

BOARD NOTES:

May 12, 2020, Regular Board Meeting:

Consent Agenda: The Board approved the Consent Agenda, which included the minutes from the April 14th Regular Board Meeting and the monthly bills and salaries. While the Consent Agenda also included the approval of Board Policies section 200, it was agreed to pull out Board Policy 250 “Uniform Grievance Procedures” for more review by the Policy Committee.

Communications: Superintendent Dr. Ed Stange shared that once again District 29 has been recognized as a “Project Lead The Way Distinguished District” for providing broad access to transformative learning opportunities for students through its PLTW programs. We are one of only 24 districts across the US, and 7 in IL, to receive this honor! Dr. Stange congratulated Computer Science teacher Mrs. Kim Albright for this incredible achievement. He also shared a very creatively written thank you note from District 29 teachers and staff to the Board for their gifts during Teacher Appreciation Week.

Finance and Facilities: The Board discussed the past challenges to keeping Sunset Ridge’s fields healthy over the summer. In approving the new contract for landscaping services with Millieu, we are assured that these challenges will be better addressed, which include more aeration because of compacted dirt caused by construction, better weeding services, and more aggressive reseeding. The addition of a booster pump on our sprinkler in order to increase water pressure will also improve our watering system. Additionally, the Board approved the renewal of our 3-year lease contract with Impact for multifunction copier use. The Board agreed to hold off on the approval of the 3-year contract for transportation services by Olsen until contract details regarding fingerprint background checks could be better defined. Chief School Business Official Mr. Tom Beerheide updated the Board on the status of the custodial services bidding process (6 vendors bid and we are in the process of reviewing them) and the food service bidding process (3 vendors showed interest at the pre-bid meeting). The next meeting is July 14, 2020, at 6pm.

Education Committee: Board member Mrs. Anne Peterson reported that principals Dr. Mary Frances Greene and Dr. Ivy Sukenik both gave a thorough review of the District’s curriculum and instructional progress this past year as it pertains to the Strategic Plan goals, identifying our successes, opportunities for growth, and plans for the future. An update on eLearning was also given, with an eye to how we can better position ourselves for success in the fall should we still be implementing remote learning. The next meeting is July 7, 2020, at 6pm.

Policy Review Committee: The Board had a first reading of Board Policies sections 300 (General School Administration) and 800 (School-Community Relations). The next meeting is May 22, 2020, at 9am.

IASB: No report.

PTO: No report.

NSSED: Board member Mr. Bill Hayes reported that they are working on an encompassing guide for their remote learning plans, contract negotiations continue, and the presentation and potential approval of the completed financial model will be in June. Dr. Stange thanked Mr. Hayes and Director of Student Services Ms. Emily Dunham for their work on NSSED’s Finance Committee that always kept District 29’s interests at the forefront.

Northfield Park District: Board member Mr. Rory Welch reported that we are in discussions with the Park District regarding the use of District 29 facilities for summer camps and/or daycare programs, considering the health and safety of attending children and directives from health officials.

Village of Northfield: Board member Mrs. Nancy Detlefsen reported that Northfield leadership communicates to residents weekly regarding COVID-19. They also plan to erect a banner downtown congratulating all of Northfield's graduates.

Foundation Fund: No report.

Administrative Reports:

Dr. Stange: We received one FOIA request this month seeking information on our custodial contracts. There are currently 52 students registered for Kindergarten, with potential to go as high as 61. We have posted a vacancy for an Advanced Learning Teacher position.

Mrs. Sheri Styczen: Network Manager and Data Security Specialist Mr. Brian Thiel joined her in providing a report on our data security practices, which included preventing intrusions, analyzing and mitigating possible intrusions, and the tech audit update. We continue to support students and teachers with repairs and troubleshooting advice. School registration for next year is starting, and the tech department has developed office hours for teachers needing any technology tutorials.

Dr. Greene: May 26th is reserved for students to come pick up anything they left at school. We are creating both a 3rd grade graduation video and an end-of-year video, and have tentative plans to deliver each 3rd grader's portfolio to their door in celebration of their accomplishments. In regards to eLearning, average attendance is around 90%, and teachers are experimenting with the Zoom environments for future discussions, games, and enrichment activities.

Dr. Sukenik: The students are coming to school during assigned time slots to pick up their belongings and it seems to be going well. Administration is working closely with the graduation committee to plan a drive-in style graduation ceremony. Plans include assigned parking spaces, student speeches, and U Dawg U provided afterwards, and perhaps even a parade! Additionally, district parent Robert Mazur is developing a video. As an update in eLearning, attendance has gradually gone down, as has work completion. Teachers are working to meet kids where they are academically and emotionally, and be understanding of each individual situation.

Ms. Dunham: Student Services staff continue to engage in live check-ins, recorded instruction, and meet IEP deadlines, and feel as if they are getting into a groove.

Recommendations: The Board approved the Closed Session Minutes from April 14, 2020, and the destruction of verbatim Closed Session recordings, which is a routine bit of maintenance the Board engages in. The Board also approved the maternity leave request from Mrs. Kellie Johnson, the employment of Ms. Carley Cohen as 7th grade Student Services Teacher, the retirement of SRS Art teacher Mrs. Lynn Horne, the employment of Ms. Kathleen Downs as School Psychologist Intern, and a request for voluntary transfer.

Official meeting minutes will be posted on the website following their approval at the June 9, 2020, Regular Board meeting.