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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, NAPERVILLE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 203, DUPAGE AND WILL COUNTIES, ILLINOIS, HELD Via Livestream November 16, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M., CLOSED SESSION 6:00 p.m.

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### **Call to order**

President Kristin Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Board members present: Kristin Fitzgerald, Kristine Gericke, Joe Kozminski, Janet Yang Rohr, Paul Leong, Donna Wandke, and Charles Cush (arrived at 6:01 pm).

Administrators present were:

Dan Bridges, Superintendent,  
Bob Ross, Chief Human Resources Officer,  
Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer/CSBO  
Brian Hextell-PMA  
Finial Patel-PMA

### **Closed Session**

Donna Wandke moved, seconded by Janet Yang Rohr to go into Closed Session at 6:00 p.m. for consideration of:

1. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) Discussion of minutes lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. 10/19/2020, 11/02/2020.
2. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) Appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District.
3. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(7) The sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts.
4. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(11) Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal.

### **Meeting Opening**

Donna Wandke made a motion, seconded by Kristine Gericke to return to Open Session at 7:02 pm. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: Leong, Fitzgerald, Wandke, Yang Rohr, Gericke, Cush and Kozminski. No: None. The motion carried

### **Welcome and Mission**

Kristin Fitzgerald welcomed all and read Naperville Community Unit School District 203's Mission Statement. President Fitzgerald also stated that due to current conditions and mitigations placed on our region; this meeting is being held virtually.

### **Roll Call**

**Board members present:** Kristin Fitzgerald, Donna Wandke, Charles Cush, Paul Leong, Joe Kozminski, Kristine Gericke and Janet Yang Rohr.

**Student Ambassadors present:** William Ma, Shay Doshi

**Administrators present:** Dan Bridges, Superintendent, Roger Brunelle, Chief Information Officer Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer/CSBO, Chuck Freundt, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, Christine Iggoe, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Rakeda Leaks, Executive Director of Inclusion and Diversity, Sinikka Mondini, Executive Director for Communications, Patrick Nolten, Assistant Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability, Bob Ross, Chief Human

Resources Officer, Stephanie Posey, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education, Jayne Willard, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Learning

**Pledge of Allegiance:  
Led by Board of Education**

**Good News**

Superintendent Bridges recognized that November 15 is set aside as School Board members Day. School Board members volunteer and work tirelessly to ensure that all students are provided the opportunity and resources for a successful future. On behalf of the administration, staff and students, Superintendent Bridges thanked the seven members of our Board of Education.

**Written Communications**

President Fitzgerald noted that our Attorney review of code of conduct of Janet Yang Rohr. Found no grounds for code of conduct violation. Letter is attached to the agenda under Written Communications.

**Freedom of Information Requests:**

Faith Jones Request- COVID Information  
Piotrowski Request- Union Dues Information  
ESPI Local Labs Request-Contracts for guest speakers  
R.G. Sojka Request- Student Zip Code Information  
Tony del Alcazar Request-Grades Information  
Michael Dahm Request-DuPage County Health Department Communications  
Sharon Jones Request-Staff email Information  
Scott Zimmer Request-Return to Learn Information

**Public Comment**

All public comments have been added to Board Docs.

Superintendent Bridges stated that all comments are posted as received. Comments received include concern over the current plan, the need to get students back into the classroom, especially those with IEP's or on the wrong side of achievement gaps. There are comments in support of our efforts. On behalf of the whole board, President Fitzgerald thanked the community for being a part of the process. We understand and share your passion. We continue to advocate for what you believe and are passionate about. Keep writing to share your frustrations and continue asking questions. You are making us better and together we will get through this. Your public comments have been reviewed and heard by the Board of Education.

Superintendent Bridges remarked that this week we would be updating the website with a FAQ section to answer questions raised in Public Comment. Should be up by the end of the week and will have responses to questions raised on November 2 and 16.

**Monthly Reports**

- Treasury Report- The Board received the September Treasurer's Statement
- Investments- The Board received the September Investment Report
- Insurance-The Board received the September Insurance Report
- Budget-The Board Received the September Budget Report

**Action by Consent:**

1. **Bills and Claims** from Warrant #1029349 thru Warrant #1029798 totaling \$20,316,994.47 for the period of October 20, 2020 to November 16, 2020.

## 2. Adoption of Personnel Report

	Effective Date	Location	Position
<b>RESIGNATION-CERTIFIED</b>			
Tabitha Kahl	22-Jan-21	NCHS	Learning Behavior Specialist
Stephanie Schreiner	8-Nov-20	Elmwood	Occupational Therapist (70%)
<b>APPOINTMENT-CERTIFIED FULL-TIME</b>			
Stacy Zallis	11/11/20-6/10/21	Student Services	EL Coordinator 6-12
<b>APPOINTMENT-CERTIFIED PART-TIME</b>			
Sarah Pyle	11/9/20-6/10/21	Elmwood	Occupational Therapist (20%)
Stephanie Schreiner	9-Nov-20	Elmwood	Occupational Therapist (50%)
<b>REVISED CONTRACT-CERTIFIED PART-TIME</b>			
Amy Willer	2-Nov-20	WJHS	Learning Behavior Spec (80%)
<b>EXTEND LEAVE OF ABSENCE-CERTIFIED</b>			
Melissa Tomei	8/26/20 - 6/10/21	Maplebrook	Music
Jackie Barker	8/26/20 - 6/10/21	NCHS	Science
Dennise Torres	8/26/21 - 6/10/21	Steeple Run	Reading Specialist
<b>RETIREMENT-CLASSIFIED</b>			
Lori Calzaretta	20-Nov-20	NNHS	Senior Secretary
Phyllis Erikson	31-Dec-20	Prairie	Special Education Assistant
Lois Slater	5-Jan-21	Beebe	LBS Assistant
<b>RESIGNATION-NON-UNION CLASSIFIED</b>			
Anna Zavala	4-Jan-21	PSAC	HR Specialist-Leaves
<b>RESIGNATION-CLASSIFIED</b>			
Ruth M. Mathusek	1-Aug-20	Connections	Special Education Assistant
<b>EMPLOYMENT-CLASSIFIED FULL-TIME</b>			
Alexis Bartlett	16-Nov-20	Administration	Health Technician
Elizabeth De Santiago	8-Nov-20	NNHS	EL Program Assistant
Kathleen Gwodz	16-Nov-20	Scott	Special Education Assistant
James Sheldon	15-Oct-20	Transportation	Bus Driver
Joseph Sitzman	15-Oct-20	Transportation	Bus Driver
Ariel Watters	5-Oct-20	NNHS	Attendance Specialist

