

**WESTERN SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION, DISTRICT 101**

**JANUARY 28, 2019  
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL**

Julie O'Connor, President, called the regular meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:15 p.m., in the McClure Junior High School Library Learning Center, 4225 Wolf Road, Western Springs, Illinois 60558.

Ms. O'Connor led the Pledge of Allegiance and invited the Board of Education and those in the audience to participate. Ms. O'Connor acknowledged the presence of Assistant Superintendent Dr. Sarah Coffey, and Dr. Brian Barnhart, Superintendent, and requested a roll call. On roll call, the following answered present: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Jeanne Padgett, Julie O'Connor, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego. Todd McLawhorn's train was delayed and he is expected soon.

Ms. O'Connor welcomed visitors and Betsy Allen from the audit firm Miller Cooper. She thanked everyone for coming out in today's weather.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Padgett moved, seconded by Mrs. Garvin, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 17, 2018. All voted yes.

**BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. O'Connor opened by sharing that the Board has reached a tentative five-year contract agreement in principle with WSEA. This evening the Board will discuss final details of the agreement, with final Board approval occurring at a subsequent meeting. Ms. O'Connor thanked Drs. Barnhart and Coffey and the WSEA for managing the contract process in a timely and professional manner.

She then announced that the Board will continue its discussions regarding the Field Park Principal search and work to finalize that process in the near future so that the transition process can begin.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Barnhart thanked Betsy Allen of Miller Cooper for attending this evening's meeting. He shared that Ms. Allen will be presenting the FY 2018 audit tonight, and then she will be attending another school board meeting in the area. Ms. O'Connor welcomed Ms. Allen to the meeting and commented that the board appreciated the opportunity to review tonight's materials in advance of the meeting.

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**Audit Presentation - Betsy Allen, Miller Cooper**

Ms. Allen referenced the materials shared with the Board in advance, commenting that a few things have changed since last year. She reminded the board that the auditor's report is an unmodified opinion.

One of the changes includes a re-statement based on the GASB 75, a new standard which requires the District to post employment benefits (THIS and the retiree health plan) into the government-wide statements. This is a similar situation to GASB 68 which was implemented in the past. Ms. Miller referenced page 14, which overviews the government-wide statements that show a net position of \$9 million this year. This net position is reflected as a net deficit, but that is directly related to GASB 75 and 68 liabilities; the District is not in a deficit from a daily operating perspective. Long term liabilities have also increased because of GASB 75.

Mr. McLawhorn arrived during the audit presentation.

The Board inquired if the District was funded for the obligations of pension liabilities and for the new THIS obligations. Ms. Miller referred to page 62 for the total liability of the District, showing proportionate shares between the District and the state for TRS funding, as well as a less-significant share for the funding of THIS. Ms. Miller noted that THIS is not nearly as well-funded by the state at the same proportion as TRS.

Ms. Miller addressed the delay of the Audited Financial Record (AFR), acknowledging that a report with errors related to THIS was released and then retracted. When the report was re-released, the auditors had to revise each of the related reports, hence the delay of the AFR.

At the Board's request, Ms. Miller reviewed the material weaknesses and management advice in the audit report. With respect to the material weaknesses relating to segregation of duties, Dr. Barnhart assured the Board that the mitigating actions in place would continue. Under the management advice section, Ms. Miller noted that board policy requires the signature of the superintendent on all purchase orders, however, the District's practice is to allow principals to sign purchase orders. The Board noted that the applicable policy allows the superintendent's delegate to approve purchase orders; as such the Board

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requested that Dr. Barnhart document his delegation of authority to the principals to approve purchase orders.

Ms. O'Connor thanked Ms. Miller, commenting that the presentation, in combination with the advance materials the board received, was very clear.

Dr. Barnhart concluded the Superintendent's report by commenting that the weather for Wednesday was not looking favorable for school to be in session. Dr. Barnhart commented that he had a conference call scheduled with other local superintendents and would likely cancel school due to the excessively cold temperatures and announce it during Tuesday's school day to give parents and staff ample time to plan. Dr. Barnhart noted that it was still to be determined if school could be in session on Thursday in a safe manner, late arrival or otherwise.

