

**NOVEMBER 18, 2019**  
**WILMETTE, IL**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, November 18, 2019 at the Mikaelian Education Center, 615 Locust Road, Wilmette, Illinois. 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 Kelly Jackson introduced Highcrest Middle School 6th Grade Advisory Board Students whose mission is to strengthen community and spread kindness, friendship, and unity throughout the school. Students shared their recent activities and passed out feathers for Board members to write and share their thoughts of thankfulness. The students led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ARTWORK**

President Schneider-Fabes stated the photographs in the Board room were taken and edited by Wilmette Junior High students in Eric Willson's Photography class. Each image communicates a deeper meaning about the life and adventures of a Wilmette student. Photography at Wilmette Junior High fosters an environment of cutting-edge interaction and innovation.

**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 October 28, 2019 Board of Education and Executive Session Minutes. The minutes were approved as submitted by **General Consent**.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**ADJOURN TO PUBLIC HEARING ON 2019 LEVY**

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to adjourn to the public hearing on the 2019 Levy. The meeting adjourned to the Public Hearing by **General Consent**.

## **FINANCIAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. Fiscal Year Financial Audit**

Dr. Cremascoli stated District 39 earned the highest “Financial Recognition” for exhibiting financial stability with a weighted score of 4.0 out of 4.0. She introduced Scott Duenser of Klein Hall Associates to present the District’s audit.

Scott Duenser reported as of November 1<sup>st</sup> Klein Hall Associates merged with Wipfli LLP and are now under the Wipfli LLP label. He stated the audit data met the regulatory requirements and are complete for the year. District 39 was issued an unmodified “clean” opinion meaning all financial statements are fairly stated in all material respects. The District obtain a financial profile score of 4.0 out of 4.0 meeting the five criteria established by ISBE. He noted the District’s Net Position increased by \$3.9M and the fund balance over all increased by \$300K.

### **B. 2019 Levy**

Dr. Cremascoli stated the 2019 estimated Levy request represents an increase due to Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 1.9% plus new property growth. District 39 taxes are approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a property owner’s tax bill, therefore, the projected increase for District 39 portion is .7% of the total tax bill.

Mrs. Crispino reported the 2019 levy is based upon several variables including the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the value of new construction, the county multiplier, and the Limiting Rate calculation. The District’s Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) is unknown at this time, but is projected at \$1,796,402,623 (2018). However, when the County Clerk extends the taxes, the taxes will be against the actual 2019 EAV plus new property growth. The total requested levy for “capped” funds is \$55,949,911. She noted the Cook County Clerk determines the final levy extension amount. She reported the Debt Service Levy was also reviewed at Committee of the Whole meeting. The Debt Service Levy is a standard practice allowing the District to cover actual bond payment obligations.

### **C. Resolution Authorizing a Supplemental Debt Service Tax Levy to Pay the Principal of and Interest on Outstanding Limited Bonds of the District**

Dr. Cremascoli noted the Debt Service Tax Levy allows the District to levy for bond payment obligations and was reported as part of the 2019 Levy presentation.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION ON THE 2019 LEVY**

None

## **AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO THE 2019 LEVY PRESENTATION**

None

## **ADJOURN TO REGULAR MEETING**

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to adjourn back to the regular Board of Education meeting. The meeting adjourned to the Regular Meeting by **General Consent**.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Brook Fox Conkey, a lifelong Wilmette resident and District 39 alumni, expressed concern with the increase in student fees. She noted the current fee for her 7<sup>th</sup> grade student is \$295 and another increase would put the fee over \$300. She stated this might have been acceptable fee when taxes were lower and home values were higher but the opposite is the reality. She requested the Board make cuts to fees to incorporate them within taxes.

## **BOARD REPORTS**

### **A. Committees**

Facility Development Committee – Mrs. Sternweiler stated the Board tabled the landscape bid at the October meeting to investigate the vegetable gardens needs of each school. Members received an updated review at the recent Committee of the Whole meeting. She noted the intent of the bid was to provide the same services currently received. While the needs at each school vary, the District would provide equitable services across the schools. Administration recommended approval of the bid with Landscape Concepts Management with a change order increase up to 10% for potential of additional needed services.

