

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

**JANUARY 21, 2020
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 6:45pm, in the McClure Junior High School Library Learning Center, 4225 Wolf Road, Western Springs, Illinois 60558.

Ms. O'Connor led the Board of Education and those in the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. O'Connor acknowledged the presence of Dr. Barnhart and Dr. Coffey and welcomed Betsy Allen from Miller Cooper.

On roll call, the following answered present: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego. Megan Cahill was unable to attend.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Garvin moved, seconded by Mrs. Heit to approve the minutes of the Regular and Closed Minutes from the meeting of December 16, 2019.

On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. O'Connor introduced Betsy Allen from Miller Cooper and thanked her for coming to present the District audit at tonight's meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

2020 - 2021 School Calendar Draft

Dr. Barnhart shared that the Board would be asked to approve the 2020 - 2021 school calendar later this evening. The calendar is a hybrid of feedback from the Board and the WSEA, incorporating the creative approach of using scheduled non-attendance days for winter weather emergency days if required and does include the last day of school falling on a Friday.

Dr. Barnhart previewed that a detailed review of the financial and student performance data would occur during the Other portion of the Board meeting. Dr. Barnhart shared that District 101 ranked #9 in the State of Illinois in student performance this past year. He also shared that D101 students ranked seventh in the state in math and fourteenth in reading.

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This performance illustrates a high level of consistency across grade levels and among schools. District 101 was also returned to the exemplary level in the state's financial rating, with an overall 3.9 score (out of a possible 4.0). As well, D101 teachers were above the state average for the second-consecutive year, and the delta between average salaries and the state average grew substantially over 2018, the first year that our local teacher salaries exceeded state averages. Dr. Barnhart commented that even with this continued growth in the investment in our teachers, the District's Per Pupil Expenditures were an amazing 38.9% below the other nine districts comprising the state's Top Ten student performers and 19.3% below the other Lyons Township associate districts. Ms. Miller shared with the Board that if districts are using their capital projects fund correctly, the per pupil expenditures are not affected by capital expenditures. Dr. Barnhart also commented that the overall tax rate of 2.9% shared with the Board in December at the Tax Levy Hearing was validated in the final FY 2019 audit.

FY 2019 Audit Presentation - Betsy Allen, Miller Cooper

Ms. O'Connor again thanked Ms. Allen for presenting the overall results of the audit tonight, as she has done for the last several years. Ms. O'Connor informed Ms. Allen that the Board had a few new members and therefore her summary of the audit and willingness to answer questions was especially appreciated. Ms. O'Connor informed Ms. Allen that the Board had received the audit prior to the meeting.

Ms. Allen reminded the Board that every school is required to have an audit by an independent audit firm and that our audit consists of two phases. The first phase of the audit focuses on the main transaction cycles and the controls in place regarding these cycles. This phase helps Miller Cooper plan the next phase of the audit procedure where student activity funds, credit card procedures and approvals, management of capital assets and debts are examined. Once the audit is complete and the financial statements are prepared, the audit is reviewed internally by Miller Cooper and the Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) are completed by the school district and also reviewed by the audit team. Miller Cooper then releases the deliverables and files with ISBE and other required agencies.

Ms. Allen began her review of the highlights from this year's audit, first noting that there were no GASB statements adopted this year, which made for a smoother process. She then walked the Board through the audit at a high level, pointing out the independent auditors report assigned a "clean opinion," which is the highest level. She noted that the MD&A on

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page 5 features the condensed financial statements and highlights financial items that could impact the District's future, such as capital assets and District debt.

Ms. Allen noted that the District's long-term liabilities are \$35 million, with \$20 million of general obligation bonds and the remaining amount consisting of pension liabilities. She noted that page 16 includes the fund financials and balance sheet of the District, and that the year ended with a fund balance of \$9.3 million. She continued by pointing out that page 76 featured the required supplementary information, including OPED and pension liabilities and budgetary schedules for each of the funds, comparing current year fiscal information with the year prior.

