



Board Briefs

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[August 6, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting](#)

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Approval of Agenda

The Board voted to approve the August 6 agenda as amended.

Board Reports

President

Board President Anne Neumann said that the Board's self-evaluation meeting with the Illinois Association of School Board (IASB) facilitator will be held on August 19. Ms. Neumann reminded Board members that all have been invited to join District 113 in welcoming staff on August 12 for Opening Day for Staff events.

In her report, Ms. Neumann said that excitement is building for the start of the school year, with all looking forward to the hum of students filling our hallways, locker rooms, stages and fields on the first day for all students, Wednesday August 14. Ms. Neuman encouraged students, parents/caregivers and staff to take a moment and be present in the launch of the school year and to savor this beginning of school with the community's amazing young people.

Finance and Facilities Committee

Finance Committee Chair Greg Nieder provided an update on the July 24 joint Facilities and Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Nieder said that the committees discussed the life safety plan the District is due to complete and that an action item approving a contract with FGM Architects to conduct that work is later on the agenda.

He also shared that PMA, the District's municipal advisor, provided a presentation to the committees about recent changes in school finance that offer new flexibility for financing certain kinds of capital projects. One of those changes includes extending the term that bond and debt certificates can be issued for capital projects from a maximum of 20 years to 30 years. Other changes include that certain types of projects, such as safety, security, and energy conservation, count against a district's total debt limit but no longer count against a district's debt service extension limit, or DSEB.

Mr. Nieder said an action item to adopt a reimbursement resolution later in the agenda provides the District with flexibility if in the future the District were to pursue projects that would qualify. He emphasized that there is no discussion of issuing bonds now, adopting the resolution simply provides the District with the flexibility to have that mechanism available.

He closed his remarks by saying that the District is looking to complete the health and life safety plan in time to submit the plan in November to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Policy Committee

Policy Committee Chair Jaime Barraza provided an update from the July 30 meeting. Mr. Barraza said the meeting focused on generative artificial intelligence (AI) and context around use, misuse and protections the District has throughout its policies.

Administration Information Reports

Superintendent

Superintendent Dr. Chala Holland began her remarks with her excitement for the start of the 2024-25 school year. She said she was very much looking forward to the return of staff and students to our schools, filling them with joy, laughter, and excitement. Dr. Holland said teams have been working hard to ensure that the start of the school year is a positive one and that our students and families have all of the information they need to launch. She noted that portions of our schools and fields have been renovated, some of our instructional spaces and support areas have been reimagined and redesigned as well.

Dr. Holland shared the following message about the start of the year:

“Our district leaders have returned and leadership meetings have been occurring at the district level and within our high schools. New teacher orientation will launch on Thursday and all of our district staff meet on Monday, August 12 for our Opening Day. Our first day of attendance for all students is on Wednesday, August 14.

Students and families are encouraged to take some time to review all of the communication sent from your high school Principals. If there are questions pertaining to any of the information you receive, please reach out as soon as possible to have your questions answered. We want you to start the school year well-informed and confident.

To our staff and students who are new to our district. We are so happy that you are here and we are all looking forward to getting to know you and welcome you to our district. Most importantly, we are committed to making every effort to ensure that you know and feel that you BELONG in 113.”

FOIA

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

Update on Communications Initiatives for 2024-25

Chief Communications Officer Karen Warner provided the Board with an update on communications initiatives already implemented or underway during the 2024-25 school year. Highlights of the report included:

- [Test of emergency communications on Monday, August 12 at 10:25 a.m.](#) to all parents/guardians, students, and staff to the contact information parents, guardians and students have on file in Infinite Campus and staff have on file in Skyward

- Information about the [new, enhanced tip line](#) that offers two-way encryption that enables the tip submitter to remain anonymous while giving D113 the potential to gain more actionable information

Other highlights included the latest information on the development of a new website as a result of a buyout of the current website platform; a new communications platform that the District will implement over the course of the 2024-25 school year, and a new program to provide devices to substitute teachers so that they can receive staff notifications while working in the event of an emergency.

K-9 Pilot Overview

Chief Operations Officer Brian Ahmer and Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Mirah Anti provided the Board with a report on the K-9 pilot that took place during summer school. During the week of July 8, a dog specially trained to detect weapons and the dog's handler spent the week at summer school to gauge how students and staff feel about this potential extra layer of safety mitigation. Student and staff feedback was gained through surveys and focus groups. A majority of the student body responses indicated that the students welcomed having the dog team in the school and that it had a positive impact on school culture. After some discussion, Dr. Holland said the topic will come back to the Board as part of a larger security discussion tentatively planned for September.

Board of Education Policies for First Reading

7-180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Policy 7-180 was presented for first reading. The policy will come back to the Board for approval at the August 20 meeting.

Action

Resolution of intent to reimburse certain capital expenditures, including life safety project expenditures, with the proceeds of a debt obligation

Per the update by Finance Committee Chair Greg Nieder about changes in school finance law, the Board voted to approve as presented a resolution of intent to reimburse certain capital expenditures. The resolution provides the District with the flexibility to use this mechanism if it chooses to sometime in the future.

Approval of the 10-Year Health and Life Safety Plan

The Board voted to approve as presented a proposal in the amount of \$84, 815 authorizing FGM Architects to conduct the District's health and life safety plan. All school districts are required to conduct a health and life safety plan every 10 years.

Approve Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Traveling Licensed Staff Members

The Board voted to approve as presented a memorandum of understanding with the District 113 Education Association (DEA) regarding traveling licensed staff members.

Approve Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Start for Health Insurance Coverage Upon Hire

The Board voted to approve as presented a memorandum of understanding with the District 113 Education Association (DEA) regarding the start date for the health insurance coverage for newly hired licensed staff members.

Consent Agenda

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings

August 19, 2024

Special Meeting – Board Self Evaluation

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Administration Building

August 20, 2024

Finance Committee Meeting

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Regular Action Meeting

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

Administration Building