

**APRIL 27, 2020
WILMETTE, IL
REGULAR MEETING**

REMOTE VIRTUAL MEETING

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, April 27, 2020. President Lisa Schneider-Fabes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Lisa Schneider-Fabes, Jon Cesaretti, Frank Panzica, Amy Poehling, Mark Steen, Ellen Sternweiler, Erin Stone

Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Kari Cremascoli, Ellen Crispino, Tony DeMonte, Heather Glowacki, Katie Lee, Kristin Swanson

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Principal Cindy Anderson and Assistant Principal Elena Ryan introduced a video of Romona staff and students sharing their thoughts and feelings during remote learning. Several Romona fourth graders led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENT

President Schneider-Fabes read an announcement requesting everyone be respectful of each other, only speak when called upon, and refrain from distracting behaviors such as such as loud conversations, cheering, clapping, or booing.

APPROVE THE MINUTES

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to accept the March 16, 2020 Public Hearing Minutes and the March 16, 2020 Board of Education and Executive Session minutes. The minutes were approved as amended by **General Consent**.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (email public comments to: PublicComment@wilmette39.org)

None

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facility Development Committee (FDC) – Mrs. Sternweiler reported the committee met as part of the Committee of the Whole on April 20th. The donation agreement in support of the Central Elementary School Kindergarten Playground donation was reviewed. The Central PTA generously raised \$75K for construction of the Kindergarten playground which will be installed this summer.

The FDC also reviewed Harper Summer Construction. Harper construction centers around finishing the new classroom space for kindergarten enrichment and preparing space for the special education Therapeutic Intervention Program (TIP) to relocate from Central to Harper School next year.

School Finance Committee (SFC) – Mr. Cesaretti reported the Finance Committee met as part of the Committee of the Whole on April 20th. Members received and discussed a presentation from Elizabeth Hennessey, Bond Advisor, who provided a market update. She reviewed historical AAA, MMD and Treasury Rates, with a focus on market changes since the coronavirus outbreak. The markets continue to be monitored carefully. She provided a bond sale process update, and discussed public offering, direct placement, competitive sales and negotiated sales. The bond sale has been delayed as the markets relative to the impact of COVID-19 are monitored. Mrs. Hennessey provided a review of the costs of issuance comparison as well as the advantages and disadvantages of private placement. The District anticipates the sale of bonds in the coming weeks.

The SFC also discussed capital projects and funding timelines. The Board reviewed a draft of the Capital Projects Funding Timeline and the FY20 budget along with some adjustments anticipated to reflect the projected balance in the O&M fund at the end of the fiscal year. FY21 information has been updated to reflect known costs based on actual construction bids as well as savings due to unused contingency of \$196K combined for the Harper and Highcrest Learning Commons projects. Both have been updated to reflect current estimated timing of expenditures between fiscal years as summer projects always cross two fiscal years.

The Committee discussed the draft FY21 budget for all funds. This draft budget will be presented and discussed in detail later on the agenda. When the final budget is presented in August it will reflect the actual fund balances at the end of FY20. The budget currently reflects a surplus in the Operating Funds prior to Other Uses of Funds for construction projects. A higher balance is expected at the end of the fiscal year within the Operations & Maintenance budget due some savings from FY20 capital projects and the issuance of bonds. These additional funds projected in the Operating Fund balance will put the projected Operating Fund Balance as a percentage of Operating Fund Expenditures at 48.8% at the end of FY21. It was noted the projected fund balance would be better known in a couple of months based on the impact of COVID-19 and the school closure.

Finally, the SFC reviewed options for a transportation contract amendment due to school closures. The Board expressed interest in ensuring North Shore Transit's (NST) bus drivers and employees continue to be paid during the COVID-19 school closures. Per the terms of the transportation contract, the District is not required to make any payments when routes are not run; however, the District has an interest in ensuring drivers continue to be paid, both in accordance with the Board's direction issued in March when school's first closed, and in order to retain bus drivers when school returns to in-person instruction. The Board reviewed a proposed contract with North Shore Transit to pay 60% of regular and special education route costs to cover salaries and benefits of NST employees. To be fiscally responsible, the District needs to balance payments to NST to ensure drivers continue to be paid with District expenses and any potential refunds to parents. Administration hoped a contract would be ready for consideration and action at this meeting, however, it is now expected for consideration in May.