Mrs. Sternweiler announced a Special Board of Education meeting would be held on December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at Highcrest Middle School to meet with Village of Wilmette representatives regarding the stormwater project scheduled for the Highcrest playfields in summer of 2020.

School Finance Committee – Mr. Cesaretti stated at the recent Committee of the Whole meeting, members received a presentation from Scott Duenser on the 2019 Audit, the Audit Highlights, the 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and the Audit Communication. Members also discussed completion of the expenditure review and concluded the District is being managed in a fiscally responsible manner. He stated the District has Forecast5 software provides benchmarking abilities for ongoing review of selected metrics to measure performance against other comparable districts. The administration would also explore modern web graphic options to present data in summary and drill down comparisons as well as historical trends.

Mr. Cesaretti stated the members reviewed the 2019 Levy, which had no changes since presented in October. Finally, the committee reviewed proposals for 2020-2021 student fees and discussed how costs are significant, the overriding philosophy on fees, and moving costs to people who choose to utilize services.

Strategy – Mr. Steen stated the Strategy Committee met as Committee of the Whole on November 11<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Cremascoli led discussion regarding future strategic planning efforts, which included vision, priorities, and process. The members requested examples of strategic plans from other high performing districts for continued review in December and January. Members also discussed special education and Response to Intervention (RtI). Mr. Steen noted District 39 has a long history of providing exceptional special education services, which many families move to Wilmette to receive. Administration requested approval to have an independent firm review the District's special education services in order to continue to provide excellent services and define areas for improvement. He stated the Request for Proposal would be due January 30, 2020.

## **B. Liaison**

Community Review Committee (CRC) – Mrs. Poehling reported the committee met on November 4<sup>th</sup>. She noted the group broke into three subgroups on the CRC topic, *Strengthening Parent Partnerships*. The three sub-topics were “why partnerships between parents and schools are critical to success”, “how schools can cultivate parent engagement”, and “improving understanding and strengthening partnerships on important educational topics”. The groups discussed survey questions to be posed to parents and teachers. The next meeting is December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) – Mrs. Sternweiler reported the Joint Annual Conference, Triple I, begins on Friday and continues through the weekend. On Saturday, she would attend the Delegate Session to represent the District 39 Board of Education to vote against Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) Resolutions #1, School Safety and #3, School Safety Grant Program, which were previously discussed.

## **C. Legislative Update**

Ms. Stone reported the General Assembly concluded their fall veto session and would return in January 2020. Pertinent bills approved were SB10 that reinstates competency test for individuals seeking a paraprofessional license and SB460 which extends compliance to July 1, 2020 of a new requirement that a school district submit all written materials to parents of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) within three days of an eligibility meeting.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. Written Communication**

Dr. Cremascoli noted the Board received written communication from Alexandra Eidenberg, Romona parent, regarding obtaining playground equipment and updating the Romona playground with additional special consideration for children with special needs.

### **B. Administrative Announcements**

Dr. Cremascoli announced Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup> was designated as School Board Members Day in Illinois. She thanked Board members for their commitment as elected officials in providing a local governance voice for public schools. She noted her appreciation for the Board’s leadership and countless hours of volunteer work.

Dr. Cremascoli stated District 39’s Parent Teacher conferences were held on November 6th, 7th, and 8th, which were very well attended among all six schools. Parents who were unable to attend face-to-face conferences were updated by phone or email. Conferences provide an opportunity for families and teachers to discuss student progress, and provide students guidance on how to reflect and set goals.

Dr. Cremascoli announced the Illinois School Report Card was released on October 31<sup>st</sup> by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The District 39 Report Card is posted on the District website and each school website. This announcement meets the annual statutory obligation for each school district presenting the report card to its school board and for posting it on the District website no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of the report card from the State Superintendent of Education. The District’s local achievement data was presented in detail during the October 28th Board of Education meeting.

Dr. Cremascoli stated in December, parents, teachers and 4th -8th grade students will have the opportunity to participate in the 5Essentials Survey. The survey gathers data related to five indicators that affect and predict school success. These indicators are: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Involved Families, Supportive Environments, and Ambitious Instruction. Schools will communicate directly to parents of 4th - 8th grade students. Mark – get that survey out to parents.

Dr. Cremascoli stated the District received a FOIA request from Jonathan P. Fagg of WLS/ABC TV requesting information about student vaping in District 39 including the number of vaping confiscations, number of students disciplined or censured for vaping, and types of disciplinary/censuring categories from 2017 to present.

