

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT 68, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Regular Board of Education Meeting held on November 21, 2019

The Board of Education of School District 68, Cook County, Illinois, met on the 21st day of November 2019, in regular session at the Educational Service Center, 9440 Kenton Avenue, Skokie, Illinois, according to the rules of the Board.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by the President of the Board, Una McGeough, who presided. Members of the Board were present as follows:

Present: Frank Alkyer
Katrina Bell-Jordan
Meghan Espinoza
Jinu Joseph
Una McGeough
Joseph Ruffner
Jeffrey Sterbenc

Absent: None

Also present were: James Garwood, Ed.D., superintendent of schools; Christie Samojedny, Ed.D., assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction; Ryan Berry, assistant superintendent of business and chief school business official; Barbara Marler, Ed.D., director of EL services; Karen Bradley, Ed.D., principal; Greg Hanson, principal; Robyn Huemmer, Ed.D., principal; Daniel Schuth, Ed.D., principal; and Phyllis Carlstrom, recording secretary; and members of the staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no requests to address the Board of Education.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS

Highlights on Jane Stenson Elementary

Dr. Huemmer, principal, chose to highlight the new math curriculum as this month's presentation topic explaining how the math specialist provides support, along with showing examples of student mathematical thinking, and work places.

2018-19 Student Achievement Data Report (IAR and MAP)

Dr. Christie Samojedny, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, gave a presentation on the assessment results for Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR), Illinois Assessment of Science (ISA), and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) from the 2018-2019 school year with some additional data that did not appear in the October report.

After-School Enrichment Programming

In order to address the dwindling after-school club opportunities that schools can offer to students, Dr. Garwood, superintendent of schools, has reached an agreement with the Skokie Park District to provide clubs for our students at no cost to parents. The Park District will handle the registration process and is contracting with two providers that they work with to run a total of six clubs (Hip Hop Dance, Cheer, Yoga, Chess, Let's Build It - Engineering, and Art) at each of our elementary schools starting in January. For this year, each club session will last for six weeks and there will be three sessions. Registration will begin in December. Next year we will be able to start earlier and the sessions will run for eight weeks. The cost to the District this year will be approximately \$41,000.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Garwood noted that each year in November we celebrate a Board of Education member day to show appreciation for all the time and effort board members devote to the District which contributes to providing the best educational experience we can offer our students.

READING AND ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Mr. Ruffner made a motion, seconded by Mr. Joseph, that the minutes from the following meetings of the Board of Education be approved and placed on file:

- October 17, 2019, Board of Education Regular Meeting

A roll call was held with the following results:

AYE: Alkyer, Bell-Jordan, Espinoza, Joseph, McGeough, Ruffner, Sterbenc

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Ruffner made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Espinoza, that the items on the Consent Agenda be approved, as presented, which included the items below:

- A. Personnel Report
- B. Financial Reports
- C. Approval of Pay Orders and Expenditures
- D. Board of Education Policy – Second Reading
 1. 2:240 Board Policy Development
 2. 6.40 Curriculum Development
 3. 6.340 Student Testing and Assessment Program
- E. Destruction of Closed Session Audio Recording – May 19, 2018

A roll call was held with the following results:

AYE: Alkyer, Bell-Jordan, Espinoza, Joseph, McGeough, Ruffner, Sterbenc

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion carried.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

NTDSE #807 Report

Jeff Sterbenc, alternate District 68 Board Representative to the Niles Township District for Special Education (NTDSE) Governing Board, reported that the following topics were discussed at the November meeting: staff accomplishments, inclusion practices, *No Small Matter* screening, Malloy Thanksgiving Feast, renovation information along with new construction costs, a new attorney firm, and Friends of NTDSE awards.

