

BOARD NOTES:

December 8, 2020, Regular Board Meeting:

Consent Agenda: The Board approved the Consent Agenda, which included the minutes from both the November 10th Regular Board Meeting and the November 18th Special Board Meeting, and the monthly bills and salaries.

Communications: Superintendent Dr. Ed Stange reported one FOIA request for a list of District 29 names and contact information.

Old Business: The Board discussed the revised Board Meeting Calendar, which includes all Board and Committee meetings.

Board Open Discussion: The Board discussed the process by which committees are formed. After the elections, it is generally accepted practice for Board members to inform the Board President of any interest in, or skill set that may lend itself to, certain committee positions, after which the Board President makes the final assignments.

New Business: The Board discussed the 2021-2022 District Calendar. As outlined in the District 29 Collective Bargaining Agreement, our school year consists of 182 staff work days (177 student attendance days, 3 institute days, and 2 parent/teacher conference days). Next year, several of the religious holidays fall on weekdays rather than weekends, which gives the appearance that the year is longer than usual. After a vote of 5 “yays” and 2 “nays,” the Board approved a Resolution authorizing our legal team to represent District 29 in a mass settlement seeking to recover damages from Juul Laboratories for costs incurred from the vaping epidemic that has affected middle and high school aged children across the nation.

Return to School Task Force Committee: After reviewing the latest local, regional, and District metrics, Dr. Stange reported that the Task Force reevaluated its purpose and methods, and explored new ways to continue to constructively serve the District in the second half of the year.

Finance and Facilities: The Board opened a public hearing to discuss the FY20 Tax Levy. After no public comments, the hearing was closed and the Levy was approved. After a discussion of how the District covers its debt payments, the Board approved a Resolution authorizing a supplemental tax levy to pay the principal of, and interest on, outstanding limited bonds of the District. The next meeting is January 12, 2021, at 6pm.

Education Committee: Board member Mrs. Anne Peterson reported that administration led a thorough presentation comparing remote learning as it was in the spring to present day, highlighting lessons learned and continued areas for growth. The next meeting is March 9, 2021, at 6pm.

Policy Committee: The next meeting is January 5, 2021, at 9am.

IASB: Board member Mr. Scott Subeck reported that he attended the virtual Annual Conference, and all of the Resolutions that the IASB Resolutions Committee recommended to adopt were adopted. However, the proposed resolution supporting advocating for improved gun storage laws in the state of Illinois, which the District 29 Board had voted to support, was not approved.

PTO: Dr. Stange reported that their fundraising campaign has been very successful, and that the PTO Gifts proposals are in their last stages of review. The Northwestern Settlement House gift project was a huge hit with families, and both schools are looking forward to upcoming author visits. The next Parent Connections Committee meetings will profile the Advanced Learners Program and our Kindergarten program.

NSSED: Board member Mr. Bill Hayes reported that they have gone remote through mid-January, but remain available to provide services to in-person districts if needed. They are working closely with individual schools to work on the logistics of providing services in any scenario.

Village of Northfield: No report.

Northfield Park District: No report.

Foundation Fund: No report.

Administrative Reports:

Dr. Stange: 5 new students are joining the District in the new year and 2 students have recently left. We are currently looking to fill one more Teacher Assistant position.

Dr. Sukenik and Mrs. Keidaisch: Thank you for the generosity families displayed during the Northwestern Settlement House project. The Social Justice Committee is providing meaningful activities for staff to engage in during small group meetings that provide opportunities to dive deep into the experience of personal identity. After winter break, it is expected that more students will be returning to in-person school. In preparation, staff is exploring ways to expose students to different Exploratories, and will communicate any changes in the schedules to families as plans become finalized. The partnership with the Park District regarding their afterschool program has been very successful. Thank you to all the teachers and staff for rising to every occasion and exceeding every expectation.

Mr. Beerheide: The application for \$53,000 reimbursement of COVID expenses that was promised by FEMA has been denied. However, we are working on an appeal. It seems only a fraction of expenses nationwide have been reimbursed. We are likely to receive some payment from the state, but anticipate it will be very small.

Mr. Dreher: We are working on getting estimates to modify classroom space, but it is unlikely we will be able to do any meaningful work towards that before the year ends.

Recommendations: The Board approved the Closed Session Minutes from November 10, 2020. Also approved was the employment of Maternity Leave Substitute Ms. Kristyn Jaco.

Official meeting minutes will be posted on the website following their approval at the January 12, 2020, Regular Board meeting.