### **C. Annual Business**

#### **1. 2019 Landscaping Bid**

Dr. Cremascoli noted this review was mentioned during the Facilities Development Committee report. She noted all schools' vegetable garden needs would be met under the proposed contract. The administration recommended Board approval of the landscaping bid as presented in the amount of \$46,632 with Landscape Concepts Management. Depending on each school's vegetable garden service and care, the bid could be increased to \$4,663 (10%) without having to go out to bid again.

#### **2. 2020-2021 Draft Student Fees**

Dr. Cremascoli stated the administration recommended two changes to student fees which would be presented for approval in December.

Mrs. Crispino stated the first recommendation was an increase of \$10 - \$30 to several athletic activities to cover increasing costs, since athletic programs are intended to be self-sustaining. Also recommended, was to combine a number of small fees charged to families throughout the year into the Instructional Materials Fee. These fees cover items such as assignment notebooks, musical recorders, and magazines. The average recommended increase in the Instructional Materials Fee would be about \$10 - \$15 per grade level. Dr. Cremascoli noted there was no recommended increase to the actual Instructional Materials fee.

#### **3. New Trier Township Eighth Grade Survey Report**

Mrs. Jackson reported the New Trier Township Eighth Grade Survey was administered last spring across the township to eighth grade students. The survey was taken by 834 students of which 336 were Wilmette Junior High School (WJHS) students. The survey focused on preparedness in the areas of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills as well as social emotional connections within the schools. The survey was comprised of questions that asked students to comment on their middle school and junior high experiences including challenges faced, feelings of preparation in academic skills areas, and their feelings of preparation in social emotional areas.

Mrs. Jackson noted top areas of challenges for junior high students were balancing schoolwork and a social life, lack of sleep, and managing homework. She reported 90% of WJHS students felt "positively prepared" and 56% felt "very prepared" in the area of technology.

Mrs. Jackson stated 56% of students felt “positively prepared” in time management and study skills though these were the lowest marks received for preparedness and would be addressed for future by integrating executive functioning into classroom instruction.

Mrs. Jackson reported students across the township marked positive preparedness at a rate of over 70% in social-emotional skills, while 71% of WJHS students were noted as positively prepared. She noted Wilmette’s lowest areas were setting personal goals and advocating for peers in bullying situations. She stated 80% of WJHS students had an adult in the school they could reach out to and almost 50% indicated they had five or more adults they felt cared for them at school. She noted many measures were implemented this year to focus on improving climate and culture in schools.

Mr. Panzica noted the new format of the survey provides less longitudinal data on academic preparedness for New Trier and requested this be a topic for follow up at a Committee of the Whole meeting. He noted there were a number of academic items that are important to be successful learners. He specifically asked if there were questions on the survey that addressed writing skills. Dr. Cremascoli stated area superintendents have met to discuss sharing success data regarding students’ preparedness for high school. Important outcome data such as students’ grades, attendance, connections to school, and participation in after school activities could be considered. She stated they would partner with New Trier Township superintendents to continue this discussion. Mrs. Sternweiler felt students need to be prepared for life beyond high school. She appreciated the student responses regarding which groups felt prepared and which groups felt challenged.

#### **D. Board Policy Review**

1. Second and Final Reading of Board of Education Policies 5:120, 5:125, 5:130, 5:150, 5:170, 5:180, 5:185, 5:190, 5:195, 5:200, 7:20 and 7:18

Dr. Cremascoli stated the policy recommendations made at the October Board of Education meeting have been reviewed, considered, and revised. Additionally, in late October, the Policy service of the Illinois Association of School Boards, PRESS, provided several policy revisions. The policies for second reading were checked against the revised PRESS policies and revisions were made as agreed upon by legal counsel. She noted the administration received some later suggested revisions so Board members can discuss the edits and either approve them as part of the Consent Agenda or move them to third reading.

