



Board of Education

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Call to Order and Roll Call

President Eileen Kowalczyk called the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of January 7, 2021, held via Zoom conferencing, to order at 7:04 p.m. Board members present: Vicki Chung, Kimberly Fay, Jennifer Kobus, Brian Maye, Gerald McCluskey, Rachael Rothrauff, and Eileen Kowalczyk. Absent: None.

Community Comments

President Kowalczyk asked Mr. Parisi if anyone was present at Fairview but no one was. She said in order to facilitate an efficient meeting, community members who wished to address the Board were to submit a Board feedback form that would be seen by each Board member and District 57 administration. The comments were posted to the district's website by noon on Thursday, January 7. President Kowalczyk thanked everyone who sent comments.

Personnel

Presentation by Superintendent Search Firm Representatives

Dr. Brian Barnhart and Dr. Benjamin Martindale of School Exec Connect, the search firm hired to do the superintendent search, spoke to the Board. Dr. Barnhart recapped the procedures that took place to build the profile for the new superintendent. They spoke with the District 57 administrative team, staff, and community. The forums were held December 17 and, even though there was low turnout, the forums resulted in a strong profile. Dr. Martindale said there were 421 online survey responses which he said was phenomenal. They said the profile would be on the district's website within a few days. After Board discussion, it was decided the profile would include the following 14 items.

The new Superintendent should be a person who:

- Demonstrates strong leadership skills, considering input from all constituencies but keeping the best interests of students at the center of decision-making
- Communicates a clear vision that engages, inspires, and empowers students, teachers, parents, and community members
- Values and delivers clear, coherent communication to parents, community, and staff
- Demonstrates excellent people skills; shows warmth, humor and interest in others
- Practices transparency in decision-making
- Prioritizes visibility, approachability, and engagement with members of the school district and community; attends events regularly and is actively involved in the community
- Demonstrates expertise in curriculum, teaching, and learning; has a clear understanding of all programs which address the unique needs of all students
- Builds and retains a highly skilled administrative team through collaboration, mentoring, feedback and communication
- Develops and maintains a culture of collaboration, working with parents, teachers, support staff, and leaders to make plans and implement decisions
- Promotes a sense of community between the school district, parents and the broader community
- Maintains a strong working rapport with all constituencies, including the Board of Education, administrative team, association leadership, teachers, parents, staff and community
- Values District 57 and wants to be here for the long-term; not a stepping stone
- Understands all aspects of a school district our size and takes responsibility for oversight of finance, curriculum, and for improving an already talented teaching staff

- Leads with compassion and empathy; recognizes the unique and challenging circumstances of our current times.

Dr. Martindale said there were 42 applicants which is a good number. He said they would interview about 15 and recommend about seven for the Board to interview. Dr. Barnhart said they will not contact the other applicants until they have a strong slate to give the Board. He also said the principals asked that they have some feedback on internal candidates. The Board discussed this and a Board member commented that she did not think it would be right to treat internal candidates any different from external. To be fair, they should all be treated the same. Another Board member said he would defer this to the two of them. Both Dr. Barnhart and Dr. Martindale said it could be done but in their experience they have never done it with any other searches. There was also discussion about background and reference checks. President Kowalczyk said the Board would discuss in closed session and let them know. The Board will also meet in closed session on January 21 when they will be presented with six to eight candidates.

Staff Report

Return to School Hybrid Metrics Update

Dr. Mary Gorr, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, said the District 57 COVID-19 page continues to be updated and shows Suburban Cook County and Mount Prospect metrics. The numbers are moving in the right direction and are more positive than they were at the last meeting. She said data from other districts that have had in-person learning is encouraging for us to return to in-person safely.

Board members asked if there have been any changes from Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) regarding the six foot distancing and information they have seen about children at certain ages not being as contagious. Dr. Gorr responded that to her knowledge the recommendation of the six feet distancing has not changed but she thought neighboring districts are possibly doing less than six feet. She said IDPH also says it is best to distance six feet and that every day more research is available that sounds like younger children are more resilient.

