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Board of Education Meeting Recap

The Township High School District 211 Board of Education met on Thursday, November 12, 2020, at Hoffman Estates High School in order to protect public health and to be in compliance with state directives to avoid large public gatherings. The following is a recap of items that were acted upon at the meeting.

Recognitions

A total of 30 District 211 students have been named 2020-2021 National Merit Scholars. In order to adhere to safety protocols, the Board of Education recognized the following National Merit Scholars from William Fremd, Palatine, and Schaumburg High Schools, presenting each with the Robert Creek Excellence Award (medallion): **Ethan Lin, Michelle Liu, Angela Ma, Mahima Malhotra, Gavin McCarthy, Gwendolyn Nicketta, David Phillips, Jessica Rao, Sufiya Shazia, Rachel Ye, Angelina Zheng,** and **William Zhong** from Fremd High School; **MaryEtta Brigham** from Palatine High School; and **Mia Vollkommer** from Schaumburg High School.

Presentation: Equity and Professional Learning

The Board of Education viewed a presentation on equity and professional learning. Over the past several years, District 211 has built a solid foundation and continued to grow in its commitment to ensure educational equity for all students. District 211 schools prioritize systematic equity and provide every student with the access to educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, home language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, or socioeconomic status. The ability to successfully accomplish these objectives requires making professional learning opportunities available to staff.

Assistant Superintendent **Joshua Schumacher**, Palatine High School Principal **Tony Medina**, Fremd High School Principal **Kurt Tenopir**, Conant High School Principal **Julie Nowak**, Schaumburg High School Principal **Brian Harlan**, and Hoffman Estates High School Principal **Michael Alther** presented details on professional learning related to equity at each District 211 school. A copy of the presentation is available [here](#).

Approval of Minutes

The Board of Education approved the minutes from its regular meeting on [October 15, 2020](#) and its special meeting on [October 26, 2020](#).

2020-2021 School Year Update

Superintendent **Lisa Small** presented the Board of Education with an update on the 2020-2021 school year. A copy of her report is available [here](#).

Due to the recent rise in positive COVID-19 cases within District 211 communities and with guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH), and Governor Pritzker, at the Board of Education meeting, it was presented that the District move into a three-week adaptive pause and return to Remote learning scenario, beginning on Monday, November 16, 2020. A copy of the communication sent to parents and students following the meeting is available [here](#).

District 211 Equity Team Update

The Board of Education received an update on Equity Team meetings. The Equity Team continues to meet as a full team and in committees each month to make progress toward a recommended District 211 Equity Plan. Each committee has identified key stakeholders that need to be engaged as part of the responsibility to include and affirm the voices of students, staff, and families from the District 211 community. While each committee has a specific area of focus, each committee identified similar groups of stakeholders and a similar process for engaging them. In order to organize this work most effectively, the team is currently identifying outside organizations that could potentially collaborate with the District 211 team to organize and facilitate an efficient overall process for stakeholder engagement.

As the details are finalized from Phase 1: Stakeholder Engagement, the team moves toward Phase 2: Research and Community Input. At the November Equity Team meeting, each subcommittee provided information regarding their proposed plan for stakeholder engagement and participated in several discussions centered on creating a District 211 Equity Statement. The discussions included students, parent, and staff feedback.

Also during the November meeting, Assistant Superintendent **Joshua Schumacher** shared with the Team concepts that were included in the Special Board meeting training that was conducted by the Illinois Association of School Boards. Specific attention was given to the Board's engagement with the

“Cultural Responsiveness Continuum” and the efforts to move toward the “acceptance/celebrate” and “valuing/color brave” areas of the continuum.

A copy of the Equity Team update is available [here](#).

Fall Curriculum Committee Report

The District 211 Curriculum Committee meets three times each year. This fall, several new department chairs were welcomed into their new roles, including **Hali Yoshimura**, District world language department chair; **Brian Drenth**, Conant High School world language department chair; **Katherine Haskins**, Schaumburg High School world language department chair; Lindsey Komperda, Fremd High School English department chair; and **J.T. Teichert**, Fremd High School music department chair.

During the Fall Curriculum Committee meetings, each department provided updates and highlights from summer curriculum projects and on the curriculum prioritization process used to ensure that the District 211 critical learning standards were maintained in each course in preparation for Hybrid or Remote learning scenarios. An overview of the structure of and specific offerings for Afternoon Academic Support Sessions was provided.

Assistant Superintendent **Joshua Schumacher** introduced the concept of a curricular equity audit as an opportunity for each department to analyze, reflect, and identify areas of growth related to equity both in content of the curriculum and the instructional methods used. Mr. Schumacher also reviewed a supplemental book approval process that corresponds to District guidelines for instructional materials and parallels the District’s textbook and software approval process. Additionally, departments that have graduation requirement courses approved those courses in Edgenuity, an online system that students can utilize to remediate course failures.

