

The Board of Education, Downers Grove Grade School District 58, DuPage County, Illinois, met in regular session on Monday, December 11, 2023, 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 7 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; Justin Sisul, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Staff Development; Elizabeth Ehrhart, 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; Michelle Kovar, Manager of Business Services; Kevin Barto, Director of Buildings and Grounds; Faith Behr, Interim Community Relations Coordinator; and Melissa Jerves, Board Secretary.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND SCHOOL REPORT**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Pierce Downer School Student Council officers Olivia Rabchuk and Anya Sutherland. They highlighted the spirit weeks they have planned throughout the year, as well as fundraisers and service projects, including the annual Winter Wonderland fundraiser to help families in need. Participants can enjoy a hot chocolate bar, cookie decorating, a read aloud, photo booth, and other holiday activities.

PTA Co-Presidents Liz Rossi and Jennifer Klemz shared that the PTA funds a variety of activities to support students, teachers and families. Family and parent events included back-to-school welcome parties, the Fun Run, a golf outing, sweetheart dance, and the newly added One School/One Book program. Staff are supported with teacher grants and classroom allowances, teacher appreciation activities, and help in the LRC and office. Students are supported with after-school enrichment opportunities, field trips and clubs, as well as special experiences such as assemblies, Field Day, Fun Lunch, Variety Show and VIP Day.

Principal Dr. Leland Wagner shared the many ways the PD Promise (to be respectful, responsible and safe) is emphasized: morning announcements, visuals throughout the building of common expectations, monthly assemblies to celebrate successes and remind students of expectations, and staff recognition. Dr. Wagner reported on student achievement data, noting that 74% of students are in the high or high-average range in math, with 89% in average or above. In ELA, 82% are in

the average or above average range. The building's Instructional Leadership Team examined the data closely and created a specific goal in the intermediate grades of including the study of morphemes, which encourages critical thinking skills as students break down words into meaningful units.

### 3. COMMUNICATIONS

#### Email Communications

1. Email from Chelsea Foreman regarding formal letter to the Board.
2. Email from Taylor Skender regarding interest in serving on committee ~ *response from Superintendent Dr. Kevin Russell.*

#### Freedom of Information Act Requests

1. Freedom of Information Act request from Chelsea Foreman regarding suspension reports ~ *response from Board Secretary Melissa Jerves.*
2. Freedom of Information Act request from Bo Kim, UnionBids.com, regarding snow removal bid results ~ *response from Board Secretary Melissa Jerves.*
3. Freedom of Information Act request from Katherine Casey, Science of Reading Illinois, regarding literacy curricula ~ *response from Board Secretary Melissa Jerves.*
4. Freedom of Information Act request from Sheri Reid, SmartProcure, regarding purchasing records ~ *response from Manager of Business Services Michelle Kovar.*
5. Freedom of Information Act request from Chelsea Foreman regarding employees trained in CPI.

### 4. SPOTLIGHT ON OUR SCHOOLS

#### A. Overview of SASSED's Partnership with District 58: Working Together to Support Students, Staff and Families

Assistant Superintendent for Special Services Jessica Stewart introduced SASSED interim executive directors Jim Nelson and Dr. Jimmy Gunnell, who gave a presentation on the partnership between District 58 and the SASSED cooperative to support students with special needs. SASSED supports 18 member districts with compliance with federal and state regulations and provides programming for students with a variety of special needs. SASSED recently revised its Articles of Agreement, restructured its boards, approved a new strategic plan, and is in the final stages of its executive director search. This year the organization has sought to improve climate and community through greater communication to all stakeholders; alignment of handbooks, policies and procedures; employee recognition; social media launch; and regular "learning walkthroughs" to gather timely data on instructional practices and student engagement.

Ms. Stewart reported that District 58 students benefit from a variety of SASSED services and programs, including audiology evaluations; itinerant services for vision, hearing, orientation and mobility; extended school year; assistive technology evaluation and tool selection; professional learning;

group-buy discounts and collaborative purchase opportunities. Mr. Drafall shared a comparison of the costs and types of services provided, noting that costs for District 58 have remained constant over the past six years despite the increased needs of students.

