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Board of Education Meeting Recap

The Township High School District 211 Board of Education met on Thursday, October 21, 2021, in the Ann Koller Board of Education Meeting Room at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center. The following is a recap of items acted upon at the meeting.

Recognitions

Forty-one District 211 students from Palatine, William Fremd, James B. Conant, Schaumburg and Hoffman Estates high schools have been named National Merit Scholars. The students were presented with the Robert Creek Excellence Award. Read the full list of recipients [here](#).

William Fremd High School senior **Maggie Wu** recently earned a score of 36 on the American College Test (ACT), the highest possible composite score. The ACT comprises tests in English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. On average, of the 1.9 million college-bound students who take the ACT annually, fewer than two-tenths of one percent earn a perfect score. Over the past 23 years, District 211 has had 146 students achieve a top score of 36 on the ACT exam. Read the full list of recipients [here](#).

William Fremd High School Mathematics Teacher **Christopher Grattoni** has received the Edyth May Sliffe Distinguished Mathematics Teacher award, recognizing his work to motivate students. The honor is awarded by the Mathematical Association of America.

More information is available [here](#).

In early September, quick and professional reactions by Palatine High School junior and peer leader **Emma Zach**, Teaching Assistant **John Giuliano** and Wellness Teacher **Jennifer Garofalo** helped save the life of a special education student who suffered a seizure while learning new swimming strokes in the school's pool.

More information is available [here](#).

Presentation: Strategic Planning Process

At its August 19, 2021 meeting, the Board of Education authorized the Superintendent to issue a Request for Proposal to identify firms capable of facilitating a full-scale strategic planning initiative, which would include comprehensive feedback from community stakeholders. This information and input would be used by the Board of Education and the District administration, under the leadership of a Strategic Plan vendor, to prepare a strategic plan document declaring and clarifying the District's direction, priorities and outcomes.

Insight Education Group is an international educational consulting organization that works with education leaders to develop aligned strategies and to provide embedded supports to facilitate educator growth and to positively impact student achievement. Since 2000, the company has supported schools, districts, organizations and state education agencies through some of their largest challenges – including the creation of equity-focused strategic plans, the successful turnaround of chronically under-performing schools, the development of guidance for sustainable initiatives that align with mission and values, and the training of educational leaders. The company has partnered with school districts across the country on successful strategic plans, bringing thousands of educational practices to the next level and developing award-winning systems and solutions that are used in the United States and abroad. Their commitment is to a partner-driven implementation process that gets measurable results.

Jason Stricker of Insight Education Group [presented](#) an overview of the firm's proposal for the development of a strategic plan that sets the course for District 211's next five years. Insight Education Group's proposal was one of eight received in response to an RFP and reviewed by administration. The process would include significant stakeholder engagement to ensure feedback from various voices throughout the community, as well as guidance from the Board of Education and a diverse steering committee.

The comprehensive stakeholder engagement and strategic planning initiative described above has multiple integral components. Additionally, it would require travel for the project lead to conduct some feedback sessions and other key meetings in person. The total cost would be \$63,500.

The Board of Education authorized the Superintendent to enter into an agreement with Insight Education Group to provide professional services to Township High School District 211 to conduct a stakeholder engagement and strategic planning initiative at a cost of \$63,500.

More information is available [here](#).

Presentation: 2021 Tax Levy

The Board of Education viewed a [presentation](#) by Chief Operating Officer **Lauren Hummel** and Controller & Treasurer **Barbara Peterson** and received tax levy information at the meeting, including tax levy background information, 2021 levy considerations, a 2021 tax levy recommendation, financial projection information, and the 2021 tax levy calendar.

For the 2021 levy, the tax cap limit of 1.4% + new property (estimated at 0.2%) establishes the allowable increase for the Aggregate Operating Extension of Capped Funds levy. Since there is no need for a Debt Service levy, the tax cap levy limitation is \$245.0 million. Of the 1.6% levy limitation amount, 1.4% is attributed to existing property tax owners and 0.2% is attributed to new property growth within District boundaries.

The following variables support the recommendation for the 2021 levy:

- the recommended amount supports the continuation of instructional programs for students;
- the District's strategic direction to fund necessary capital improvements is through operations and annual future savings;
- the District's strategic direction is to remain debt-free; and
- The levy supports the long term financial position of the District for current and future Boards of Education.

