

WEST NORTHFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT 31
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Per SP2135 the District 31 Board Meeting was held electronically and in-person in the
Field Learning Center, 3131 Techny Road,
October 22, 2020 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Vice President Laura Greenberg at 7:02pm.

ROLL CALL

Board Members:

Present:

Laura Greenberg	Virtual	
Daphne Frank	Virtual	
Nancy Hammer	Virtual	
Robert Resis	In-Person	arrived at 7:03pm
Jeffrey Steres	In-Person	
Maria Vasilopoulos	In-Person	

Absent: Melissa Choo Valentinas

District Administration Present:

Dr. Erin K. Murphy, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Catherine M. Lauria, Asst Superintendent Finance & Operations/CSBO
Dr. April Miller, Principal Field Middle School
Mrs. Shaton Wolverton, Principal Winkelman School
Dr. Janine Gruhn, Director of Special Education
Mr. Nino Alvarez, Winkelman Assistant Principal
Mrs. Becky Mathison, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

A quorum of the Board was confirmed by Vice President, Laura Greenberg

ADDITION OF CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Member Jeffrey Steres removed Item VI. B. Closed Session Minutes of the September 24, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education from the consent agenda.

RECOGNITION OF AUDIENCE

Superintendent Erin Murphy recognized the following public comment.

Margo Schwartz-Newton

Thank you to all employees - staff, admin, social services, and everyone behind the scenes - for your hard work and dedication to keeping everyone safe, healthy, and educated. Our family is grateful for all of you.

PRESENTATION

Superintendent Erin Murphy presented the [5 Essential Survey](#) for Winkelman and Field Schools wherein she highlighted the following:

- Background of 5Essentials
- Timing of 5Essentials - It is typically administered between November-February. The District administered this in December-January.
- Percentage of parents, staff and students who completed survey
- Reviewed the following characteristics for each school:
 - Overall designation
 - Areas of greatest improvement
 - Areas of strength
 - Areas of greatest decline
 - Weakest Areas
- Reviewed the Covid impacts on School Report Cards, specifically highlighting those identified by the state as possibly being inaccurate or not present.

The Board of Education discussed ways to engage the parents to take the survey including sending home paper copies, utilizing the PTO and room parents, and working with District 31 Director of Communication, Hayley Garard.

Member Jeffrey Steres requested an analysis of the 5Essential Survey by the schools.

CONSENT AGENDA

Member Maria Vasilopoulos made a motion to approve items A-H. Member Jeffrey Steres seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0.

ACTION ITEMS

Superintendent Erin Murphy recommended to approve the IESA application for Cooperative Team Participation and IESA Cooperative Team Agreement to expand athletic opportunities in the area of wrestling for the cooperating schools of Maple School, Wood Oaks Junior High School, Northbrook Junior High School, Attea Middle School, Springman Middle School, and Field Middle School for the 2020-2021 and 2021-22 school years. District 31 is not going to do this for this year but is recommending to sign the agreement for possibly participating in the 2021-2022 school year.

Member Maria Vasilopoulos made a motion to approve the IESA application for Cooperative Team Participation and IESA Cooperative Team Agreement to expand athletic opportunities in the area of wrestling for the cooperating schools of Maple School, Wood Oaks Junior High School, Northbrook Junior High School, Attea Middle School, Springman Middle School, and Field Middle School for the 2020-2021 and 2021-22 school years. Member Nancy Hammer seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0.

Superintendent Erin Murphy summarized the adjusted calendar recommendations for FY21 due to feedback from teachers that expressed a need for more planning and collaboration time given the extraordinary challenges facing our teaching staff as they re-imagine what education looks like during a public health emergency. In September, the Board of Education asked the administrative team to come back in October with calendar modifications to address these concerns.