### 3. Minutes 10/19/2020, 11/02/2020

Kristine Gericke made a motion to approve Warrant #1029349 thru Warrant #1029798 totaling \$20,316,994.47 for the period of October 20, 2020 to November 16, 2020 seconded by Paul Leong. Those voting yes: Gericke, Kozminski, Leong, Wandke, Yang Rohr, Fitzgerald and Cush. No: None.

#### Student Ambassador Reports

William Ma-NCHS-

- No school on November 3rd because it was election day
  - Last Wednesday was Election Day. Even though we could not have an assembly this year, students watched a video commemorating Veteran's day during their PE classes
  - Winter sports are starting today. The ones that are confirmed are: Boys and Girls bowling, Boys swim and dive, and Girls gymnastics
- Block schedule experience:
  - Mixed
  - Mostly has gone smoothly, not too many issues with schedule-related confusion
  - For some students, their two blocks are different in difficulty, so for example the 1-4 block might be more difficult to concentrate through compared to the old system, whereas the 5-8 block might be easier to get through than the old schedule
  - The 90 minute periods are harder to sit through than before, although most classes now have some sort of break in the middle
  - It's nice to have more independent time because school ends earlier, although the asynchronous time on Mondays has been more intense because all classes assign work

Shay Doshi-NNHS

- We have had a few events begin this week:
  - Boys and Girls Bowling as well as Boys Swim.
  - Girls Gymnastics Cheer and Dance began their seasons in an adapted form as well.
- National Honor Society Induction-we were only able to have Seniors in the building and it was a cool experience to be able to get at least a few students in the building
- Mental Health Support-hard to reach out to counselors
- Block Schedule: there are a few pros and cons:
  - like the freedom,
  - Like being off Zoom earlier
  - Longer periods can create some boredom
  - tough to make a definitive conclusion

#### Superintendent/Staff/School Report

Return to Learn Update

- On Wednesday, 11/11 we sent an email to the community that due to the increasing health metrics we would continue with our pause on increasing in-person instruction until the beginning of the 2nd semester.
- We want to gather feedback at the junior high level on the effectiveness of the block schedule for this age group of learners and gather feedback on the effectiveness of asynchronous instruction every Monday at the HS level. We do value the block model in the remote structure since it allows more time to target learning.
- The block allows students to dive deeper into a concept/activity and provides the ability for students and teachers to focus on fewer subjects, which allows exploring them in greater depth.
- The block model gives every student an equal opportunity to access his or her teacher for help at the end of the day.

- The block considers students' mental, physical, and emotional health, including workload and screen time - by targeting instruction, reducing homework and freeing up more time for hands-on learning and collaboration.
- The COVID dashboard includes the county and community metrics and a chart to explain what the metrics mean as well as the number of staff and students who have reported a diagnosis of COVID or are quarantining due to a close contact or family member under evaluation. When reviewing the dashboard, it is important to look at the trends in the data, and not any one number in isolation.
- We want to see our cases at less than 100/100,000 and a positivity rate of less than 8% in order to move to a moderate level of transmission.
- The data shows that we continue to see a small number of total cases, but the rate at which student cases are increasing and the rising number of staff who are unable to report to work due to COVID is a concern. We are also aware that the number of cases for our students is likely to be an underrepresentation of the total number of positive cases. We are asking all families to report any positive cases, so that this data can continue to guide our decisions.
- When we look across all the metrics, we can see that the health metrics continue to be the most concerning. In DuPage county and the D203 community there continues to be a substantial level of community spread, and all metrics continue to trend up.
- Our PPE stock continues to be adequate and there are no concerns with replacing our supply.
- We do have concerns with staffing. We have seen an increase in the number of people who cannot report to work for COVID related reasons.
- We are committed to getting more students in our schools for in person instruction.
- We need to consider the guidance from the federal, state and local officials.
- We had been reviewing the metrics in 2-week increments to determine if we could accelerate in-person learning in hopes of beginning as soon as possible.
- We know that providing students with continuity of instruction through the first semester provides a structure and predictability during a time of constant change.
- While we are not bringing in any additional students, in-person learning will continue for our targeted students and we will be providing some additional mitigation strategies to support a safe and healthy environment.
- It is important that our mitigation strategies focus on reducing the number individuals that students and staff come into contact with and ensuring that we identify and isolate any individuals who are symptomatic.
- Staff will have the option of working from home whenever they are not providing in-person instruction for students.
- During the week of 11/30, all students and staff will work remotely and there will be no in-person instruction.
- In-person instruction is critically important for our students, and we want to begin to provide it to more students as soon as possible.
- Reporting any positive cases to your school nurse, even if they are only participating in eLearning;
- Being diligent about maintaining social distance and wearing a mask whenever you are with individuals who do not live in your immediate household;
- Following the IDPH guidance to engage in essential activities only during the next 3 weeks.
- From the CDC, Experimental and epidemiological data support community masking to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2.
- This week we will be updating the District website with a new section of our frequently asked questions to address questions raised in public comment and submitted to the Board.
- We will continue to update the COVID-19 dashboard weekly, but delays in data release may result in posting no later than Tuesday mornings at 8 a.m.

