



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 23, 2019**

### **District 157-C August 21, 2019 Board of Education Meeting Recap**

FRANKFORT, IL — The regular Frankfort School District 157-C Board of Education meeting of August 21, 2019, was called to order by Board President Edith Lutz at 7:00 p.m. The roll call was taken, and a quorum was present. Board Member Gina Briese was absent. The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board received correspondence from Cheryl Donovan, who thanked the Board for her 15-year anniversary gift.

The Board approved the Open and Closed Session minutes of the Collective Bargaining Committee Meeting and the Open and Closed Session minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of June 19, 2019.

No one signed up to speak for Public Forum.

During Administrative Reports, Director of Special Services Jen Bajda and the three building principals provided the Board with a recap of two conferences administrators attended over the summer that focused on social-emotional learning (SEL). At a Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Schoolwide SEL Summer Institute, the focus was on building awareness, commitment and ownership of SEL; strengthening adult SEL competencies; promoting SEL for students; and practicing continuous improvement. Breakout sessions provided the District with materials that could be used right away, including planning and tracking tools. At an Innovative Schools SUMMIT, five conferences were available to administrators, focusing on discipline, safety, bullying and empowerment of girls, innovative teaching strategies, and school climate and culture. District 157-C attendees focused on SEL sessions. Bajda said the administrators were able to meet authors of books they've read and learn evidence-based approaches to implementing SEL in schools. After attending the conferences, administrators developed four implementation steps for the District.

The first implementation step is to develop District- and building-level SEL teams and determine goals. The District-wide committee identified three initial goals: to support students through SEL, to build culturally proficient adults and to enhance relationships with all community stakeholders.

The second implementation step is to develop and/or revise building matrices of core expectations. Chelsea Intermediate School Principal Doug Wernet explained that it was common for students to not fully understand expectations. The matrices are visual and specifically outline expectations in areas of respect, responsibility and caring. These expectations are streamlined through all grade levels in the District.

The third implementation step is to pursue restorative practices and ensure compliance with Senate Bill 100, which restricts the authority of school districts to suspend and expel students and imposes new requirements in those cases where school removal will still be allowed. Hickory Creek Middle School Principal Jason Crockett explained that restorative practices focus on relationships and having conversations with students impacted by an incident. Restorative practices focus on relationships, respect, responsibility, restoration and reintegration. Crockett said these practices aim to repair harm so there is empathy and respect, and everyone involved learns from what happened.

The fourth implementation step is to conduct monthly building meetings. Grand Prairie Elementary School Principal Kirsten Frankovich said each school has a detailed framework for these meetings, provided by CASEL. The framework includes a checklist of who should be involved on the SEL team, an agenda for meetings, and a rubric for measurement of SEL progress. "It's a nice document where we can go in and say where we're at on a scale of 1-4," Bajda said. "SEL is more difficult to measure. It's not as simple as measuring academic growth, so we needed a way for our teams to be able to do this."

Board Secretary Edie Adamski asked if there would still be consequences for students who show disrespect. Bajda said there still will be consequences, but there will be an enhanced focus on teaching how to respond differently next time.

The District's first Tiger University, in partnership with the Frankfort School District 157-C Family School Partnership, will provide an overview of the District's SEL Program. It is set for 6:00-7:30 p.m. September 24 at Hickory Creek Middle School.

In other administrative reports, Director of Curriculum & Instruction Janet McClarence said many teachers invested time over the summer to work on curriculum and assessment design and to ensure everything is ready to go for the start of the school year. She added that others participated in in-district credit courses in July. "Everyone comes together and does their part," she said. "They all did a nice job ensuring we were ready for the kids on the first day."

Director of Technology Jacob Nelson thanked the members of his team for all the work they did over the summer, which included rolling out new machines for first, second and fifth grades; reimaging every teacher device in the District; and reimaging sixth-grade machines.