Financial Projections

Mr. Berry, assistant superintendent for business and CSBO, gave a presentation to the Board on the financial projections for 2019-2025 which included the following information:

Revenue Assumptions

- Tax revenues are projected within the constraints of maximum tax rates in each fund, the tax cap, and factor in estimates of new growth and tax appeals
 - The tax cap is projected at 1.52% for 2020 and future years (average of last five years)
 - The Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) of existing property in the district is projected to increase of 3% in triennial reassessment years and 0% in non-triennial year
 - New property growth is estimated at \$1.5 million per year, which is an increase from the recent low of \$1 million in 2012 but a dramatic change from the high of \$58.6 million in 2007
- Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax (CPPRT) is projected to remain steady, without any increase or decrease
- Interest revenue is projected at a 1.75% rate of return on invested reserves
- Student fee revenue is projected to remain constant with fee increases offset by increases in low income waivers
- Lunch fees are anticipated to remain constant

- Reimbursements and other local revenue are projected to increase 2% per year
- State aid is projected based on the latest information available
 - Evidence-Based Funding was voted into law in September 2018
 - Funding to stay level for three years and then dip each year starting in FY 2021
- Federal aid is projected to remain constant as a result of changes to Title I
- Working Cash Bonds are issued as previous bonds are retired, with the proceeds transferred to the Education Fund and the Operations and Maintenance Fund each year to cover the gap between revenues and expenditures

Expenditure Assumptions

- Overall enrollment is projected to remain constant at the 2019-20 level
- Total salary costs are projected to increase 2.0% to 3.70% by employee group based on average increases over the last five years
- Benefit costs are expected to increase 8% per year
- The state pension cost shift to school districts is projected to begin in 2020-21 at a cost of 0.5% of TRS salaries, increasing by 0.5% each year
- Annual capital building expenditures are projected to increase for ongoing projects such as lighting, flooring, and capital maintenance equipment
- Cost increases for other expenditures are estimated based on recent trends as follows:
 - Services increase 5% per year
 - Materials increase 5% per year
 - Utilities increase 3% per year
 - Special education tuition costs increase 8% per year
 - Social Security increase 3.25% per year
 - IMRF decreases 50% in 2020-21 and increases by 3.25% thereafter
- Expenditure projections exclude contingency amounts and estimated unspent budget in each fund

Tentative Tax Levy 2019

Mr. Berry informed the Board that based on projections of needed revenue for the 2020-21 programs, the 2019 levy is proposed at a level to sustain access to the maximum tax revenues under the tax cap.

The 2019 total tax rate for the District (excluding the Bond and Interest Fund) is restricted to the rate limit imposed by the tax cap. The rate limit is derived by increasing the 2018 extension by the 2018 consumer price index (cpi) of 1.9%, and then dividing it by the 2019 EAV of the district minus any new property.

Since information on the 2019 new property amount will not be available until after May, 2020, the estimated levy is based on new growth of \$15,000,000 to ensure that the District's maximizes operating revenue from any new growth; however, actual new growth is estimated at \$2,500,000 for the 2019 tax year based on the impact of economic conditions on new construction in the district.

Tax Rate Information

Mr. Berry demonstrated how a homeowner's tax bill is broken down and what percentages are paid out to different governing bodies, along with an explanation of the Equalized Assessed Value.

District 68 is fortunate to have a strong mix of residential, commercial, and industrial taxpayers, with homeowners currently representing just under half of the total equalized assessed value (EAV) in the district. This mix has had small transferences over the past ten years as a result of economic conditions and changes in the assessment process. Overall, in the last ten years, residential properties in the district have accounted for between 45-50% of the total district EAV. The district continues to be active in commercial tax appeals to make sure businesses pay their fair share of taxes.

Elementary School Boundaries

Dr. Garwood shared that over the last several years, student enrollment at Devonshire Elementary has been steadily decreasing while student enrollment at Highland Elementary has been steadily increasing. This trend has created a need for the district to address attendance boundaries before overcrowding becomes an issue at Highland, and the building runs out of classroom space.

Dr. Garwood proposed several boundary change options that can address this concern, however of the three that were presented, he felt that there was only one he could support as it will have the least disruptive effect on students, parents, and staff. All board members in attendance agreed on this option.