The District's recommendation for the 2021 levy is a critical component of preserving the District's long-term financial stability while being able to fund its current level of operations, complete necessary capital improvement and life safety projects, and retain a level of reserves to safeguard against possible unknowns. Detailed information on the District's future facility needs is presented in the Ten-Year Facility Improvement Plan Update report on the October 21, 2021 Board agenda.

The following levy calendar has been established and provides for determination of a proposed 2021 levy amount at the November 12, 2021 Board of Education meeting:

- **November 11, 2021** – scheduled Board of Education meeting; determine amount of proposed 2021 levy (this determination must be made not less than 20 days prior to the levy adoption)
- **November 25, 2021-December 2, 2021** – prescribed form of notice of public hearing must be published in a newspaper with general circulation

within the school district no more than 14 nor less than seven days prior to the public hearing

- **December 9, 2021** – scheduled Board of Education meeting; public hearing on proposed 2021 levy at 7:30 p.m. and adoption of 2021 levy
- **December 28, 2021** – last day to file 2021 levy with the Cook County Clerk
- **March 31, 2022** – last day to file 2021 levy abatement with the Cook County Clerk

The tax levy information the Board received is available [here](#).

Approval of Minutes

The Board of Education approved the minutes from its regular meeting on [September 23, 2021](#) and postponed a vote on the minutes from the [October 5, 2021, Special Meeting](#) until the November 11, 2021 meeting.

2021-2022 Free and Reduced-Price Meals Eligibility Report

The Board of Education received information on District 211's participation in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs -- federally assisted meal programs that provide qualifying students with access to nutritionally balanced low-cost or free meals during the school day. Students may qualify for free meals if they are a foster child, homeless or migrant student, recipient of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); qualify for income-eligible Medicaid; or if their household meets income eligibility guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Free and reduced-price income eligibility is used to determine access to benefits in addition to the federal meal program. A student with a household income at or below 130% of the poverty level is eligible for free benefits; those with a household income between 131% and 185% of the poverty level are eligible for reduced price benefits. For the current 2022 fiscal year, a family of four must have a gross income of less than \$34,450 annually to qualify for free meals or \$49,025 annually to qualify for reduced-price meals.

Eligibility for meal benefits is reviewed and determined annually based on guidelines established by the USDA. All households receive annual notification of availability of meal benefits via U.S. mail or email. In addition, applications are available on the District 211 website. Households may automatically qualify for free meal benefits through a direct certification process that occurs between the Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education. Students who are directly certified

have been verified as participants in the SNAP, TANF or income eligible Medicaid programs, or if they are homeless or foster children.

The number of students eligible for meal benefits has increased 8% since October 1, 2020. Per Illinois School Code and Board of Education Policy JN, students who qualify for meal benefits may also qualify for applicable academic fee waivers. At its February 2021 meeting, the Board of Education approved to waive textbook/instructional fees for all students for the 2021-2022 school year. Students who are eligible for meal benefits may also receive fee waivers for the following items this school year: driver education, AP testing, locks, PE uniforms, graduation cap/gown and summer school tuition.

More information about this report can be found [here](#).

Update on Foreign Exchange Trips Summer 2022

Township High School District 211 began hosting foreign exchange trips in 1976. Since that time, the Board of Education has granted yearly permission for students to participate in foreign exchange trips to a variety of locations – including Germany, Austria, France, Spain, China and Costa Rica. As with many facets of the District's educational process, COVID-19 has continued to affect the process in which we identify and secure exchange locations. In addition, governmental agencies have released specific guidance relating to international travel.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends against international travel for those who are not fully vaccinated. In addition, the CDC has issued an order requiring proof of a negative COVID-19 test for all passengers arriving from a foreign country to the U.S. In researching the locations to which we historically travel during our exchanges, three are considered "Level 4: COVID-19 Very High," while two are considered "Level 3: COVID-19 High." Due to the continued risk of transmission of COVID-19 and the travel guidance issued by the CDC, District 211 will not ask the Board of Education to recommend any trips for summer 2022.

Downtown Palatine Tax Increment Financing District Intergovernmental Agreement

At its September 23, 2021 meeting, the Board of Education discussed the possible 12-year extension of the Downtown Palatine Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District. The Board of Education expressed support in pursuing an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between District 211, Community Consolidated School District 15 and the Village of Palatine. An IGA would ensure the District receives the intended surplus payments as

presented by the Village of Palatine so as to not adversely affect the District's financial position resulting from a change in surplus payment amounts or the schedule for them.

