

FEBRUARY 27, 2023
WILMETTE, IL
REGULAR MEETING

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, February 27, 2023 at the Mikaelian Education Center, 615 Locust Road, Wilmette, Illinois. President Amy Poehling called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Amy Poehling, Jon Cesaretti, Anne Hart, Bonnie Kim, Frank Panzica,
 Lisa Schneider-Fabes, Erin Stone

Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Kari Cremascoli, Corey Bultemeier, Heather Glowacki, Katie Lee,
 Kristin Swanson, Kelly Jackson

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Principal Becky Littmann introduced second grade teachers Kate O'Brien and Caitlin Ciulla along with Central second grade students who highlighted recent activities such as *Valentines for Veterans*, study of important black history leaders, and polar bears habitat. The students then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ARTWORK

The artwork on display featured Ms. Bergard's Central students. First graders experimented with materials, concepts, media, and creative approaches to their snowman unit. Third graders created Keith Haring inspired snowmen. Students compared and contrasted Keith Haring's artwork with Wayne Thiebaud's artwork and painted donut artist portfolios. They displayed their impeccable craftsmanship with the small pieces and figurines attached. Fourth graders exhibited a project inspired by the book "Over and Under the Snow" by Kate Messner. Students drew various woodland animals and created homes for them in a snowy winter landscape.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Dr. Cremascoli introduced MathCounts competition winners Sophie Zhang and Ines Petriello. Sophie Zhang will compete at state representing Highcrest Middle School in the individual competition. The Wilmette Junior High School team of Aren Emrikian, Renee Ma, Larry Yang and Sophie Yi finished 1st and will represent WJHS at the state competition on March 4.

Ines Petriello placed first in the Wilmette District 39 Scripps Spelling Bee and Juniper Platt was the runner-up. Ines will compete at the North Cooks ISC Scripps Spelling Bee competition on March 15.

APPROVE THE MINUTES

Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica, to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2023 Board of Education Regular and Executive Session Meetings. The minutes were approved as submitted by **General Consent**.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committees met as part of the February 13, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Facility Development – no discussion

School Finance – Mr. Cesaretti

2023 Bond Issuance

Mr. Bultemier introduced Elizabeth Hennessy of Raymond James to review the financial plan to sell working cash fund bonds to fund summer construction projects. The resolution to issue \$11,250,000 Working Cash Fund Bonds for the purpose of increasing the District's Working Cash Fund to cover construction costs for air conditioning renovations at four schools was approved in January. Ms. Hennessy provided current AAA-Municipal Market Data Index and Treasury Rates. She noted the federal government has raised interest rates seven times to combat inflation. Members reviewed the working cash bond issuance for 10.5- and 12.5-year payback options. The recommendation was to issue bonds in March as opposed to June due to interest rate risks. Discussion ensued regarding the vulnerability of the market. Members weighed the two options. Mr. Bultemeier stated the Board has the opportunity to pass the parameters of the resolution to sell the working cash bonds at this Board of Education meeting. The sale of the bonds would take place following approval in order to receive the proceeds in March for reinvestment. Mr. Bultemeier presented the five-year projections for review. He noted there is flexibility to have the proceeds on hand for operational, construction, or educational use. Majority of members agreed to the 12.5-year option to be presented for approval as part of the Consent Agenda.

KEEP39 Financial Information

Mr. Bultemeier presented the KEEP39 historical information. In order to house the enrichment program, building additions and renovations were completed at Harper, McKenzie and Romona Elementary schools. Interior renovations were completed at Central Elementary. Staffing was increased to accommodate the enrichment program. Mr. Bultemeier provided annual revenues versus expenditures. The purpose of the KEEP39 tuition fee is to cover these overall costs which totaled \$9,951,413.

The program began in 2020-2021 at Central and Harper schools and was open at all elementary schools in 2021-2022. The enrollment increases annually. Currently 92.8% of kindergarten students participate in the KEEP39 program. It is estimated that a full payback of costs incurred will be achieved in the late 2030s.

Members discussed options for a full day kindergarten program, having an annual review of the enrichment program to review options, and administrations requested a minimum of 18 months to implement a new full day kindergarten program.

Strategy – Mrs. Schneider-Fabes

Family Engagement Parent Education – Goal 4

Mr. DeMonte and Principal Kelly Jackson reported on parent education events that facilitate social emotional and academic growth and progress. An archive of events and videos are posted on the District 39 website to allow parents the ability to watch at their convenience.

Liaison Reports

Community Review Committee (CRC) – Mrs. Kim

The CRC met on February 7 and continue to compile data for their report on neurodiversity.