Ms. Allen referenced the required communications to the Board, the first communication which notes the different GASB statements that may be applicable in the future but currently require no procedural change for the District, and the second which identifies "controlled deficiencies" of the segregation of duties and management reporting issues. The segregation of duties is a direct result of the relatively small size of the board office staff; regardless, it is typical and is reported by the auditors each year.

A discussion ensued regarding technology risk assessments and how Miller Cooper supports other clients in this area. The discussion also covered the burden on the State of Illinois regarding teacher pensions and whether more of the responsibility would shift to the schools, requiring funding the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) at a higher rate.

Ms. Allen expressed her team's appreciation for the cooperation of Dr. Barnhart and Lynn Swatek in the board office during the audit, and Ms. O'Connor echoed that appreciation and thanked Ms. Allen for her presentation tonight.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution Abating the Taxes Heretofore Levied for the Year 2019 to Pay Debt Service on General Obligations Refunding Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2012; General Obligation Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source) Series 2014B, Taxable General Obligation Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2014C, and General Obligation Refunding Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source) Series 2015, of School District 101, Cook County

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Dr. Barnhart reminded the Board that when we issued these general obligation bonds, we committed to the public that we would pay the debt service out of our annual budget versus creating an additional tax burden liability on local taxpayers. This resolution, adopted each January, communicates this intent to the Clerk's Office.

Mrs. Sendaydiego made a motion to approve the resolution and Mrs. Heit seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

Adopt Resolution Authorizing a Supplemental Property Tax Levy to Pay the Principal and Interest on Outstanding Limited Bonds of District 101, Cook County, Illinois.

Mrs. Sendaydiego made a motion to approve and Mrs. Adler seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

Approve Vendor List

Dr. Barnhart shared that an audit recommendation from Miller Cooper several years ago was to introduce an additional check-and-balance in the procurement process by having the Board annually review the list of vendors who work with the District. Dr. Barnhart referenced the list of vendors provided to the Board and asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Garvin made a motion to approve and Mr. Lettiere seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

Approve 2020 - 2021 Calendar

Mrs. Heit made a motion to approve the 2020 - 2021 calendar and Mr. Lettiere seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

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Approve Retirement

Ms. O'Connor made a motion to approve the retirement of Eileen Tomaso, effective June 30, 2020, and Mrs. Garvin seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

Accept FY 2019 Audit

Ms. O'Connor made a motion to approve and Mrs. Sendaydiego seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORTS

Education Committee

Mr. Lettiere, Education Committee Chair, reported that we have received requests from other districts, including LTHS, regarding our Standards Based Reporting implementation process. Mr. Lettiere shared that this is definitely to be taken as a compliment and indicative that the District executed this process well. Mr. Lettiere commented that moving forward, D101 is making a concerted effort to limit anxiety related to MAP testing times. He, referenced the handout shared with the Board and asked Dr. Coffey to elaborate.

Dr. Coffey commented that information had been sent home to parents regarding MAP testing, timing and included parental talking points that could be used to help alleviate student MAP testing anxiety. The hope was that if students are reminded that the expectation, by the design of the MAP assessment, is for students to get 50% of more of MAP questions incorrect, it would reduce the pressure of MAP testing. Hence, overall testing time would be limited to 150% of the average testing time, as a soft cap. Dr. Coffey continued that improved communication about MAP testing applies to the District teaching staff as well. The new teacher contract no longer includes MAP testing as a benchmark involved in compensation related to "student growth." This change makes it easier for the District as a whole to re-frame the purpose of MAP testing as an instructional tool. The handout before the Board presents data about the relationship between the amount of time allowed to take a MAP test and the results of the students. Our average D101 student does take additional time on the MAP test and is more successful. However, this data also highlights students who aren't successful in that time frame and allows us to consider what is best for that specific student in terms of testing.

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A broad discussion about MAP testing was held, including the timing (fall, winter, spring) of testing, the elimination of MAP testing for 1st graders and the evaluation of the cost-benefit of continued testing in this manner over time.

Building Committee

Mrs. Adler, Building Committee Chair, reported that the Field Park library is moving along and looking really good. Mrs. Adler added that the mystery leak on the Field Park roof was able to be fixed with this fall's tuckpointing work.