The Board of Education approved the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Palatine, Community Consolidated School District 15 and Township High School District 211 regarding the Downtown Tax Increment Financing District as presented; further, the Board directed the Superintendent to issue a letter supporting the extension of the Downtown Palatine Tax Increment Financing District to the Village of Palatine as required by the Illinois General Assembly.

More information can be found [here](#).

Community Engagement Discussion - 211 Together

During the September 23, 2021 Board of Education meeting, the Board discussed holding a Special Meeting with the purpose of engaging in a dialogue with the public. Though members of the public can comment at regular Board of Education meetings, there is not the opportunity for dialogue. Per Policy B: Special Board Meetings, an agenda is posted 48 hours prior to a special meeting and would include Public Comment per Policy BDDH/KH: Public Participation at Board Meetings.

The Board decided to hold a community engagement meeting on November 13, 2021 with the focus being on Student Support Services.

More information is available [here](#).

Facilities and Capital Improvement Plan Update

It has been the longstanding commitment of District 211 to provide safe, functional and adaptable facilities that contribute to the educational program and have a positive impact on student achievement. As a component of our financial and operational goals, our long-range capital outlay plan is designed to align with our strategic plan and building utilization improvement and maintenance schedule, and also serve our educational goals. The District is in year four of its 10-year capital improvement plan and is completing projects consistent with its strategic plan. We review and update the capital plan annually to convey the District's progress and consider possible adjustments necessitated by financial, demographic, technological or energy-related conditions.

The Board received an update summarizing the capital improvement work completed to date and the progress relative to life safety projects. The report also included the capital improvement timeline for the next several years. The capital improvement schedule was created in conjunction with financial considerations to ensure the District operates debt-free.

The report included information on life safety projects completed during the summer at each school. Information on major capital projects also was provided, including restroom renovations at Palatine and William Fremd High School and routine maintenance and facility upkeep projects across the District. The report included a summary of all prioritized improvements recommended for completion through fiscal year 2027.

As District 211 continues its capital improvement plan without incurring debt, financial planning remains critical. Through combined efforts of budget reductions and efficiencies, the District will plan to fund all of the recommended capital improvement projects through the use of its annual operating budget and existing reserves.

The complete update is available [here](#).

National School Boards Association National Connection Fees

The Board of Education postponed the discussion of the National Connection fees until the December 9, 2021 Board of Education meeting.

More information about NSBA is available [here](#).

Policy Revisions

As part of its ongoing Policy Manual review, the Board of Education reviews proposed policy revisions and policy deletions and proposed new policies from the Administrative Board Policy Group. The Group comprises Board President **Anna Klimkowicz**, Board Member **Mark Cramer**, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction **Josh Schumacher**, Director of Administrative Services **Matthew Hildebrand** and Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services **Kurt Tenopir**.

The Board reviewed a new policy on [Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention](#) and conducted an initial review of Board Policies [IIAA Selection of Instructional Material](#) and [INB Teaching About Controversial Topics](#).

Illinois Association of School Boards Resolutions 2021

The Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) Delegate Assembly is the policy-making body of the IASB. The Delegate Assembly comprises one voting delegate from each member district. Board President Anna Klimkowicz serves as a member of the Resolutions Committee. At the joint annual conference of the Illinois Association of School Boards/Illinois Association of School Administrators/Illinois Association of School Business Officials on November 20, 2021, the Delegate Assembly of IASB will review, discuss and vote on proposed resolutions submitted by member districts. Board Vice President Steven Rosenblum will represent District 211 as the voting voice for the Board. The results from the proposed resolutions and amended statements will guide the IASB's position statements and staff in ongoing legislative efforts.

This year's proposals include 16 new resolutions, one amended existing resolution, four reaffirmations of existing position statements, one new belief statement, and one amended belief statement.

The Board reviewed a report with the proposed slate of resolutions. Additional information is available [here](#), along with a copy of the [2021 Resolutions Committee Report](#).

Sale of Surplus Property

Per Board Policy DN-School Property Disposal, property owned by the District with market value of more than \$300 may be disposed to the best advantage of the District with condition of equipment reviewed by the Board of Education prior to its disposal.

More information is available [here](#).

Next Board of Education Meeting

The next scheduled regular Board of Education meeting will be held on Thursday, November 11, 2021, with closed session beginning at 6:30 p.m. and open session beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Anne Koller Board Meeting Room at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center.

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