



Board of Education

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Call to Order and Roll Call

President Eileen Kowalczyk called the Regular Business Meeting of the Board of Education of December 16, 2021, to order at 7:03 p.m. Board members present: Corrin Bennett-Kill, Kevin Bull, Jennifer Ciok, Kimberly Fay, Jennifer Kobus, and Eileen Kowalczyk. Absent: Vicki Chung

Public Hearing on 2021 Tax Levy

President Kowalczyk opened the Public Hearing on the 2021 Tax Levy.

Mr. Jason Kaiz, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, briefly recapped the information presented at the November 18 Board meeting. The Levy is the amount of real estate taxes that a taxing body requests. The local tax revenue accounts for approximately 84 percent of operating revenue. He informed the Board that the total proposed levy increase over last year for the district's capped funds is 6.50% and the total recommended 2021 levy is \$28,065,00. The appropriate levy documents will be filed with Cook County on or before December 28. Mr. Kaiz stated that after the tax cap application, the final 2021 tax extension is projected to be lower than the levy request. As such, the district must submit documentation of fund reductions to coincide with the final extension. In the likely event that the 2021 levy must be reduced, he said it is recommended that 100% of the reduction be made from the Education Fund. He also said that the Cook County Clerk's Office is scheduled to levy at least \$338,000 on the district's behalf for prior year refunds per the new guidance.

President Kowalczyk asked if the Board had any questions. There was no discussion from the Board. President Kowalczyk then asked if there was anyone in the audience at Fairview who wished to address the Board regarding the Tax Levy. A member of the audience discussed selling bonds. President Kowalczyk closed the hearing at 7:14 p.m. and said the levy would be voted on later in the meeting under New Business.

Public Hearing on eLearning

President Kowalczyk opened the Public Hearing on eLearning.

Dr. Kristin Vonder Haar, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning presented an eLearning plan to engage students in remote learning during emergency days or building closures. These days would consist of at least 5 hours of student engagement and may include a combination of live remote instruction and independent work. Prior to using eLearning days, the School Board must hold a public hearing and the eLearning plan must be verified by the regional office of education. All District families had the opportunity to share their preference for how emergency days will be handled in a survey that was sent on November 5, 2021. The results were 56.4% preferred eLearning days, and 43.6% preferred a traditional school closure (which would result in adding day(s) onto the school calendar). The recommendation from Administration is seeking approval to have the eLearning days for emergency school closures. Dr. Vonder Haar discussed the curriculum and special education and support systems. An eLearning committee was formed and has drafted plans and schedules for eLearning. This plan would be valid for 3 years.

President Kowalczyk asked if the Board had any questions. A Board member discussed the concerns of remote learning as compared to in-person learning. Superintendent Gorr reminded the Board this is for emergency

days as in inclement weather days. A Board member requested that language is added to the plan to define the meaning of “emergency” day. Dr. Gorr stated that specific language could be added to the eLearning plan. President Kowalczyk asked if there was anyone in the audience at Fairview who wished to address the Board regarding eLearning. A parent addressed the Board and discussed the negative effects of screen time and would like the specifics of eLearning to be outlined. The second audience member stated that she believed the district would save costs if buildings were closed for emergency days, and she asked how people would participate in eLearning if there was no power. President Kowalczyk closed the hearing at 7:56 p.m. and said the eLearning plan would be voted on later in the meeting under New Business.

Communications

Board of Education

- NSSEO: No report was given
- Education Foundation: Member Ciok said she attended the December 1 meeting which was focused on the grant process and the next meeting for the Grant is February 1. The Gala could possibly be on April 9. Joe Sonnefelt attended the meeting and surprised everyone with a \$4,000 donation towards music grants.
- PTO Reports: Vice President Fay (Lincoln), Member Kobus (Westbrook), Member Bennett-Kill (Fairview), and Member Bull (Lions Park) reported on PTO meetings and events at the schools.
- Board President Report:
President Kowalczyk
 - Toured all schools with Superintendent Gorr. It was a great experience recommending the Board to do the same.

Community Comments

President Kowalczyk said there were two times on the agenda for community comments. No one from the audience addressed the Board.

Staff Reports

- 2022-2023 Student Fees Presentation
Mr. Jason Kaiz, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, did a presentation on student fees that will be voted on at the January meeting. Mr. Kaiz shared that fees do account for approximately 4% of revenues to our district. He said the fees for the 2022-2023 school year would remain the same. He said curriculum and Kids’ Corner fees have remained the same since 2011-12 and transportation fees since 2012-13. There has been an early registration discount in place since the 2009-10 school year and approximately 82%-85% of families take advantage of that discount. The transportation contract expenditure was \$819, 385. The transportation fees are \$375 for early registration and \$450 starting mid-June. The number of students attending Kids’ Corner this year is back up to the numbers we had in 2019/20. Board discussion included the contract length of the transportation company is the second year of a 3 year contract and appreciates that the cost has not increased for families.
- FY21 Audit Presentation
Betsey Allen with Miller Cooper discussed the final audit. This audit will be filed by December 15 to the State Board of Education. The Board did not have any questions.
- Stimulus Funds (Esser)
Dr. Vonder Haar gave an overview of the District’s federal funding through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) program. This funding is intended to help schools address the student impact of COVID-19, with allocations based on enrollment and free- and reduced lunch percentages. District 57’s allocations are as follows:
 - ESSER 1 (available through 9/30/21): \$100,310

Unfinished Business

None

Community Comments

President Kowalczyk said this was the second time for community comments. One audience member readdressed the Board about concerns with eLearning and the language that is written on the definition of emergency closings. Dr. Gorr explained that she would add the wording that the Board approves.

New Business

1. **Approve Resolution 211216 Authorizing Levy and Reduction of Certain Fund Levies for the 2020 Levy Year**

President Kowalczyk said Mr. Kaiz, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, presented information on the tax levy earlier in the meeting. She asked if the Board had any questions but there were none. She entertained a motion to approve the levy and Member Kobus motioned, seconded by Vice President Fay, to:

- 1) Approve the Certificate of Tax Levy for the 2021 Tax Levy
- 2) Approve the Truth in Taxation Certificate of Compliance; and
- 3) Approve Resolution 211216 Authorizing Reduction of Certain Fund Levies for the 2021 Levy Year.

Roll call vote resulted as follows

Yes: Bennett-Kill, Bull, Ciok, Kobus, Fay, Kowalczyk
No: None Motion carried.

2. **Approve eLearning Plan**

Roll call vote resulted as follows

Yes: Bennett-Kill, Bull, Ciok, Kobus, Fay, Kowalczyk
No: Bull Motion carried.

Board Discussion

No additional discussion was needed

Closed Session

President Kowalczyk said there was a need to go into closed session for security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students staff, the public, or public property. 5ILCS. Member Bull moved, seconded by Vice President Fay, to move into closed session.

Yes: Bennett-Kill, Bull, Ciok, Fay, Kobus, Kowalczyk
No: None
Absent: Chung

Motion carried and the Board convened into closed session at 9:17 p.m.

Regular Session

Member Kobus made a motion, seconded by Member Bennett-Kill, to return to open session. All members present voted yes and the Board reconvened into open session at 10:04 p.m.

Adjournment


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

Yes: Bennett-Kill, Bull, Ciok, Fay, Kobus, Kowalczyk

No: None Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.



Roberta Flack, Secretary



Eileen B. Kowalczyk, President

Date of approval: January 20, 2022