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Board of Education Meeting Recap

The Township High School District 211 Board of Education met on Thursday, May 26, 2016, in the Anne Koller Board Meeting Room at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center. The following is a recap of important items that were acted upon at the meeting.

Recognitions

The Board of Education recognized students who earned honors in the state athletic and activity competitions in badminton, boys gymnastics, journalism, and math team. The complete list of students recognized is available [here](#).

Schaumburg High School student-athlete **Anthony Hardin** was recognized by the Board for being selected as the Illinois High School Gymnastics Coaches Association (IHSGCA) senior gymnast of the year.

The Board honored three District 211 students who recently earned a 36 on the American College Test (ACT), the highest possible composite score: Palatine High School students **Daniel Rosenburg** and **Emily Steinebrey**, and James B. Conant High School student **NitinShankar Subramanian**. On average, less than one percent of all ACT test takers earns a top score. Since 1998, [District 211 has had 91 students](#) earn a score of 36.

The Board of Education recognized Schaumburg High School student **Joanne Lee** for receiving an Achievement in Writing Award from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). This honor is the most prestigious national recognition in writing for high school juniors.

The Board honored Fremd High School students **Daniel Classon** and **James Feng** for being selected a 2016 Presidential Scholar Semifinalists by the President's Special Commission. Each year, up to 161 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the country's highest honors for high school students, and each scholar has demonstrated leadership, scholarship, contribution to school and community, or exceptional talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts.

The Board recognized Hoffman Estates High School student **Alyssa Bellows** and Palatine High School student **Jhared Juarez** who were named Golden Apple Scholars by the Golden Apple Foundation and are interested in entering

the teaching profession. In return for the extensive professional, personal, and financial support Golden Apple Scholars receive, they must attend an Illinois college or university that participates in the program, and agree to teach for five years in an Illinois school of need upon graduation. These students truly represent the “best and brightest young men and women in Illinois.”

Students named to the 2015-2016 *Daily Herald* Academic Team were recognized by the Board of Education. High School District 211 had five students selected to the 10-member team: **Shriram Chennakesavalu** from James B. Conant High School; **Srinivas Cherukuri** from Schaumburg High School; **Shreyas Gandlur** from Hoffman Estates High School; **Kiera Gavin** from Palatine High School; and **Jiamin Huang** from William Fremd High School.

Presentation: District 211 Behavior Interventions and Senate Bill 100

Understanding that there are direct correlations between student success and time in school, District 211 staff began reviewing academic, attendance, and discipline data to identify trends and ways to strengthen other student connections. It was determined that student outcomes can be improved by engaging students in school activities, creating and fostering connections to staff and the school community, and expanding intervention supports.

Each high school explored behavior modification and improvement through research and evidence-based best practices. These practices included implementation of school-wide positive behavior systems of support, instituting restorative justice models of behavioral response, and incorporation of privilege-based discipline practices. Each high school (based upon its culture and needs) has taken unique approaches to addressing student discipline with an over-reaching District-wide emphasis on improving behavior through a purposeful reduction in the use of exclusionary discipline practices and a continuous review of discipline statistics to monitor for disproportionality of applied consequences. The impact of modifying discipline practices to reduce suspension and positively impacting student behavior has had a definitive, positive, and substantial impact on District 211 schools and the communities served.

District 211 Director of Administrative Services **Matthew Hildebrand**; Assistant Principals **Brian Harlan** (Hoffman Estates High School), **Enrico Matarazzo** (Schaumburg High School), and **Mark Langer** (Conant High School); and Board of Education Attorney Jennifer Smith from Franczek Radelet, presented an overview to the Board of Education of the re-envisioned role of discipline offices, connecting discipline staff with student support staff, and the creation of student support teams.

Additional information on District 211 behavior interventions is available [here](#), along with a copy of the [presentation](#).

Approval of Minutes

The Board of Education approved the minutes from its regular meeting on [May 12, 2016](#).

Community Engagement Update

At the November 12, 2015 meeting the Board of Education authorized the Superintendent to engage professional services for the purpose of conducting a community engagement initiative to assist and inform the Board in devising a strategic plan for the coming years.

The first of the four components of the comprehensive community engagement initiative included focus group discussions with 12 groups of community members that were conducted in January. All focus groups were facilitated by a consultant from outside the District and no District 211 personnel or Facilitating Team members participated in the small focus groups so that open and uninhibited discussion could be fostered.

