

School District U-46
Elgin, Illinois

September 27, 2021

The video of the September 27, 2021 meeting can be found here:
[September 27, 2021, BOE Meeting](#)

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 5:30 p.m. at the Educational Services Center, 355 E. Chicago Ave, Elgin, Illinois. The following Board Members answered roll call: John Devereux, Dawn Martin, Veronica Noland, Melissa Owens, Eva Porter, Kate Thommes, and Sue Kerr. John Devereux participated remotely via Zoom

Ms. Olson noted that Covid-19 Executive Order 86, which extends modifications to the Open Meetings Act and permits public bodies to meet remotely through electronic means, is still in effect.

President Kerr requested a motion to move into closed session to discuss individual student disciplinary matters; pending, probable or imminent litigation; the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public, or legal counsel for the public body; the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the School Board; the setting of a price for the sale or lease of real property owned by the School Board; collective negotiating matters between the School Board and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; review of closed session minutes; and individual student matters.

The motion was made at 5:31 p.m. by Ms. Noland, second by Ms. Thommes. Upon roll call yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. No votes 0. The motion was carried by a vote of 7-0.

A motion was made at 6:52 p.m. by Ms. Martin, second by Ms. Noland, to move to open session. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Present for the business session were Superintendent Tony Sanders, Board members Dawn Martin, Veronica Noland, Melissa Owens, Eva Porter, Kate Thommes, and Sue Kerr, Chief Legal Officer Trisha Olson, and student Board member Jessica Pearce. Board member John Devereux participated remotely via Zoom. The following administrators were also present at the District's central office: Dr. Josh Carpenter, Ericka Brown, Ann Chan, Dr. Suzanne Johnson, Dr. Teresa Lance, Lela Majstorovic, Brian Lindholm, Bruce Phelps and Sheila Downs. Present for the meeting via Zoom were other administrators and members of the public.

Ms. Kerr led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was held for U-46 employee Gary Belcher.

1. Public Comments

Everett Oldenburg , a U-46 student, stated that masks should not be worn in schools as they can hurt and make kids feel sick. Students should have a choice in wearing a mask.

Pam Zirbes, a parent in the district, stated that the Board has been listening to parents plead for no masks, no testing and no vaccine mandates with little results, and that she does not understand why the Board would ignore laws regarding masks as medical devices. Ms. Zirbes stated that ESSER funding, which accounts for over \$103 million dollars in funding until at least 2024 for U-46, is the reason the district is following these rules. The district has followed the money, and had to develop a mitigation plan in accordance with the CDC, who does not make laws. Ms. Zirbes stated that U-46 could have been a leader in non-compliance, as these mandates are unnecessary as statistics show that recovery rate from COVID is 99.99%. Ms. Zirbes stated that all of the money being received does not seem moral or lawful, and the Board and Superintendent are hypocritical.

2. Other Business – Board Member and Superintendent Update, If Necessary

A. Additional Information

Mr. Sanders stated that he mentioned this at the previous Board meeting, but wanted to formally recognize the Board members who received Master School Board status: Ms. Kerr, Mr. Devereux, Mrs. Porter, and Ms. Thommes. Mr. Sanders also recognized student Board member Jessica Pearce for being named a semi-finalist in the National Merit Scholarship program. Mr. Sanders thanked all staff members, especially those in operations and human resources, for making sure the district was in compliance with the vaccine and testing mandates by the deadline so that schools would be open on Monday. Mr. Sanders recognized Mary Fergus for her service to the district, and wished her luck in her new role with Chicago Public Schools.

Mrs. Porter stated that she attended the African American Advisory Committee on September 21, 2021, which had a number of informative presentations on the topics of the gifted program, human resources, school leadership, and specialized student services. Mrs. Porter thanked Dr. Lance and Ms. Jackson, and stated they did a great job with the presentations. Mrs. Porter stated that more parent involvement is needed, and this is a great committee to join, as the committee needs parent input. Mrs. Porter stated she has been receiving a number of teacher emails, and she wanted to let teachers know she is reading all of the emails, and she is listening to the input.

Ms. Pearce thanked Mr. Sanders, and stated that four other students were named as semi-finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program, and she wanted to congratulate these students as well. Ms. Pearce stated that she took part in an equity student panel, and it was great to hear from students about issues that need to be addressed. Ms. Pearce stated that a

lot of students who participated want to have more of these conversations, and she hopes there is an opportunity for more students to participate in these conversations outside of a survey. Ms. Pearce stated that on October 6th, the first Student Advisory meeting will take place, and she is excited for input from students across the district.

