

The Board of Education, Downers Grove Grade School District 58, DuPage County, Illinois met in regular session on Monday, December 14, 2020, at the Downers Grove Village Hall. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, in-person meeting attendance was limited to 10 people and the meeting was live streamed to the public on the Village of Downers Grove YouTube channel.

## **1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The President called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and announced that it was the regular monthly meeting of the District 58 Board of Education. Members present: President Darren Hughes; Vice President Gregory Harris; and Members Kirat Doshi, Emily Hanus, Steve Olczyk, Jill Samonte and Tracy Weiner. Members absent: None. Also in attendance were Kevin Russell, Superintendent; Jayne Yudzentis, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel; Justin Sisul, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; James Eichmiller, Assistant Superintendent for Technology and Learning; Todd Drafall, Assistant Superintendent for Business/CSBO; and Melissa Jerves, Board Secretary. Betsy Allen of Miller, Cooper & Co., the District's independent auditor, also attended.

## **2. FLAG SALUTE**

Lisa Niforatos, principal of Fairmount School, introduced a video of three Fairmount classrooms leading the pledge of allegiance: Ms. Micele's first grade, and Ms. Brejcha and Ms. Matson's fifth grade.

Fairmount PTA President Dominic Zucchero made a video presentation highlighting PTA activities this year. PTA membership fees were gifted to all Fairmount families, and new families received yard signs. Additional signs and masks were sold as a fundraiser. The PTA purchased standing desks for teachers to facilitate remote learning, sponsored a hat and glove drive, and partnered with Home Run Inn for a take-and-bake pizza fundraiser. PTA welcomed teachers back to school with breakfast and its annual Chalk the Walk event. One Book One School and STEM Night will proceed as virtual events.

Ms. Niforatos reviewed Fairmount's progress toward Key Performance Indicator goals set out in the strategic plan for spring 2021. The goal in reading is an 80% or greater median percentile achievement as measured by NWEA MAP; the goal in math is a 77% median percentile achievement. In fall 2020, Fairmount has achieved 77% in reading and 67% in math. To accomplish these goals, staff continue to target skills such as using figurative language in elementary reading and writing, and annotating texts at the intermediate level. Math resources Bridges and Big Ideas are new to District 58, but are being used successfully in both hybrid and remote instructional models. Ms. Niforatos highlighted the successes and creativity of students and teachers in remote learning, noting that

differentiation, collaboration, field trips and professional development are all occurring in a remote environment. In the past few years, Fairmount has prioritized improving its communication with all school stakeholders; this January it will convene a Student Advisory Committee, consisting of fifth and sixth grade students who want to share ideas for school improvement.

### 3. SPOTLIGHT ON OUR SCHOOLS

#### FY2020 Audit Report

Assistant Superintendent for Business Todd Drafall introduced Betsy Allen from the District's independent auditor, Miller, Cooper & Co., to summarize the fiscal year 2020 audit report. Miller Cooper has provided an unmodified clean opinion, which is the highest rating possible. The audit shows an overall fund balance increase of \$2.4 million. The auditors also reviewed processes and systems for errors, deficiencies or weaknesses. They noted one item for correction regarding the accounting of student activity funds; the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) rules and standards for the use of these funds have changed in the past year, and some procedures must be updated to be in compliance. An additional item to consider reviewing in the coming year is the accounting of technology.

### 4. UPDATE ON DISTRICT 58 LEARNING MODEL

Dr. Russell and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Justin Sisul updated the Board on the District's current learning models. A recent survey of staff and families provided feedback on the effectiveness and manageability of each instructional model and areas for improvement. The data was reviewed initially by administrative teams, and then a volunteer working group of certified staff and administrators, who split into groups that focused on certain subsets of data to look for themes and trends. During staff activities on December 11, all staff broke into groups and further discussed specific topics that arose in the initial review. The working group will reconvene, and then a discussion with the full administrative team will take place. After a final ASC team review, any changes or improvements will be recommended to the Board at the January 11 board meeting.

### 5. COMMUNICATIONS

#### Written Communications

1. Email from Katie Thomas regarding adaptive pause needed ~ *response from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell*
2. Email from Anthony LoBello regarding careful consideration and success
3. Email from Julie Rana regarding COVID school closure ~ *response from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell*
4. Email from Mark Mencinsky regarding IASB Resolution 2
5. Email from Louise Dechovitz regarding IASB Delegate Assembly Resolution #4

