

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Field School Small Gym
3131 Techny, Northbrook, Illinois 60062
7:00 PM, June 27, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

The Open Session Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Melissa Choo Valentinas at 7:06pm.

ROLL CALL

Board Members:

Present:

Robert Resis
Daphne Frank
Jeffrey Steres
Nancy Hammer
Maria Vasilopoulos
Melissa Choo Valentinas

Absent:

Laura Greenberg
joined via phone at 7:45pm - disconnected after open session

District Administration:

Present: Dr. Erin K. Murphy, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Catherine Lauria, Chief School Business Official

A quorum of the Board was confirmed by Board President, Melissa Choos Valentinas.

MOVED INTO CLOSED

Member Nancy Hammer made a motion to go into closed to consider information regarding the appointment, employment, compensation, or performance of specific employees.

Member Daphne Frank seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Nancy Hammer, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Maria Vasilopoulos.

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0 at 7:06pm.

The Board of Education adjourned in closed and came back into open at 7:35pm.

RECOGNITION OF AUDIENCE

- Allison Slade, Parent, residing at 2117 Valley Road, Northbrook
 - Mrs. Slade thanked the Board of Education for their prompt attention to her concerns last month regarding the Open Meetings Act.
 - Expressed concern of the lack of commitment to do a Superintendent search.
 - Requested the Board of Education consider contracting an external party to hold a school/district review along with regular performance reviews of our highest leadership both at the district and school level.
 - Mrs. Slade feels that the public data is not being used in the evaluations of our highest officials.
 - She expressed that the cost per pupil is increasing and our academic success is not keeping up with the increase in cost per pupil.
 - Mrs. Slade stated that the district's achievement gap is abysmal. In every high performing school and in the business world there is performing evaluations wherein the people at the top are held accountable for the performance of the institution.
 - Mrs. Slade requested to consider using the taxpayers dollars to invest in research based evaluation systems.

ACTION REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, OR PERFORMANCE OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES

Vice President Laura Greenberg made a motion to approve the employment of Dr. Erin Murphy as Superintendent of West Northfield School District 31 effective July 1, 2019. Secretary Daphne Frank seconded the motion.

- Member Jeffrey Steres requested to discuss the long term vision of our superintendent prior to voting on a one year contract. He read his letter of concern.
 - Member Jeffrey Steres stated that even though he is in support of having Dr. Erin Murphy as superintendent, his concern lies in not conducting a formal search.
 - Member Jeffrey Steres is concerned as to why some of the Board members have not shared their reasons as to not wanting to conduct a search.
 - Member Jeffrey Steres expressed that in the past he has heard Board members state that they need to hear the community and take into consideration the community input on certain items. He feels we are not listening to the community in regard to having a superintendent search.
 - Member Jeffrey Steres stated that even though he is in favor of Dr. Erin Murphy, he is not in favor of not conducting the superintendent search.
- Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that she will be abstaining from this vote.
 - Her reasoning for this decision is not to be equated as a vote of no confidence. The abstention has nothing to do with Dr. Murphy or her ability to do this job.

- Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that in fact, Dr. Murphy is fabulous and her commitment to this District is second to none. She has lead the Field community in ways that should be commended.
 - Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that in her personal opinion the decisions concerning the superintendency could have been handled differently and better reflect best practice, thoughtfulness, due diligence and dedication to a more community involved process and search.
 - Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that the process and climate that Dr. Erin Murphy is assuming this position is not favorable.
 - Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated her goal as a Board member is and always will be to help ensure success for all administrators and teachers.
 - Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that she feels Dr. Murphy will rise to meet this challenge but wishes she did not have to be a part of the suboptimal climate that is existing in our community due to all the changes.
 - Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that her absention on this vote is a statement on our process.
- Member Robert Resis stated that he supported conducting a superintendent search for the 2019-2020 school year. However, he will be voting in favor of a one year contract for Dr. Erin Murphy as superintendent.
 - At the present time he feels Dr. Murphy is the best person for the job.
 - Member Robert Resis would like to conduct a superintendent search for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Member Nancy Hammer expressed that she comes from the corporate world. She realizes that while the corporate world and education are different, she believes you should be able to move into a position if you have proven yourself, worked hard for a certain position over time and made proper strides to obtain the certifications needed.
- Vice President Laura Greenberg offered support for Dr. Erin Murphy.
 - She stated that she endured through both a failed and successful referendum. She feels as though she went through many changes on this Board and thanks the community for voting her in this position.
 - The past six months have been difficult, Board members are often called to make some difficult decisions with somewhat minimal information. Vice President Laura Greenberg feels that the Board Members' hearts are in the right place.
 - She feels confident in this decision because she believes Dr. Erin Murphy will take us into the future that our students and staff deserve.
- President Melissa Choo Valentinas stated that she would like to thank the community for coming out to our last special meeting on June 18th and reminded them that they are always welcomed to future Board meetings.