Finance Committee

Mrs. Sendaydiego reported for the Finance Committee, bills were as expected, and included payment of the first major Field Park library invoice as well as a stipend for the poms coach. Mrs. Sendaydiego also shared that the McClure poms and cheer teams were going to be performing at a Chicago Bulls basketball game on February 20, 2020.

Mrs. Sendaydiego made a motion to approve the December 2019 expenditures and liabilities in the amount of \$1,771,522.23. Ms. O'Connor seconded the motion .

On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

Mrs. Sendaydiego reported the December 2019 Fund Balance was \$9,194,624.20, which is as expected about \$700,000 below this time last year.

Policy/Legislative Committee

Mrs. Heit, Policy/Legislative Committee Chair, no report.

Communications Committee

Mrs. Garvin, Communications Chair, noted that a Google document is available for administrative team members to input information for the District newsletter which will be distributed at the end of June.

Educational Foundation

Ms. Cahill, Board liaison for the Western Springs Foundation for Educational Excellence (WSFEE), was absent. Dr. Coffey reported on her behalf that WSFEE is busy planning for the May 16, 2020 dinner dance and approved three grant requests. The three grants are a

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genetics grant for all 8th grade science students, a communication board grant in partnership with the District and our Speech Language Pathologists, and a grant for seed money for a running club at Laidlaw. WSFEE noted that the other elementary schools would be approved for this same seed money grant for running clubs at their schools if they elect to complete a grant request.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. O'Connor noted there was no correspondence in the Board's materials for review.

ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION

At 7:38pm, Ms. O'Connor requested a motion to adjourn to Closed Session for approximately 40 minutes to discuss personnel, legal, and negotiations matters. The Board will return to Open Session following Closed Session, and will check for any remaining attendees. Mrs. Garvin made a motion and Mr. Lettiere seconded to adjourn to Closed Session. On roll call, the following voted yes: Meredith Adler, Lisa Garvin, Kate Heit, Brett Lettiere, Julie O'Connor, and Caitlin Sendaydiego.

At 8:32 p.m., Ms. O'Connor moved to return to Regular Session. Mrs. Adler seconded the motion. On roll call, the following voted yes: Mrs. Adler, Mrs. Garvin, Mrs. Heit, Mr. Lettiere, Ms. O'Connor, and Mrs. Sendaydiego.

A check of the McClure library resulted in no awaiting meeting attendees.

OTHER

Miscellaneous

Dr. Barnhart updated the Board briefly on a number of issues including the on-going 5G debate that is a topic of much discussion currently within the Village. He shared that he had met with a District parent who is one of the leaders of the group working to keep 5G out of Western Springs to gather additional information. He also overviewed the findings on the McClure Fire Alarm system, resulting in a plan to replace the entire system over spring break. An interactive discussion followed each of these overviews.

Ms. O'Connor led a lengthy discussion about the future of the Board of Education, Board membership, Board continuity, upcoming elections, and Board leadership planning. A highly engaging and interactive discussion followed.

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Review of Annual Financial and Student Performance Data

Drs. Barnhart and Coffey overviewed the annual Financial and Student Performance data in detail. In addition to teacher salaries, per pupil expenditures, and district rankings that were highlighted during the Superintendent's Report, the full Board asked questions related to administrative salaries, advanced degree comparisons, tax rate, and financial opportunities related to equalized assessed valuation. An interactive and detailed discussion ensued.

Kasardas Update

Dr. Barnhart overviewed the results of the recently completed Kasarda enrollment study update. He shared that the range between Kasarda's low-growth projections (Projection A) versus the high-growth projections (Projection C) were especially substantial. He noted that the mid-range Kasarda projections (Projection B) have been historically close to accurate for two decades, but because of the potential facility and staffing implications associated with a high-growth experience in the next decade, he has asked Kasarda to do a more in-depth building by building projection for the next ten years. The results of that in-depth study will likely be in our hands around spring break.

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING

At 9:03 p.m., Mr. Lettiere moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Sendaydiego seconded the motion, and all voted yes.



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



Julie O'Connor
Board of Education President