

**MARCH 20, 2023**  
**WILMETTE, IL**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, March 20, 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 Kelly Jackson introduced Highcrest Middle School students who provided highlights of the many clubs formed and guided by student interest. The students then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ARTWORK**

The artwork on display this month in the Board room is a wonderful sampling of 1st-8th grade student work. Every March the District observes *Youth Art Month* by showcasing the talented student artwork created across the District. *Youth Art Month* emphasizes the value of art education for all children and encourages quality school programs.

**APPROVE THE MINUTES**

Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica, to approve the minutes of the February 27, 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 March 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting.

**Facility Development** – no discussion

**School Finance** – Mr. Cesaretti

**Financial Audit Services**

Mr. Bultemier noted the contract with Baker Tilly for audit services was up for renewal. The Board reviewed and discussed options for contractual services for its financial auditing services. In January 2020, the Board approved Baker Tilly for a three-year contract to provide financial auditing services to D39 and WCSEA. Baker Tilly has completed those three years doing a really good job during some unstable times; however, a lot has changed economically since initiation of this contract which is now impacting a potential renewal. The Board reviewed information on single- or multi-year renewal options as well as options to make a request for proposals. After discussion and consideration, the Board has been pleased with and appreciative of Baker Tilly's services. The Board acknowledged that it is prudent within the current economic climate to direct administration to make a request for proposals.

**Strategy** – no discussion

### **Liaison Reports**

Community Review Committee (CRC) – Mrs. Hart

The CRC continues to compile data for their final report on neurodivergent learning. The committee meets again on April 11 to finalize their presentation at the May Board of Education meeting.

Educational Foundation – Ms. Stone

The Foundation met on March 15 and their primary focus was voting for spring Gripp Grants. Ann Jacobs and Becky Bartsch, were given grants for whiteboards to be used in math classes. In addition, the Fine Arts group spoke about the screen printer presentation and plan to have him return. Other upcoming events include *Stem in Real World* program and a partnership with a theatre company for students with autism. Super Mario Movie night and Cheers and Beers events are also scheduled.

Insurance Advisory Committee – Mrs. Hart

The Insurance Advisory Committee met for its annual meeting on March 13, 2023. Catherine Loney from Alera Group was present and provided information regarding the upcoming renewal of health, dental, and life insurance. D39 is part of the Cooperative 90's insurance cooperative along with six other organizations. The cooperative is expecting at least a 9.5% increase in HMO premiums, likely a 15% increase in PPO premiums for health insurance. The cooperative expects no change in premiums for the Dental HMO and 3.2% increase for the Dental PPO plan. The actual increases will be determined by the Cooperative 90's Board on March 23. The District will conduct open enrollment at the end of May/early June for implementation on September 1, 2023.

Wilmette Village Intergovernmental Cooperation Working Group – Mrs. Kim/Mr. Cesaretti

Mrs. Kim attended the meeting on March 8 along with representatives from park district, village, library, Avoca, New Trier Township and New Trier High School. Together the group is addressing the topic of mental health in our community. Representatives of organizations that provide services attended and explained their roles and needs. The group is considering next steps.

Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) – no report

Legislative Update – Mrs. Kim

A number of bills passed out of committee that include: Senate Bill 1994 requiring school districts to submit quarterly reports to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) that include the amount of funds in reserves, and number of days with cash on hand; House Bill 2784 creates a new \$20/hour minimum wage for school district employees who provide educational support services beginning in 2024-2025; House Bill 2396 would mandate full day kindergarten in all school districts by 2027-2028.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A. Written Communication** – Dr. Cremascoli

Dr. Cremascoli reported the Board received written communication from: Melissa Petri, Highcrest parent, regarding not being allowed to volunteer during the school day with an accompanying younger sibling; Rob & Rebecca Toton, Central parents, regarding behavioral incidents in their child's kindergarten class and the investigation and follow-up thereof.

**Administrative Announcements** – Dr. Cremascoli

*K-4 Parent-Teacher Conference*

Dr. Cremascoli noted elementary spring parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for March 23-24 (Thursday-Friday). This year, the District will be utilizing *Meet-the-Teacher* to support video conferencing. This system has been used with tremendous success and favorable reviews at New Trier for the past several years. Video conferences are encouraged for this spring and are set as the default within the Meet-the-Teacher registration system; however, requests for in-person conferences will be accommodated.

### *5-8 Professional Development Day*

Dr. Cremascoli stated while K-4 Teachers will be engaged in conferences, 5-8 teachers and staff will participate in a day of professional development, collaboration and learning on Friday, March 24. The day is organized with a focus on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) efforts. Sessions include learning and collaboration focused on the work of the Foundations Team, which is addressing behavioral expectations and supports as well as aspects of social-emotional learning.