- As always, our Return to Learn web page includes the most up to date information and we will continue to send Talk 203 messages as needed.

**Board questions/comments:**

**Thank you for this update and shedding more light on the decisions that have been made. Staffing is on a warning level trending upward, does that mean we are getting into a warning level in the sub pool?**

Mr. Ross responded that in many cases we are able to address that because some can work from home even if they are unable to be in the building. We have had trouble with the teachers and assistants who need to teach in person.

**Can you talk about what the Naperville schools have been doing in terms of air quality testing and air filtration?**

Mr. Dolan remarked that we are doing a number of things to improve ventilation. We run fans sometimes 24 hours/day. We have improved filtration in every building in the district. We are using CO2 to monitor air quality as it gives a measure of quality due to stagnation. We will use air purifiers as needed.

**Are you putting in touchless fixtures in the bathrooms and other safety measures?**

Mr. Dolan reported that yes, there is a school of thought that the most important fixture in a health outbreak are the plumbing fixtures. There has been an increase in the number of touchless fixtures. Will have a choice to use the other fixtures. We are upgrading all handles on each faucet so that people can use the back of the hand or wrist.

**Given the guidance, can you walk me through how we are bringing in students for extracurricular activities?**

Superintendent Bridges noted that IHSA has identified certain sports that are allowed to have certain levels of participation as long as they are following the guidelines given by the IDPH. In November, the IHSA went against guidance of IDPH to allow basketball. District 203 and about 300 other districts postponed the start of basketball for both boys and girls.

**What feedback and how are getting it for block schedule and a timeline for change?**

Superintendent Bridges state that we have received mixed feedback. Many educators have been encouraging us to keep the block schedule. The block scheduling allows for differentiation in instruction. It was part of the return to learn plan when we were planning to have some students in person.

Mrs. Willard added that she and Mrs. Posey met with High School and Junior High administrators and received some feedback. We brought back the feedback and talked with Dr. Nolten to create surveys for stakeholder groups. This feedback will give the opportunity to have voices heard. We will use that feedback as well as looking at the instructional needs of students.

Hoping to get survey created this week and out soon.

Dr. Nolten added that we will be looking for feedback by level.

**There have been two methodology changes, one going from seven days to 14 days and now including presumed cases. When those methodologies change, do they shift our benchmark?**

Dr. Igoe responded that no the guiding figures come from the CDC and IDPH.

**Thank you on the surveys for block schedule. The Board has received so much feedback in emails as to how this is working for families. It is going to be appreciated by parents, students and staff to be able to share their feedback.**

**In hearing the comments of Student Ambassadors that were mixed. Any sense of perspective, is this a matter of people getting used to something new not necessarily this it's better or worse?**

Superintendent Bridges noted all that you identified is part of the mixed bag. Something new in an online environment. We are seeing educators getting better of using it. Some courses are more conducive to creating breakout rooms for smaller groups; we are beginning to see teachers getting better at not lecturing the entire 85 minutes.

Mrs. Posey added that it depends on the type of learner, what their skills and abilities are as well as some content. Some content lends itself better to the eLearning and virtual classes.

Mrs. Willard responded that we have gathered feedback from our learning support coaches. We looked at Professional Learning for November 24 and they are committed to providing some quality PL for teachers. At the end of the day, it does allow time for students to check in with teachers. Teachers are using that to support students individually as well as in small groups. Change takes time. We need to give time and to get feedback.

**The Board would love to hear the pros and cons from teachers. It is important for community to hear how teachers are working through this.**

**As part of the feedback gathering, will we be seeking feedback from students?**

Mrs. Willard stated that we are working with Dr. Nolten on how we ask the question as many will say they love an early dismissal. We want the instructional impacts of the block schedule.

**As we have seen the spread, are we seeing any differences in climb in those who are participating in childcare vs the targeted population?**

Mr. Freundt noted that we are not seeing a difference in childcare vs in person. These programs are not that dense as there are only 15-20 total students in each building. The childcare providers have additional mitigations that they have to follow.

**Studying these programs is a great way to get some good learning about how the mitigations are working. As has been said before, we would like to make the program more accessible from a cost perspective.**

**Will there be anything in the survey that asks if parents or students want to return to the remote learning at the beginning, all classes each day?**

Superintendent Bridges responded that we are not going to do a vote. Will solicit feedback based on pros and cons of the block scheduling and leave the design to the experts.

**Referring to the graphs on slide 8, cases and quarantine. Do we have any idea on breakdown by level?**

Dr. Igoe noted that we are only providing in large groups so we are not identifying any students or staff. We are only breaking it down a bit further when we have groups of 10 or more.