Four rounds of open, public community engagement sessions have been completed. The first round, focusing on the state of the District, was held on February 1 and 2, 2016 at Fremd High School and Schaumburg High School, respectively. Round two focused on academic programming, and meetings were held on March 14 and 15, 2016 at Palatine High School and Conant High School, respectively. The third round, held on April 4 and 5, 2016 at Hoffman Estates High School and Palatine High School, respectively, focused on student involvement and wellness. The final round, focusing on finances and facilities, was held on May 2 and 3, 2016 at Conant High School and Fremd High School, respectively.

Random telephone surveys began on May 6, 2016 and finished on May 22, 2016. Phone numbers, both landline and cell phone, were collected using registered voter lists from within District 211 boundaries and from current District 211 parent listings. The online surveys have been advertised throughout the community using a wide range and means of communication platforms and will continue to be accessible through May 31, 2016.

Reports and summaries from focus group discussions, community engagement sessions, random telephone surveys, and online surveys will be compiled by the Facilitating Team. The results and findings will be compiled and presented to the Board of Education at its meeting on June 16, 2016.

Additional information on the community engagement initiative is available on the District's [website](#).

SAT Suite of Assessments

In 2016, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) adopted the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) as the State of Illinois' required annual student achievement exam for third-year Illinois public high school students. The SAT officially replaces the ACT, which previously served as the State's assessment since the introduction of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2002. The ISBE will fund the cost to administer the SAT beginning in spring 2017.

In order to most accurately place students into the appropriate level of curriculum, to assist students and teachers to identify students' specific areas for academic improvement, to monitor and communicate students' achievement levels and growth rates, and to prepare students for the State's new college readiness measure, District 211 is proposing to adopt the SAT Suite of Assessments. The District is rearranging the assessment schedule to optimize the availability and application of student outcome data during each school year, to prepare staff to administer the new assessments, and to prepare students to complete them.

The proposed assessment sequence includes incoming freshmen completing the PSAT 8/9 in the fall of their 8th grade year, with assessment results primarily being used to assist freshmen year course placement decisions. Freshmen will complete the PSAT 8/9 in the fall of 9th grade, and data will inform students, parents, and staff about individual students' academic growth over the past 12 months as well as specific areas of academic strength and deficiency. Sophomores will complete the PSAT 10 in the spring of 10th grade.

Based on the percentage of students classified as low income, District 211 is eligible for a discounted rate for assessments given to 9th and 10th grade students, while the discount is not applicable to 8th grade students since those students are not yet enrolled in District 211. The total assessment expenditure for 8th, 9th, and 10th grade students is approximately \$82,000 and has been included in the budget plan.

A specific recommendation to purchase the SAT Suite of Assessments will be brought to the Board at its June 16 meeting. Additional information is available [here](#).

Equal Opportunity Schools Proposal

Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) is a national, non-profit initiative designed to serve students and school districts by closing the Advanced Placement (AP) participation gap of underrepresented student populations. The goal of the partnership between school districts and EOS is to reflect the diversity of the school within the school's AP courses specifically at the junior and senior grade levels. EOS measures participation as students taking one or more AP courses during their junior or senior year. The goal of achieving equity is that the same percentage of students among each subgroup will enroll in at least one AP course. EOS has worked with 240 schools in 86 districts nationwide.

A primary goal in District 211 is to increase the number of students enrolled in AP courses. AP coursework offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. As of May 2015, any student who obtains a score of 3 or higher on a College Board AP exam will be awarded college credit by public institutions of higher education in Illinois. The value for students earning early college credit is significant. District 211 continues to grow in the overall percentage of students enrolled in AP courses, but an enrollment gap exists among student demographic subgroups. With the significance of students potentially earning college credit, the District is committed to ensuring that more students across all subgroups enroll in AP courses. The EOS partnership would provide assistance in closing the enrollment gaps.

EOS has identified three overarching steps effective to closing the gap. The first step is developing a strategy to close the enrollment gap. Then, EOS and school representatives collaboratively deploy the implementation plan. The final step is the sustainability of the growth and success of AP participation by underrepresented student populations.