- Superintendent Erin Murphy highlighted possible considerations allowed by the Illinois State Board of Education
- Superintendent Erin Murphy recommended the following:
 - Designate the following as half days:
 - Friday, December 18 (before winter break)

- Thursday, February 11 (before the long weekend)
- Friday, March 19 (before spring break)
- Thursday, April 1 (day before a long weekend)
- Wednesday, May 12 (day before midweek no school day)
- In general current weekly staff meeting times would be reallocated to the teachers as planning, PLC meetings, and collaboration time. The half days would be used for staff and committee meetings and professional development. Note: This would begin in December because November already has a Blended Remote Planning Day scheduled. However, we would begin scheduling staff meeting times as planning/collaboration time in November, with the exception of the Monday an equity professional development is already scheduled.
- Designate Monday, January 4 as a Teacher Institute Day to prepare for the transition back into remote and in-person learning. Students would start school remotely on Tuesday, January 5.
- Designate January 5-January 15 as remote learning days for all students.
- Designate April 6 as a remote learning day for Field staff and students in order for the building to be a polling place free of students and staff.

After further discussion, Secretary Daphne Frank made a motion to approve the following as half days for our students for purposes of professional development for our teachers to elevate our education.

- Friday, December 18 (before winter break)
- Thursday, February 11 (before the long weekend)
- Friday, March 19 (before spring break)
- Thursday, April 1 (day before a long weekend)
- Wednesday, May 12 (day before midweek no school day)

Member Laura Greenberg seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0.

Member Jeffrey Steres made a motion to approve to designate Monday, January 4 as a Teacher Institute Day to prepare for the transition back into remote and in-person learning. Students would start school on Tuesday, January 5, method is TBD. Member Nancy Hammer seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0.

Secretary Dahne Frank made a motion to approve January 5-January 15 as remote learning

days for all students. Member Maria Vasilopoulos seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

Aye:

Nay: Robert Resis, Daphne Frank, Maria Vasilopoulos, Nancy Hammer, Jeffrey Steres

Abstain: Laura Greenberg

The motion does NOT pass 0:5.

Member Maria Vasilopoulos made a motion to approve April 6 as a remote learning day for Field staff and students in order for the building to be a polling place free of students and staff. Member Jeffrey Steres seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Superintendent Erin Murphy summarized the dashboard update, which has been shared through the weekly communications with parents. This was created by the Northfield Township to monitor us on when we need to talk to the Cook County Health Department. Superintendent Erin Murphy highlighted the following:

- Data showed weekly cases have gone up significantly from the past three weeks.
- Substitutes have continually been difficult to find.
 - It has been a slow process to transition to Kelly. We are working on getting more subs.
- Summarized the Covid cases in the District:
 - 4 student Covid cases
 - 2 staff cases (from partner vendors)
- The Cook County Department of Public Health have not made any recommendations about school closing at this time.
- Reviewed Re-registration timeline:
 - November 11 -Information about reregistration will be sent out to families. Only families requesting platform changes need return re-registration information.
 - November 18 - Platform change notifications due.
 - November 23 - Begin collaborating with classroom teachers on accommodating changes.
 - Before winter break - notification of any new assignments for post winter break.
- Things to consider including
 - Safety will not be compromised.
 - Goal is to provide as much consistency as possible for kids.

- We may need to consider hiring additional teachers to avoid disruption.
- We will not be able to accommodate parental requests AFTER the re-registration due date.
- Bus service may not be available for new riders.

Vice President Laura Greenberg requested that an FAQ be provided so parents understand the specifics of platform changes.

The Board of Education discussed in length the question of if the Cook County Public Health recommends returning all students to remote learning, does the District need to follow that or can we decide as a District based on our data. They discussed if an emergency Board of Education meeting needs to be scheduled to determine our decision when/if the Cook County Department of Public Health office makes an announcement about school status. Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that her recommendation would be to follow the recommendations of the Cook County Department of Public Health because the administrative team are not infectious disease specialists and must rely on the experts.

The Board of Education agreed in the event of a recommendation to close schools from the CCDPH, Dr. Murphy would schedule an emergency board meeting, possibly even for that day. However, if that meeting couldn't be held immediately, Dr. Murphy could follow the recommendation.

