



*...from the January 9, 2018 Board of Education Meeting*

## **RECOGNITION**

### **ILMEA Junior**

The Board of Education recognized the 28 Elmhurst District 205 middle school students who were selected to perform in the ILMEA Junior Festival Band, Orchestra and Chorus Concerts at the District I Music Festival on November 4, 2017. Two middle school students were also recognized for their selection to perform in the Jazz Concert at the Junior and Senior Jazz Band Festival on November 11, 2017.

### **DuPage County Principal of the Year**

Congratulations to Jacquelyn Discipio, Principal at Bryan Middle School, for being selected as the 2017-2018 Middle School Principal of the Year by the Illinois Principals Association DuPage Region. Ms. Discipio was selected out of a pool of nominees from throughout the DuPage County region. She was nominated by Elmhurst District 205 Superintendent Dr. David Moyer, who stated in his nomination that "Ms. Discipio has been asked to lead monumental and transformative change in a short period of time, examples of which include: a successful one-to-one personalized learning implementation utilizing Chromebooks in year one; implementation of a new English Language Arts curriculum and the addition of instructional coaches in year two; ongoing development of common assessments in all grade levels and content areas; and a major overhaul of the schedule to include dedicated time for interventions and enrichment and increased co-teaching for the 2017-18 school year."

Ms. Discipio will be recognized at the DuPage IPA's annual Spring Student Recognition Breakfast on April 23. She will now be considered among other nominees throughout the other 20 regions of the Illinois Principals Association. The state winners will be announced in the spring.

## **REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **Annual Audit Review**

Andrew Mace from Klein Hall CPAs in Aurora, IL presented his findings on the [Comprehensive Annual Financial Report](#) for the year ending June 30, 2017. Mace said his job as an auditor is to provide an opinion on whether the District's financial statements are presented fairly. Mace had no comments related to internal control. "The District is well staffed and has excellent controls, you're fortunate enough that you have enough people in your business office that you can do things correctly, and we're happy to see that," he said. "The audit went smoothly."

Mace noted that District 205's year-end fund balances are currently around 40%. While that seems sufficient, unseen changes from the state or capital items the District could face with no option for funding from a bond, could require a higher fund balance.

## **Summer Facilities Projects**

Frank Schuh, Director of Buildings and Grounds, presented recommendations for [facilities projects](#) for summer 2018. Mr. Schuh noted that the recommendations are very similar to those the board has seen in recent years, and is a very modest request, totaling about \$1.3 million in work. Forthcoming projects include replacing the auditorium roof at Sandburg Middle School and replacing the cafeteria roof at York Community High School. Mr. Schuh said there is a large amount of work at Lincoln Elementary and at Churchville Middle School that does not have a timeframe for completion or source for funding.

## **Standards Based Grading Update**

Dr. Mary Henderson, Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Leadership, Tim Riordan, Principal at Hawthorne Elementary School, Heidi Thomas, Principal at Field Elementary School, Dr. Christina Podraza, Assistant Principal at Hawthorne Elementary School, Anne Parrone, first-grade teacher at Hawthorne and Valerie Baxter, fourth-grade teacher at Field, presented an [update to the Standards Based Grading System](#). Hawthorne and Field are the two pilot schools for the standard-based reporting system. With this system, students earn a number, rather than a letter grade.

Dr. Henderson said the traditional letter-grade system doesn't align well to any learning standards or the district curriculum. Additionally, the letter-grade system trains kids to focus on "earning" a grade, rather than learning and understanding growth. Finally, students learn at different rates, and a traditional grading system doesn't account for this.

So far this school year, teachers have been meeting in Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs, as a grade level. This allows teachers to problem-solve together and make instructional decisions together as a team, rather than working as an individual in their own classroom. Both teachers and students are adjusting to the Standards-Based Grading System, but teachers see their students understanding the standards of the new system, and what details make their work a "3", or a meets-expectations, as compared to a "4", or exceeds expectations.

"They can self-assess, as well as understand what they need to do to achieve proficiency," Parrone said.

Dr. Podraza addressed the process of gathering feedback from teachers. Teachers were asked, what went well? What did you learn? What do you want to do differently? What do parents need to know? What do non-pilot schools need to know?