Member Fay suggested, and other members agreed, that maybe the Task Force could work on this. Superintendent Aumiller said she was thinking the same thing and would bring this up to the Task Force at their next meeting which is January 12.

Dr. Gorr presented results of the recent survey of Lincoln families who selected hybrid. The survey was to determine if the families preferred to keep the current two-phase approach or if they would want their students to remain in phase one (half days) until the end of the third quarter on March 19. The survey stated that if parents did not respond, the assumption would be to keep the two phases. The results were 42% preferred the phased-in approach, 38% said to keep half days through March 19, and 19% did not reply by the deadline. Therefore, the plan would be to move forward with the original Lincoln plan of four half days for three weeks, followed by students attending two full days in person each week and two full days of streaming, with Wednesdays remaining remote days.

Member Maye said families who chose full remote might choose half days for four days for the fourth quarter if there was that option. Member Kobus said people's circumstances change and supports what Member Maye suggested. President Kowalczyk said principals maybe reaching out to parents if they have changed their minds and schools would try to accommodate, if possible. Dr. Gorr said it would be a challenge for keeping parameters of six foot distancing at Lincoln because there might not be space especially with the sectioning. Mr. Parisi, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, said it would be a space issue unless the Board feels differently about the six feet distancing. Member Kobus said we need to think about consistency and remember that some families still want remote. We can't afford to lease space so what can be done. She said maybe the Task Force could work on this. Mr. Parisi said he is not an advocate of eliminating six foot spacing but this will have to be addressed and that we have already been dealing with overcrowding at Lincoln and finding space is a problem. Vice President Chung agreed with Member Kobus and asked Dr. Aumiller and Dr. Gorr to ask the Task Force to address this. President Kowalczyk asked the Board how they felt about Member

Maye's suggestion to survey remote parents about the fourth quarter. Vice President Chung said she would like to bring as many students back as possible but would like the Task Force to brainstorm this. Dr. Aumiller suggested that the Task Force put the survey together and wait a while to send it out because parents have been sent so many surveys.

President Kowalczyk said she received an email about people travelling, especially if a parent has to travel for business. She asked if we were expecting them to quarantine every time a parent has to travel. Dr. Gorr said she is working with Kim Finnerty, District Nurse, and Carla Cumblad, Interim Student Services Director, and will address this topic.

Member Rothrauff asked about availability of Kids' Corner during hybrid and about the time in-between when students can't be in school. Mr. Parisi said we might be able to address Kids' Corner concerns if we can staff it. Member Maye said he was interested in this for the parents and Kids' Corner numbers are much lower than we initially thought. Member Rothrauff said even if they had to eat outside it would be helpful for parents, especially those already in Kids' Corner.

President Kowalczyk said there was consensus and gave administration direction to move forward with hybrid learning on January 19 for families who selected that model. She reminded the Board that the next meeting would be closed session on January 21.

Closed Session

President Kowalczyk said there was need for closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body. She said Board action may or may not take place following closed session and entertained a motion. Vice President Chung moved, seconded by Member Maye, to move into closed session. Roll call vote resulted as follows

Yes: Chung, Fay, Kobus, Maye, McCluskey, Rothrauff, Kowalczyk
 No: None Motion carried and the Board convened into closed session at 8:34 p.m.

Regular Session


Member Rothrauff made a motion, seconded by Member Kobus, to return to open session. All members voted yes and the Board reconvened into open session at 9:01 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Kowalczyk entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member McCluskey made a motion, seconded by Member Fay, to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote resulted as follows

Yes: Chung, Fay, Kobus, Maye, McCluskey, Rothrauff, Kowalczyk
 No: None Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.


 Virginia Webster, Secretary


 Eileen B. Kowalczyk, President

Date of approval: January 28, 2021