**Do we know if these are getting this in school?**

Dr. Igoe responded that when we do our contact tracing, the person who is positive almost always identifies people outside the school buildings. In the last two weeks, we have had some people who are having difficulty where they are getting it. It makes sense with more community spread. We have not made any connections to it happening in school although we will not guarantee that it is not.

**Excited to see results of surveys. Advantageous to streamline information and it will help me to see it in all one spot.**

**Thank you. Can you drill down as to what is a probable case? Have they changed the guidance?**

Dr. Igoe noted that the CDC and IDPH has not changed metrics. Metrics are based on science behind how the virus spreads and the importance of including those probable cases over time.

**Doesn't the addition of probable cases, doesn't that increase the numbers?**

Dr. Igoe responded, yes they are definitely increased with the addition of probable cases.

**There are lots of metrics that we are looking at and not just one metric. Would like to know that this number is not the number that is keeping us out of school.**

Dr. Igoe reminded the community that we have to look at trend lines. The data comparisons will be apples to apple in 3-4 weeks.

**What are we learning by having about 10% of students in the buildings?**

Dr. Igoe reported that we are learning how to move students; the mitigations in place are working. We are doing a good job at contact tracing of being able to know who should be isolating or quarantining. Superintendent Bridges added that this has allowed building administrators to understand how to handle the larger groups that will be coming in.

**How will you handle contact tracing as we have larger numbers of students in the building?**

Dr. Igoe noted that we are able to consult with the building nurse and building administrator. That will be harder when we have larger groups of students in the buildings.

**How are continuing to provide PL and how to utilize MTSS time? There seems to be some concern about the use of that time. Concerned about us changing things before we have a chance to figure it out.**

Mrs. Willard responded that this is our fourth PLC of gathering data and identifying students. The PLC's are continuing to work so that teachers know what to do with these students. Taking one step at a time. We need to sit with the block schedule. They are getting more targeted as the weeks pass. The administrative teams at both High Schools have come up with new ways of identifying and supporting students that will be rolled out on November 24. Educators are dedicated to using the MTSS time and supporting students.

**What about the JH level?**

Mrs. Willard remarked that they are the same although they have more embedded planning time. Allows for more targeted time. Taking feedback about what is working.

**If we were in a block, it would be every two days.**

Mrs. Willard noted that it depends on their schedule. Allows for a longer block for them to collaborate.

**Do they have less team time?**

Mrs. Willard responded they have about 40 minutes less.

**Thank you for giving the community understanding from moving from a two week change to January. As it came as disappointing news, we have received a lot of understanding and support of the decision making process.**

**We are concerned that it is hard to connect with a counselor. We certainly hear from parents who are concerned about isolation. The block schedule seems to create more isolation. What can you tell our parents and students about connecting with counselors?**

Dr. Igoe noted that we have systems and processes in place. Students should reach out via email to counselor. Counselor should reach out. We are starting our Signs of Suicide. We do this in person and are now doing that now remotely. Each student 6-12 will be asked to identify a trusted adult. We will get them connected to a trusted adult.

It is important that parents can reach out to counselors if they have concerns.

**Can you let the community understand how you are identifying the students who are being brought in? If parents feel their student is academically in need of that, how to go about that?**

Superintendent Bridges responded that there are many factors that are considered as part of the PLC, for example, student engagement has been limited or challenging, the student has required significant adult intervention or support in order to successfully engage. Is there a need for some type of in person assessment, lack of attendance, Wi-Fi, study space are some other ways of identification.

Dr. Igoe added that case managers are looking at IEP and 504 students to understand how much progress they are making toward goals are they regressing. Teachers are working with PLC to identify students who are not meeting standards.

**Thank you that is helpful for parents to use those criteria to communicate if their student is in need of additional support.**

**It is great that you feel positively about serving students in person and that you are positive that our mitigations and system checks are working.**

Superintendent Bridges noted that if we did not feel that our mitigations are working, we would not be bringing in any students.

**There is still confusion as to when they can go in. How do we continue to educate families about when and if they can come into school buildings?**

Dr. Igoe responded that if people are following the symptom monitoring they should know whether to send students into buildings. They need to take a close look at the form that we asked them to sign.

Perhaps we can send it out again if needed.

**Therefore, if they have a suspicion of being exposed to someone or if there is someone in your household who is exhibiting symptoms, you should not send a student in.**

**Map testing is not going to happen before the break. How long will it take to process the end of the semester data to see how different groups are progressing?**

Dr. Nolten responded that since Mid-October and Mid-November, we have generated a comprehensive file that identifies each student in each course so we know exactly who is getting what grades. We are in the process of creating some visualizations for the High School by course and demographics how students are doing. They will incorporate that data into PLC meetings.

**Is there anything concerning so far that you have identified?**

Dr. Nolten noted that we are seeing a higher number of A's as well as a higher number of F's. We are concerned about those students who are not engaging and working to determine if it is lack of engagement or a skill issue.

Can this can be looked at the elementary and Junior High?

Dr. Nolten stated that we did review data at the mid trimester for Junior High and will look at it again at the end of the first trimester in late November. At the Elementary level, we are looking at essential standards.

**Is it possible to get a general overview to see how things are going since we will not have MAP data?**

Dr. Nolten noted that we will be able to make some global statements about student performance.

**In the interim, are they reporting out on the confirmed to say how many of the probable are confirmed?**

Dr. Igoe stated that no, that is not how they are reporting.

**Want to be sure that the community is aware of the trends.**

Dr. Igoe remarked that all metrics have to come together and it is not just one number.