The Board approved the [Fall Curriculum Committee Report](#) and recommendations as presented.

2020 School Report Cards

School Report Cards provide information about academic performance and characteristics of students, faculty, instructional resources, and finances at the school, district, and state level. Prepared by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Report Cards contain data received from and about schools at various points throughout the school year. According to Illinois School Code, School Report Cards are to be forwarded to schools from the ISBE annually by October 31 and made available by schools to the public within 30 days. Once the Report

Card is issued by the ISBE, no information in the School Report Card can be modified. The ISBE released the 2019-2020 School Report Cards to the public on October 30, 2020.

The Board directed the superintendent to post the 2019-2020 School Report Cards to the District and school websites. Traditionally, in addition to the complete online Report Cards, at-a-glance versions (two-page printable PDFs) of School Report Cards also are available. At-a-glance reports are not being provided for 2019-2020 by the ISBE since several metrics were impacted by the Federal accountability waiver.

Additional information on 2019-2020 School Report Cards is available [here](#), while District 211 and School Report Cards are available [here](#), via the District 211 website.

2020 Proposed Tax Levy and Truth in Taxation Resolution

The levy and extension process is set in State statute (35 ILCS 200/18) and outlines the specific purposes for which taxes can be levied and limitations on the amount that taxing districts may levy. The major limitation placed on a taxing district's ability to raise revenue through property taxation is commonly referred to as the "Tax Cap." The Tax Cap (the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law, or PTELL) is intended to limit a taxing district's total operating fund levy amount to the increase in the Consumer Price Index, plus the addition of new property growth. The Cook County Clerk is responsible for applying tax caps to taxing districts in Cook County.

For the 2020 levy, the Tax Cap law restricts the District to increase the levy amount only by the increase of CPI-U (Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers) of 2.3%, plus the addition of the Equalized Assessment Value (EAV) of new construction. New construction includes improvements or additions that increased the assessed value of property and the expiration of a 23-year-old Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district during the levy year and is estimated at an amount of 0.03%. The new property is an amount that reflects new or improved properties added to the tax roll, and only the property owners of the new property pay taxes on the amount levied for new property. The increase that may be levied by District 211 upon existing properties is restricted to a ceiling amount set by the CPI-U limitation, or 2.3%.

A portion of property taxes remains unpaid each year. In order to comply with the statute and set rates that will provide each taxing district with the amount levied, the Cook County Clerk adds an amount for "loss collection" to the levy amount. This amount is a loss buffer of up to 3% of the District's operating levies and 5% to debt service levies.

The District files its levy each year but does not collect the entire amount of property taxes that it requests through the levy process. Property tax refunds from current and prior tax years are lost from the District's current year tax collections annually, and the District is not able to recover this loss of revenue. Over the past three years, District 211 has lost more than \$20 million through property tax refunds. Most recently, in the 2019-2020 fiscal year, District 211 lost over \$5.7 million in total refunds which were lost from levy revenue for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. The District cannot recover this lost revenue.

For the 2020 levy, the Tax Cap limit of 2.3%, plus new property (estimated at 0.43%) establishes the limited increase for the Aggregate Operating Extension of Capped Funds levy relative to last year's initial levy extension, prior to the levy abatement. The District has committed to discussing an abatement to the proposed levy amount in January 2021, after a possible \$2 million abatement was presented at the October 15, 2020 Board meeting following the closing on the sale of the District's 62 acres, release of the 2020 CPI, and further assessing FY21 property tax collections. Since the District has no Debt Service levy, the recommended levy amount is \$241.7 million, or a 2.73% increase of the prior year levy amount. Should consideration of the \$2 million abatement be approved, the final levy amount filed with the Cook County Clerk will be a 1.9% increase over the prior year.

Levying the aggregate extension of capped funds at an amount less than the established limit under the Tax Cap law inhibits the District from collecting revenue to support its needs, and further, leads to a loss that will continue to compound year-over-year and will impact student programs. The following variables support the recommendation for a 2.3% + 0.43% new property increase of the aggregate of capped funds:

- the recommended amount supports the expenditure plan for the following year(s) through contractual provisions, anticipated supplies and services, and prioritized facility improvement projects;
- the recommended amount supports the continuation of instructional programs for students;
- the impact of levying less than the allowable amount in these funds has a compounding and permanent effect year-over-year;
- the District's strategic direction to fund necessary capital improvements is through operational fund and annual future savings;
- the District's strategic direction is to remain debt-free as it has since 2017; and
- preserve the future financial stability of the District long-term for current and future Boards of Education.

The recommendation for the 2020 levy is a critical component of preserving the District's long-term financial stability while being able to fund its current level of operations, complete necessary capital improvement and life safety projects, and retain a level of reserves to safeguard against possible unknowns. A change in

the 2020 levy recommendation could negatively impact the District's stable financial position and ability to fulfill all of its commitments as defined in the Strategic Plan. Should economic conditions be favorable toward the long-range financial position of the District, the Board will consider a levy abatement beginning in January 2021.

