

DOWNERS GROVE GRADE SCHOOL DISTRICT 58

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 17, 2021

The District Leadership Team (DLT) met on Monday, May 17, 2021 at 3:45 p.m. at O'Neill Middle School and via Zoom video conference.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:49 p.m.

Present

Co-Chairs Kirat Doshi and Tracy Weiner, Michael Cassa, Todd Drafall, Matt Durbala, Erin Guth, Megan Hewitt, Emily Honn, Katie Hurckes, Jason Lynde, Erin Menet, Kevin Russell, Justin Sisul, Jason Suchy, Craig Young, Jayne Yudzentis.

Absent

Melissa Jerves, Angie Rybarczyk.

Approval of Minutes

Craig Young moved and Katie Hurckes seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the February 22, 2021 meeting. Motion carried.

Goal 1: Focusing on Learning

Math curriculum implementation has continued throughout the shifting instructional models this year. Two parent videos were created to help families better support their children at home, and curriculum and instructional coaching team members are visiting each classroom to provide direct instructional support. These supports will continue through the next school year.

The Curriculum Council and District Leadership Team continue conversations about the definition of success in District 58. The next step in defining success for students is centered around meaningful Key Performance Indicators (KPI); the current targets expire in spring 2021. The committee discussed creating a small working group to report back to the DLT and the Board. Topics include whether Goal 1 goes beyond academics; the existing definition of student success is more holistic. The working group can discuss what measures to track, how to measure, and how to report. The committee discussed the development of the Portrait of a Graduate, with milestones at the primary, intermediate and middle school levels; the Curriculum Council will be working on a draft.

Goal 2: Connecting the Community

The draft communication plan will be revisited. The staff newsletter, 58 Connects, continues to be published every two weeks, with an open rate of 72-29%. The Superintendent's Community Advisory Council (SCAC) met and discussed website improvements, facility needs with an emphasis on Longfellow Center, and District finances. The Communicate 58 newsletter is published every two weeks, with open rates of 40-45%. The Communication Survey feedback will be used to review gaps and improvement opportunities. Megan Hewitt presented the 2020 survey results to the committee; subsequently they will be posted to the District website. The percentage of respondents who answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" to survey questions increased from 2019. The 2021 survey will open soon.

Goal 3: Securing the Future

A year ago, on the recommendation of the Citizen Task Force, the District was moving forward with polling the community regarding a referendum question. Due to the pandemic, the Village of Downers Grove put its plans for a shared administrative facility with District 58 on hold. The District continues to be interested in partnering with the Village in the future. Issues with heating in multiple schools arose this winter and threatened the opening of school on some days. This year the District issued bonds and refinanced other debt to generate funds to address some of these most urgent facility needs. However, the District has a very small capacity to issue non-referendum bonds. Legislation passed in the early 1990s limited school districts' non-referendum borrowing to the debt they had at the time; District 58 had very little debt at that time, and thus has been limited in its borrowing capacity ever since.

After considering the District's considerable facility needs and looking at the District's assets, the Board voted 7-0 in May to sell Longfellow Center. The Citizen Task Force will be reconvened this summer to determine whether priorities are the same and to discuss the timing of a potential referendum. The community will be polled before any question is added to the ballot.

Todd Drafall reported that, while this year's budget began with a large deficit, lower transportation expenses and the receipt of federal stimulus funds will result in an amended budget that is positive. The District has put into place a five-year financial planning cycle and the Board revised its fund balance policy to require a 35% fund balance to ensure there are sufficient funds during the low cash point of each school year.

The District anticipates starting the school year as normal as possible, subject to current health department guidance. The ISBE will vote on a resolution stating that all schools must begin full day in person. The District awaits guidance on remote learning, quarantine, masks and social distancing for the fall. Vaccines are not mandated.

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Adjourn

Kirat Doshi moved and Craig Young seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.