Ms. Martin thanked administration and staff for complying the executive order, as she knows many people were not in agreement with it. Ms. Martin stated that if we have to close our doors, students are the ones who suffer.

Ms. Kerr thanked staff for complying with the executive order, and also thanked Mary Fergus for all of the work she has done to improve communications within the district and to highlight district students.

Mr. Sanders noted that complying with testing is a weekly occurrence.

B. FOIA Responses

Mr. Sanders stated there were five (5) FOIA requests that the District has responded to since the previous Board meeting, and the responses are available on the Board book and would be made available on the District's website.

C. School Maintenance Project Grant

Mr. Sanders stated this item was on the agenda to seek additional grant funds, and would allow the Board president to sign the grant application. Ms. Downs stated the district applied for a similar grant in 2020, and this grant, if awarded, would go toward replacing the fire alarm system at Wayne. The grant is for \$50,000.

Motion by Ms. Noland, second by Ms. Martin, to approve the Board President to sign the School Maintenance Project Grant form, as presented. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote 7-0.

3. Consent Agenda – Mr. Sanders

- A. Personnel Report and Workers' Compensation Cases
- B. Minutes of Board Meeting – September 13, 2021
- C. Contract - Specialized Student Services - Co:Writer
- D. Occupancy Permit - 1

Motion by Ms. Owens, second by Ms. Noland, to approve the consent agenda items A-D, as presented. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote 7-0.

4. Discussion/Action – Mr. Sanders

- A. Itemized Bills – September 27, 2021

Mr. Burnidge, Director of Financial Operations, was available to respond to questions from the Board of Education regarding the attached bills. Administration recommended the Board of Education approve the List of Bills in the amount of \$6,798,995.93.

Motion by Ms. Noland, second by Ms. Martin, to approve the itemized bills in the amount \$6,798,995.93. Upon roll call yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

B. Resolution Adopting School District U-46 Budget, July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Mr. Burnidge, Director of Financial Operations, reviewed the resolution and was available to respond to questions from the Board of Education. Administration recommended the Board of Education approve the Resolution Adopting the School District U-46 Budget, July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022.

Motion by Mrs. Porter, second by Ms. Noland, to approve the Resolution Adopting the School District U-46 Budget, July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022. Upon roll call yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Ms. Owens thanked Mr. Burnidge, financial services, and administration for their efforts in preparing this budget. Ms. Owens encouraged everyone to read the executive summary of the budget. Ms. Owens noted the budget includes: 2.7 million dollars to waive instructional fees for U-46 families; a return of 34 elementary and 26 secondary teaching positions that had been reduced due to declining enrollments, and the addition of 12 teaching positions in elementary and 26.4 in secondary, in order to reduce class sizes to provide for greater social distance; \$4.4 million for the first year of a five-year learning recovery plan, U-46 Rising, with our partner Learning Sciences International, plus an additional \$1.5 million in staffing for our Schools for Rigor and Equity (Creekside, Parkwood, Willard, Laurel Hill, and Channing); \$2.7 million to waive instructional fees for all U-46 families; \$2.6 million for summer enrichment programs with community partners; \$3.0 million for after school programs including tutoring and homework help; 6,200 Chromebooks purchased as part of the age and obsolescence plan for technology; 2,300 computer monitors for classrooms to support teachers; 1,600 interactive boards to support teachers; • 2,300 elementary desks to allow for better social distancing in our elementary classrooms. Ms. Owens stated she believes the district is truly budgeting for the future.

Mr. Devereux stated that everyone on the Board is a local homeowner, and in recent years, notable changes have been made regarding taxes. Mr. Devereux stated the effective tax rate has decreased overall, and it is important that these details are presented accurately. Mr. Devereux stated the district has invested in classrooms, much needed investments in infrastructure, and has reduced the economic burden on families during the pandemic. Mr. Devereux stated the district's debt metrics are comparable to other surrounding districts, and taxpayers will save millions in the coming years due to

the district's improved credit rating. Mr. Devereux stated he is glad to support this budget.

C. Contract Renewal - School Safety and Culture - School Resource Officers (SRO)

Mr. Phelps, Director of Business Services, Mr. Lindholm, Chief of Staff, and Mr. Bosh, Coordinator of School Safety, were available to respond to questions from the Board of Education. Administration recommended approval of the contract renewals with the City of Elgin, the Village of Bartlett, the Village of South Elgin, and the Village of Streamwood in the amount of \$1,014,204.01, and requested authorization for district administration to execute related documents. This expenditure will be charged to the Educational Fund.