Dr. Barnhart thanked the D101 staff for arriving on time Monday, and ready to keep the school day a normal one for our students even with the challenging weather. He also thanked the custodial and maintenance staff who did a great job getting sidewalks and parking lots cleared and ready for students and staff.

**Renovation for Innovation Presentation**

Dr. Coffey introduced the District's new partnership with WSFEE and the Renovation for Innovation (R4I) initiative, explaining that this project focuses on how classroom spaces can best enhance student learning. WSFEE's dedication to positively impacting all District students, led them to commit \$100,000 to launch R4I over the next two school years.

Referencing the presentation provided to board members, Dr. Coffey explained that R4I supports the District's 10-year systematic and systemic instructional improvement plan, of which innovative learning spaces are a part. It is important for everyone to understand that R4I is more than a classroom furniture strategy. It is the creation of classroom spaces that match the District's instructional classroom practices. An example of R4I would be changing a classroom's layout from rows of desks all facing forward into more flexible seating arrangement. That flexible seating arrangement would be illustrative of the District's shift from prescribing instruction to empowering students to create learning paths for themselves. Dr. Coffey further explained that one of the key themes of R4I is to maximize spaces for students to talk to one another and to define classroom "creation zones" to encourage an innovative line of thinking. Research has also shown that significant

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improvements in a classroom environment come from exposure to natural or incandescent lighting. Dr. Coffey commented that colors also help enhance the environment, with red in elementary environments being the most impactful and the right balance of stimulation and white space also playing a role.

Dr. Coffey fielded questions from the board, explaining that the goal of R4I is to allow students to be successful utilizing a myriad of instructional and supporting classroom environment strategies. Classroom management is a significant component to maximize R4I success. Dr. Coffey concluded that while R4I is a forward-looking concept, the components and overall plan is based on a meta-analysis of 64 studies.

Dr. Barnhart thanked Dr. Coffey for her informative presentation and shared that R4I classrooms will be rolled out across the district based on building side and need, with five classrooms at McClure, two classrooms at Field Park, two classrooms at Forest Hills and three classrooms at Laidlaw renovated annually.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Resolution Abating the Taxes heretofore Levied for the year 2018**

As legally required, Ms. O'Connor read the first resolution in full.

Mrs. Secord made a motion, seconded by Mr. McLawhorn, to approve the resolution. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**Resolution Authorizing Supplemental Property Tax Levy**

Ms. O'Connor read the resolution in full.

Mrs. Garvin made a motion, seconded by Mr. McLawhorn, to approve the resolution. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**Approve Vendor List**

Per the recommendation of our auditors several years ago, the Board annually reviews and takes action to approve the vendor list. Ms. O'Connor noted that the list has been improved over the years, and it has become much more informative and consumable.

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Mrs. Padgett made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Garvin, to approve the list of 2019 vendors. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**Accept Retirement**

Dr. Barnhart commented that the retirement before the board is perhaps one or two years earlier than expected and that Ms. Zebert, current assistant to Dr. Coffey, will be missed.

Ms. O'Connor made a motion, seconded by Mr. McLawhorn, to accept the retirement of Mary Zebert, Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**Approve Resignations**

Mrs. Padgett made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Garvin, to approve resignations of Dorothy Neale and Tina Wolf. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**Approve Non-Certified Staff**

Ms. O'Connor made a motion, seconded by Mr. McLawhorn, to approve non-certified staff members Meghan Burke and Amy Enderle, both of whom are replacing special education assistants who resigned. It was noted that Ms. Enderle is in the process of getting her leadership degree and that Ms. Burke is a District 101 graduate. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORTS**

**Education Committee**

Mr. Lettiere, Education Committee Chair, had no report.

**Building Committee**

Mr. McLawhorn, Building Committee Chair, had no report.

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**Finance Committee**

Mrs. Sendaydiego reported for the Finance Committee that this month's financials included preparing classrooms for R4I with eight classrooms receiving lighting upgrades over winter break, some STEAM night expenses, and expenses for DLC consultant Carl Hooker.