Director of Human Resources Shayna Cole said the District is doing well with staffing, with all but a few support positions filled. She said New Teacher Orientation Week went well. During the week, new staff members were trained on curriculum, safety and culturally responsive teaching. This year, substitute teachers were included in the orientation for the first time. Cole added that she is finalizing dates for fall wellness initiatives for staff, and staff members are using the Benefit Value Advisor program the Board approved, resulting in a \$4,400 savings to the District so far.

Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds Rodney Davis said his department had a very productive summer, working on mechanical upgrades, maintenance, painting and more. He thanked his team for the work they did and other staff members for their collaboration.

Lutz thanked the administrators for their hard work over the summer.

Adamski provided the Board with the June 17 and July 8 Advisory Board, and June 25 and July 23 Governing Board meeting minutes from Lincoln-Way Area Special Education District 843.

Family School Partnership Co-president Desiree Lavin updated the Board on the FSP. She said the organization was at meet-and-greets to sell spirit wear and welcomed teachers back to school on the first day with treats. Over the summer, the FSP planted a butterfly garden at Chelsea and is putting finishing touches on the area. Next, it plans to work on beautifying boxes at Grand Prairie's greenhouse. The organization's first meeting of the year is set for 9:30 a.m. September 3 in the Board Room of the District Office.

During the superintendent's report, Dr. Maura Zinni said the District added a 12th section of kindergarten in July based on enrollment numbers. That brings class sizes to roughly 20 students per classroom. The District also plans to add a special education teacher at Hickory Creek to support co-taught sessions and an instructional paraprofessional for fifth-grade advanced English. She said the first official enrollment report for this school year will be available after Labor Day.

Zinni presented a list of teachers who submitted their intent to retire in upcoming school years. At the end of the current school year, seventh-grade teacher Susan Niendorf and math interventionist Cheryl O'Brien intend to retire. At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, fourth-grade teacher Cindy Lang intends to retire. And at the end of the 2022-2023 school year, seventh-grade teacher Diane Bunnell, eighth-grade teacher Patrick Feehan and third-grade teacher Lynn Winans intend to retire.

Zinni also presented a list of teachers who acquired tenure status at the start of this school year, including foreign language teacher Johanna Bartolomeo, Grand Prairie physical education teacher Barbara Borden, Hickory Creek physical education teacher Pamela Dettman, Hickory Creek special education teacher Bridget Flynn, fifth-grade teacher Colleen Jenkins, sixth-grade teacher Maggie Sayles and fourth-grade teachers Amy Venable.

Zinni reported that the Education Foundation granted a total of \$157,250 worth of teacher-written grants at the end of last school year and through the summer. "We can't thank the Foundation enough and the community that supports the Foundation to be able to give back that amount of money in teacher grants," she said.

Zinni also said District schools ranked among the Top 200 schools in Chicagoland by *Chicago* magazine. In Will County, Hickory Creek was ranked first, and Chelsea was ranked ninth. Additionally, the District has the lowest cost per pupil of any of the school districts ranked.

Director of Business and Operations Kate Ambrosini provided the Board with the June and July 2019 Treasurer's Report and Graphs. In June, the total fund balance increased by \$11,729,682. Monthly revenue receipts totaled \$22,920,905, primarily due to inter-fund transfers and Will County property tax receipts. Monthly expense disbursements totaled \$13,257,310, primarily due to payroll, accounts payable and inter-fund transfers. In July, the total fund balance decreased by \$2,260,566. Monthly revenue receipts totaled \$427,157, primarily due to registration fees and Will County property tax receipts. Monthly expense disbursements totaled \$1,606,405, primarily due to payroll, accounts payable and payroll liability.

There was one Freedom of Information request that was responded to in a timely manner. Bethany Simpson, on behalf of SmartProcure, submitted a FOIA request for purchasing records.

Frankfort Village Trustee Margaret Farina introduced herself to the Board. She was inducted in May and said she is excited to be a liaison between the Village and the District. "I look forward to supporting you," she said. "Often, the village of Frankfort attracts people because of what you do here on the School Board."