**What are hearing from colleges on what their expectations will be?**

Superintendent Bridges responded that we would have to follow up with college admissions counselors to see what kinds of conversation they have been having and the feedback they have received.

**We have received feedback from community with concerns about how this is going to impact students in the future.**

**Can you give us details on flexibility of staff to work from home?**

Superintendent Bridges noted that the priority is for educators to identify students who need in person help. In order to reduce numbers in buildings, we are offering the flexibility to work remotely. It is not an option to choose in lieu of working with students in person.

**Can someone speak to the fact that instructional time does not necessarily with the teacher always standing in front of students? The community needs a better understanding that synchronous time does not always mean a teacher is lecturing.**

Superintendent Bridges stated that is right. Not every day will look the same whether we are in person or in this eLearning environment. It may be groups, individual teaching.

Mrs. Willard added that educators are continuing to employ good instructional practices. We have provided technology applications that will allow our teachers to implement some strategies when they are face to face with the large group or small group teaching. Content and student need still drive the delivery. Our model is still a responsive model.

**Concerns about testing. Are we relying on self-reporting or are we checking as they arrive?**

Dr. Igoe stated that we are asking parents to check temperatures before they send their student to school. We are also checking each student as they arrive.

**Community member asked about basketball. While we understand they are not competing, are they getting contact days like football?**

Superintendent Bridges stated that he thinks they are and we will take advantage of those days.

**If there is improvement of metrics before January 25, will you look at how you are bringing students in and are we preparing if metrics do not improve before January 25? What are we learning about the transmission with regard to younger students?**

Superintendent Bridges stated that the overriding goal, we would have students in person when it is safest to do so. The level to which we bring in will be dependent upon the metrics. We will have to look at the local metrics. We will look at multiple things. We have identified our youngest learners to be the most vulnerable and have a high need of in person instruction.

**As we continue to study our own experiences and those of districts around us, what are we learning from other districts who have students in person?**

Dr. Igoe stated they are seeing increases in numbers as we are. We do not know if it is passing in other schools or not. We are looking at studies in regards to spread in schools.

Superintendent Bridges added that districts are unique with respect to size and numbers. There have been questions regarding liability and decisions that the district makes. Our insurance carrier and legal

counsel that not following guidance would put us at greater risk and vulnerability for litigation has advised us.

**The board would like to confirm that we are operating within the guidance as we bring in our priority students.**

Superintendent Bridges noted that our whole plan is in line with the DCHD guidance. Superintendent Bridges restated our goal of returning as many students to in person instruction as soon as safely possible.

**Realizing the DuPage County Health Department has said that testing is not recommended, with the numbers rising are we going to continue to investigate testing?**

Superintendent Bridges stated that he spoke with Karen Ayala, Executive Director at DCHD who says the antigen testing is not found to be reliable. We will continue to investigate.

**It is difficult for many people to find a test in a timely manner. We want to ensure they have a way to get that testing. Just continue to be looking at the availability of the PCR testing, is something we should continue to do so.**

**Do you have an update on the status of what our finals are going to look like for this semester?**

Mrs. Posey responded that there would be regular school days and not the exam schedule that is typically followed. Encouraging teachers to do final projects, final unit tests but not comprehensive exams.

**Will we communicate that to our students and parents so they are aware of that?**

Mrs. Posey responded yes.

**The Board is willing to talk about additional resources to help with elementary asynchronous time; can we utilize student teachers in that way? Board is willing to provide the needed resources as they are identified.**

#### Five Year Financial Forecast

Superintendent Bridges indicated that it is time to update the Board and the community on the Five Year Financial Forecast. Superintendent Bridges introduced Chief Financial Officer/CSBO Michael Frances to provide the update.

- One of the things we look at each year to help drive recommendations and decisions throughout the year is a five-year financial forecast.
- We use the forecast for a variety of reason from budget and levy planning
- The current year budget as the main driver moving forward.
- We also include five years of actual results for historical perspective and to help see trends
- Current and projected CPI, EAV and new construction drive the majority of results on the revenue side
- While salary and benefits, as well as enrollment and staffing drive the majority of projected costs.
- We also incorporate any known or projected changes to State and Federal funding
- While these are the major drivers in the projections, there are hundreds of items that have an effect on the current and projected financial situation of the district.
- Starting with the assumptions built into the forecast for revenue, the main driver is the consumer price index, which drives any changes in property taxes.
- The most recent actual is 2.3%, which is the figure all taxed capped districts use this year for their 2020 tax levies.
- The 1.3% estimate for the 2021 levy year is the year to date CPI figure through September of this year. This value will be known and final in mid-January, at which time these projections will be updated, and that figure will be the main driver of the 2021 tax levy a year from now.
- The other driver of property taxes is the amount of new construction added to the assessed valuation of the district annually.

- The 22 million is the current estimate for this year's levy from data provided by our township assessor's offices. The remaining projected values have been decreased from previous projections where we were using 35 million annually.
- With the reduction of the federal funds rate, we have begun seeing and will continue to see a reduction in the amount of income we receive on the district's investments.
- At this time, corporate personal property taxes as well as most state and federal funding are projected flat throughout the projections. These assumptions are vulnerable to major changes as we see how the state handles its own financial situation
- On the expenditure side, staff salaries are the largest area of cost, now and moving forward. We are projecting the costs of any current contracts as well as other contracts being based on CPI increases as they have been in the past.
- Health insurance is our next largest cost, which is projected at 5% annually.
- We have kept contingency in for next year, to help with overall budget planning, but have removed it in the out years of the projections.
- We have also kept the annual abatement of the district's debt in the projections. Overall, the district has very little debt and is getting close to being debt free.
- On the revenue side, again the largest drivers are CPI and new construction.
- As mentioned earlier, the district's financial reports will now show fund balances deferring the receipt of June taxes into the subsequent fiscal year.
- At this point, we are stable for the current and projected FY22 year, but will start to see projected deficits starting in FY23.
- All results are dependent on the current set of assumptions and will be updated throughout the year as anything in the future becomes clearer.

