



**WEST CHICAGO ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL DISTRICT 33**

Kristina Davis Ed.S., Superintendent
November 17, 2022, Board Briefs

Rita Balgeman, Board President
Felicia Gills, Board Vice President
Tom Doyle, Board Secretary
Phebe Balzer, Board Member

Chad McLean, Board Member
Morgan Banasiak, Board Member
Sandra Garcia, Board Member

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was held at Lemay Middle School on Thursday,
November 17, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance

Rita Balgeman, Tom Doyle, Phebe Balzer, Chad McLean, and Morgan Banasiak were present.
Absent: Felicia Gills, and Sandra Garcia.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda

No changes were made.

Shared Agreements:

1. *Make decisions according to what is best for ALL District 33 students.*
2. *Respect staff and other board members and their opinions.*
3. *Be willing to see things from the eyes of seven (7) people, not just one (1).*
4. *Allow everyone to complete their thoughts.*
5. *Commit to shared leadership.*
6. *Respect confidentiality.*
7. *Adhere to our belief in our students' full potential and successful future.*

Strategic Plan Goals

Goal #1 – Student Growth and Achievement

Goal #2 – Learning Culture of Equity, Engagement & Agency

Goal #3 – Professional Culture of Teamwork & Continuous Improvement

Goal #4 – Family Engagement & Community Partnerships

Goal #5 - Effective and Innovative Use of Resources

Shared Agreements Reflection

At the July 18, 2013 meeting, the Board of Education finalized their “shared agreements” and agreed to begin each regular board meeting by reflecting on one agreement. The Board revised the shared agreements on November 6, 2014. The purpose of the agreement is to help maintain a positive environment in which to conduct board work. Board President, Rita Balgeman, shared her statement:

I was fortunate enough to attend a League of Women Voters event last month. It was entitled "Improving Civil Discourse - The Science of Us vs. Them."

The presenter, Dr. Terry Wu, explained that people have an innate need to be part of a group and to "other" those who aren't in the same group. From prehistoric times, when being approached by people who weren't part of your group often meant battle, to today, where Bears fans rabidly hate the Packers, groups are an intrinsic part of society. Neuroscience provides

evidence for this as well - scans show that the frontal cortex, which controls social behavior and interactions, lights up when shown pictures of those in your group, while the amygdala, which controls feelings of fear or anger, lights up when shown pictures of those not in your group. Groups are not inherently bad - it promotes a sense of belonging and safety. However, they can also be turned into a weapon, playing on people's fears of the "other," and can disrupt productive discourse by amplifying divisions in society.

It is fairly easy to find groups, even within our small community. Groups by cultural background or political points of view are not unique to our community. Kids group themselves by what school they attend, if they're in dual or mono-lingual classes, and what grade they're in. And we hear plenty of comments that divide the Board from community members or parents. It is important for us to recognize the power and unconscious nature of this group identity. However, what we all need to realize is that, in reality, we are one large and inclusive group. Across these different groups in our community, we have more in common than not. And ultimately, we are all striving for the same thing - a high-quality education for the students. We may have differing opinions on how to accomplish that best, and that's ok. But we cannot be Us vs Them in this community, we have to be an All. I believe this is embodied in our Shared Agreement to make decisions according to what is best for all D33 students. We engage in conversations that look beyond groups to the entire school community. And we actively promote belonging, inclusivity, and humanizing interactions to help change the conversation from Us vs. Them to All. I hope we continue to consider this as we engage in decision-making and conversations, not just at the board table but across the community.

Recognition/Showcase/Presentation

Recognition – School Board Member Recognition

On November 15, 2007, the first “School Board Member Day” was established. In honor of Illinois School Board Member Day, individual Board members received a gift presented by students from their adopted schools.

Recognition – Cross Country State Medalist Miguel Boney

This year, during the regular season, Miguel was UNDEFEATED at our dual and triangular meets, coming in 1st place in every single one of those races.

On October 6, 2022, at our last home meet of the season, Miguel set a **new school record** on the 2-mile - Leman course of 11:16.

At the **IPAC**, our conference meet, Miguel took 1st place in the 8th-grade boys' race, beating his closest competitor by 32 seconds, and making him Leman's first ever individual, IPAC Champion in Cross Country.

At the **Sectionals meet**, Miguel took 3rd place, running his fastest time of the season on a 2-mile course, at 11:02, and earned the first individual state qualifier spot out of our sectional.

At the **State meet**, Miguel took 22nd place out of 233 runners, with a time of 11:07, earning him **ALL STATE honors**, and our school's first ever state medal in Cross Country!

