



## **Board Briefs**

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[October 24, 2023 Regular Action Meeting](#)

[Board Meeting Videos](#)

### **Approval of Agenda**

The Board voted to approve the October 24 agenda as presented.

### **Board Reports**

#### ***President***

Board President Dan Struck began his report by underscoring that the Board shares the joy and relief at the news communicated by Principals Anderson and Finn and Dr. Law last Friday that a recent DHS graduate and her mother were released from Hamas after being held hostage. He said that all share the hope for a lasting and secure peace in this region. Mr. Struck said that the D113 community has countless connections and close ties to Israel and that the impact of the recent, horrific events is felt by many staff, students, and families. He said that as a school community, the first responsibility is to come together to support each other and he encouraged students to seek support from counselors or other social and emotional support resources within the schools.

Addressing the item of approving a search firm to find a new D113 superintendent and principal of HPHS, Mr. Struck said this action marks an important first step on the journey. He said that the firm will assist the Board in developing a profile of the qualities sought in a superintendent. Mr. Struck reaffirmed that community involvement through focus groups and forums involving staff, community members, students, parents and guardians, and other key stakeholders is a core element of the search process. Mr. Struck noted that one of the consultants leading the search is Dr. Linda Yonke, who is very familiar with HPHS and DHS as she served as an interim superintendent for D113 in the 2018-2019 school year. He noted that D113 is fortunate to have the staff and resources sufficient to make it among the highest achieving high school districts in the nation for all its students. Mr. Struck said the Board is committed to finding a superintendent who is passionate about District 113's unwavering commitment to providing all of its students with opportunities to realize their unique potential.

In closing his remarks, Mr. Struck provided background information about the rationale for the change to Highland Park High School's daily and weekly schedule next year as required by the collective bargaining agreement. Mr. Struck cited the fact that HPHS has long had the fewest instructional minutes of any of the schools that D113 uses as comparables for benchmarking purposes and that this situation creates a disservice to students. He said the HPHS move to the DHS schedule will increase instructional minutes at HPHS, address work and pay inconsistencies, and provide flexibility in the search for solutions to retain skilled teachers and

diverse course offerings throughout changes in population and the decision to enter the teaching profession.

### ***Facilities Committee***

Facilities Committee Chair Anne Neumann shared that several items from the October 18 meeting were listed on the agenda for subsequent Board discussion. The DHS Auditorium was the only item without discussion so she provided an update on the renovation saying it is on track to be completed by mid-November and it is at the stage of final finishes.

### **Administration Reports**

#### ***Superintendent***

Superintendent Dr. Bruce Law reiterated Mr. Struck's comments that the situation in the Middle East continues to be difficult on students and staff. Dr. Law said Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Mirah Anti has started a series of staff dialogues with the goal of taking care of staff so that they can take better care of students. Principals are compiling and sharing resources that staff are using in their classrooms, all in an effort to support staff in being able to respond to issues and questions that may arise in the schools. Dr. Law also asked parents and guardians to encourage students to seek social work and counseling resources if they need additional support.

#### ***A Passion for Excellence***

Continuing its second season of celebrating the passion for excellence of District 113 faculty and staff to the student experience, [this month's video features D113 bus driver Regena Carter](#). The third week of October is National School Bus Safety Week, and D113 recognizes and thanks our bus drivers for the important role they play in the lives of District 113 students.

#### ***FOIA***

Dr. Law reported the FOIA requests received since the last meeting and their disposition. The report is posted in BoardDocs online.

### **Discussion**

#### ***2023 IASB Delegate Assembly Resolution Recommendations***

The Board reviewed the resolutions that will be up for a vote at the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) Delegate Assembly at the annual conference in November. The Board determined that it would follow the recommendations of the IASB's 2023 Resolutions Committee Report for the five resolutions under consideration.

#### ***2023 Tax Levy***

Following his presentation to the Finance Committee, Assistant Superintendent for Finance Ali Mehanti presented information to the Board concerning the 2023 tax levy it must adopt by the last Tuesday of December 2023 to fund school year 2024-25. The amount the Board can levy is based on the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from December to December, capped at a maximum of five percent by the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law, or PTELL.

#### ***DHS – Baseball Donation Agreement***

The Board reviewed a proposal to partially fund a construction project to improve drainage at the Deerfield High school baseball outfield using private donations. Approximately 20 percent of the total project cost will be incurred by DHS Athletics. The item will come back for action at the November 14 meeting.

### ***Field Turf Approval***

The Board reviewed a proposal to replace the field turf at both schools that is at the end of its useful life. Chief Operations Officer recommended that the Board select an alternate option to upgrade the turf to a softer, plusher product that will improve safety of athletes using the field. Mr. Ahmer said he will re-review the proposal with legal counsel before bringing the item back for action at the November 14 meeting.

### ***Construction Manager Approval – Summer 2024 Construction***

The Board discussed a proposal in the amount of \$73,866 to approve Pepper Construction to serve as construction manager for summer 2024 construction projects. The item will come back for action at the November 14 meeting.

### ***Approval of Fourth Amendment to Guaranteed Energy Savings Contract with Performance Services, Inc., for installation of solar panels in an amount not to exceed \$9,940,870.00***

The Board discussed approving an amendment to a contract with Performance Services, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$9,940,870 for the installation of solar panels. It was noted that after many years of evaluating the cost of solar panels, financial and tax incentives finally provided a fiscally responsible way for the District to pursue installation. This project will provide new renewable energy opportunities and cost savings for the District as well as provide the opportunity for a curriculum component for students. The item will come back for action at the October 30 Special Meeting.

### **Action**

#### ***Approval of search firm to conduct search for Superintendent and Highland Park High School Principal***

The Board approved as presented a proposal in the amount of \$40,500 to engage School Exec Connect to conduct the searches to replace Superintendent Dr. Bruce Law and Highland Park High School Principal Debby Finn upon their retirements at the end of the academic year. The Board will hold a Special Meeting October 30 to conduct a planning session, that is confidential under *The Open Meetings Act*, with School Exec Connect to kick off the search process.

#### ***Legal Firm for Property Tax Appeals***

The Board approved as presented a resolution to authorize the firm Hodges, Loizzi, Eisenhammer, Rodick & Kohn (HLERK) to provide legal representation on behalf of the District for property tax appeals. Representation would be for appeals seeking a reduction of \$500,000 equalized assessed valuation (EAV) or more. An EAV in the amount of \$500,000 represents a fair market value of \$1.5 million. By proactively intervening in significant tax appeals, predominantly from commercial properties, the District could potentially alleviate the tax burden for all taxpayers.

### **Consent Agenda**

The Board approved [the consent agenda](#) as presented. The consent agenda includes personnel, stipends and board bills.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

**Upcoming Meetings**

October 30, 2023 (Monday)

Special Meeting

6:00 p.m.

Administration Building

November 14, 2023

Committee of the Whole Meeting

6:00 p.m. Closed Session, 7:00 p.m. Open Session

Administration Building

November 28, 2023

Regular Action Meeting

6:00 p.m. Closed Session, 7:00 p.m. Open Session

Administration Building