

The Board of Education, Downers Grove Grade School District 58, DuPage County, Illinois met in special session on Wednesday, August 18, 2021, at the Downers Grove Village Hall. 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 6:00 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 and Tracy Weiner. Members absent: Melissa Ellis. 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; Jessica Stewart, Assistant Superintendent for Special Services; Todd Drafall, Assistant Superintendent for Business/CSBO; Sonali Patil, Manager of Business Services; Kevin Barto, Director of Buildings and Grounds; and Megan Hewitt, Coordinator of Community Relations.

**2. FLAG SALUTE**

President Hughes led the flag salute.

**3. PUBLIC HEARING ON INITIAL PROPOSAL OF E-LEARNING PROGRAM**

Public Hearing

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Justin Sisul gave a brief overview of the draft e-learning plan. An e-learning plan could be used on emergency days when school cannot be safely open for in person instruction. It would not be used for extended periods of remote learning; the plan is limited to five emergency days in a given school year. The District surveyed families and staff about the proposal; over 75% were in favor. The survey also generated 300 open-ended responses that contained strong opinions on both sides of the issue. The Board then took public comment.

Kathy Mahay, DGEEA co-vice president, commented that after the experiences of remote learning due to the pandemic, teachers are well situated to provide high quality remote lessons in an efficient way. An e-learning day helps to preserve the continuity of learning; an unplanned day off disrupts the flow of instruction and student engagement.

Marshall Schmitt, Pierce Downer attendance area, commented that teachers have developed the experience and expertise to take advantage of an e-learning day.

President Hughes declared the hearing closed at 6:07 p.m.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

##### A. Return to Learn Plan

Dr. Russell stated that the District will continue to follow the COVID-19 health and safety protocols from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, state and local health departments, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Governor's Executive Action that mandates universal mask usage inside schools. School districts that do not comply with this mandate risk losing their recognition, state funding and insurance coverage. Assistant Superintendents Justin Sisul and Jessica Stewart reviewed the specifics of the fall 2021 instructional plan, which is designed to keep students and staff as safe as possible while providing as normal a school day as possible. It was noted that all students can receive free lunch and snack, regardless of income status, paid for with federal funds.

District 58 plans to offer optional COVID-19 testing for staff and families, and sent a survey to help gauge the community's interest. The testing program could help identify asymptomatic positive cases, as well as provide convenient testing to students who are symptomatic or identified as close contacts. The District is also advocating for a "test to stay" option that would permit unvaccinated students who are close contacts to access daily testing to allow them to remain in school instead of quarantining. However, at this point the DuPage County Health Department is not permitting this option.

#### 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sara Roussin, Highland attendance area, stated that she is relieved that the governor has mandated masks at school for the safety of all children.

Marshall Schmitt, Pierce Downer attendance area, commented that he was frustrated that the discussions between the District and the Village regarding a shared administrative facility were not referred to by the Board when discussing Longfellow. He stated that there has been a lack of financial analysis of the potential partnership with the Village and believes the District will lose money renting.

Jim Hamilton, Pierce Downer attendance area, commented that he believes parents should decide whether their children should wear masks at school.

Josh Hearne asked that, once the state mask mandate has been lifted, the District allow families to decide whether their children should wear masks.

Valerie Drews, Kingsley attendance area, advocated for a mask optional policy.

Elyse Churchill, Kingsley attendance area, stated that mask wearing contributed to

her children's anxiety. She asked the District to push back on the Illinois State Board of Education and make masks optional.

Christina Gansel, Kingsley attendance area, stated that she believes the governor does not have the authority to mandate mask wearing.

## 6. 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 as presented in the packet materials. Member Olczyk moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to approve the following items:

### A. Personnel

- The appointment of one administrator, one certified staff employee, eight educational support staff employees, and one custodial maintenance employee.
- The resignation of four educational support staff employees.

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

Dr. Russell introduced the new principal of O'Neill Middle School, Mr. Bryant Cobo. Mr. Cobo thanked the Board and stated that he is excited to join the District 58 community.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

### A. Proposal of E-Learning Program

Member Doshi moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to approve District 58's initial e-Learning plan for school years 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: Members Doshi, Hanus, Olczyk and Weiner  
NAYS: Members Harris and Hughes Motion carried

### B. Google Workspace Contract

Member Olczyk moved and Member Weiner seconded the motion to approve a three-year contract from Amplified IT for Google Workspace for Education Plus for a total cost of \$67,851.

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