**Board Questions/Comments:**

**Thank you for the report.**

**Can you remind us what is our target fund balance as percentage as number of months?**

Mr. Francis noted that the Board adopted a new fund balance policy that created a new target. It is a minimum of 10-20% in operating funds.

**Looking at chart with months, even with the projected surplus, we are still within the range.**

Mr. Francis responded yes.

**For the past eight years, the projections always have us moving into a deficit and you work hard to keep us out of it.**

Mr. Frances responded that if we start to see deficits, we would course correct to keep us falling below the minimum fund balance.

**Even with the deficits, there is no concern of us falling below the minimum through 2026?**

Mr. Frances stated that if what we are projecting now is correct, we would be fine. The state can make changes to the pension law that will affect us.

**We are not projecting that?**

Mr. Frances noted that we are not. It was a common practice but as it has not happened or how they would phase that in, we would have to make adjustments.

**With both State and Federal revenues, we have a drop, is that because of the CARES Act money?**

Mr. Frances remarked that is one of the reasons, the CARES Act money was budgeted on both the revenue and expenditure side. For transportation, we budgeted like a normal year but will have less reimbursement.

**Usually at some point, there is some kind of deficit spending. This time it is in year two instead of year five. At what point do we pull back given that you know a good chunk of the expenditures are in salaries and benefits, to not get the deficit spending accelerated?**

Mr. Frances responded that this is one of the reasons we do a five-year projection to help the board make decisions to keep us from getting there. This is a tool to help up make decisions to not get there.

**Did we keep assumptions the same, retirements, staffing at the same educational level?**

Mr. Frances responded that the vast majority are the same. I dialed back the new construction based on conversations with assessors. A few years ago, we had a large retirement class. In this projection, there are no retirees or additional staffing so there is some room to tweak it a bit to make it more refined. Those projections are not in this forecast.

**Do we normally?**

Mr. Frances stated only when we see that we are going to have a large class.

Superintendent Bridges added that when we have looked at it in February and March, we have more data that allows us to change assumptions.

**We have struggled in the past with getting these to be as accurate as possible in the year one so when we see this again, we definitely need to have retirees included.**

**Looking at the past year, we had some areas where we did not have the same level of spending, as we were remote. Having an unanticipated surplus last year, why do you think we will not have it this year?**

Mr. Frances responded that the budget was budgeted as a normal year. Beginning in March, the end of last year was abnormal and the beginning of this year is abnormal. We do not have some expenses that were anticipated but we did have some that were not anticipated. We do not have experience with these kinds of things. We did have expenses related to remote learning. Overall, we are trending positively with fewer expenses.

**You did not put in any projections for retirement but for 2021 we already have some retiring early so are those in the projections?**

Mr. Frances noted that there has been a lot of movement in personnel and we were not prepared to have that in this projection. We will have that for the next time we look at this.

**Student Discipline Report:**

**Superintendent Bridges introduced Nancy Voise, Principal, Madison Junior High School to present the Student Discipline report.**

- Elementary data is not included since there were less than ten students suspended during this seven-year period.
- Student Behavior Policy 7:190 provides the philosophy behind student conduct and interventions related to the behavior code. Our practices are built on acting in the best interest of the student and the consideration of the rights and well-being of others in an effort to provide the best possible learning environment for everyone.
- During the 2019-2020 school year, we also provided a required administrators academy in the area of restorative practices to ensure each site is consistent in their response to student behavior.
- Senate Bill 100 was implemented during the 2015-2016 school year to reduce the school to prison pipeline that was noted in numerous studies. This Bill promotes proven disciplinary alternatives over exclusionary discipline and eliminated zero tolerance policies unless required by federal law or state code. Our district has implemented professional development for all staff in the areas of classroom management strategies, culturally responsive practices, and restorative justice measures to better meet the needs of our students and to keep students in their learning environments whenever possible.
- 2014-2015 was our district's highest junior high suspension rate at 3%. In 2016, fighting and verbal or written threats to school safety comprised the majority of suspensions and 2019's suspensions were primarily the result of fighting, vaping, verbal and written threats to school safety and unauthorized use of technology.
- While less than 3% of the overall junior high population received suspensions, these suspensions are disproportionate by demographic group. Consistently, a higher percentage of Black/African American students were suspended compared to the overall size of this demographic group in comparison to their peers in other demographic groups.