Educational Foundation – Mrs. Schneider-Fabes

The Foundation met on February 15 and received an update from Central Physical Education teachers about use of the rail yard. The Paddle Event and Bingo Night were successful and raised over \$4K. Future activities include Movie Night on March 14 and Beers & Cheers on March 28. Gripp Grant applications will be accepted until March 3 with vote to occur on March 15. Upcoming junior high assemblies include a screen printer presentation and STEM in the Real World.

Wilmette Village Intergovernmental Cooperation Working Group – Mrs. Kim/Mr. Cesaretti – no report

Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) – Mrs. Kim

A North Cook Division meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 15 in Wheeling, where there will be a discussion on “Schools as the Cornerstone of Community.” On the IASB website, there’s a new publication called “New School Laws” that has a summary of all of the state laws enacted by the General Assembly in 2022 that impacts Illinois public schools, of which there are 64 new laws.

Legislative Update – Mrs. Kim

Three Senate Bills passed out of committee that would make changes to teacher contractual service. A House bill passed out of committee intended to alleviate the teacher shortage. It would extend the time from June 2023 to June 2026 for retired teachers to teach for up to 120 days without affecting their retirement status.

INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Written Communication – Dr. Cremascoli

Dr. Cremascoli reported the Board received written communication from Beth Drucker who shared the recording of the Sustainable Schools program held January 10 and to share information about free energy assessment open to all Illinois schools as part of the Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA); Cory Lester wrote to request a conversation about the financial and strategy plans for the KEEP39 program.

B. Administrative Announcements – Dr. Cremascoli

School Registration

Dr. Cremascoli noted registration remains open for the 2023-2024 school year. Returning students, register through the PowerSchool parent portal. New students, including incoming kindergarteners, register through the District website www.wilmette39.org/enroll and follow instructions on the process. Parents with incoming kindergarten students who wish to enroll their child(ren) in the KEEP39 program must complete registration by March 1 to guarantee a spot in the program.

Institute Day

Faculty and staff engaged in a day of learning and collaboration on Tuesday, February 21. The day included several mandatory sessions for teachers focused on instructional practices in Mathematics and Reading. Staff were also provided breakout sessions, which included focus on instructional practices in and strategies for social emotional learning, executive functioning, English language arts, math, writing, and goal-setting with students.

Conferences Sign-Up

Dr. Cremascoli stated elementary parent/teacher conferences will be held March 23-24. Parents of elementary school students will receive email instructions for scheduling conference appointments online, and registration will open on Monday, March 6. Video conferences are encouraged and set as the default within the registration system; however, requests for in-person conferences will be accommodated.

National Blue Ribbon Nomination

Dr. Cremascoli congratulated Romona Elementary School for being nominated by Illinois to join the esteemed community of National Blue Ribbon Schools.

National Blue Ribbon Schools are public and non-public elementary, middle, and high schools that produce outstanding results for all students. They have demonstrated consistent excellence and made progress in closing gaps in student achievement. The National Blue Ribbon Schools recognition program is part of a larger U.S. Department of Education effort to identify and disseminate knowledge about effective school leadership and promising instructional practices.

Romona School was nominated as an Exemplary High Performing School. Up to 16 outstanding public schools can be nominated from Illinois for the National Blue Ribbon Schools award. Schools of choice are not officially recognized until September.

Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Village of Wilmette for Shared Sustainability Coordinator

As part of the Consent Agenda, the Board will be presented the approval of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Village of Wilmette for the shared Sustainability Coordinator. The proposed Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the Village of Wilmette, Wilmette Park District, Wilmette Public Library District, Township of New Trier and Wilmette Public School District 39 serves to codify the cooperative commitment toward sustainability initiatives throughout the Village.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The District received FOIA requests from Sheri Reid of SmartProcure (commercial FOIA) for any and all purchasing records from August 25, 2022 to present; Nathan Mihelich of Illinois Retired Teachers Association (IRTA) requested the names and emails for certified staff retiring this year; Caroline Sales of Bausch & Michaels Law, LLC requested executive summary report and building reports prepared by Atlantic Research Partners from February 28, 2020 to January 13, 2022.

C. Strategic Plan Updates

1. 2021-2026 District 39 Strategic Plan: 2022-2023 Mid-Year Update

In September 2022, the D39 administration submitted 2022-2023 action steps for the 2021-2026 District 39 Strategic Plan for Board of Education approval. The work continued to implement those action steps. The District 39 Strategic Advisory Team was presented a preview of a mid-year update on February 16 and asked to provide feedback on the data and any action steps that members would recommend for review. The team monitors and reported on progress in terms of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for this mid-year update on all goal areas: Student Achievement + Growth, Supportive Community, Professional Community, Family Partnerships, and Stewardship of Resources.