- After due consideration to different opinions and lengthy discussions, the Board of Education decided to not have a superintendent search. It was a divided vote of 4:3 which represents the different perspectives at the table.
- The Board choose to lean into succession and promoting from within.
- President Melissa Choo Valentinas stated that the Board action tonight is to appoint Dr. Erin Murphy as Superintendent of West Northfield District 31 for the 2019-2020 school year.
- This action tonight is to ensure that we have a committed superintendent leading us through the 2019-2020 school year.
- President Melissa Choo Valentinas stated that after Dr. Erin Murphy approval of appointment, the Board of Education and the Union, along with Dr. Murphy, are committed to working together to ensure that parents, teachers and staff have a voice in determining the future of District 31.
- Conversations will begin in the next few weeks so be on the lookout for opportunities where the community can help in ways to support Dr. Murphy, Union and the Board of Education to bring District 31 into the future. With the physical changes on both the inside and outside of both schools, a change in leadership, and a mutual commitment to expand communication and collaboration, we are truly poised to start a new beginning.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Daphne Frank, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Nancy Hammer, Laura Greenberg

Abstain: Maria Vasilopoulos

Nay: Jeffrey Steres.

The motion passed 5:1:1

President Melissa Choo Valentinas introduced Dr. April Miller to the community.

Vice President Laura Greenberg made a motion to approve the employment of Dr. April Miller as the Principal of Field Middle School effective July 8, 2019. Member Daphne Frank seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Nancy Hammer, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Maria Vasilopoulos, Laura Greenberg

Nay: None

The motion passed 7:0.

ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

- Interim Superintendent Murphy added two items for discussion on the closed session agenda.
- Member Jeffrey Steres requested to remove items A, B, D, E, F, special closed meeting minutes from the consent agenda due to not having enough time to review

them prior to approving.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

None

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/INTRODUCTIONS

None

CONSENT AGENDA

Member Daphne Frank made a motion to approve items C, G-Q. Item C. is being approved with the modifying changes. Member Jeffrey Steres seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Nancy Hammer, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Maria Vasilopoulos, Laura Greenberg.

Nay: None.

The motion passed 7:0.

ACTION ITEMS

Interim Superintendent Murphy stated that *Words Their Way* and the Science adoption information has not changed from last Board packet. The adoptions have received endorsement from our new Director of Curriculum and Instruction and is now ready for approval.

Member Jeffrey Steres made a motion to approve the *Words Their Way* adoption. Member Nancy Hammer seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Nancy Hammer, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Maria Vasilopoulos.

Nay: None.

The motion passed 7:0.

Member Daphne Frank made a motion to approve the Science adoption. Member Nancy Hammer seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Laura Greenberg, Robert Resis, Nancy Hammer, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Maria Vasilopoulos.

Nay: None.

The motion passed 7:0.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

Administrative Sharing:

Interim Superintendent Murphy shared that they are excited to have all five curriculum coordinators. Three were internal candidates, Julie Stone, Jacqueline Le-Mon and Veronica Gott. A Science coordinator has been hired that has many years implementing science and gifted programs. Also hired was an ELA K-4 coordinator.