Member Maria Vasilopoulos stated that the feedback from parents regarding Parent Teacher Conferences were very positive and stated that we can learn some good things during this time in that virtual conferences may be used in the future. She gave a huge thank you for everybody's time in organizing the virtual conferences.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Becky Mathison gave a verbal update on the professional learning provided for staff so far this year. She also explained that all of the testing has been completed and reviewed in a cabinet meeting this week. NWEA MAP has come out with great new reports that address the COVID slide. This information is challenging to compare from year to year. Some of the rostering has not been set up correctly and this is being looked into in order to compare from year to year more clearly. Reports will be sent out to parents along with information on why it's different this year and why it is delayed.

Vice President Laura Greenberg questioned that in a couple months, if the Board of Education can see the plan for combining the metrics with observations. Superintendent Erin Murphy stated that it is on the agenda for next month regarding the assessment data and what the goals are for this department.

Finance

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria reviewed the Monthly Budget Reports for September 2020.

- Monthly Budget Reports
 - Revenues from property taxes were down \$1.5 million for September compared to the prior year. In October to date, the district received approximately \$740,000 in property taxes which has made up half of that discrepancy. That is net of the additional refunds that have been coming through with the payments. In general, interest income will be much lower than last year due to the spending down of the money that was available for capital projects, as we near completion of those projects. Transportation fees were down 50% as less families are using bus services. Fewer users worked to our advantage during this time to allow for social distancing on the buses. Revenues for capital leases are higher this year due to an earlier allocation of CPPRT to that fund.
 - Expenses - Nothing outstanding to report. Next month will show a larger increase than is typically shown due to allocating the retro pay for CBA employees on October 15th.
- The P-Card summaries remain available for Board review.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria summarized the Post-Issuance Tax Compliance Report wherein she stated that this is a report that is required every year by the IRS and SEC to make sure we are following the guidelines related to tax exempt bonds issued. As we move forward, the relevance of the report decreases since the tax exempt bonds have been spent but it is still required while we have outstanding payments due. Due to this spend, concerns such as arbitrage (which we are not subject to as a small issuer) cannot occur. This report relates to the 2015A and the 2018B bonds which were tax exempt. At this point, payments will continue for the 2015A bonds through December, 2024 and for the 2018B bonds through December, 2037.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria stated the FY21 Public Disclosure of Total Compensation Report is a Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) requirement to post on the District's website the total compensation package for each employee having a total compensation package that exceeds \$75,000 per year. The Act is not clear as to only posting IMRF employees, so all employees meeting that threshold are reported. The salary posted is the base salary and benefits are to include the following:

- Employer-paid portion of health insurance
- Bonuses
- Vehicle Allowance
- Vacation Days Earned
- Sick Days Earned

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria stated the Administrative Compensation Report is also a required posting each year. Noted on the report marks certain sections as TBD since we do not have final salaries. However, the report has been posted to comply with the posting requirements.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Catherine Lauria reported on the facilities:

- Field - Abbey Paving was out this weekend and working on the field and completed the following:
 - Field was smoothed out.
 - Drain tile cleanout pipes on the south end of the field were buried.
 - Incline on the sides of the field between the soccer field and the area on the south east side of the field were reduced by adding soil.
 - The added soil also extended the east side of the field blending as needed into existing grades.
 - The sunken trench from drain tiles were filled. The drain tiles were added due to a concern of an accumulation of water on the south end of the soccer field.
 - Straw seeding was laid out on most of the field and the detention area. This method was used in an attempt to protect the seeds and allow to root and better in place.
 - Pricing for fencing is being developed for the area on the west side of the soccer field to prevent the soccer balls from going into the parking lot. This should extend the fence's height to 10 or 12 feet. Pricing for a partial fence is also needed near the detention area.
 - To date, balance owed on the work outside at Field is estimated at \$62,000.
- Field Auditorium/Garage Area - Edwin Anderson came out to touch up small areas that were missed with brick staining.
- Winkelman- the site work is considered substantially complete and an estimated \$200,000 needs to be paid out.

BOARD REPORTS

NSSSED

- Member Robert Resis stated that the meeting focused on the reopening procedures of NSSSED. They also discussed the shortage of substitutes and confirmed three staff members that had COVID.