### *Student Attendance Review*

Dr. Cremascoli reported during the Board's recent Committee of the Whole Meeting, administration shared information and reviewed data regarding student attendance this school year. Following the COVID pandemic, higher chronic absenteeism rates have been observed compared to pre-pandemic era. In examining the data, the majority of absences for those who are identified within the chronically absent range (which is 10% of school days) are due to illness or injury (54.5%) and medical appointments (13.1%). This is expected as students are still required to isolate following a COVID diagnosis and an increase in other illnesses has also been prevalent. However, the District has reviewed the variety of education, intervention and supports that are in place to assist with regular attendance and is considering a variety of additional options moving forward. The Board directed administration to return to many of the pre-pandemic measures to raise awareness of the importance of attendance and to remind/support families and students in maintaining regular, consistent attendance.

### *Spring Assessments*

Dr. Cremascoli stated Highcrest Middle School and Wilmette Junior High School launched the state mandated academic accountability assessments last week. These tests include the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR). Unfortunately, testing was interrupted when the state's assessment platform through Pearson was overwhelmed and shut down. Testing needed to be discontinued and will be rescheduled.

### *Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)*

The District received a FOIA from Josiah Chatterton of LocalLabs requesting teacher information including name, position/job title, department, pay rate, year-to-date gross pay for years 2020, 2021 and 2022.

## **B. Board Policy Review**

1. First Reading of Board of Education Policies 4:10; 4:140; 4:165; 4:190; 5:20; 5:120; 5:190; 5:200; 5:220; 5:250; 5:280; 6:15; 6:250; 6:255; 6:260; 7:50; 7:70; 7:190; 7:250; 7:285; 7:290 and 7:340

Dr. Cremascoli stated these policies are presented as first reading. In an effort to keep policies reviews up to date with PRESS, some of these policies have been reviewed but there are no recommended changes. This is noted as "reviewed" rather than "revised" at the bottom of the policy.

Members provided edits to policies for second reading.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Consent Agenda**

Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica, to approve the Personnel Report dated March 20, 2023, which included educational support personnel full-time employment of **Jeanine Hardy**, effective April 24, 2023; **Rogelio Heredia**, effective March 21, 2023; **Alasdair McLean**, effective March 2, 2023; **Nina Nissan**, effective February 27, 2023; **Andrew Radakovitz**, effective March 13, 2023; licensed resignation of **Melanie Eckert**, effective June 9, 2023; **Katherine Galvin**, effective June 9, 2023;

**Ethan Kohring**, Music, effective June 9, 2023; **Robyn Scott**, effective June 9, 2023; **Barri Werth**, effective June 9, 2023; **Debra Yasutake**, effective June 26, 2023; educational support personnel resignation of **Nor Dawood**, effective March 10, 2023; **Sara Schroeder**, effective March 17, 2023; licensed retirement of **Carly Perry**, effective the end of the 2027-2028 school year; educational support personnel retirement of **Deborah Beitzel**, effective the end of the 2022-2023 school year; tenured leave of absence of **Laura Meyer**, (LOA), for the 2023-2024 school year: approve as first reading of Board of Education Policies 4:10 *Fiscal and Business Management*; 4:140 *Waiver of Student Fees*; 4:165 *Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors*; 4:190 *Targeted School Violence Prevention Program*; 5:20 *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:120 *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; 5:190 *Teacher Duties and Qualifications*; 5:200 *Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal: Teachers*; 5:220 *Substitute Teachers*; 5:250 *Leaves of Absence*; 5:280 *Non-Certified Duties and Qualifications*; 6:15 *School Accountability*; 6:250 *Community Resource Persons and Volunteers*; 6:255 *Assemblies and Ceremonies*; 6:260 *Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs*; 7:50 *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*; 7:70 *Attendance and Truancy*; 7:190 *Student Behavior*; 7:250 *Student Support Services*; 7:285 *Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program*; 7:290 *Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention*; and 7:340 *Student Records*: approve the accounts payable for bills listed between February 28, 2023 – March 20, 2023 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$1,075,611.53; O&M Fund \$38,642.74; Transportation \$191,479.92; Capital Projects \$453,316.97; total all funds: \$759,051.16: to approve the manual checks issued between February 28, 2023 – March 20, 2023 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$751,568.72; O&M Fund \$87,707.08; Transportation \$10,920.26; Capital Projects \$17,939.08; total all funds: \$868,135.14.

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. Approve the Resolutions Authorizing the Honorable Dismissal of Teachers**

Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica to approve the resolutions authorizing the honorable dismissal of teachers.

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 he had watched the Committee of the Whole video as he was unable to attend the meeting in person. Mr. Panzica appreciated the time spent reviewing student attendance data and noted attendance prior to the pandemic was much lower than current absences. He asked that the focus be on upper grades prior to entering high school and allowing students to take responsibility for their attendance and teaching these students the importance of being in school.

### **New Business**

None

### **Good and Welfare**

Mrs. Hart noted the Highcrest Variety show was a phenomenal event that was enjoyed by all. Mrs. Poehling said there were over 500 people in the audience and commended students for performing in front of such a large group.

Mrs. Schnieder-Fabes noted how quickly students feeling of belonging improved as was evidenced by their interest in organizing and participating the many Highcrest clubs.

Mrs. Kim attended the annual McKenzie Variety Show/Fundraiser and noted how great it was to see 180 parents participate and assist in raising money for a new playground.

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 7:43 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting of the Board of Education at 9:19 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 9:19 p.m. by **General Consent**.

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President

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Secretary