Showcase – Turner School

Student Voice Council - Principal Maurice McDavid, presented the Student Voice Council with members Laina R., Bella R., and Jesus R. The purpose of the Student Voice Council is to be a school-based student leadership team designed to forge student-adult partnerships in school improvement. The SVC seeks to partner directly with the administration on persistent problems the school is actively seeking to address, collaborating to form a better solution than either could have created alone. Goal: The SVC works to elevate youth perspective and expertise in understanding the problems schools face, to strengthen the decisions schools and

teachers make, and to encourage the development of youth leadership skills. For the 2022-2023 school year, the council will be open to 4th and 5th grade students recommended by their teachers and/or peers and, ultimately, selected by the building Principal. They should represent all of the many facets of the diversity in our building.

Presentation –

No presentation at this time.

Board Salutes -

The Board Salutes will be a standing item on the agenda starting with the February 3, 2022, board meeting. The Board of Education would like to recognize individuals of the District 33 community - which includes all staff members, students, bus drivers, parents/guardians, and guardians - for actions that build a positive culture and climate in District 33. This “shout-out” will become part of the official Board minutes under Board Salutes on the bi-weekly agendas.

Salute to: Janet Sikma

Submitted by: Kristina Davis, Board of Education, Administration and Staff

On behalf of the Board of Education, administration, and staff, We would like to salute Mrs. Janet Sikma. Janet has been a devoted music teacher and inspiring colleague to so many in District 33. There are so many reasons why Janet is worthy of a salute, but her ability to bring the community together through music is what stands out the most.

It was about 8 years ago when Janet approached the administration with concern and an idea. She was concerned that the orchestra program did not reflect the population of our schools. Enrollment was minimal and underrepresented in the Hispanic community we serve. Her idea was to begin a mariachi program to encourage Hispanic parents to enroll their children in music. There were many people who were surprised that a teacher who didn't speak Spanish or come from the Mexican culture would be interested or qualified to take on such a task. There was also skepticism that there would be enough student interest. Janet assured those in doubt that her background in orchestra was the foundation she needed and she would learn the rest. She just needed support to enroll in a mariachi course to learn the new instruments and new techniques. She was certain that over time she could spark interest in our students.

She began to share her vision showing videos of mariachi programs around the country and the stories of mariachi students who went on to achieve great things. We left the conversation inspired by her passion and excitement for the possibilities that lie ahead.

What started as an idea 8 years ago has ignited a passion for music in our students and brought great pride in the culture of residents of the West Chicago Community. Our music program has more than tripled, and the mariachi and orchestra program now reflects the student demographics of our district. As a result of her work, student interest in the music program has far exceeded our expectations.

Recently, I read an article, *The Science of Success: How to become a firestarter*. What is a fire starter? Firestarters create things, disrupt things, they change things. They're the people who change the world, start movements or innovate when others are content with the status quo. They create a spark that turns into a fire in those around them. Janet is one of those people who can turn a vision into a spark and a spark into a fire. What began as an idea for a mariachi program turned into a spark, and has now lit a fire in our music students and the entire community. I don't think it is coincidental that Janet initially named her beginning mariachi group, “Las Chispas or little sparks in Spanish” She knew exactly what she doing and what the program would become. Those “chispas” or little sparks grew into Mariachi Los Rayos or Thunderbolts. This is because what Janet understood most was that student interest is derived from adult interest. It wasn't her passion for music or mariachi that lit a spark in them, but it was her interest in THEM as people.

So, on behalf of the entire District 33 community, we salute you, Janet Sikma. As we look ahead, we will always be reminded of your work and inspired by your legacy. As you pass the torch, rest assured that your work is in capable hands and will continue.

Context of the video presented: Kristina Davis, Gloria Trejo, and Mark Truckenbrod met with Mrs. Sikma and asked what support they could provide and what resources they could receive to continue her legacy. Mrs. Sikma expressed her desire to unite with former students from Band, Orchestra, and Mariachi. Mrs. Sikma had a huge admiration for Dr. Richard Carranza, who she met at the first clinic she attended to learn Mariachi. Dr. Carranza came flew in to visit her at her home and taught a class for the day with former students (now in high school) and current students at LMS. The video was recorded during the class, which included over 70 students.

E.T.A.W.C. Statement

No statement at this time.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

Superintendent News - Turner School

The Superintendent News is to update the board and community on some of the many programs and activities occurring in the schools and the departments determined to help us accomplish the goals of the District Strategic Plan.

Goal #1: Student Growth and Achievement

- Turner is moving forward with the implementation of MTSS as a district strategy to see student success.
 - During the November 4th School Improvement Day, we focused on better understanding our data sources and how to make instructional decisions based on that data.
 - We were able to get staff certified in Fastbridge and will use the screenings and progress monitoring tools in this program suite to have a better understanding of our students as learners.
 - We are also able to use this data to work with students on setting their own growth goals, which we know produces higher engagement.