PTO

- Provided Winkelman with Spirit Week including photo ops, drawing contest, frankenstein dancing, recipes and more.
- PTO and The Education Foundation joined forces to raise funds to provide all District 31 staff with a treat and will continue until funds run out.
- Book fair will be online and available to both schools.

The Education Foundation:

- Excited on the success of joining forces with PTO over a shared goal of teacher recognition. More than \$1,100 raised this far.
- The PPE donation program is still going strong and the tents should be arriving tomorrow.

- Working on ideas for the next capital projects to support. They are expected to announce their winter campaign at their November meeting.
- Always accepting new members who want to make a difference in the community.

Northbrook Economic Development Committee

Member Robert Resis stated that he and Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operation, Catherine Lauria attended. Member Resis stated:

- Tax receipts being down in certain areas.
- Area of growth in April was groceries.
- Neighboring districts mentioned how they are proceeding with school reopening procedures.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operation, Catherine Lauria provided Economic Development Committee (EDC) additional information regarding how the district is managing the pandemic including the guidelines being followed. Overall, there were positive comments from surrounding districts.

- Additionally, the EDC is forming a Climate Control sub-committee and has reached out to districts inviting them to join this group. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Becky Mathison, has volunteered to join the committee.

Illinois Association of School Boards

- Member Maria Vasilopoulos reported that the conference is virtual the weekend before Thanksgiving and if you are interested let Tina Nielsen know and she will register you.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Superintendent Erin Murphy reported enrollment.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS

- Kirkland & Ellis, LLP - Title IX
- SmartProcure - May 21, 2020 to September 15, 2020

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Superintendent Erin Murphy summarized the first read for the following policies
 - [Title IX policies - First Read](#)
 - [Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure](#)
 - [Uniform Grievance Procedure](#)
 - [Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment](#)
 - [Workplace Harassment Prohibited](#)
 - [Staff Development Program](#)
 - [Equal Educational Opportunities](#)
 - [Harassment of Students Prohibited](#)
 - [Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment](#)
 - [Teen Dating Violence Prohibited](#)
- The Board of Education discussed determining the delegate to attend the IASA

Delegate Assembly Meeting on Saturday, November 14 at 10am (virtual) and District 31 positions on resolutions. The two volunteers, Member Maria Vasilopoulos and Member Jeffrey Steres, will decide who will attend. The position on the resolution of gun storage was raised by Member Robert Resis. The resolution calls that the Illinois Association of School Boards shall support and advocate for legislation which strengthens child safe gun storage laws in the state of Illinois, requiring gun owners to store firearms, whether they are loaded or unloaded, in a securely locked container, if a person under the age of 18 is likely to gain access to the weapon without permission. The current resolution states under the age 14. Member Robert Resis stated that it should stay under the age of 14. Because the IASB positions deal directly with issues that happen inside of a school district, the resolution committee recommends to not adopt. Member Robert Resis stated that we should approve the resolution of raising the age restriction to 18. After further discussion, the Board of Education agreed with Member Robert Resis that the resolution should be adopted.

MOVE INTO CLOSED

Member Jeffrey Steres made a motion to move into closed session to consider pending litigation, collective bargaining, and the appointment, employment, compensation, or performance of specific employees and school security matters. Member Maria Vasilopoulos seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0.

ACTION FROM CLOSED

Member Jeffrey Steres made a motion approve the following salary increases:

Superintendent Erin Murphy, 3.5%

Director of Buildings and Grounds, Edmund Blankenheim, 4%

Director of Technology and Infrastructure, Dave Del Boccio, 3%

Field Middle School Principal, April Miller, 5%

Assistant Superintendent of Special Services, Janine Gruhn, 5%

Member Maria Vasilopoulos seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0

ADJOURN

Member Robert Resis made a motion to adjourn. Member Maria Vasilopoulos seconded the motion.

Final Resolution:

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

Nay: None.

The motion passed 6:0 at 11:57PM.

Board President

Board Secretary

Date