Mrs. Sternweiler provided additional edits to policies. Mr. Steen asked about legal counsel advice regarding pronoun use. Ms. Stone suggested pronoun use be ‘his/her/they/them’ to capture most preferred pronoun use as possible. Mr. Steen suggested pronoun use be changed within the next several months to allow administration to confer and to be as inclusive as possible. President Schneider-Fabes suggested the second read policies be pulled from the Consent Agenda and presented for third reading next month.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Consent Agenda**

Mr. Steen pulled Item XIII.A.5: Second and Final Read Board of Education policies 5:120 Ethics and Conduct; 5:125 *Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct*; 5:130 Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information; 5:150 Personnel Records; 5:170 *Copyright*; 5:180 *Americans With Disabilities Act*; 5:185 *Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)*; 5:190 *Use of District Electronic Networks and Technology Equipment*; 5:195 *Teacher Duties and Qualifications*; 5:200 *Terms & Conditions of Employment and Dismissal: Teachers*; 7:20 *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; and 7:180 *Preventing Bullying and Other Aggressive Behaviors*.

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to approve the personnel report dated November 18, 2019, which included licensed full-time employment of **Sarah Lancaster**, effective November 20, 2019; **Shannon Zock**, effective November 7, 2019; educational support personnel full-time employment of **Christopher Bobb**, effective November 11, 2019; temporary employment of **Victoria Newton**, effective October 30, 2019; licensed resignation of **Kathleen Enright**, effective November 15, 2019; educational support personnel resignation of **Hyunsook (Christine) Chang**, effective December 6, 2019; **Mia Cudecki**, effective November 15, 2019; **Michele Delmonico**, effective November 15, 2019; **Mary Dugger**, effective December 20, 2019; **Sarah Lancaster**, effective November 19, 2019; **Catherine Morris Priest**, effective December 3, 2019; **Jesenia Murphy**, effective November 15, 2019; **Faith Zabin**, effective October 31, 2019; to accept the fiscal year 2019 annual financial audit and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Wilmette Public Schools as presented by Klein Hall CPAs, of Aurora, Illinois; to approve a resolution authorizing a supplemental debt service tax levy to pay the principal of and interest on outstanding limited bonds of School District 39, Cook County, Illinois; award bid package to Landscape Concepts Management for landscaping services at all District buildings from December 1, 2019 to November 30, 2020 in the amount of \$46,632, and authorize the Business Manager/CSBO to add change orders not to exceed \$4,663, 10% of the contract. The detail of the costs, by building, are included on the bid tabulation spreadsheet dated November 18, 2019. The contract has an option for subsequent year-to-year contract extensions by mutual agreement; to approve the accounts payable for bills listed between October 29, 2019 – November 18, 2019 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$407,068.90; O&M Fund \$212,235.42; Debt Service Fund \$1,232,932.00; Transportation Fund \$186,036.36; Capital Projects \$894,990.00; total all funds: \$2,933,262.68; to approve the manual checks issued between October 29, 2019 – November 18, 2019 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$713,005.13; O&M Fund \$3,742.15; Transportation Fund \$35.46; total all funds: \$716,782.74.

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.**

### **B. Adopt the 2019 Levy**

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to approve the 2019 Levy and accompanying resolutions contained herein for requested amounts that can be summarized as Educational \$42,811,652; Operations & Maintenance \$9,571,707; Transportation \$674,748; Working Cash \$89,717; IMRF \$362,607; Social Security \$1,319,591; Life Safety \$0; Tort Immunity \$789,057; Special Education \$330,832; Total Aggregate Levy: \$55,949,911.

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.**

## **CONFERENCE ITEMS**

### **A. Old Business**

President Schneider-Fabes stated the recording of the Committee of the Whole Meetings was discussed at length during last week’s committee meeting. After much consideration, the Board directed the administrative team to pursue audio-recording devices, and to initiate audio recording and posting as soon as the January Committee of the Whole Meeting.

### **B. New Business**

Ms. Stone stated she wished to have a discussion regarding the philosophy behind instructional materials fees for the next Committee of the Whole meeting. Dr. Cremascoli noted it would be added to the agenda as a Finance Committee item.

Dr. Cremascoli reminded the Board to fill out the Student Advisory feathers with a thought of thankfulness and submit the feathers to Mrs. Jackson.

### **C. Good and Welfare**

None

Mr. Panzica moved, seconded by Mr. Steen, to adjourn to executive session to discuss the Placement of Individual Students in Special Education Programs and Other Matters Relating to Individual Students.

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 8:26 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting of the Board of Education at 9:12 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 9:14 p.m. by **General Consent.**

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President

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Secretary