Mrs. Padgett moved to approve December total expenditures and liabilities in the amount of \$1,616,726.24 and Mr. McLawhorn seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

Mrs. Sendaydiego reported that fund balances were \$9,814,606.15 for December 2018, which is \$100K below where we were last year, and in line with expectations.

Ms. O'Connor thanked Mrs. Padgett and Mrs. Sendaydiego for transitioning the role of Finance Committee Chair so seamlessly in advance of Mrs. Padgett retiring from board service.

**Policy/Legislative Committee**

Mrs. Secord, Policy/Legislative Committee Chair, reported that in response to the auditor's comments, she will plan to amend the purchase order policy from "designee" to include Principal and create a bicycle transportation policy, as recently required by new legislation. Mrs. Secord also commented that prior to her departure from the board, she would create suggest tweaking our current policy to bring it in line with public comment, as well as tackle overall review and revisions to the 8000 and 9000 policy series.

Mrs. Secord reported, from a legislative front, the legislature is considering ways in which to better define the parameters defining an instructional day. Additional funding to support the evidence based funding model has been requested by ISBE, with several billion dollars sought over the next several years. Unfortunately, our district would see very little, if any, of that additional money. Mrs. Secord noted it is a huge increase for a state with the financial struggles that the State of Illinois faces. Bills have been filed to revert to retirement cap for teachers from 3% back to the previous 6% annual limitation. There is also talk of the minimum wage potentially being raised to \$15/hr over a number of years.

Ms. O'Connor thanked Mrs. Secord for her report and diligent work to bring our policies up-to-date.

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**Communications Committee**

Mrs. Garvin, Communications Chair, no report.

**Educational Foundation**

Mrs. Sendaydiego, Board liaison for the Western Springs Foundation for Educational Excellence (WSFEE), reported that WSFEE approved the STEAM travel grant that will provide for a District fusion teacher representative from each building to attend a national conference this summer.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. O'Connor noted there was no correspondence.

**ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION**

At 7:57 p.m., Ms. O'Connor requested a motion to adjourn to Closed Session for approximately 90 minutes to discuss personnel, negotiation, and legal matters. The Board will return to Open Session following Closed Session. Mrs. Garvin made a motion and Mr. McLawhorn seconded, to adjourn to Closed Session. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

At 9:51 p.m., Mrs. Garvin moved to return to Regular Session. Mrs. Sendaydiego seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn. A check of the McClure library resulted in no awaiting meeting attendees.

**OTHER**

**Annual Succession Planning Discussion**

It was agreed by all that, given the already late hour, the board would hold this annual review and discussion for the February meeting.

**Facility Updates**

Dr. Barnhart provided the Board with a very brief set of facility project overviews, including the status of the camera security partnership we are pursuing with Aegis. He expects to

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have more information on this at our February meeting. Additionally, he expects the Field Park Library project to go to bid in February, with bids received in time for Board consideration at our March meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Approve Field Park Principal for 2019 - 2020 School Year**

It was agreed that action on this item would be held for additional process to be undertaken. The Board anticipates taking action at a special meeting that will be scheduled for February 7.

**Approve Master Contract Agreement with WSEA**

The Board discussed some final details associated with the Draft Agreement with WSEA. It was agreed that a few minor edits still needed to be incorporated, and final approval of the agreement would be placed as an action item on the February 7 Special Meeting agenda.

**Accept FY2018 Audit**

Mrs. Padgett made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Garvin, to accept the FY 2018 Audit. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**Approve Policy #9360 - Board Meeting Procedures**

Mrs. Secord made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Padgett, to accept Policy 9360 - Board Meeting Procedures. On roll call, the following voted yes: Lisa Garvin, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, Jeanne Padgett, Jamie Secord, Caitlin Sendaydiego, and Todd McLawhorn.

**ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING**

At 9:59 p.m., Mr. McLawhorn moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lettiere seconded the motion, and all voted yes.



Brian T. Barnhart, Ph.D.  
Board of Education Secretary



Julie O'Connor  
Board of Education President