- Vaping tobacco and other chemicals as well as the unauthorized use of technology took significant climbs in the 2018-2019 school year. Fighting, theft and verbal and written threats continue to be patterns of behavior causing concern for administrators across multiple years.
- At the high school level, our staff began examining the data prior to the new law and were making changes in how they responded to behavior infractions. There has been a steady decline, from 5.5% to less than 2% of our students receiving an out of school suspension from 2013 to 2019.
- Black/African American students continue to be suspended at a disproportionate rate. Fighting and drug possession are the leading causes of suspensions in this demographic group. The leading cause of suspension in the Caucasian subgroup can be contributed to vaping and drug possession.
- Awareness and professional development have been key factors in our efforts to reduce suspensions and close the discipline gap between demographic groups. Our district has implemented a social/emotional learning curriculum and trained all District 203 administrators in restorative practices and measures. Additionally, many of our schools have completed training in Trauma Informed Practices where they learned more about the impact of adverse childhood experiences.
- We believe the work that each school is experiencing through the Deep Equity training and the professional development in culturally responsive practices will help us to continue to learn about our students and cultural differences with an emphasis on recognizing our own biases that may be contributing factors to the 'discipline gap'.
- When proactive measures are not enough for some students to prevent the behaviors, we offer intervention supports and services such as individual and group counseling services and behavior intervention plans to reduce the likelihood that these behaviors will re-occur.
- A small percentage of our students whose behavior continues to interfere with others learning will be referred to our in-school suspension program or Saturday School where they receive academic learning support as well as behavioral supports to address behaviors, in lieu of an out of school suspension.
- As a district, we are as committed to closing this gap as we are to closing the achievement gap.

#### **Board Questions/Comments:**

**Thank you for this report and the work that has gone into it.**

**To make sure I understand what the data is telling us about out of school suspension, there was a significant uptick in junior high suspensions for African American and Latinx students can you speak to the some of the underlying reasons for that and what we observed?**

Mrs. Voice remarked that the uptick came in one incident where a large group of African American and Latinx students was involved in a vaping incident and all were suspended equally across the board.

**Therefore, last year about 9% of the African American students had a suspension and about 6% of Latinx students. Have we looked at that data relative to the proportion of the population that those groups make up because I would imagine it is not always easy to tell is a disproportionate number relative to the size of the population.**

Mrs. Voice responded that the data is being shared in relation to their demographic size.

**That number is shockingly high. As a proportion of all suspension issued, what is the percentage that would fall by group?**

Mrs. Voice stated that she would get the data and report to the Board.

**Have we looked at any patterns by ethnicity to be referred for disciplinary action?**

Mrs. Voice asked, are you asking if all students are being referred for the same behaviors? I can assure you that all students that are engaging in the same behavior are all being referred versus some not.

We only have the data for the referrals that come to the administrator's office.

**The observer has the opportunity to make a decision as to whether or not to refer it.**

Superintendent Bridges remarked that we are getting to that through Implicit Bias. We do not have the data but we are hoping to get to that through the Implicit Bias training.

Dr. Leaks added that we are doing Professional Development to ensure that staff is not making referrals because of bias. We are working on that. Hoping to see fewer in those most subjective areas.

**Interested in looking at data for all disciplines, whether a referral or written up. What are the patterns and how does that factor into whether or not discipline will be handed out. Can we get at some of that data?**

Mrs. Voise remarked that some of that is in Infinite Campus.

Superintendent Bridges added that we could see if we can add that to an additional report.

**If we look at tardies, who is being written up and who is not.**

**Do the graphs represent cases or individual students?**

Mrs. Voise responded that it is number of students. We do have data on repeat offenders.

**If we are looking at Junior High data and look at demographic there, are more white students being suspended?**

Mrs. Voise responded that yes that is why we did it by demographics because it would not display the disparity.

**At quick glance, it could look like we have more African American and Hispanic students being suspended and that is not the case, we have more white students but proportional to their demographic, we have more African American and Hispanics?**

Mrs. Voise responded yes.

**Do we need to consider additional supports at the Junior High level similar to what we have at the high schools?**

Mrs. Voise responded the numbers are low, there is the one event. More data is being given to us. The trends are going down and are trending in the right direction.

**Are we seeing these trends across buildings or are there particular buildings?**

Mrs. Voise noted that data is similar across all schools.

**Can we continue to update this and make this an annual report?**

Superintendent Bridges responded, yes, would likely be a June report.

**Thank you so much for your work on this.**

**What I see lacking, you are not showing comparisons from other districts, like CPS and District 204. We are not doing that badly as a comparison. I would like to see some peer data so we can see how we are doing as a comparison.**

Superintendent Bridges remarked, we would look to see if that could be done to create clear data.

**Like seeing the work that has been done to get these numbers down. Grateful for the restorative practices and the Implicit Bias. Are we suspending all students who are caught for vaping?**

Mrs. Voise responded, yes we do send all students home. We do not always know what is in the vaping device so we want all students under the watchful eyes of parents/guardians.

**Want to continue to dig into the data to see how we are really faring in terms of over representation from some of our student groups.**

**Want to be able to look at raw data. Hard to process when I see it this way. Our district is about 5% African American and 10% Hispanic. There are 6 times more white students, are they getting suspended 6 times more? Are the suspension numbers reflective of the population gap?**

**Need to keep watch on the categories that are subjective.**

## **President's Report**

**Thank Board members for attendance at the IASB meeting last week. And for the attendance of the Virtual Summit on Friday. Thank you for making the time for that.**

### **Board of Education Reports:**

**Joe Kozminski reported on the Delegate assembly on Saturday. On November 5, there was a discussion on the Resolutions. Joe was able to present our positions of Resolution #2 and #7. The resolution that we presented was left on the Consent agenda and passed 98%-2%. The IASB**

position held to not approve Resolution #2. The local control during a pandemic, IASB gave a do adopt, we opposed. The IASB position was upheld 89%-11%.

Diversity Committee, Dr. Leaks put together a nice program for families and students with different trainings this fall. Informed us that the comprehensive equity plan is available on the district website. Good breakout groups on communication and nice to see them on the table tonight.

