized the great job District 39 did in preparing his children for college and the future. He values the schools for future children. He appreciated the value of the schools in attracting people to Wilmette for community prosperity. He stated his full support of the levy at rate of inflation.

Kimberly Alcantara, Wilmette, has three sons who attended District 39. She stated if the District pays its 2018-2019 expenses with 2017-2018 dollars, fund balances will be drawn down in a very predictable manner. She said extending the levy by CPI reflects the reality of costs that increase. The District should extend the levy because it's necessary to pay for the education delivery and programming that the people of this District want and expect for years to come. She felt failing to pass the levy would be an undeniable misstep with the property tax freeze, potential pension obligations, and increased health care costs. She noted this does not consider costs for the many programs residents want to add, such as full day kindergarten and moving band/orchestra into the school day. She encouraged the Board to continue to maintain and upgrade facilities to keep pace with current educational models. By keeping buildings up to date, and not allowing them to become functionally antiquated, the District can avoid a situation like at New Trier when a major referendum was needed simply to keep the building working for students and staff. She asked the District to also consider increasing the target fund balance above 30%. She suggested having a 30% operating fund balance means the District would have three months of working capital, especially given the uncertainties of legislation, maintaining a 30% fund balance would be imprudent.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Consent Agenda**

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mrs. Schaff to approve the personnel report dated November 13, 2017, which included educational support personnel full-time employment of **Marina Porter**, effective November 8, 2017; educational support personnel part-time employment of **Michael Madden**, effective October 27, 2017; temporary employment of **Stephen Alfredson**, effective December 1, 2017; **Roopak Hanna**, effective November 6, 2017; **Daniel Levy**, effective December 1, 2017; licensed resignation of **Juliana Cremieux**, effective November 7, 2017; educational support personnel resignation of **Alana Carroll**, effective November 24, 2017; **Michael Seitzinger**, effective October 23, 2017; release of probationary employee, **Julia Johnson**, effective November 10, 2017; **Catherine Schmittou**, effective November 10, 2017: to accept the fiscal year 2017 annual financial audit and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Wilmette Public Schools as presented by Klein Hall CPAs, of Aurora, Illinois: approve Fiscal Year 2019 solicitation of bids for construction projects per bid report dated November 13, 2017 with expenditures estimated at \$5,241,212 for non-life safety projects: approve as first reading revised Board of Education Policies 2:230 Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings and Petitions to the Board; 6:70 Religious Holidays; 6:80 Controversial Issues; 6:100 Resources for Teachers: Animals; 6:110 Truant's Alternative and Optional Education Programs; 6:120 Special Education; and 6:140 Education of Homeless Children: to approve the accounts payable for bills listed between October 24, 2017– November 13, 2017 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$243,347.52; O&M Fund \$97,975.28; Debt Service Fund \$1,087,307.50; Transportation Fund \$191,795.95; Capital Projects \$16,561.00; total all funds: \$1,636,987.25: to approve the manual checks issued between October 24, 2017 – November 13, 2017 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$350,179.00; O&M Fund \$3,588.63; Transportation Fund \$50.94; total all funds: \$353,818.57.

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

## **CONFERENCE ITEMS**

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

Mrs. Kearney suggested the Board develop a solid policy or practice about addressing responses to written communication to the Board. She noted the District’s past practice was to publish responses to communications received one week prior to the publishing of the public packet, generally the Friday before the Board meeting. She noted some more complicated communications require more time to respond. She noted the superintendent needs to be copied on any communications received by the Board to ensure a response and to be published. Mr. Steen responded that this would be a topic to be addressed at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Mrs. Schneider-Fabes asked Dr. Lechner if he might pursue advocating to not administer the PARCC test in the spring as it would not impact instruction in the classroom. Dr. Lechner stated PARCC is a mandated assessment but he would make an inquiry.

### **Good and Welfare**

None

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mrs. Schaff to adjourn to executive session to discuss specific personnel.

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

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 10:00 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting of the Board of Education at 10:27 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 10:28 p.m. by **General Consent.**

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President

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Secretary