## 5. REPORTS TO THE BOARD

### A. Superintendent

Dr. Russell reported on the following topics:

- **Personnel:** A two-year proposed school calendar is recommended to the Board to help families and staff with planning. The calendar includes e-learning for election days when schools are used as polling places. The District plans to use e-learning days in lieu of emergency days so it can adhere to its construction schedule.
- **Curriculum:** The PTA Council held its annual Reflections art program awards ceremony on December 6. 89 student pieces were recognized, with 39 advancing to the next level of judging.
- **Finance:** The District has received a draft of the annual financial report to be filed with Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) by the end of the week. A presentation of the annual audit will occur at the January board meeting.
- **Technology:** The technology and facilities departments have been collaborating on the request for proposals for network cabling in the Phase I elementary project. The proposal will be eligible for partial reimbursement through the e-rate process.
- **Special Services:** The District has partnered with ReferralGPS to provide access to a curated database of mental health professionals at no cost. Funding is through a recent grant awarded by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Staff and families may access ReferralGPS by contacting a social worker, psychologist or counselor, or by visiting the District website.
- **Facilities:** Referendum construction is scheduled to begin on December 23 with asbestos abatement of some ceiling and floor tiles at the middle schools. All work will be performed by licensed asbestos abatement contractors and will be monitored closely.
- **Public Relations:** Thanks to the following community organizations who donated winter wear and gifts to District 58 students: Downers Grove Roadrunners Soccer Club, Blessings in a Backpack, St. Joseph Knights of Columbus, EM5 Foundation, Sharing Connections, St. Joe's Vincent DePaul, Downers Grove Loyal Order of Moose Lodge, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Stitches to Share, Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club, and Downers Grove First United Methodist Church's Mission Justice and Community Program.

### B. Monthly Business

The Board received the financial and investment reports for the month ending November 30, 2023. Assistant Superintendent for Business Todd

Drafall reported that the Year-to-Date report reflects a lag in the payroll cycle, with one payroll fewer than this time last year, which is a \$2 million differential. In January, the Board will vote on 2024-25 school fees, which the administration recommends increasing by CPI.

- C. Treasurer's Report  
There was nothing additional to report in regard to the Treasurer's Report.
- D. Policy Committee  
The Policy Committee has not met since the last Board meeting.
- E. Legislative Committee  
The Legislative Committee has not met since the last Board meeting.
- F. Financial Advisory Committee  
President Hughes reported on the December 8, 2023, Financial Advisory Committee meeting. The committee discussed the school fee recommendation, the upcoming renegotiation of electricity rates, participation in open enrollment for health insurance, construction bids, and the food service contract.
- G. District Leadership Team  
The District Leadership Team has not met since the last Board meeting.
- H. Health and Wellness Committee  
The Health and Wellness Committee has not met since the last Board meeting.
- I. SASED Report  
Dr. Russell reported that the Board of Directors will meet on December 13 to interview final candidates for the Executive Director position.

## 6. DISCUSSION

- A. Overview of Bid Group #2 (Middle Schools)  
Director of Buildings and Grounds Kevin Barto introduced Mike Huffman of the District's owner's representative firm, Huffman Keel. Mr. Huffman shared that the design phase for the middle schools is 95% complete, while the phase 1 elementary schools are at 80%. Village Council review is set for December 12 and 19, and ISBE plan review is underway for the middle schools. Environmental surveys are wrapping up; technology, furniture, and move management planning are ongoing. Bid Group #2 (Middle Schools) is on the agenda; it contains bids for the subcontractors for the project. Asbestos abatement work is scheduled for winter break.

At this point, bidding is currently 2.7% under budget, though that does not indicate future expectations. Huffman Keel will continue to report to the Board on change orders, usage rates, and work progress. It was noted that

Bulley & Andrews, the District's construction management firm, was awarded several subcontracts. Mr. Huffman responded that in the categories where Bulley & Andrews was the successful bidder, there were multiple bidders.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jennifer Schuh, Kingsley attendance area, commented that the District has excluded her son with special needs from school for the past six months, and coerced her into signing an IEP with a therapeutic day school placement. She stated that no appropriate therapeutic day school exists within a reasonable distance from Downers Grove. She has filed a lawsuit against the District.

**8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2023

Member Weiner moved and Member Doshi seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023, regular meeting as presented.

VOICE VOTE

Motion carried

**9. CONSENT AGENDA**

The President stated that a motion would be in order relative to the items on the consent agenda, consisting of the Personnel Report and Financial Statements (consisting of the List of Bills and Summary, and Board Member travel expenses). Member Weiner moved and Member Hanus seconded the motion to approve the following items:

A. Personnel

- The assignment of four support staff employees and one custodial/maintenance staff employee.
- The Family and Medical Leaves of Absence of two certified staff employees.
- The resignation of seven support staff employees.
- The retirement of one support staff employee, effective May 2024, and one custodial/maintenance staff employee, effective January 2024.
- Staff stipends.