Members discussion included: consistent behavior expectations for common areas such as hallways and recess; comparison of current growth rates to pre-covid data; raising baseline data for academic goal setting; benchmarking for students' sense of belonging in schools; noticeably high engagement in clubs for grades 5-8 students. All agreed this was an impressive and extensive mid-year report.

D. Annual Business

1. Series 2023 School Bonds Resolution

Mr. Bultemier noted the Board is asked to approve an issuance parameters resolution to provide authorization for the bond sale scheduled to occur on February 28. The resolution incorporates the parameters discussed at the February committee meeting such as a 12 year payback period, leaving a window to issue new bonds beginning in 2028, and using the District's debt service extension base to repay the bonds. The issuance is expected to generate roughly \$11M in proceeds that will be spent on the summer 2023 construction projects.

E. Board Policy Review

1. Second and Final Reading of Board of Education Policies 5:10, 5:35, 5:40, 5:50, 5:60, 5:70, 5:150, 5:240, 5:260 and 7:180

Dr. Cremascoli noted the policies were revised based upon feedback from first reading.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ACTION ITEMS

A. Consent Agenda

Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica, to approve the Personnel Report dated February 27, 2023, which included educational support personnel full-time employment of **Jessica Hill**, effective March 6, 2023; **Brian Pearlman**, effective February 10, 2023; **Marlena Twiggs**, effective February 6, 2023; licensed resignation of **Kimberly Carter**, effective June 9, 2023; **Jamie Parker**, (Leave of Absence), effective February 16, 2023; release of a probationary employee, **Andrew Byerwalter**, effective February 2, 2023; tenured leave of absence of **Michele Gilford**, from May 11, 2023 to the end of the 2022-2023 school year; licensed retirement of **Kathryn O'Brien**, effective the end of the 2027-2028 school year; **Laura Polkoff**, effective the end of the 2022-2023 school year: approve the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Village of Wilmette for Shared Sustainability Coordinator: approve as second and final reading Board of Education Policies 5:10 *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*; 5:35 *Compliance With Fair Labor Standards Act*; 5:40 *Communicable and Chronic Infectious Diseases*; 5:50 *Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition*; 5:60 *Expenses*; 5:70 *Religious Holidays*; 5:150 *Personnel Records*; 5:240 *Suspension*; 5:260 *Student Teachers*; 7:180 *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*: approve the accounts payable for bills listed between January 24, 2023 – February 27, 2023 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$505,909.85; O&M Fund \$41,005.24; Debt Service \$1,500.00; Transportation Fund \$170,128.91; Capital Projects \$13,800.00; total all funds: \$732,344.00: to approve the manual checks issued between January 24, 2023 – February 27, 2023 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$757,452.00; O&M Fund \$116,834.51; Tort Fund \$486.33; Transportation Fund \$133.28; Capital Projects \$227,142.09; total all funds: \$1,102,048.21.

On a roll call vote on the motion, voting “yea” – Jon Cesaretti, Anne Hart, Bonnie Kim, Frank Panzica, Lisa Schneider-Fabes, Erin Stone, Amy Poehling; voting “nay” – none; absent – none: **Motions Carried.**

B. Consideration and Action Providing for the Issue of Not to Exceed \$11,250,000 General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds, Series 2023, of School District Number 39, Cook County, Illinois, for the Purpose of Increasing the Working Cash Fund of Said School District, Providing for the Levy of a Direct Annual Tax to Pay the Principal and Interest on Said Bonds, and Authorizing the Proposed Sale of Said Bonds to the Purchaser Thereof

On a roll call vote on the motion, voting “yea” – Jon Cesaretti, Anne Hart, Bonnie Kim, Frank Panzica, Lisa Schneider-Fabes, Erin Stone, Amy Poehling; voting “nay” – none; absent – none: **Motion Carried.**

CONFERENCE ITEMS

Old Business

Mr. Panzica noted New Trier had published significant student absence data and asked if District 39 had similar absence trends and if there was a way to support eighth graders attendance before entering high school. Dr. Cremascoli stated there is ongoing review of absence data and discussion would continue at the March committee meeting.

New Business

None

Good and Welfare

Mrs. Kim attended the delightful Wilmette Junior High and Highcrest Middle Schools Band-O-Rama which included 5-8 grade band and orchestra students. She noted how diligently these students practice and rehearse.

Mrs. Hart commended WJHS Student Council and administration for the wonderful Valentine's Day Dance that was recently held. She enjoyed seeing the students so involved in leading this event.

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 8:43 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting of the Board of Education at 9:20 p.m.

Being no further business, Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education. It adjourned at 9:21 p.m. by **General Consent**.

President

Secretary