

**WILMETTE, IL**  
**APRIL 24, 2023**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, April 24, 2023 at the Mikaelian Education Center, 615 Locust Road, Wilmette, Illinois. President Amy Poehling called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

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

Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Kari Cremascoli, Corey Bultemeier, Tony DeMonte, Heather Glowacki,  
Katie Lee, Kristin Swanson

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Principal Dana Nasiakos introduced McKenzie Leadership Council Members and Teacher Advisors Colleen Mooney and Gwen Faulkner. The Advisors explained 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Leadership Council allows students to fulfill a role in the functioning of the school. Students introduced themselves and highlighted some of their tasks and accomplishments such as taking lunch counts and providing new lunch meal options; running classroom deliveries, assisting kindergartners, writing solar panel grants, working with PTAs on community projects such as *Project Linus* making blankets for hospital patients, sorting books for Bernie's Book Bank, and many other important activities. Students then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ARTWORK**

Romona students created the vibrant artwork on display in the boardroom. 1<sup>st</sup> graders created their personal versions of Vincent Van Gogh's Starry Night scenes with their own imaginary cities dusted with swirling night skies, stars, and moons. 2<sup>nd</sup> graders studied Alma Woosey Thomas and created watercolor backgrounds with painted mosaic paper collages. 3<sup>rd</sup> graders studied sunflowers and geometric shapes to create their Sunflower Still Life art using oil pastels and watercolors washes. 4<sup>th</sup> graders studied Henri Matisse to develop sketches and shapes to create their large, thick, black ink self-portraits.

**APPROVE THE MINUTES**

Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica, to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2023 Regular and Executive Session meetings. The minutes were approved as submitted by **General Consent**.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS** – Committee of the Whole April 17, 2023

Facility Development – Mr. Panzica

Mike Bickler, Project Manager from Nicholas and Associates reported on summer 2023 construction projects. Pre-construction plans and pre-purchased equipment have been completed. Mr. Bickler noted there is more certainty with lead times this year and preparations are in order for summer construction. Over spring break the chiller for McKenzie school and was installed and had its initial run during warmer temperatures last week.

School Finance – Mr. Cesaretti

### **Student Fees**

Mr. Bultemeier provided 10 years of financial history for program fees up for review. The program fees to be determined for 2023-2024 school year include Instructional Materials, lunch, transportation, and athletics. The lunch and transportation fees have been highly impacted since the COVID pandemic. Budget deficits for each fee category were provided along with information regarding increased costs for food, fuel, and labor costs for cooks, bus drivers, and coaches. Mr. Bultemeier provided scenarios with multiple options for the various fee increases.

Members discussed the Board’s historical philosophy regarding fees and noted each fee carries a quality of service. It was noted that food and fuel costs drive inflation and tying the fees to Consumer Price Index (CPI) is transparent and consistent with the economy. Families who wish to utilize services such as lunch, transportation, and athletics would pay directly for each service or choose to not participate. Financial aid would be available to families that meet financial criteria.

### **Transportation**

Bus contracts with North Shore Transit are up for renewal. The ongoing issue regarding the lack of bus drivers continues and cost increases are due to fuel, liability insurance, new buses as well as salary and benefits for employees. Regular transportation will increase 8.5% and special education transportation will increase 10.5%. The state reimburses the school district up to 80% for special education transportation costs and only \$5K for regular transportation. D39 subsidizes 35% of transportation costs. Members agreed to continue service with NST.

### **Student Technology Repair Fees**

Mr. DeMonte provided an informational report regarding the repair fee structure for electronic devices. The District has a four year rotation with iPads that includes Apple Care. Apple offers different types of Apple Care coverage. Mr. DeMonte reviewed the history of claims and how the new program lowers incident costs for families.

### **Bond Proceeds Transfer Resolution**

Mr. Bultemeier explained the District recently issued working cash bonds which were deposited into the Working Cash Fund. The purpose of the issuance of working cash bonds was to utilize the funds for summer construction projects. A resolution is presented for approval as part of the Consent Agenda that allows moving the funds from the Working Cash Fund to the Capital Projects Fund to cover summer construction costs.

