

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
FIELD SCHOOL LEARNING CENTER  
3131 Techny, Northbrook, Illinois 60062  
7:00 PM, January 22, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Jeffrey Silver at 7:03 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Board Members:

Present:        Laura Greenberg  
                  Shel Leshner            arrived at 7:05PM  
                  Robert Resis  
                  Jeffrey Silver  
                  Kosta Skoulikaris  
                  Robert Spector  
                  Peter Stamatis

District Administration

Present:        Dr. Alexandra Nicholson, Superintendent of Schools  
                  Cathy Lauria, Chief School Business Official

Recording Secretary:        Tina Nielsen

A quorum of the Board was confirmed by President Silver.

**ADDITIONS OF CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

Superintendent Nicholson added extra co-curricular activities for discussion.

**READING OF COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

None

**RECOGNITION OF AUDIENCE**

Jennifer Gemignani gave the PTC report: The PTC is looking forward to the annual Bingo night which will be held tomorrow, Friday, January 23, 2015. The 3rd annual LeBlanc laugh off that is scheduled for March 13, 2015 is presented by our own James LeBlanc and five of his college buddies that performed improv in college. The PTC is continuing to address issues of PTC attendance and participation. The Wildcat Times bulletin is written by the students. The next issue will begin in February for a release right before Spring break. Member Skoulikaris suggested this bulletin to be online. Principal Kahn stated he will have it put on the website.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Member Leshner made a motion to approve items VI a through h of the consent agenda which were read by President Silver. Member Greenberg seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call 7:0.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

Superintendent Nicholson stated that this is the last year of our five year strategic plan. This spring, we will be forming a large representative group of District stakeholders to develop our next strategic plan which will establish the District goals for the next five years.

Superintendent Nicholson recommended the District undergo a formal systems assessment before the strategic plan is developed. The assessment is an internal and external review of all of the areas of the school system which results in the identification of District strengths and opportunities for improvement in the areas that, by research and best practice, tell us make a successful school district. Superintendent Nicholson stated that she and Dr. Carrie De La Cruz, Director of Instructional Services, are experts in system assessment; however, we are recommending that the District utilize a consulting firm, the Consortium for Educational Change (CEC), to provide an external review, that in combination with an internal review, will result in a thorough analysis. CEC will bring a team of educators, including superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, and teacher leaders from ten different school districts to conduct the external review. The cost is approximately \$10,000 which will be covered by grant funds.

Superintendent Nicholson made a recommendation to the Board to approve a membership to the CEC, to contract with CEC to complete the systems assessment, and to approve the recommended process for the completion of the strategic plan.

Superintendent Nicholson then summarized the recommended strategic plan development process. She explained this is a 15 step process involving members from the Board of Education, administration, parents, students, certified staff, non-certified staff, community members, NSSED, and District 225. Superintendent Nicholson and Dr. De La Cruz will serve as the facilitators. Superintendent Nicholson explained each of the 15 steps ending in the development of 5 to 6 major smart goals for the next five years. The strategic plan design will be presented to the community for input before the plan is finalized and brought to the Board for adoption. The total cost of the strategic plan development will not exceed \$5,600. This pays for substitute teachers for teachers involved in the process during the school day, supplies, and food and water during meetings. Member Leshner asked about the timing of the systems assessment and strategic plan development. Superintendent Nicholson stated the systems assessment would be completed in March and the strategic plan development would begin in April and be ready for final approval in June. Member Skoulikaris asked about the recruitment process. Superintendent Nicholson stated recruitment plans include informing District stakeholders of the processes as well as the roles of participants and asking for volunteers. If we receive more volunteers that needed, the administration will review the volunteer list and identify participants in a way that will provide a balance of representative areas.