Dr. Henderson also addressed a survey that was given to parents of students at the two pilot schools. The survey was done after parent-teacher conferences and 89 parents participated, which amounts to about 10% of the parent population. Overarching results from the survey concluded that parents lack clarity on the difference between their students meeting and exceeding standards. Thus, Dr. Henderson said there is a continuing need to increase parent understanding of standards-based reporting and how it differs from the traditional grading system. Additionally, there is a need for additional professional learning for teachers to increase consistency among teachers and deepen their understanding of the standards.

Parents will be surveyed again in the spring of 2018, and staff at Field and Hawthorne will continue to provide feedback on the specifics of the standards.

## **Learning and Teaching Committee Meeting Update**

In the absence of Board Member Jim Collins, Kara Caforio presented the summary of the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting from December 13, 2017. Mrs. Caforio said the meeting was an opportunity to discuss the proposed changes to the middle school curriculum, and make sure the committee members were aware of the main concerns of middle school parents and community members.

The committee also discussed acceleration. Ms. Caforio said the main concern regarding acceleration time was whether students are really engaged and learning, or whether it is lost time. However, the committee members agreed that as the community has expressed the desire for more STEM-related activities, acceleration is the perfect time to incorporate some of those activities.

The proposed changes to the band, orchestra and choir programs were also discussed, particularly in how changes to those programs might affect special education students who take guided study.

The full minutes from the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting [can be found here](#).

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA – ACTION**

The Board voted 6-0, with board member Jim Collins absent, to approve the following items, one at a time:

- Dual Language Program
- Lacrosse Fees
- Resolution of the Board of Education Transferring Money from the Education and Operations Maintenance Funds to the Debt Service Fund

There was extensive discussion on the Dual Language program before the final vote. Dr. Margaret Harrell said she had asked Dr. Dave Moyer for more information regarding the plan for finding enough space at Fischer Elementary School for the Dual Language program, information on the impact to the existing Fischer community, including those without children at the school, and information on the implementation of the program in years to come. Dr. Harrell then asked Dr. Moyer to share the information he provided to the Board on the record.

Jane Bailey, Principal at Conrad Fischer Elementary, discussed the issue of space. She said they are planning for five kindergarten sections for the 2018-2019 school year, the school currently has four sections. Ms. Bailey said many rooms at the school are allocated for "resource rooms", which is nothing more than office space. If those rooms were allocated to kindergarten classes, resource personnel who previously used those rooms could partner with a classroom teacher and co-teach and/or provide acceleration.

"No implementation is without growing pains, and this will be the growing pain, but I do think it will be worth it at the end of the day," Ms. Bailey said.

It is difficult to plan for potential space concerns further down the road than the first year of the program, Ms. Bailey said, because it is still unknown how many students will participate. If there are too many Dual Language students to fit into Fischer, plans can be made to add a second location.

Regarding impact to the Fischer community, Dr. Mary Henderson said the District will look to collect feedback from parents, students and teachers like the way feedback is currently being collected for the standards-based reporting system.

"It's not something to be fearful of, because we have to think differently," Ms. Bailey said. "If you're talking about a global economy, then you need to be bilingual."

"There are benefits for both the native English speaking and native Spanish speaking students in this program, even though the rationale focuses more on native Spanish speaking students," added Dr. Moyer. "It's a phenomenal enrichment opportunity to truly allow all students to graduate bi-lingual, bi-literate, bi-cultural."

## **FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

**January 23** – Board of Education Meeting – 7:30 PM – District 205 Center

**January 27** – Special Board of Education Meeting – 9:00 AM – District 205 Center

**February 13** – Board of Education Meeting – 7:30 PM – District

**NOTE:** Video footage of all Board of Education regular meetings is usually posted on [205TV](#) within 48-72 hours. Audio is posted within 24 hours at <http://www.elmhurst205.org/Audio> (please click on appropriate meeting date). Past editions of Board Highlights are posted/archived at [www.elmhurst205.org/BOE\\_highlights](http://www.elmhurst205.org/BOE_highlights).