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Board of Education Meeting Recap

The Township High School District 211 Board of Education met on Thursday, March 20, 2014, in the Anne Koller Board Meeting Room at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center. The following is a recap of important items that were acted upon at the meeting.

Recognitions

The Board of Education recognized award winners in statewide activity and athletic competitions, including chess, speech, Business Professionals of America, wrestling, and boys swimming. The Board also honored the Hoffman Estates High School Bowling Team and the William Fremd High School Girls Gymnastics Team, both finishing 3rd in their respective state competitions. A complete listing of state award winners recognized by the Board is available [here](#).

James B. Conant High School Physical Education Teacher and Boys Gymnastics Coach **Michael Opsal** was recognized for being named the 2013 Boys Gymnastics Illinois State Coach of the Year by the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) Coaches Association. The NFHS Coaches Association recognizes coaches at the state, sectional, and national level each year for their outstanding service and unselfish devotion to interscholastic athletics.

Facilities and Capital Improvements Update

In the spring each year, the Board of Education reviews facility and capital improvement recommendations for the ensuing school year. A presentation to the Board of Education included information on pool expansion and locker room remodeling at all five high schools and renovation of Conant High School's main office and guidance area, as well as wireless access point expansion, auditorium lighting and sound upgrades, media center upgrades, athletic field upgrades, Barrington Orthopedic Lease and remodeling, Adult Transition Program relocation, and 2nd floor math/science corridor at Conant High School. The presentation also provided information on Life Safety Fund projects and financial projections.

The information the Board received is available [here](#), and the presentation is available [here](#).

Approval of Minutes

The Board of Education approved the minutes from its regular meeting on [February 13, 2014](#).

Curriculum Committee Report

The winter round of the 2013-2014 Curriculum Committee meetings has been completed, with 15 departmental meetings taking place.

One of the core propositions from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards asserts that teachers must be members of “learning communities ... who contribute to the effectiveness of their schools by working collaboratively with other professionals on instruction, curriculum, and staff development.” Department chairs, as instructional leaders in their respective subject areas, work collaboratively with and learn from one another as a professional learning team to review curriculum, best practices, and student academic achievement and progress toward learning goals. The professional learning team (PLT) concept is specifically designed to develop the collective capacity of a staff to work together to achieve the fundamental purpose of the school: high levels of learning for all students. Professional learning communities are grounded in the research on effective teaching. Promoting teacher quality and increasing student achievement have become the major emphasis for curriculum committee meetings.

All department chairs are members of Interdisciplinary Council which met after the winter curriculum committee meetings to ensure that all have a shared understanding of the concept of cognitive rigor and could identify the kind and level of thinking required of students to successfully engage with and solve a task. Depth of Knowledge (DOK) aligns with Bloom’s Taxonomy and measures the degree to which the knowledge elicited from students on assessments and performance indicators or questioning is as complex as what students are expected to know and do. DOK is about the complexity of the cognitive processes students need to engage with the content to be successful. Department chairs learned how to apply DOK to instructional tasks, questions, and assessments in answering the following:

- Do the assessment items match the level of complexity or cognitive demand (recall, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, creation) of the content and skills taught?
- Did instructional strategies and methods during the learning match the cognitive demand (recall, comprehension, application, analysis,

synthesis, evaluation, creation) of the content and skills assessed on District benchmark assessments?

Each curriculum committee meeting also included discussion regarding District benchmark assessments, April institute plans, selection of instructional materials, summer curriculum projects, and department specific instructional or curricular items.

The Board of Education received the Winter Curriculum Committee Report, which included a summary of winter-round activities, and approved the recommendations as presented. A complete copy of the report can be viewed [here](#).

Class Size Committee Report

The Board of Education received a [report](#) from the Class Size Committee.

Enrollment Projections

The Board received information on enrollment projections through the 2021-2022 school year. Enrollment projections are based on data received from Districts 15 and 54, with enrollment from private schools factored in. The projections include students who will attend the District's five high schools. Projections for students who are in Academy-South, Academy-North, and private facilities, such as N.S.S.E.O., are based on enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year and on averages for the remaining years. Not included in the projections are the number of students who may enroll in District schools based upon their families specifically moving into District 211 boundaries for its educational excellence.

Projections indicate that the District's enrollment at its five high schools will decrease approximately 0.86% in 2014-2015. Enrollment will continue to decline through the 2018-2019 school year, then enrollment begins to increase in 2019-2020.

Additional information on enrollment projections is available [here](#).

Benefit Consulting/Brokerage Services

High School District 211 provides a range of benefits to its employees and retirees, including five self-funded medical insurance plans, dental, vision, and group life plans, voluntary life options, flexible spending accounts, and long-term disability. The District has used consulting and brokerage services to assist with the review and evaluation of benefit design, funding, claims administration,

renewal negotiations with the applicable carriers and access to day-to-day member advocacy services. Access to qualified experience has proven cost effective in making recommendations for plan and rate structure changes.

The Board approved retaining the service of Corporate Benefits Consultants, Inc., to provide insurance consulting and brokerage services for a three-year period beginning April 1, 2014 at an annual cost not to exceed \$82,800 for the first two years and \$85,800 for the third year ending March 31, 2017.

Administrative Appointments

Superintendent-Elect **Daniel Cates** is pleased to announce the following administrative appointments:

The Board of Education approved the appointment of **Mark Kovack** as associate superintendent for student services, effective July 1, 2014. Mr. Kovack is currently the assistant superintendent-educational services at Community High School District 155 in Crystal Lake, Ill. He is responsible for leading District 155's educational services programs, including curriculum and assessment, student support programs, and other services for students. Mr. Kovack has been with District 155 since 2009. After serving as the school resource officer at Fremd High School as a member of the Palatine Police Department, Mr. Kovack began his teaching career at Schaumburg High School in 1994 as a special education teacher. He served as the dean of students in 2000, and then returned to Fremd High School to become the technology coordinator in 2003. In 2004, Mr. Kovack was named student services director at Fremd High School, serving in that capacity until 2009. Mr. Kovack holds a bachelor of science degree from Western Illinois University in Macomb, a master of science degree from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, and a master of arts from Roosevelt University in Chicago.

The Board also approved the appointment of **Renée Erickson** as director of special education, effective July 1, 2014. Ms. Erickson is currently the assistant director of special education, a position she has held since 2009. Ms. Erickson served as the assistant director of special services for Consolidated School District 158 in Algonquin, Ill., from 2007 to 2009, and she was a special education teacher in District 158 from 2004 to 2007. Prior to her positions in District 158, Ms. Erickson was a special education teacher for two years at Prairie Hill School in Cary, Ill. Ms. Erickson earned her bachelor's degree in special education from Illinois State University in Normal and a master's degree in teaching and leadership from Saint Xavier University in Chicago. She is currently working on her doctorate.

Next Board of Education Meeting

The next scheduled regular Board of Education meeting will be held on Thursday, April 10, 2014, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Anne Koller Board Meeting Room at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center.

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