Member Stamatis shared his concern that the extra-co-curricular activities and field trips that had been eliminated in the past due to needed budget cuts have not been reinstated. He stated he understands why these activities were cut but would like to see if any of them can be restarted or if new ones can be created as part of the new strategic plan. Superintendent Nicholson responded that these types of activities will be considered as the new strategic plan is developed. She shared that the administrators have discussed their desire to review and improve the extra-co-curricular programs. She stated it would be ideal if parents did not have to pay for their children to participate in specific activities, that maybe in lieu of individual fees, there could be one activity for all students.

Member Stamatis made a motion to approve the District's membership with the Consortium for Educational Change (CEC), contracting with CEC to complete the systems assessment, and the process for the development of the new strategic plan. Member Leshner seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call 7:0.

Superintendent Nicholson stated that we may need to have two Board meeting dates in April. Currently we have one scheduled for April 30th. We need one before April 24th as well. We are looking to have a regular Board meeting on April 23rd. If Cook County has confirmed the Board election results by then, the April 23rd regular meeting can be immediately followed by our reorganization meeting and the April 30th meeting will not be needed. If the election results have not been confirmed by then, the reorganization meeting will take place on April 30th.

After further discussion, Member Greenberg made a motion to add an April 23, 2015 Board meeting. Member Leshner seconded the motion. The motion passed 7:0.

Superintendent Nicholson reviewed the 2015 - 2016 District calendar wherein she explained the process of the creation of the calendar. A Calendar Committee consisted of a teacher from each school, Board Member Leshner, parent/PTC President Susan Harrison, and the school principals. We had 118 parents and staff members complete the Calendar Survey, and the survey results were used to help with the creation of the calendar.

After further discussion, Member Skoulikaris made a motion to approve the 2015-2016 District calendar. Member Leshner seconded the motion. The motion passed 7:0.

Chief School Business Official, Cathy Lauria summarized the final copy of the Life Safety Plan developed as a result of the ten-year life safety study. She explained that the Life Safety Plan commits the District to an estimated amount of \$560,000 in repairs over the next five years. Mrs. Lauria explained that once the Plan is approved by the Board, the architects will submit it to the Illinois State Board of Education. The State reviews the Plan to make sure all the items qualify for life safety. President Silver asked if all the items in the plan go out for bid. Mrs. Lauria confirmed they will go out for bid depending on their costs. She stated the costs listed on the plan are estimates from the architects. Member Skoulikaris questioned item E6,

intercom/master clock system, and its cost. Principal Erin Murphy explained it is Field's master clock and bell system. She shared that the clocks are not timed together which makes it difficult for the teachers to dismiss students at the same time. The system is old and it's very difficult to find the parts.

After further discussion, Member Skoulikaris made a motion to approve the ten year Life Safety Plan. Member Leshner seconded the motion. The motion passed 7:0.

## **INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION**

Superintendent Nicholson summarized the mid year Strategic Plan status report. This report will be on the District website for parent and community access. There are 61 improvement activities occurring this year throughout the District. 30 are still in progress and 31 have been successfully completed. We are halfway through the plan and halfway through the year.

Chief School Business Official Cathy Lauria reported that we received our designation for the financial profile from the State and have been awarded the highest possible recognition level, 4 out of 4. Mrs. Lauria referenced the powerpoint presentation and highlighted information such as the four designation levels and the criteria for each. Superintendent Nicholson stated that prior to the budget reductions and referendum, the District was projected to be in the watch category by this year.

Chief School Business Official Cathy Lauria summarized the monthly budget summary wherein she stated that we are within expectations that we are above where we were last year for expenditures due to the number of large expenditures made at the beginning of the year. The revenues are about where they were last year. The monthly report for the education revenues reflect just over \$200,000 more for FY15 over last year, which equates to a 3% increase at this point in the year. Member Skoulikaris questioned that if we are \$1,000,000 higher in expenses this year for the first six months from last year, can we assume that in the next six months we will be \$2,000,000 over in expenses. Mrs. Lauria stated that we had major expenses in the beginning of the year so total expenses will continue to increase but not at that rate and we would not be \$2,000,000 over at year end. As of December, the total budget and the Education Fund budget numbers reflect less than 50% spent of the amount budgeted for the year.