6. Email from Terri Wilson regarding parent concern
7. Email from Jarett and Amy Reinwald regarding thank you ~ *response from Board Member Kirat Doshi*
8. Emails from Troy Hawkins regarding please consider returning to all-day synchronous remote learning ~ *response from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell*
9. Email from Roger Carr regarding JAMA study on school closure effects on children
10. Email from Mary Bromberek regarding return to in-person instruction
11. Email from Jason Sparks regarding Finance Committee ~ *response from Board President Darren Hughes*
12. Email from Chad Walz regarding remote/hybrid learning ~ *responses from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell and Board President Darren Hughes*
13. Email from Julie Jacobs regarding 8th grade in-person learning days ~ *response from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell*
14. Email from Pamela Nicholas regarding 8th grade in-person learning days ~ *response from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell*

#### Freedom of Information Act Requests

1. Freedom of Information Act request from anonymous regarding tax levy records from 2002, 2008 and 2014 ~ *response from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell*
2. Freedom of Information Act request from Ken Deloian, SmartProcure, regarding purchasing records ~ *response from Manager of Business Services Katie Hannigan*
3. Freedom of Information Act request from Scott O'Connell regarding 2021 budget ~ *response from Board Secretary Melissa Jerves*

## 6. REPORTS TO THE BOARD

### A. Superintendent

Dr. Russell provided the Board with information and updates, including:

- **Curriculum & Instruction:** January 4th is the next Teacher Institute Day. Certified staff will attend six one-hour sessions, with over 100 sessions to choose from.
- **Finance:** The tax levy approved by the Board has been filed with the DuPage County Clerk's Office.
- **Facilities:** Construction permission for the El Sierra playground was approved, and demolition and excavation have already begun. The work schedule will depend on the weather, but the project is expected to be complete by the middle of May. A significant water leak at Herrick recently affected the building's heat. Repairs were completed overnight so that the school did not have to be shut down.
- **Personnel:** Green Apple Awards, through the Education Foundation, will be presented to various staff members before and after winter break. A complete list of recent award winners will be sent out in January and can be viewed on Dr. Russell's Twitter account. To

address the substitute teacher shortage, the Personnel Office has continued outreach and has added new subs to the list each week. One or two floater substitutes have been hired to work at each building daily, which has nearly eliminated the unfilled substitute positions in schools. The District is also exploring the option of allowing instructional assistants who have a teaching license to work as substitute teachers when necessary.

- **Technology:** A new online registration process for parent-teacher conferences was successfully rolled out. Over 6,200 conferences were scheduled with the new system and school offices and the Technology Office were able to support families who needed assistance.
- **Student Services:** The CDC has updated its guidance on quarantine requirements, but the District is awaiting clarification from the state and county health departments before considering amendments to its quarantine requirements. The District is also considering eliminating temperature checks as students enter the building because they are proving ineffective at catching sick students, and thermometers often have performance issues in colder weather. The temperature check is not mandated by the health department so long as the District continues its robust self-certification of students and staff.
- **Other:** All District 58 schools will be closed the weeks of December 21 and December 28 for winter break. School resumes on January 5. To support families in need, many community organizations have contributed donations of money, food, gift cards, winter coats, and holiday gifts.

B. Monthly Business

The Board received business reports and the investment report for the month ending November 30, 2020. Assistant Superintendent for Business/CSBO Todd Drafall reported that the year-to-date report reflects all the revenue the District expects to receive until spring tax receipts; the January report will show a decrease in revenue due to refunds issued for outdoor education and milk fees. The District's overall revenue stream is behind last year's. Interest income has dropped precipitously because the District is limited to low-risk investments, which are based on the federal prime rate that is currently near zero.

C. Treasurer's Report

There was nothing special to report in regard to the Treasurer's Report.

D. Policy Committee

The Policy Committee did not meet this month because there was no PRESS update to review. The District has received the draft Administrative Procedures manual and will begin its editing process.

E. Legislative Committee

Member Emily Hanus reported that she attended the Illinois Association of

School Boards (IASB) virtual Delegate Assembly on November 14. Of note were a resolution the District supported to require additional training for early childhood teachers, which was not adopted by the Assembly, and a resolution not supported by the District to permit provisional teaching licenses as a means of addressing the teacher shortage in some areas. A revised resolution was adopted by the Assembly.

Member Doshi reported on the November 11, 2020 committee meeting. The virtual Legislative Breakfast is planned for February. The committee discussed narrowing the potential topics for discussion, and using Zoom breakout rooms moderated by committee members to facilitate discussion with legislators.

F. Financial Advisory Committee

President Hughes reported on the December 4, 2020 Financial Advisory Committee meeting. The committee previewed and provided feedback on the information included in the December 7 Financial Workshop presentation.

G. District Leadership Team

The District Leadership Team did not meet in December.