In discussion, Zinni said she and Lutz conducted a semi-annual review of Closed Session meeting minutes from December 2018 through May 2019 and determined the minutes of the May 6, 2019 Closed Session meeting could be released to the public.

A semi-annual review of verbatim recordings of Closed Session meetings from August 2017 through January 2018 was also conducted, per School Code. Verbatim recordings may be destroyed after 18 months by vote of the Board of Education provided that proper written minutes of the meeting have been approved.

Ambrosini provided the Board with an annual review of District finances from the past fiscal year. She said the District paid off the remainder of its 2014 and 2011 bonds. It now has three outstanding bonds totaling roughly \$11 million. At the end of fiscal year 2020, two more bonds will be paid off, with the final bond scheduled to be paid off in January 2022. The District received roughly \$21,000 in rebates from purchasing card purchases during the previous fiscal year. It received roughly \$324,000 in impact fees from builders. Ambrosini said she anticipates a \$1.7 million increase to fund balances from the prior fiscal year. Both revenues and expenditures came in under budget.

Ambrosini also provided the Board with a fiscal year 2020 tentative budget presentation. It included assumptions of a \$3 million abatement, 4 percent insurance increase, \$13 million in new construction, 3 percent equalized assessed valuation increase, and 1.9 percent CPI increase. It anticipates \$35.9 million in revenue and \$35.6 million in expenditures.

The Board reviewed a first reading of updates to 14 policies from the Illinois Association of School Boards, including 2:20, Powers and Duties of the Board of Education; Indemnification; 2:110, Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers; 2:140, Communications To and From the Board; 2:230, Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings and Petitions to the Board; 4:20, Fund Balances; 4:30, Revenue and Investments; 4:100, Insurance Management; 4:110, Transportation; 4:150, Facility Management and Building Programs; 4:160, Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds; 5:250, Leaves of Absence; 6:15, School Accountability; 6:40, Curriculum Development; and 6:340, Student Testing and Assessment Program.

The Board discussed a proposed facility master plan for Chelsea from FGM Architects. Following initial discussions at the Board's June meeting, John Ochoa, CEO of FGM, Peggy Hoffmann, principal architect at FGM, and Michael Becker, senior associate at FGM, presented options of different renovation plans the Board could consider. The first option involved repurposing former science labs currently being used for storage space, rearranging classrooms into grade-level sections, moving windowless classrooms to rooms with exterior walls, creating extended learning areas in each grade-level section, create centralized ENCORE spaces, move the faculty lounge to the exterior north wall, expand the administrative suite and improve circulation. Option 1 is estimated to cost \$11.8 million.

Option 2A involved repurposing former science labs, eliminating windowless classrooms and grouping classrooms by grade level. Similar to Option 1, it includes upgrades to flooring, lighting and ceilings. It is estimated to cost \$8.9 million. Option 2B includes the same things as Option 2A but includes extended learning areas in inboard areas. It is estimated to cost \$9.7 million.

Additionally, FGM created an estimate of what it would cost to create improved single-story flow to the school by bringing the library to the first floor, keeping large portions of the building to one level and building a commons in the area where the school's breezeway currently is located. The estimate came to \$24.5 million. For reference, FGM also created an estimate of what it would cost to build a new school, adding an extra classroom per grade level, and it came to \$51 million.

Ambrosini said the District is working with a demographics consultant to understand what the predicted population will be in the area in the next 10 years. She said the Board needs to decide if it wants FGM to develop any of the presented options deeper or if it wants to wait to receive the demographic study information in fall or early winter. She added that with keeping abatements, she is comfortable allocating \$10 million for the project, and without abatements, she is comfortable allocating \$16 million to the project. That means anything beyond Options 1, 2A or 2B would require a referendum. Lutz said she would like to get the community involved in the discussion once the District has more information. The rest of the Board agreed that waiting to have the study would be best.

The Board took action to approve the Lincoln-Way Area Special Education 843 fiscal year 2020 tentative budget.