Leaders from District 211 are communicating collaboratively with representatives from EOS in order to implement the EOS approach in all five District 211 schools for the start of the 2016-2017 school year. The implementation would include certain commitments that are being refined and specified. Fees for the program for the first year would total \$122,000, plus travel. These funds have been included in the District's budgeting plan. The Board of Education will consider this proposal to engage in a partnership with EOS for the 2016-2017 school year at the June 16, 2016 meeting.

Additional information on the EOS proposal is available [here](#).

Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund Information

The Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) is a multi-agent public pension fund that administers a program of disability, retirement, and death benefits for employees of local government in Illinois. Currently High School District 211 has approximately 1,300 active and inactive employees enrolled in the program, and

another 1,000 receiving some form of benefits. Employees in a qualified position working more than 600 hours in 12 months are eligible for participation.

Funding for IMRF comes from three sources: contributions from employees, contributions from employers, and investment earnings from the contributions. All contributions made by District 211 and its employees are maintained in a separate trust reserve account at IMRF.

As of December 31, 2015, District 211's total IMRF Liability (AAL) is \$104.6 million, of which \$81.7 million is funded (AVA). The unfunded portion (UAAL) is currently \$22.9 million and has fluctuated over time, ranging from an unfunded liability of \$20-\$28 million over the last seven years. These fluctuations are based upon the economic and demographic assumptions made by the actuaries, as well as the actual rate of return on the investments.

While the District has an unfunded pension liability of almost \$23 million, the IMRF plan is stable and District 211's annual minimum contributions are reliably made in full to IMRF. All contributions made by District 211 are directly attributed to District 211 employees, unlike other pension funds in the State of Illinois. The unfunded liability (UAAL) amount impacts the unfunded rate calculation included in the employer rate. For 2017, the unfunded rate is anticipated to be 3.29%.

The District is not required to make additional payments to IMRF toward the unfunded liability; however, additional payments toward the liability amount will decrease the employer rate, thereby lowering the amount that the District is required to pay to IMRF based upon its eligible IMRF salary amounts.

IMRF has provided an analysis of the impact of additional contributions made by District 211 to determine the dollar impact of making these additional contributions. For every additional \$1 million contributed to IMRF to reduce the unfunded liability, the District would save \$60,000 annually through a reduction in our employer contribution rate. This is a 6% rate of return on our investment. Currently the District earns approximately 0.2% on our investments due to our investment and collateralization policies. Additionally, we would avoid the 7.5% interest charge on this obligation.

At the June 16, 2016 meeting, additional information will be shared regarding a recommendation to engage an actuarial assessment of the financial impact to District 211 via various IMRF pre-payment investment strategies.

More information on this is available [here](#).

Appointment of School Treasurer and Assistant School Treasurer

In accordance with Illinois School Code, the Board of Education of school districts effected by the abolition of Township School Treasurer are required to appoint their own school treasurer for a two-year term, beginning and ending on the first day of July. The school treasurer shall not be either a member of the Board of Education or the superintendent of schools, and must be either a certified chief school business official or a certified public accountant. School Code also provides that the school treasurer be bonded.

The Board appointed **Barbara Peterson** as school treasurer and **Lauren Hummel** as assistant school treasurer, effective July 1, 2016. Treasurer bonds will be secured through Lloyd's of London in the amount of \$31,900 for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

Energy Supplier Contract

The Illinois General Assembly enacted laws to provide a market structure for electricity and natural gas purchases. The legislation allows consumers the opportunity to choose an energy supplier based on favorable rates and terms.

In July 2017, District 211 will complete its three-year agreement with Constellation Energy Services for the supply of electricity. As a result, the District sought energy rates from seven suppliers, with five responding. Of the five respondents, three were found to be the most competitive, with additional rates requested from these suppliers. One was eliminated based upon the rate and fee structure. The remaining energy rates were reviewed, and based upon the rate energy analysis, the Board of Education awarded the business for the purchase of electricity through Constellation Energy Services for an extended three-year term, beginning July 1, 2017.

Additional information on the energy supplier contract is available [here](#).

Purchase of Land for Student-Built House

The Board of Education approved the purchase of the property located at 502 Oak Street in Palatine for the purchase price of \$152,920.22. The property would be used for the student building construction program, and is suitable to build a 2,000-2,500 square foot house at a future date. The property is located within the Fremd High School attendance area.

Next Board of Education Meeting

The next scheduled regular Board of Education meeting will be held on Thursday, June 16, 2016, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Anne Koller Board Meeting Room at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center.

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