Strategy – Mrs. Schneider-Fabes

The District continues to address the many focus areas contained under each goal of the Strategic Plan. During the Committee of the Whole meeting, Katie Lee provided an informational presentation and shared a few updates highlighting the work in the areas of math and reading that included reading instruction in primary grades, professional learning about reading instruction, K-4 Math Curriculum Materials Review Committee, and professional learning about math instruction.

Liaison Reports

Community Review Committee (CRC) – President Poehling

The committee met on April 11 and reviewed the draft of their extensive report on neurodiverse learning to be presented at the May Board of Education meeting. The committee will meet again on May 9 to review and finalize their report.

Educational Foundation –Mr. Cesaretti

The Foundation met on April 19 and reported on Gripp Grants. Principal Kelly Jackson gave a presentation on mobile furniture which was made available through a Gripp Grant. Recent fundraisers included a Family Movie Night on April 14 and an upcoming Cheers & Beers event will be held on April 28 at Double Clutch Brewery.

Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) – Mrs. Kim – no report

Legislative Update – Mrs. Kim – no report

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. Written Communication**

The Board received written communication from Cheryl Sundheim inquiring about Harper Cub Scout Pack 8 leading the Pledge of Allegiance at a Board meeting.

### **B. Administrative Announcements from Superintendent and Staff**

#### **1. Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Dr. Cremascoli stated spring parent-teacher conferences were a success. The majority of parents elected to engage through the new online “Meet the Teacher” platform while a few elected to meet in person. Feedback was received regarding the new online platform including accolades as well as opportunities for improvement. These issues will be addressed in time for fall parent-teacher conferences with the hope that this platform will make conferences easy to access for all.

#### **2. Staffing for 2023-2024**

Dr. Cremascoli stated significant progress has been made toward being fully staffed for the upcoming school year. The District is expecting lower student enrollment as predicted by the recent enrollment projection report. There are a few elementary grade levels that are being closely monitored where enrollment does not yet necessitate a fourth section within a school. Lower enrollment coupled with a strategic goal commitment to examine class sizes in non-homeroom classes is resulting in a few possible assignment changes for classes in grades 5-8. Administration continues to closely monitor and adjust staffing as enrollments continue over the spring and summer. In addition, the District needed to reduce the number of occupational therapists for next year. Later in the agenda the Board will vote on a resolution reducing the number of occupational therapists by one staff member.

#### **3. Harper Principal Candidate**

Dr. Cremascoli announced Jacqueline Brennan has been chosen as the new Principal for Harper School. Mrs. Brennan has been a valued member of both the Harper and District 39 communities since returning to Wilmette two years ago as Assistant Principal at Harper. Prior to joining Harper School, she began her teaching career in Chicago Public Schools for five years and then as a 4th grade teacher at Central Elementary in Wilmette from 2015-2017. Mrs. Brennan transitioned to administration first as Assistant Principal at Scammon Elementary School on the Northwest Side of Chicago and then in Wilmette at Harper School.

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

Dr. Cremascoli reported the District received FOIA requests from Vince Espi of LocalLabs requesting the District 39 current Mission Statement and any previous Mission Statements; Karen Garcia of SmartProcure submitted a FOIA for all current staff/employee contact information; Sheri Reid of SmartProcure submitted a commercial FOIA for all purchasing records from January 24, 2023 - March 17, 2023.

## C. Annual Business

### 1. December 1 Child Count

Dr. Swanson stated each year the Illinois State Board of Education compiles information related to special education enrollment. The District uses this information to monitor trends and ensure procedures are appropriate. Similar to the decrease in overall enrollment, there were fewer students with IEPs enrolled on the December 1<sup>st</sup> date. In tracking the information longitudinally, trends remain relatively stable. The current percentage of students enrolled in D39 with an IEP is 15.38%, which is slightly lower than last year (15.49 %), and somewhat lower than the state of Illinois as a whole, which is 17%.

### 2. Student Fees 2023-2024

Mr. Bultemeier reported the Board will be asked to approve the 2023-2024 school year fees as part of the Consent Agenda. There are four areas of fees slated to increase for next year. The Instructional Materials fee increased by the applicable Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 7%. Lunch fees would increase by 10%, 44 cents per lunch for kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> grades and 48 cents per lunch for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Transportation fees would increase by 14% which equates to a \$97 increase for roundtrip riders and \$58 for one-way service. The lunch and transportation increases are projected to reduce the deficits in each program. D39 offers several different sports with fees offsetting the costs of the programs. With costs rising, the various athletics fees would increase by 5% for 2023-2024.