Goal #4: Family Engagement and Community Partnerships

- We are excited to have an attendance rate of 94.88% at this time. Our goal for the year is 96%.
 - Turner has a strong attendance team led by our assistant principal and is meeting monthly to help resolve any ongoing issues.
 - In partnership with Teresa Ocon, our family liaison, an event was hosted on Saturday, November 12th, called Routines Matter. Our targeted audience were families with students in grades K-2.

Consent Agenda

The Board of Education conducted the following business on a consent agenda as follows:

- Approved the Board meeting minutes of September 15, 2022, October 20, 2022, and November 3, 2022;
- Approved the list of bills dated October 17, 2022, through November 15, 2022, in the amount of \$2,396,035.05;
- Approved payrolls of October 14, 2022, in the amount of \$1,964,686.93, and October 31, 2022, in the amount of \$1,922,927.81;

- Approved imprest account from October 9, 2022, to November 8, 2022, in the amount of \$1,000.00;
- Approved the disposition of audio tape of the Board of Education regular closed session dated April 22, 2021, and May 6, 2021 session 1 and session 2. Meetings that are at least 18 months old, and meet the State criteria, are disposed of.
- Approved the personnel report:
 - 1 Administration: Kim Shaffer, Interim Assistant Principal at Turner School, effective March 21, 2023;
 - 0 Certified:
 - 0 Classified:
 - 0 Position Changes:
 - 0 Transfers:
 - 1 Resignation: Marly Robles, Paraprofessional at Winfield Preschool, effective November 9, 2022;
 - 0 Retirements:
 - 0 Leave:

Financial Reports

- The Board of Education reviewed the Treasurers' Report and Budget Report as of October 31, 2022, along with the financial charts.
- The Board of Education received a financial report from Karen Apostoli, Director of Business and Operations, stating that since the last meeting, the District received a \$1,188,210.00 payment for Evidence-Based Funding; \$193,143.81 for National School Lunch; \$70,063.96 for School Breakfast Program; \$134,773.00 for Title 1; \$16,411.00 for Title IV-A Student Sup. Enrichment; \$51,749 for Title III Lang. Inst; \$8,162.00 for Title II Teacher Quality; and \$68,446.00 for Other Federal Programs;
- The Board of Education received a summary of each school's monthly activity accounts as of October 31, 2022.

Discussion of New /Ongoing Business with Possible Action

- *Presentation follow-up* - No follow-up at this time.
- *Property Tax Abatement* - The Board of Education received information on the tax abatement process and a recommendation for a tax abatement. The Board will continue to review the information at the December 1, 2022 meeting
- *IASB (Illinois Association of School Boards) Resolutions 2022*- The Board reviewed the proposals which will be acted on at the Annual Meeting of the Illinois Association of School Boards Delegate Assembly, on November 19, 2022. Tom Doyle, will be the representative for District 33.

Action Items

- *2022 Property Tax Levy* - The Board voted to approve the Property Tax Levy.

Information Items

The Board of Education received/reviewed/discussed the following informational items:

- Most current posting of available job positions in School District 33;
- The Board received American Education week 2022 information;
- The Board of Education received the Freedom of Information Act Report noting there were 2 new requests since the last board meeting;

- Out of District placement of Students with Disabilities report stating that 18 special education students and 4 general education students have been placed out of district as of November 17, 2022;
- The Board of Education was provided with the School newsletters from the buildings;
- Short term maternity leave report was shared;
- Student Chronic Absentee Report from October 12, 2022, to November 9, 2022, which showed the percentage of students chronically absent district-wide to be at 25.3%;
- Student Suspension Report for October 2022, indicated 5 out of school suspensions, 9 in-school suspensions, and 0 Bus suspensions;
- Truancy Referral Report of October 2022 indicating 3 new students referred to the ROE, and 9 students continue to be listed on the ROE truancy referral report;
- The Board received the Veteran's Day report.
- No suggested Board items at this time.
- Board President, Rita Balgeman, attended the Bullying presentation, and it had good information. Rita also attended the Principal Committee at LMS, and school lunches are at the top of the list.
- Parking Lot –
 - Academic Recognition - Gloria Trejo, will bring more information regarding academic recognitions at the next board meeting.
 - Restorative Practices- Sherri Massa gave an update to the board, the new name is Culture and Climate Committee, which will change to make it Tier 1 focus.

Report of District Committee Meetings

Board members were provided with the committee update slideshow.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

The Board of Education members reviewed upcoming meetings and events.

Adjournment

The above review of action taken by the Board of Education at their regular meeting is provided in an attempt to keep you informed. If you have any questions regarding any of the information provided or wish to discuss any of the items, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Respectfully,

Kristina Davis, Ed. S.

Kristina Davis,
Superintendent of Schools

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