Strategy Committee – Mr. Steen reported the committee received an update on the District's scheduling of Strategic Planning events in light of cancellations due to COVID-19. Dr. Cremascoli recommended the District put a pause on formal strategic planning efforts for this school year. In light of the community-wide engagement effort being planned, coupled with no opportunity for in-person meetings, this is the most prudent action for this important endeavor. The Board supported this direction and directed administration to seek new dates for second quarter in the fall after the launch of the new school year.

Liaison Reports

Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) – Mrs. Sternweiler stated IASB is focused on supporting school districts statewide during this new remote learning landscape. They are defining paths to clarify expectations and opportunities for the end of the school year as well as options for summer programming and the next school year. ISBE offered a variety of virtual meeting dates to provide collaboration opportunities for administrators and staff.

Legislative Update

Ms. Stone stated the state legislative sessions have been canceled through the end of April. On the Federal level, states can apply for their portion of the \$13.5B allotted for K-12 education as part of the third stimulus package, CARES Act, that can be used to reimburse COVID related expenses going back to March 13th. She noted there is very specific detail on how funds can be distributed which are listed on the ISBE website. In the fourth stimulus package there is no money for education but some advocacy on the national level for funding education and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). She noted H.R.6563 was proposed last week to create funding for districts struggling with connectivity, mobile devices, and wireless networks.

INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Written Communication

Dr. Cremascoli reported the Board received written communication from Eric Assouad requesting the District consider utilizing the Khan Academy for online learning. The Board received written communication from Tracy Kearney regarding the Committee of the Whole Meeting and supporting documents.

B. Administrative Announcements

Remote Learning Update and Progress

Dr. Cremascoli stated District 39 focused on providing meaningful and manageable remote learning experiences that nurture strong, positive connections between students and teachers while emphasizing the most essential learning targets in each grade level or subject area.

Dr. Cremascoli said as the District moves forward with fourth quarter and the end of school year remote education in accordance with Governor J.B. Pritzker's order, an update was provided to the Board at the Committee of the Whole meeting regarding the Remote Learning Program and recent survey results. Families were also provided updates regarding remote learning. The District continues to put students first and, as a community, continues to support one another and those in need with caring kindness and generosity.

Dr. Cremascoli stated, "In the midst of many challenges, we have truly seen the resilience and collective strength of the entire community in action. We are incredibly grateful for our community's support as schools closed, lives dramatically altered, and we swiftly shifted to remote learning. We have been encouraged by the many positive and uplifting messages we have received, and by the ongoing partnership and collaboration from which we all benefit in these truly unprecedented times."

Dr. Cremascoli stated as the District continues to refine remote learning programming to ensure meaningful, manageable, and connected learning experiences for students, administrators are also planning for the end of the school year. Administration continues to closely monitor guidance from health experts at the CDC and the IDPH and await additional guidance from the Governor and the State Board of Education regarding the conclusion of the school year and summer school opportunities.

Dr. Cremascoli stated a report summarizing the feedback received through Remote Learning Surveys of students, teachers, and parents was provided to the Board. Members reviewed the in-depth feedback at the Committee of the Whole Meeting. She highlighted a few noteworthy areas of feedback, planning and implementation to date, as well as ongoing refinement efforts. She also highlighted the Remote Learning Information Page for Parents. She provided a link to the ISBE Remote Learning Guidance Document.

2019-2020 School Year Calendar

Dr. Cremascoli stated administration is awaiting additional clarification from the Governor and the Illinois State Board of Education regarding the last day of school in June. Formal remote learning will continue through at least June 5th, with some opportunity set aside during the week of June 8th for end-of-year activities, progress reporting, classroom and locker clean-out, and final farewells. During this unique remote learning environment, there is a lot more to plan for as the end of the school year approaches and preparations begin for the next school year. It is expected that teachers will spend some of this time planning, collaborating with each other to make any necessary curricular adjustments and prepare for the transition back to school in the fall.