### 3. Regular and Special Education Transportation Contract Renewals

Mr. Bultemeier reported the District is able to extend the contracts with North Shore Transit by one year for regular and special education transportation services. The Board will be asked to approve both renewal contracts for one year. Regular transportation will increase by 8.5% for 2023-2024 and special education transportation will increase by 10.5%. North Shore Transit has continued to provide a reliable and high-quality service despite facing a very challenging labor market for bus drivers. North Shore Transit is increasing driver pay by \$2 per hour for the third straight year, this increase equating a 9.1% pay increase in drivers' salaries.

### 4. Bond Proceeds Transfer Resolution – Working Cash Fund Abatement

Mr. Bultemeier stated the bond issuance that closed in March 2023 was done as working cash bonds meaning they were required to be deposited into the working cash fund. To move the money into the Capital Projects Fund, the Board is required to pass a resolution to abate the proceeds out of the Working Cash Fund into the Capital Projects Fund. The proceeds can then be utilized from the Capital Projects Fund for summer 2023 construction projects.

Mrs. Kim noted as a parent, prior to becoming a Board member, she was not aware of how much the school district subsidizes these fees and programs. Mrs. Hart appreciated the extensive dialogue on the cost of fees and noted the importance of communicating clearly to the community the reasons for the cost increases and how much the District contributes towards these fees.

### 5. ESSER III Grant Application

Dr. Kristin Swanson reported ESSER III was one of the three grants released by the federal government to support districts in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. When first released in August/September of 2021, District 39 projected how the funds would be used over the next few years. As students have returned to the schools and business has become more typical, priorities have shifted somewhat and the administration would like to reallocate some of the

funding remaining. This report detailed some of the accomplishments based on initial allocations, as well as the requested changes. The ESSER III grant provided a unique opportunity to engage in professional development activities such as Responsive Classroom and Foundations that have proven very beneficial to staff and students, and the District would like to continue to fund these professional development activities. Additionally, the District would like to move additional funds to support clubs and activities at the 5-8 level, summer writing, and summer school teachers.

#### **D. Board Policy Review**

1. Second and Final 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, 7:340

Dr. Cremascoli responded to Board members suggested edits for policies during first reading. Policies and revisions are now presented for final approval as part of the Consent Agenda.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

##### **Consent Agenda**

Ms. Stone moved seconded by Mr. Panzica to approve the personnel report dated April 24, 2023 which included administrative appointment of **Jacqueline Brennan**, effective July 1, 2023 ; licensed full-time reemployment of **Katherine Black**, effective August 21, 2023; **Katherine Llanes-Smith**, effective August 21, 2023; **Marina Peri, McKenzie**, effective August 21, 2023; licensed part-time reemployment of **Jill Gershune**, , effective August 21, 2023; **Candice Grudowski**, , effective August 21, 2023; **Melissa Johnson**, effective August 21, 2023; educational support personnel full-time employment of **Diana Bogota**, effective April 12, 2023; **Thomas Hart**, effective April 12, 2023; **Victor Krichevsky**, effective May 15, 2023; **Luca Piattoni**, effective April 4, 2023; **Hyang Seol**, effective April 24, 2023; **Avianna Walker**, effective April 17, 2023; licensed resignation of **Stephanie Boron**, effective June 9, 2023; **Candice Grudowski**, effective June 9, 2023; **Melissa Hansen**, effective June 9, 2023; educational support personnel resignation of **Jorge Carballido Navarro**, effective March 24, 2023; **Janet Karr**, effective April 25, 2023; **Ma Elena Nunez**, effective April 5, 2023; licensed retirement of **Patricia Ballard**, effective June 9, 2023; educational support personnel retirement of **Mary Frandsen**, effective the end of the 2023-2024 school year; **Ellen Smith**, effective the end of the 2024-2025 school year: approve the student fees for the 2023-2024 school year as contained in “Exhibit A” of the report dated April 24, 2023: 1pprove the Regular and Special Education Transportation contract renewals with North Shore Transit (NST) for the 2023-2024 school year with a fee increase of 8.5% for regular transportation and 10.5% for special education transportation: approve as second and final 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 to release to the public the executive session minutes for September 19, 2022: approve to maintain as confidential the executive session minutes for the