Agree with the report of the Diversity Committee. Thank you for your hard work for the Delegate Assembly. Congratulations on the resolution that you authored.

Charles Cush reported that he and Kristine Gericke sit on NEF. They are publishing a gratitude report of all the initiatives that they fund. It is important that they still receive funding. Giving Tuesday is December 2 and NEF has a goal of raising \$10,000. Building a passion will not be held in 2021 and will be a more virtual format. Will come back in 2022, as it is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NEF.

### **Discussion without Action**

#### **2020 Tax Levy Determination**

**Superintendent Bridges invited CFO/CSBO Michael France to present information on the 2020 Tax Levy Determination.**

Property taxes provide 85% of district's total revenue.

Tonight is the Board's first look at the tentative tax levy for 2020. Mr. Frances walked thru:

- The laws and requirements that drive the levy process
- The variables that are used in the calculation
- The estimated levy and tax rates as well as the impact to taxes on the average homeowner
- The recommendations to move forward
  - Property taxes are the largest piece of revenue for most school districts throughout the state of Illinois and an even larger share of revenue for districts in our area.
  - The tax levy we are presenting tonight is the district's formal request for taxes that is required and the first step in the process.
  - County Clerks will calculate tax rates around mid-March for bills to be distributed by County Treasurers typically at the beginning of May.
  - Tax bills are typically due in two installments, in June and September.
  - All taxing agencies must comply with the truth in taxation law, which requires a public hearing if the levy request is greater than a 5% increase over last year's tax extension.
  - Districts in tax-capped counties also must comply with the property tax extension limitation law. Both DuPage and Will Counties have been under this law since its inception in 1991, which limits the growth in taxes to existing taxpayers to the lesser of the Consumer Price Index or 5%.
  - Only the consumer price index is known at this time. For the 2020 levy, all tax-capped districts are capped at the CPI for the 2019 calendar year. That value is 2.3%.
  - The other two variables, new construction and EAV, are not finalized at this time.
  - Not knowing what those final unknown variables will be, we typically increase the levy slightly in order to capture any unanticipated increase in new construction.
  - The Board has the ability to reduce the levy after adoption but cannot add to it.
  - Finally, as far as timeline, all taxing bodies must adopt and file their annual tax levy by the last Tuesday in December, which is December 29 this year.
  - While the district's overall maximum increase from existing taxpayers is limited to the CPI on an annual basis, individual property tax bills may differ. Different assessment changes and whether an individual property assessment change is less than or greater than the average change district wide can cause a single tax bill to be less than or greater than the average.
  - Looking ahead a few months to the early spring when the County Clerk calculates the district's tax extension; the actual amount of taxes we will receive.

- If our levy request is higher than the clerk's tax cap calculation, then the levy will be adjusted downward.
- If our request is lower than what is calculated we could receive under the cap, we will only receive the levy request.
- The Board will be asked to adopt a final levy on December 21 so that we can file as required by the last Tuesday in December.
- **The Board will adopt any abatements at a meeting in March 2021.**

**Board Questions/Comments:**

Thank you for this report.

**Thank you. Understand rationale for your recommendation to approve the full tax levy with the ability to change that in March. I am interested in doing all that we can to allow for as much tax relief as we can beyond the \$2.7 million abatement.**

Superintendent Bridges responded, we understand the desires of the board. We would rather have this conversation over time after receiving the final audited numbers. We will look at multiple ways we can give relief.

**In the time of this pandemic, our families have numerous costs related to this remote learning. We need to look at fees and other numerous discussions to help the tax burden for our families. No action until the second meeting in December and the final determination will be in March.**

There was a need to amend the approval of the consent agenda, as not all items were covered.

Kristine Gericke moved to approve items 7.02 and 7.03 as presented. Donna Wandke seconded.

Those voting yes: Yang Rohr, Cush, Fitzgerald, Leong, Kozminski, Wandke and Gericke. Those voting no: None. Motion carried.

**Discussion with Action**

Consideration of Board of Education Expenses

These were expenses related to the Triple I Virtual Summit.

Kristine Gericke made a motion to approve the Board of Education expenses as presented, Charles Cush seconded. Those voting yes: Fitzgerald, Wandke, Kozminski, Leong, Yang Rohr, Gericke, and Cush. Those voting no: None. Motion carried.

Capital Improvement Plan

**Superintendent Bridges reminded the Board and community that the Capital Improvement was presented at the November 2, 2020 meeting. Tonight administration is asking for approval of the plan.**

**Board questions/comments:**

Just want to express for the community that projects that are ongoing to prepare our buildings for in person learning are included.

**It looks like there is a different number on the version of the presentation, have there been any changes?**

Mr. Frances noted that there were changes prior to the presentation on November 2 so that may be where the difference is. There have been no changes since then.

Joe Kozminski made a motion to approve Capital Improvement Plan as updated, Paul Leong seconded. Those voting yes: Wandke, Yang Rohr, Gericke, Cush, Leong, Kozminski and Fitzgerald. Those voting no: None. Motion carried.

**Old Business:**

**None**

**New Business**

**None**

**Upcoming Events**

**Superintendent Bridges noted Posted in BoardDocs. November 24 is a remote planning day so there will be no students in attendance and Thanksgiving holiday dates.**

**Adjournment**

Donna Wandke moved seconded by Joe Kozminski to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: Fitzgerald, Wandke, Gericke, Yang Rohr, Leong, Kozminski and Cush.

Approved: December 21, 2020

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Kristin Fitzgerald, President, Board of  
Education

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Susan Patton, Secretary, Board of  
Education