Office of the Chief School Business Official

- Chief School Business Official Cathy Lauria summarized the monthly budget report for June 2019.
 - The treasurer's report is showing an ending fund balance of all funds of \$24.1 million which is \$1.5 million less than last month. It does include the funds we have for our capital improvements.
 - The investment summary shows our investments, that our outside of our PMA capital projects bond funds earning interest at PMA, are earning up to 2.54%. Recently, there was a drop in the interest rates in both Illinois Trust liquid accounts and Savings Deposit funds to 2.23%. The decision was made to pull the interest earned for those investments and then deposit the funds in a general account with a fixed rate option, which is currently earning the rates we were recently earning.
 - The general ledger is showing healthy fund balances. \$255,000 was collected in fees through May. Last May, we collected \$144,000 at this time. The monthly budget summary report shows the revenues are within 1.3% from previous year. Revenues collected are at 99.07% of the budget. We are just about meeting out budget goals for this year. More CPPRT dollars were allocated into the debt service to help cover the costs for technology leases. Instead of allocated the \$30,000 budgeted amount, \$50,000 was recorded in that fund. During the months leading up to June in 2019, the 2018 property taxes are recorded with estimated tax rates. Once the final rates are received, the funds are reallocated. This will be done in June. Expenses are running 4% less than last year. When comparing the years, there was somewhat of a trade off between the \$3.25 million settlement agreement and the \$2.9 million spent on capital projects. The linear chart shows the revenues have lined up on a similar course and are on budget. Expenses are also running similarly to last year at this point in time.
 - The P-Card summaries will continue to be in the packets. The Board of Education will review and can contact her with any questions.
- Chief School Business Official Catherine Lauria summarized the informational memo on changes with Prevailing Wage Act. Formally, in June, a Prevailing Wage resolution would be presented for approval. The resolution states that all construction contracts will include payment at the prevailing wage rate. Though we must continue to pay

prevailing wage, there is no longer a requirement to pass a resolution each year. Also, instead of the contractors giving the certified payrolls to the districts, they will have to post them on the website that is being created by the Department of Labor.

- Mrs. Lauria stated that the safety laminate for the windows is still on hold due to the number of construction projects currently in progress. There have also been some delays in receiving information from the companies that were sent RFPs.
- Chief School Business Official Catherine Lauria summarized the updates for the summer facility projects and other information:
 - The MWRD permit for the Field site work was received today. We are now waiting for Cook County to give clearance to begin the site work since we are on county roads.
 - We continue to wait on the MWRD permit for the playground at Winkelman. The district has met all the requirements needed and has done what we could to get this moving forward. The process to obtain permits has lengthened as once the process gets through the Village, there is additional waiting time for the 3rd party Village engineer and then the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) to sign off when water and sewer work is included. All planning, appearance and village meetings were attended by the District.
 - The inside work at Field is moving along smoothly. For the outside work, stain samples will be reviewed tomorrow and landscaping work will be completed to provide space for the cladding project. The Board had requested estimates for additional staining and cladding on the remainder of the building. The initial base bid and alternates were awarded but did not include the entire building due to the effort to remain within budget. Four different options with estimates were shared by Mrs. Lauria with the Board of Education to illustrate staining and cladding to complete those sections. President Melissa Choo Valentinas questioned funds available depending on the option chosen. Mrs. Lauria stated that as we discussed last Board meeting, the \$8 million bond issuance is going to spent and we have money in capital projects that we are able to use. When we get beyond that point, we may need a resolution to transfer funds from working cash. Additional bids may also be needed due to the cost of the option chosen for completing the building. After further discussion, the Board directed Mrs. Lauria to investigate options, go out for bid as needed, update the drawings, and bring information back to the table. Member Jeffrey Steres suggested bidding options two and three with an alternate bid to include the doorway. Further discussion took place regarding Options 2 and 3 with alternates. Also the Board of Education agreed to remove the “Field Middle School” wording on the exterior of the auditorium. The Board of Education was shown renderings of the signage that would be added to the building.
 - The abatement work at Field is completed and we received air clearance in regards to the asbestos work. A trench is being dug for new piping and is pending inspection. Once approved, the project can continue moving forward.
 - The furniture for the learning center is ready for us to take delivery. We will wait until we are ready to move it in.