Student Registration for Next Year

Dr. Cremascoli stated families were encouraged to complete the registration process for the next school year by spring break. After the pandemic occurred the District's collective attention turned toward remote learning, and thus deadlines for registration were extended beyond the original target of spring break. She noted many families have completed the enrollment process. Currently, nearly 80% of students (78.6%) registered have completed the enrollment process. The District continues to reach out to families who have not yet finalized their enrollment for the upcoming school year as this information defines staffing plans for the upcoming school year.

End of Year Planning

Dr. Cremascoli stated the end of the school year will simply not be the same without the opportunity for everyone to physically gather again as a school community. She added the news of school closures through the end of the school year is especially difficult for 4th, 6th and 8th graders who are preparing to transition to new schools in the fall. She stated administrators are identifying special ways in which to honor treasured end-of-year celebrations, especially for these students.

Summer School Programming

Dr. Cremascoli reported administrators are currently considering what options may exist for Summer School opportunities in District 39. Summer school will be offered, but further guidance is needed regarding modality and available options. It is expected that the programming that has historically been available will be modified to account for social distancing requirements, but remain hopeful that some in-person instruction may be offered. Knowing there will be restrictions to in-person instruction, the focus is almost exclusively on academic programming for the summer.

Board discussion included collection of school fees during the registration process, reminding parents about the need for Angel Fund donations and Angel Fund assistance, thanking the Educational Foundation for donating a significant amount to Angel Fund, and the length of summer school programming.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Dr. Cremascoli reported the Board received FOIA from Nathan Mihelich of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association requesting names and email addresses of any certified staff (teachers, administrators, nurses, counselors, etc.) who are retiring this year; Venya Joshi submitted the same FOIA twice for all logs from August 1, 2017, to the present that detail the instances when students were placed in an isolated time out, seclusion, or any other type of confinement (referred to as “isolated time out”; Katherine Smyser of NBC Universal requesting the District answer survey questions, on issues concerning potential local cases of Coronavirus.

B. Annual Business

1. Fiscal Year 2021 Tentative Budget

Dr. Cremascoli stated this is the first review of FY2021 Tentative Budget. The budget will be reviewed again next month and submitted to the Board for final approval in August.

Mrs. Crispino stated the first version of the budget was prepared prior to the governor announcing school closures through the end of the school year. This budget uses the current FY20 budget as a starting point. Over the next couple of months, a review of the estimated financial implications of COVID-19 and the current economic environment on our FY21 budget will be conducted

Mrs. Crispino reviewed the District’s Operating Funds, which include the Educational, Operations and Maintenance, Transportation, Municipal Retirement, Working Cash and Tort Funds. She noted local revenue makes up the majority of the District’s revenue. 84% of the District’s Operating Revenue is made up of property taxes.

Mrs. Crispino reported local revenue assumptions include Property Tax Revenue, New Property Growth, Levy Collections, Interest Revenue and Kindergarten Enrichment revenue. She noted property tax revenue assumes an increase of 1.9% CPI from the 2019 levy and 2.3% for the 2020 levy plus an estimated \$487,000 in New Property Growth (NPG) which is based on a 12-year historical average. She also reported levy collections are historically based at 98%, net of refunds. However, due to COVID-19 the Cook County Assessor will reassess all properties and projected refunds would also be reviewed. Interest revenue is .7% of the prior year’s fund balance and kindergarten enrichment is budgeted at \$769K based on enrollment of 119 students.

Mrs. Crispino stated federal and state funding were based on FY20 allocations, which may change due to the global pandemic.

Mrs. Crispino reported Operating Expenditure Assumptions include salaries and benefits, and construction projects. She noted salaries are expected to increase 5% and benefits to increase 10.8%. Approved construction projects at Highcrest Middle School and Central Elementary are estimated at \$1.7M each. The budget included construction costs for KEEP39 at Romona and McKenzie Elementary Schools.

Mrs. Crispino provided a summary of each fund individually.

Board member discussion included Operating Funds ‘other revenue’ being from school and lunch fees; how many state funding payments are made historically; the 10% insurance increase being larger than in the past; how CPI will affect the budget beyond 2020; reviewing the five-year projections; review the tentative budget again in June due to COVID-19 related issues.