following dates: September 12, 2022; October 24, 2022; December 5, 2022; January 17, 2023; January 23, 2023; February 27, 2023: approve to dispose of executive session audio recordings pursuant to District policy 2:220 for March 22, 2021; July 20, 2020; December 7, 2020; January 11, 2021; January 25, 2021; February 8, 2021; March 15, 2021; April 19, 2021: approve the accounts payable for bills listed between March 21, 2023–April 24, 2023 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$401,895.81; O&M Fund \$86,738.53; Transportation Fund \$210,717.78; Capital Projects \$594,845.00; total all funds: \$1,294,197.12: to approve the manual checks issued between March 21, 2023–April 24, 2023 in the following amounts: Educational Fund \$846,067.57; O&M Fund \$151,740.25; Debt Service \$3,253.67; Transportation Fund \$62,511.82; Capital Projects: \$24,139.41; total all funds: \$1,087,712.72.

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

**Approve the Resolution Authorizing Reduction in Force of Education Support Personnel, Linnea Bader, and authorize notification according to the requirement of the *Illinois School Code, Section 10-23.5***

Ms. Stone moved seconded by Mr. Panzica to approve the resolution authorizing the reduction in force of Education Support Personnel, Linnea Bader, and authorize notification according to the requirement of the Illinois School Code, Section 10-23.5.

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

**Consideration and Action on a Resolution Abating the District’s Working Cash Fund**

Ms. Stone moved seconded by Mr. Panzica to approve the consideration and action on a resolution abating the District’s Working Cash Fund, of \$11,200,430.21 from the Working Cash Fund to the Capital Projects Fund.

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

**Comments by Audience Prior to Reorganization**

Mark Steen, Wilmette, thanked the administration, staff and current Board members for their service. Mr. Steen thanked Mr. Panzica for his commitment to the community through his work at his church, the Boy Scouts, and in District 39. Mr. Steen was a Board colleague for six of Mr. Panzica’s eight years. Mr. Panzica contributed to setting budget fund guard rails, navigating a controversial tax proposal, creating a kindergarten enrichment program, negotiating teacher contracts, navigating COVID and the closing and reopening of schools, creating a new Strategic Plan and countless construction projects. On behalf of the community Mr. Steen thanked Mr. Panzica for his service to District 39.

**Comments by Board Members Prior to Reorganization**

President Poehling spoke about her leadership role on the Board of Education these past two years. She expressed her gratitude to fellow members for their dedication during difficult times and appreciated each one’s advocacy for their individual beliefs while listening respectfully to each other and supporting the final decisions. President Poehling also shared her admiration for the administration, teachers, and staff who make District 39 an inspiring learning environment that promotes empathy, respect, and belonging. She thanked Superintendent Cremascoli for her leadership in serving together through complicated issues.

**Recognition of Outgoing Board Member Mr. Frank Panzica**

Members shared their appreciation for Mr. Panzica’s mentorship and knowledge in their early days of being Board members. All were grateful for his wisdom and experience, his contributions to the many committees on which he has served, and his commitment to the families and community in District 39. Everyone wished him well in his future endeavors.

Dr. Cremascoli stated Mr. Panzica throughout his term, has been laser focused on improving student achievement, especially growth for all students. Mr. Panzica provided critical leadership during significant times; throughout the pandemic, ensuring daily student growth, advancements in curricula, substantial facility improvements, and continual financially responsible decision-making. On behalf of the District, she thanked Mr. Panzica for his service.

Dr Cremascoli stated as part of District 39’s tradition, a piece of student artwork is dedicated to each outgoing Board member to celebrate their impact on students through their service and legacy in D39.

Dr. Cremascoli introduced Highcrest Middle School sixth grader, Maral Munkhgerel, who presented her artwork to Frank Panzica in honor of his eight years of service to the District 39 Board of Education.

Mr. Panzica stated his eight years as a Board member flew by quickly. He was grateful for his service to the District and noted being a board member is a very important role. He thanked everyone he worked with, administrators and board members alike.

**Adjourn Sine Die to Reorganizational Meeting**

At 8:05 p.m. Ms. Stone moved, seconded by Mr. Panzica to adjourn sine die to the reorganizational meeting.

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President

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Secretary