- The demolition work is done and the ceiling framework is completed in a number of areas. The district offices are also demolished. The work on patching and painting will begin and be followed by new carpeting.
- Weekly construction meetings are scheduled.
- At Winkelman, the site work can begin once the MWRD issues a permit. The playground is behind schedule as the village considers the projects as one. This is due to disrupting more than half an acre of land and the need to increase the detention area.
- The inside work at both schools is on track and should be done for the teachers to get their rooms ready.
- The condensing units were both delivered at Winkelman and Field.
- The outside work at Field should begin shortly. Member Jeffrey Steres questioned when the outside work would be completed. Mrs. Lauria stated that if the weather cooperates, we should be ready for the opening of the school year. Member Jeffrey Steres questioned if we can add a contingency plan to the July agenda.

BOARD REPORTS

- Member Nancy Hammer stated that the Education Foundation is going to do a Fun Run in the fall and are asking if anyone knows of any companies that they can go to for donations. The Education Foundation is also looking for new members. If new membership is not found, the Education Foundation may dissolve. Also the PTO needs volunteers.
- President Melissa Choo Valentinas stated to buy your school supplies kit from the PTO.
- Member Maria Vasilopoulos reported on her Board training that she attended and shared the “Coming to Order” copy of the book with the rest of the Board. The Triple III Conference is scheduled for November 23, 24, and 25.
 - Member Jeffrey Steres and President Melissa Choo Valentinas stated that they would like to be registered.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Interim Superintendent Murphy reported on the June student enrollment and enrollment status for the 2019-2020 school year. One of the goals for July Board packet is to bring information on the status of families who have not yet begun the registration process.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Chief School Business Official, Catherine Lauria summarized the FOIA request for:

1. Bob Flynn, Heat & Frost Insulators, Local 17- Requesting Contact Information
2. Allison Slade, Steans Family Foundation - Admin Compensation/Assessment Scores

POLICIES

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Communication:

- Interim Superintendent Murphy reviewed a plan for summer communication which includes 2019-2020 school calendar, introduction of new leadership, plans for early dismissals, construction updates, etc.
- Interim Superintendent Murphy also shared some visioning for a more comprehensive communication strategy that includes texting, social media, and better utilizing Skyward.
- Member Jeffrey Steres suggested that we share with parents when certain notifications will be sent out.
- Interim Superintendent Murphy suggested sending out a newsletter in the early fall to showcase the facility improvements, new science curriculum, and new leadership.

Facility Fees for Non-School Related Vendors:

- Interim Superintendent Murphy provided background on Facility Fees for Non-School Vendors including the fact that our policy says that the superintendent or designee can set the fees and that we have been charging outside vendors \$48.00 per session.
- Interim Superintendent Murphy is proposing a fee waiver if an outside vendor program held on site only services District 31 students and if there is no need for additional custodian support.
- Member Jeffrey Steres suggested looking at fee caps on outside vendor programs to better support District 31 families.

RECOGNITION OF AUDIENCE

None

MOVE INTO CLOSED

Member Steres made a motion to move into closed session to consider information regarding student issues and the appointment, employment, compensation, or performance of specific employees. Member Nancy Hammer seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Nancy Hammer, Laura Greenberg, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Maria Vasilopoulos.

Nay: None.

The motion passed 7:0 at 9:24pm.

ACTION ITEMS REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION OR PERFORMANCE OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES

Member Jeffrey Steres made a motion to approve the Educational Support Personnel FY 2020 Hourly Rate Increase for Rita Redmond as recommended by the Superintendent. Member Nancy Hammer seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Nancy Hammer, Laura Greenberg, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Maria Vasilopoulos.

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0.

ADJOURN

Member Steres made a motion to adjourn. Member Nancy Hammer seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye: Robert Resis, Melissa Choo Valentinas, Nancy Hammer, Jeffrey Steres, Daphne Frank, Maria Vasilopoulos.

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0 at 12:06am.

Board President

Board Secretary

Date