Recommendation:

Starting next school year, 2020-2021, we will change the boundaries of the area south of Gross Point Road, north of Grove Street, and west of Skokie Blvd., which is currently a Highland attendance area to a Devonshire attendance area, only for students new to the District in the following manner:

- All current Highland students in the designated area will be allowed to finish their K-5 years at Highland but will have the choice of transferring to Devonshire starting in the 2020-21 school year to finish their K-5 experience.
- For the 2020-21 school year, incoming kindergarten siblings of current Highland students in grades K-4 in this area will be allowed to enroll at Highland and may continue there until the end of 5th grade. Younger siblings not entering kindergarten next year will be assigned to Devonshire as their K-5 home school when they begin kindergarten.
- Starting in the 2020-21 school year, new kindergarten students from this area without older siblings at Highland, as well as students in grades 1-5 from this area who are new to the District, will be assigned to Devonshire as their K-5 home school.
- Starting in the 2021-22 school year, all new students from this area will be assigned to Devonshire as their K-5 home school.

Communications to parents and guardians will go out, and an evening parent meeting will take place for anyone having additional questions. This proposed boundary change will return to the December board meeting as an action item.

IASB Resolutions Committee Report

Board members discussed the IASB Resolutions Committee Report resolutions that will be voted upon at the 2019 Delegate Assembly. Mr. Alkyer, District 68 IASB Representative, collected the majority vote on each item so that he can accurately represent the Board when placing the votes for District 68.

Board of Education Policy – First Reading

2:20 Powers and Duties of the School Board-Indemnification

Updated language that clarifies the duties of the Board and employees to report child abuse.

2:70 Vacancies on the School Board-Filling Vacancies

Per 105 ILCS 5/10-10, amended by P.A. 101-67, school boards will now have 60 days (instead of 45) to fill a vacant board member seat.

2:100 Board Member Conflict of Interest

Added language per the Federal Code of Regulations, no Board member shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award or State award governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/) if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest.

2:105 Ethics and Gift Ban

A reference change will be updated.

2:110 Qualifications Duties and Terms of Board Officers

Additional language from 5 ILCS 430/70-5, amended by P.A. 101-221, requires school districts to amend their sexual harassment policies to provide for a mechanism for reporting and independent

review of allegations of sexual harassment made against an elected official of the governmental unit by another elected official of a governmental unit.

2:200 Types of School Board Meetings

Allowed reasons for a governmental body to enter closed session for the purpose of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal expands to include a broader description of employee types: specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers.

2:220 School Board Meeting Procedure

Modified language allows for a clarifying question to be asked by a board member prior to voting on the consent agenda.

2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure

Updated references and procedural practice including a required timeline to address any complaints.

ACTION ITEMS

School Calendar 2020-2021

Mrs. Espinoza made an amended motion, seconded by Mr. Sterbenc, to approve the presented 2020-2021 school calendar, with the change of renaming the Columbus Day holiday to Indigenous Peoples' Day moving forward.

A roll call was held with the following results:

AYE: Alkyer, Bell-Jordan, Espinoza, Joseph, McGeough, Ruffner, Sterbenc

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion carried.

Semi-Annual Review of Closed Session Minutes

Mr. Joseph made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ruffner, to approve the Board's Attorney and the Administration's recommendation for closed session minutes of the Board of Education as follows:

The closed session minutes for the following meeting dates were approved for release:

March 21, 2019, and May 16, 2019.

The closed session minutes for the following meeting dates were approved for partial release:

January 24, 2019, and April 19, 2019.

A roll call was held with the following results:

AYE: Alkyer, Bell-Jordan, Espinoza, Joseph, McGeough, Ruffner, Sterbenc

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

School Report Cards

2019 Illinois School Report Cards have been released and were included with the information made available to the Board and the public. All four schools in District 68 earned a commendable rating.

Freedom of Information Request(s)

Mrs. McGeough, board of education president, reported on two (2) requests and/or responses for information under the Freedom of Information Act during the period October 11, 2019, through November 15, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Sterbenc made a motion, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call was held with the following results:

AYE: Alkyer, Bell-Jordan, Espinoza, Joseph, McGeough, Ruffner, Sterbenc

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Una McGeough, President
Board of Education

Katrina Bell-Jordan, Secretary
Board of Education