C. Board Policy Review

1. Second and Final Reading of Board of Education Policies 8:10, 8:20, 8:25, 8:30, 8:70, 8:80, 8:90, 8:95 and 8:100

Dr. Cremascoli stated policies were presented for first reading in March. The policies have slight revisions and are ready for final approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ACTION ITEMS

A. Consent Agenda

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to approve the personnel report dated April 27, 2020, which included administrative full-time employment of **Corey Bultemeier**, effective July 1, 2020; licensed full-time reemployment of **Carole Nimrod**, effective August 24, 2020; licensed resignation of **Anne Clark**, effective June 11, 2020; **Morgan Paulson**, effective June 11, 2020: approve as second and final reading of Board of Education Policies 8:10 *Communications With The Public*; 8:20 *Community Use of School Facilities*; 8:25 *Advertising and Distribution of Literature and Other Materials by Non-School Entities*; 8:30 *Visitors to and Conduct on School Property and Community Use of Buildings*; 8:70 *Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities*; 8:80 *Gifts to the District*; 8:90 *Parent Organizations*; 8:95 *Community Review Committee*; and 8:100 *Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies*: approve to release to the public the executive session minutes for May 13, 2019 and August 22, 2019: approve to not release to the public the executive session minutes for the following dates: June 10, 2019 (Session 2); June 17, 2019; August 26, 2019 (Sessions 1 & 2); September 16, 2019; September 23, 2019; October 28, 2019; November 18, 2019; December 16, 2019; January 13, 2020; January 27, 2020 and February 10, 2020: approve to dispose of executive session audio recordings pursuant to District policy for the following dates: January 22, 2018, February 24, 2018, February 26, 2018, March 19, 2018 and April 23, 2018: approve the accounts payable for bills listed between March 17, 2020 – April 27, 2020 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$587,715.49; O&M Fund \$302,035.51; Transportation Fund \$94,281.90; Capital Projects \$152,243.00; total all funds: \$1,136,275.90: approve the manual checks issued between March 17, 2020 – April 27, 2020 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$563,315.26; O&M Fund \$12,046.11; Transportation Fund \$53.19; total all funds: \$575,414.56

On a roll call vote on the motion, voting “yea” – Jon Cesaretti, Frank Panzica, Amy Poehling, Mark Steen, Ellen Sternweiler, Erin Stone, Lisa Schneider-Fabes; voting “nay” – none; absent – none:
Motions Carried.

CONFERENCE ITEMS

Old Business

Mr. Panzica requested an update on Village stormwater project. Dr. Cremascoli stated the project is proceeding and the village was able to begin the project earlier than anticipated due to school closures. She stated discussions are ongoing regarding allowing the Village full access with some days reserved for students and staff to enter the school to gather belongings and access resources.

New Business

None

Good and Welfare

Mrs. Poehling stated being able to see and connect with adults remotely has enlightened her children. Today her children were thrilled to hear from Dr. Cremascoli and loved the book she read to students. She stated with all the superintendent has to handle and plan for, it was nice to have Dr. Cremascoli prioritize her time to spend with students, proving her commitment to children. Mr. Steen agreed.

President Schneider-Fabes noted how difficult it was to hear the announcement to end the school year remotely. She thanked Dr. Cremascoli for taking time to survey parents, staff, and students while continuing to improve remote learning. She noted the new communication on the website is fabulous. She stated on behalf of the Board, all are grateful for the D39 team efforts. The work being done is so impressive.

Ms. Stone was grateful for the flexibility of the teachers. She said her eighth grader had ceramics for fourth quarter, which she thought would be impossible in a remote learning environment. She was surprised when her son took a cookie sheet out of the oven with homemade clay made from ingredients already in her home. She was grateful for these accomplishments.

Dr. Cremascoli thanked District 39 teachers and the administrative team. As part of Teacher Appreciation Week, she shared a video made by the Board Members acknowledging D39 teachers. She thanked the Board for taking the time to appreciate and honor teachers.

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to adjourn to executive session to discuss Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and Its Employees or Their Representatives, or Deliberations Concerning Salary Schedules for One or More Classes of Employees 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)

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

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 8:27 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting of the Board of Education at 9:38 p.m.

Being no further business, Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by, Mr. Steen, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education. It adjourned at 9:39 p.m. by **General Consent.**

President

Secretary