B. Financial Reports

The list of bills and obligations prepared for payment on December 11, 2023, as well as the revolving and imprest issued in November 2023 as shown on the list submitted under the date of December 11, 2023, in the total amount of \$8,167,159.69 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 11, 2023  
LIST OF BILLS & EXPENDITURES

<b><u>EDUCATION FUND (Fund 10)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$959,304.93
Imprest Checks - November 2023	\$20,118.50
Revolving Fund - November 2023	\$4,950.45
District Credit Card - November 2023	\$17,501.01
<b><u>OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE FUND (Fund 20)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$126,128.15
Imprest Checks - November 2023	\$0.00
District Credit Card - November 2023	\$210.91
<b><u>DEBT SERVICE (Fund 30)</u></b>	
12/14/23 Bond Payment	\$6,073,050.00
<b><u>TRANSPORTATION FUND (Fund 40)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$202,535.18
Imprest Checks - November 2023	\$280.00
District Credit Card - November 2023	\$225.00
<b><u>IMRF (Fund 50)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$0.00
<b><u>FICA/MEDICARE (Fund 51)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$0.00
Revolving Fund - November 2023	\$0.00
<b><u>SITE &amp; CONSTRUCTION FUND (Fund 60)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$61,482.87
<b><u>CAPITAL - REFERENDUM (Fund 61)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$424,957.88
<b><u>WORKING CASH FUND (Fund 70)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$0.00
<b><u>FIRE &amp; LIFE SAFETY FUNDS (Fund 90)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$0.00
<b><u>MEDICAL INSURANCE RESERVE FUND (Fund 13)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$276,414.81
<b><u>SINKING FUND (Fund 21)</u></b>	
List of Bills - December 11, 2023	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,167,159.69</b>

C. Board Member Travel Expenses

Travel expenses consisting of hotel and parking for the Joint Annual Conference held in Chicago from November 17 – 19, 2023, for Board Members Hughes, Harris, Doshi and Ellis, for a total of \$1380.16.

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

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

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION**

A. School Calendars 2024-2025 and 2025-2026

Member Weiner moved and Member Hanus seconded the motion to approve the 2024-25 and 2025-26 School Calendars as presented.

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

B. Resolution Authorizing Commencement of Social Media Litigation

Member Weiner moved and Member Doshi seconded the motion to adopt the Resolution Authorizing Commencement of Social Media Litigation as presented.

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

**11. CONSTRUCTION CONSENT AGENDA**

The President stated that a motion would be in order relative to the items on the construction consent agenda as presented in the packet materials. Member Weiner moved and Member Olczyk seconded the motion to approve the following item:

A. Bid Group #2: Middle Schools

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

**12. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

President Hughes announced the following dates:

Monday, December 18, 3:45 p.m.	District Leadership Team O'Neill Middle School
Tuesday, December 19, 7 a.m.	Policy Committee O'Neill Middle School
Wednesday, December 20, 3:45 p.m.	Legislative Committee O'Neill Middle School
Monday, January 8, 7 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting Downers Grove Village Hall

### 13. CLOSED SESSION

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

- A. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)
- B. Consideration of student disciplinary matters; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9)
- C. The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10)
- D. Litigation...when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting; 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)
- E. 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)

VOICE VOTE

Motion carried

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

VOICE VOTE

Motion carried

The Board convened to closed session at 8:30 p.m. and reconvened to open session at 9:21 p.m.

### 14. ACTION AS A RESULT OF CLOSED SESSION

- A. Student Disciplinary Matter—Student 2023-002—pursuant to Section 2(c)(9) of the Open Meetings Act. (5 ILCS 102/2(c)(9))



Member Weiner moved and Member Olczyk seconded the motion to approve the Resolution to Adopt Student Disciplinary Decision regarding Student 2023-002.

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

B. Closed Session Minutes

Member Weiner moved and Member Hanus seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the November 13, 2023, closed session meeting and keep them permanently closed for reasons of confidentiality.

VOICE VOTE Motion carried

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

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

VOICE VOTE Motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

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Darren Hughes, President

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Melissa Jerves, Secretary