Mrs. Porter stated she would be withholding her yes vote for the 2021-2022 SRO contracts due to the fact that last year on multiple occasions she had asked for more training in diversity and inclusion. Mrs. Porter stated that at this time, she is not sure there have been any significant changes in regards to this type of training. Mrs. Porter stated that she understands SROs complete certified training programs, but more training is needed to address the issues that the data reflects – disproportionate arrests in certain populations of students. Mrs. Porter stated that more training needs to be implemented by the district, not just left up to police departments, in the areas of diversity and cultural sensitivity and inclusion, particularly for certain populations of students who seem to have higher percentages of arrests (African American and Latino students). Mrs. Porter stated she understands schools need to be protected and SROs play an important role, but more training needs to be implemented, and she would be withholding her yes vote at this time.

Motion by Ms. Martin, second by Owens, to approve the contract renewals with the City of Elgin, the Village of Bartlett, the Village of South Elgin, and the Village of Streamwood, as presented. Upon roll call yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. No votes: 1. The motion carried by a vote of 6-1.

D. Proposal - Business Services - At-Home COVID-19 Test

Mr. Phelps, Director of Business Services, presented the proposal and was available to respond to questions from the Board of Education. Administration recommended payment to School Nurse Supply, Inc. in the amount of \$66,600.00 and requested authorization for district administration to execute related documents. This expenditure will be charged to the Elementary School Emergency Relief Grant. The cost is included in the budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Motion by Ms. Thommes, second by Ms. Owens, to approve the Proposal - Business Services - At-Home COVID-19 Test, as presented. Upon roll call yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes, and Ms. Kerr. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Ms. Martin asked for clarification on the testing system, particularly if staff was paying out of pocket for their own tests, and if they would be part of the SHIELD program. Mr. Sanders stated that the intention is to move everyone to SHIELD (families who provide authorization/staff), but that SHIELD is not currently up and running at all locations. Mr. Sanders stated that if staff incurred out of pocket expenses, they have been reimbursed. Mr. Sanders stated kits would be available for staff members who miss their testing date, but if kits cannot be received in a timely manner, the district will not be moving forward with this vendor. Mr. Lindholm stated the district wanted delivery to occur last week, but it has been pushed out a few weeks. Mr. Phelps stated the district cannot get BINAX tests because the federal government has taken up all of the orders. Ms. Martin asked if the district is anticipating any shortages with SHIELD testing. Mr. Lindholm stated that so far quantity has not been an issue.

5. Other Business – CAC Update (Board Policy 2.152 – Advisory Committees to the Board)

A. Additional Information

Tracy Kelly, CAC Secretary, stated that she wanted to remind everyone there is a FACE meeting scheduled for Thursday at 7 p.m. via Zoom. The public can check the website for the Zoom link to pre-register for the meeting. The next general meeting is scheduled for October 7th via Zoom. The topic of this meeting will be academic teaming.

6. Work Session - Resolutions

A. Bid - Plant Operations - Drinking Fountain Installation at 14 Elementary Schools - Environmental Work, Project #2065

Mr. Phelps, Director of Business Services, and Ms. Downs, Director of Plant Operations, presented the proposal summary and were available to respond to questions from the Board of Education. Administration recommended award of the low bid meeting specification to EHC Industries, Inc. in the amount of \$27,345.00, and requested authorization for district administration to execute related documents. This expenditure will be charged to the Operations and Maintenance Fund. The cost is included in the budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

B. Bid - Information Services - VMware Servers Replacement

Mr. Phelps, Director of Business Services, and Ms. Macias, Director of Information Services, presented the proposal summary and were available to respond to questions from the Board of Education. Administration recommended award of the low bid meeting specification to Dell Technologies in the amount of \$218,416.20, and requested authorization for district administration to execute related documents. This expenditure will be charged to the Educational Fund. The cost is included in the budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Motion by Ms. Thommes, second by Ms. Martin, to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting of September 27, 2021 at 7:48 p.m. Upon roll call yes votes: Mr. Devereux, Ms. Martin, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Porter, Ms. Thommes and Ms. Kerr. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Approved this 4th day of October, 2021

Susan E Kerr
President

Justina A. Olson
Secretary