H. Health and Wellness Committee

Vice President Gregory Harris reported on the December 3, 2020 Health and Wellness Committee meeting. The District's health plans are in much better position than in the past, with continued higher revenue than expenditures. Although prescription drug costs have risen, they have been offset by rebates. Staff participation in the wellness program increased to 51%; the goal is 80%. The committee will begin conversations on the next phase of wellness initiatives. Wellness programs can identify health issues early, improving overall health for staff and reducing long term healthcare costs to the District.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### Electric Rates

Assistant Superintendent for Business Todd Drafall explained to the Board that natural gas and electricity are commodities that the District purchases. Gas is purchased through a cooperative with other DuPage County elementary schools, and electric rates are bid out so that a set rate is locked in for a certain period of time. Electric rates are currently at a historic low, which makes it advantageous to lock in new rates that could save the District \$15,000-20,000 annually. Because rates are only good for the day of the bid and must be locked in that day, either the Board must convene to take action on that day, or it can adopt a parameters resolution giving authority to the superintendent or designee to sign off on a bid within certain parameters. The District will present such a resolution at the January 2021 regular board meeting for Board approval.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Approval of Minutes – November 9, 2020

Member Olczyk moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2020 regular meeting as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Members Doshi, Hanus, Harris, Hughes, Olczyk, Samonte, and Weiner  
NAYS: None Motion carried

**10. CONSENT AGENDA**

There being no request for individual consideration of any items on the consent agenda, the President stated that a motion would be in order relative to items on the consent agenda, consisting of the Personnel Report and Financial Statements (consisting of the List of Bills and Summary) as presented in the packet materials. Member Weiner moved and Member Doshi seconded the motion to approve the following items:

A. Personnel

The assignment of one certified staff employee, two educational support staff employees, and one custodian; the medical leaves of absence of four certified staff; the leaves of absence of two educational support staff employees; the resignation of three educational support staff employees, two custodians, and one technology staff employee; and the retirement of four educational support staff employees.

B. Financial Reports

The list of bills and obligations prepared for payment on December 14, 2020, as well as the revolving and imprest issued in November 2020 as shown on the list submitted under the date of December 14, 2020 in the total amount of \$3,028,623.65 and direct that they be so entered in the minutes and orders drawn for their payment in accordance with the following summary and that the President and Secretary be authorized to certify the list to the School Treasurer.

BOARD OF EDUCATION DISTRICT 58  
SUMMARY PAGE DECEMBER 14, 2020  
LIST OF BILLS & EXPENDITURES

**EDUCATION FUND**

List of Bills – December 14, 2020	\$993,344.85
Revolving Fund - November 2020	\$21,561.93
Imprest Checks - November 2020	\$4,541.39

<b><u>OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE FUND</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$177,053.61
Revolving Fund - November 2020	\$3,495.91
Imprest Checks - November 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>DEBT SERVICE</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
Revolving Fund - November 2020	\$1,399,450.00
<b><u>TRANSPORTATION FUND</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$429,175.96
Revolving Fund - November 2020	\$0.00
Imprest Checks - November 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>IMRF</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>FICA/MEDICARE</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>SITE &amp; CONSTRUCTION FUND</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
Revolving Fund - November 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>WORKING CASH FUND</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>FIRE &amp; LIFE SAFETY FUNDS</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>MEDICAL INSURANCE RESERVE FUND</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
<b><u>SINKING FUND</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 14, 2020	\$0.00
Revolving Fund - November 2020	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,028,623.65</b>

(Copy of Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements  
attached to official minutes)

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

### A. FY2020 Audit Report

Member Olczyk moved and Member Doshi seconded the motion to accept the FY2020 audit report as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Members Doshi, Hanus, Harris, Hughes, Olczyk,

Samonte, and Weiner  
NAYS: None Motion carried

**12. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

President Hughes announced the following dates:

Friday, January 8, 7 a.m.	Financial Advisory Committee Meeting
Monday, January 11, 7 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting

**13. CLOSED SESSION**

Member Harris moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to move to closed session for the purpose of discussing matters relating to

- the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1);
- the placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10); and
- discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21).

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Members Doshi, Hanus, Harris, Hughes, Olczyk, Samonte, and Weiner  
NAYS: None Motion carried

Member Harris moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to reconvene in open session.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Members Doshi, Hanus, Harris, Hughes, Olczyk, Samonte, and Weiner  
NAYS: None Motion carried

The Board convened to closed session at 8:37 p.m. and reconvened to open session at 9:58 p.m.

**14. ACTION RESULTING FROM CLOSED SESSION**

- A. Approval of Closed Session Minutes – November 9, 2020  
Member Doshi moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2020 closed session meeting and keep them

permanently closed due to the confidential nature of the contents.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Members Doshi, Hanus, Harris, Hughes, Olczyk,  
Samonte, and Weiner  
NAYS: None Motion carried

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

Member Harris moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Members Doshi, Hanus, Harris, Hughes, Olczyk,  
Samonte, and Weiner  
NAYS: None Motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

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Darren Hughes, President

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Melissa Jerves, Secretary