Of the District's existing reserves, sizeable amounts have been committed to funding the remainder of the capital improvement projects outlined in the current five-year and future 10-year capital improvement plan. For the 2021 summer, planned capital improvement projects recommended for funding through the District's budget and reserves include renovation of restrooms and a cafeteria kitchen.

The 2020 levy recommendation is considered for both the upcoming 2021-2022 budget year, as well as for its impact on the District's financial position over a five-year period.

The Truth in Taxation Act requires the Board of Education to determine a proposed levy amount at least 20 days prior to final adoption. If the proposed levy amount of the combined operation funds (excluding the Debt Service levy) exceeds 105% of the amount extended the previous year, then a public hearing must be held prior to levy adoption, although taxing bodies may elect to hold a public hearing for levy amounts less than 105% of the prior year's extension. District 211 has provided, and will continue to provide, a public hearing although not obligated to do so under the Act. The final levy amount must be adopted and filed with the Cook County Clerk before the last Tuesday in December. For 2020, the levy must be filed by December 29.

Based on these requirements, the following levy calendar was established:

- **November 12, 2020** – Determine amount of proposed 2020 levy at Board of Education meeting. This determination must be made not less than 20 days prior to the levy adoption.
- **November 26, 2020 - December 3, 2020** – Prescribed form of notice of public hearing must be published no more than 14 nor less than seven days prior to the public hearing.
- **December 10, 2020** – Public hearing on proposed levy at scheduled Board of Education meeting.
- **December 29, 2020** – Last day to file 2020 levy with Cook County Clerk.

The Board approved the resolution that sets forth the amount of \$241,690,000 as the proposed 2020 levy for Township High School District 211 and directed publication of a notice of public hearing on the proposed levy at its meeting on December 10, 2020.

Additional information on the 2020 proposed tax levy is available [here](#).

Proposed New Policies, Policy Revisions, and Policy Deletions

As part of its ongoing Policy Manual review, the Board of Education reviews proposed policy revisions, proposed policy deletions, and proposed new policies from the Administrative Board Policy Group. The Group is comprised of Board President **Robert LeFevre**, Board Vice President **Anna Klimkowicz**, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction **Joshua Schumacher**, Director of Administrative Services **Matthew Hildebrand**, and Assistant to the Superintendent **Kathe Lingl**. Proposed new policies, as well as policy revisions and deletions, also are reviewed by legal counsel.

The Board approved the proposed new policy [Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Policy](#), after initially reviewing it at the October 15, 2020 meeting.

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) required that schools give and communicate a policy stating that they do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, and other characteristics. The Board initially reviewed proposed new policy [Non-Discrimination Statement](#). No action was taken at the meeting.

The Board initially reviewed proposed policy revisions to Board policy [File: GAC/JA/KAA Uniform Grievance Policy](#); [File: JFJ/GBCBB Prohibition of Harassment of or By Students](#), and [File: JFCH Prevention of and Response to Student Bullying](#). No action was taken at the meeting.

The Board also initially reviewed the proposed policy deletions for Board policy [File: JFCM Non-Discrimination of Students and Staff by Students](#); [File: GBMA Grievance Procedure for Sex Discrimination](#); and [File: GBMB/JFJK Prohibition of Sexual Harassment](#). No action was taken at the meeting.

Illinois Association of School Boards Resolutions 2020

After initially discussing at its October 15, 2020 meeting, the Board of Education continued discussion of the Illinois Association of School Boards Resolutions for 2020. The Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) Delegate Assembly is the policy-making body of IASB. The Delegate Assembly is comprised of one voting delegate from each member district. High School District 211 Board of Education Vice President **Anna Klimkowicz** serves as a member of the 2020 Resolutions Committee. With the cancellation of the 2020 joint annual conference of the Illinois Association of School Boards/Illinois Association of School Administrators/Illinois Association of School Business Officials, the Delegate Assembly of IASB will be conducted virtually on November 14, 2020. The

Delegate Assembly will review, discuss, and vote on proposed resolutions submitted by member districts. District 211 Board Member **Steven Rosenblum** will represent District 211 as the voting voice for the Board. The results from the proposed resolutions and amended statements will guide the IASB's position statements and staff in ongoing legislative efforts.

This year, there are eight proposed new resolutions, three reaffirmations of existing position statements, one new belief statement, and 28 amended/deleted position and belief statements.

Additional information is available [here](#), along with a copy of the [2020 Resolutions Committee Report](#).

Next Board of Education Meeting

The next scheduled regular Board of Education meeting will be held on Thursday, December 10, 2020, with closed session beginning at 6:30 p.m. and open session beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Anne Koller Board Meeting Room at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center.

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