Chief School Business Official, Cathy Lauria reported that she and Dave Del Boccio, Manager of Technology and Infrastructure, have been meeting with various copier/printer vendors to replace the current machines in the buildings, as our lease with Xerox will expire this summer.

## **BOARD REPORTS**

Member Leshner shared he attended the last NSSSED Board meeting. During the meeting, he learned that Mitsubishi has a mentoring program, and some of the NSSSED students have an opportunity to work there. The goals and objectives for NSSSED were discussed. The cost for our fee for next year is going to increase. Member Stamatis stated that he was at the meeting as well. Secretary Leshner stated the first draft of the NSSSED budget was also distributed for

review. The second draft is going to be available in April which means we will not know who the new District 31 Board representative will be. Member Leshner suggested to NSSED that they postpone the NSSED meeting to later in April after the member boards have reorganized and voted in their officers.

Member Stamatis reported on the Northbrook Economic Development meeting. The potential Red Seal property development is still moving forward with many people against it. Mrs. Lauria stated that the County delayed the meeting because the opposing Mission Hills group got many signatures together and the County Board is validating the signatures. If the signatures are validated, the County has to vote on the project with a 75% approval rating. If the signatures are not validated, then a 50% approval rating is needed. The final vote should be in mid February. The next meeting is July 8, 2015. Member Stamatis further shared that Glenview Plan Commission meetings were held on December 16, 2014 and January 13, 2015, during which none of the business pertained to District 31 except for the idea of putting sidewalks on the one side of Landwehr. January 27, 2015 is the next meeting. Mrs. Lauria added preliminary proposals for homes just north of Stone Gate are being considered.

Member Greenberg reported on the Education Foundation stating that the Winter Benefit is scheduled for February 21, 2015.

#### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

Four FOIA requests were included in the Board packet.

1. Scott Reeder – Union Compensation
2. Janet L Martin – Non-Certified Employee Information
3. Crystal Davis of Image Systems & Business Solutions – District Copier and Printer Lease and Service Agreements
4. Dr. Vincent Miles – Closing Records for Each Debt Issuance Since January 1, 1984

#### **POLICIES**

Superintendent Nicholson summarized the first read of the following policies:

- *Communications To and From the Board Powers and Duties of the School Board Indemnification*
- *Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students*
- *Administering Medicine to Students*
- *Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities*

#### **STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Superintendent Nicholson summarized the January 2015 student enrollment.

#### **RECOGNITION OF AUDIENCE**

Resident Kathi Stamatis addressed the Board about extra co-curricular activities. She shared the different experiences her children have received in the past in District 31. She said many

of the activities were taken away when the first referendum was lost and requested the District review bringing back some of the activities that the children enjoyed such as field trips and clubs.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Member Leshner made a motion to approve the FMLA leave for Bard Braje. Member Spector seconded the motion. The motion passed 7:0.

Member Leshner made a motion to approve the FMLA leave for Tina Bishop. Member Greenberg seconded the motion. The motion passed 7:0.

Member Leshner made a motion to approve the FMLA leave for Chris Kolbuk. Member Greenberg seconded the motion. The motion passed 7:0.

Member Stamatis made the following motion: The Board declares that Superintendent Dr. Alexandra Nicholson has met her student performance and academic improvement goals to date; therefore, the Board approves an extension of Superintendent Dr. Alexandra Nicholson's employment contract through June 30, 2020 with salary increases of 2.5% annually for 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020. Member Skoulikaris second the motion. The motion passed on a roll call 7:0.

**ADJOURN MEETING**

Member Greenberg made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Resis seconded the motion. The motion was passed on a roll call 7:0. The Board adjourned at 9:20 PM.

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Board President

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Board Secretary

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Date