The Board took action to approve District 157-C's fiscal year 2020 tentative budget as well as the Notice of Public Hearing, and directed the District Office to publish said notice in a newspaper of general circulation as required. The tentative budget will be on public display for at least 30 days prior to the final approval as required by law. The Board also directed the Administration to complete a final budget in anticipation of the public budget hearing on September 18, 2019, and in anticipation of subsequent Board approval of the final budget at the September 18, 2019, Regular Board Meeting in accordance with State statute.

The Board took action to change the District's employee benefits consultant to Stumm Insurance and accept the Insurance Advisory Service Agreement through 2021. Adamski said she was concerned the District did not go through a competitive bidding process for the firm. Ambrosini said the District's Insurance Committee was dissatisfied with the District's previous consultant and wanted a firm that was better able to communicate with the District. Zinni added that the one-year commitment allows the District to test the waters with the firm. Ambrosini said the cost of Stumm is roughly \$40,000 for the year, and the cost of Horton, the District's previous consultant, was roughly \$33,000 a year.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Claire Burke as a one-year, full-time Kindergarten Teacher at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 19, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Carly Bettinardi as a one-year, full-time kindergarten teacher at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 19, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Stephanie Chamberlin as a full-time Kindergarten Teacher at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 19, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Joy Cunningham as a full-time Library Clerk at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Kelly O'Donnell as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent

upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Len Heine as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Rebecca Moss as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Sunyoo Ku as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Rudolph Tracy as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Nicole Steffen as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Luke Morris as a full-time Custodian at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of August 12, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Kristina Quilico as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Chelsea Intermediate School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Monique Viz as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Chelsea Intermediate School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Michelle Sarafin as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Chelsea Intermediate School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Mary Yuktonis as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Chelsea Intermediate School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon

the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Lisa Maior as a full-time Instructional ELA Aide at Chelsea Intermediate School with a start date of August 26, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Samantha Snow as a .5 FTE Title I Instructional Math Aide at Chelsea Intermediate School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Jennifer O'Shea as a .5 FTE Title I Instructional Reading Aide at Chelsea Intermediate School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Kathryn Allison as a full-time STEM Science Teacher at Hickory Creek Middle School with a start date of August 19, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Robin Murphy as a full-time Special Education Teacher at Hickory Creek Middle School with a start date of August 19, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Emily Venezio as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Hickory Creek Middle School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Shannon Louis as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Hickory Creek Middle School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Christopher Aust as a full-time Special Education Paraprofessional at Hickory Creek Middle School with a start date of August 20, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Bradlee Crnich as a stipend Head Wrestling Coach at Hickory Creek Middle School for the 2019-2020 school year, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Michelle Kuehnle as a full-time Instructional Coach at District Office with a start date of August 19, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve the employment of Peggy Klene as a Long-Term Substitute Second Grade Teacher at Grand Prairie Elementary School with a start date of September 30, 2019, contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board took action to approve a request from Alison Koszulinski for an unpaid leave of absence for the 2019-2020 School Year.

The Board took action to approve new extra-curricular activities including Mindful Movements for Kids for second-grade students, Fun with Math Games for first- and second-grade students, Fourth Grade Makey Makey, and Podcasting Club for fifth-grade students.

The Board took action to approve the payment of bills for June and July 2019, as presented.

In the consent agenda, the Board approved the semi-annual review of Closed Session meeting minutes from December 2018 through May 2019; the semi-annual review of verbatim recordings of Closed Session meetings; and a transportation resolution certifying existing hazardous routes for pupil transportation.

The Board entered into Closed Session at 9:06 p.m. and began Closed Session at 9:08 p.m. for the purposes of discussion of personnel matters, student issues, pending litigation and collective bargaining.

The Board adjourned Closed Session at 9:25 p.m. and adjourned the regular meeting at 9:26 p.m.

The next regular District 157-C Board of Education meeting will be held on September 18, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. at the District Office, 10482 W. Nebraska St. in Frankfort, Illinois.