

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
LAKE FOREST SCHOOL DISTRICT 67**

March 18, 2014

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was held at Lake Forest High School West Campus in the Board Room and called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Mr. Andersen.

Board members present at roll call were:

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bill Andersen, President | Lesley Fisher, Vice President |
| Beth Clemmensen, Member  | Jeff Folker, Member           |
| Mike Borkowski, Member   | Rob Lemke, Member             |
| Rick Schuler, Member     |                               |

Absent:

Administration Present:

Mr. Michael Simeck, Superintendent  
Mr. Allen Albus, Director of Finance  
Ms. Jennifer Hermes, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance  
Mrs. Lauren Fagel, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, Technology and Assessment  
Dr. Lori Wilcox, Executive Director of Growth and Professional Development  
Dr. Andy Henrikson, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

Staff Present: Eileen Faller, Board Clerk

Guests Who Signed In: Julie Arsenault, Laura Griffith, Justin Griffith, Adriana Dattoli Arpino, Kathy Ivinjack, Michelle Yousuf, Paul Markoff, Irma Markoff, Lois Markoff, Roger Quan, Edwin VanDusen, Katherine VanDusen, Shannen Atkinson, Deb Bradley, Jen Hughes, Pim Alley, Brayton Alley, Doug Lee, Joanne Lee, Heather Drach, Debbie Silver, Deborah Laughton, Jen Mulloy, Georgia Kyriakou, Desiree Witte, Christine Quigley, Stew Kerr, Lauren Turelli, Ken Turelli, Jen Goldman, Kerri Sherman, Jared Rhoads, Jacey Rhoads, Debbie Jensen, Jennifer Mulloy, Jan Constantine, Bettina Carlson, Jennifer McGregor, Micaiah Robinson, Melia Markoff, Elijah Markoff, Elena Daniel, Michael Hallagan.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Andersen welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that an unusual number of communications had been received regarding the world language

program at Cherokee School that were overwhelmingly passionate, polite, fact-based and oriented towards finding solutions to the issues the district is working on. Mr. Andersen offered some perspective on the challenges of managing the school district and how the Board is continually trying to better serve the community. Mr. Simeck and the Board are working on the important initiative of the mission, vision and goals of the district and have included many opportunities for community involvement. The process is designed to discern the community's shared values, hopes and priorities for the students, and it is important that the District gets it right. Mr. Anderson stated that it is his hope that the work will result in a roadmap for current and future board members and administrators and will be a meaningful contribution to the District and the Community.

Mrs. Fisher shared her viewpoint on the difficult decisions and various impacts of the Mandarin Immersion program on Cherokee School and thanked community members for their time in attending Vision/Mission, Mandarin Immersion and elementary school meetings and those who gave their valuable time to the LASIC committee. Mrs. Fisher stated that the current program is not working for all of the students and families in its current implementation. The rationale for not offering Mandarin Immersion in Kindergarten was based on three reasons: 1) multiple LASIC groups recommendations 2) continuing the program for currently enrolled students through 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 3) the Illinois School Board states that it is the role and responsibility of the Board to understand the issues and obtain as much information as possible before taking a position or making a recommendation. Mrs. Fisher stated that the Superintendent and Administration is charged with a task and thanked them for listening open-mindedly, collecting data, studying successful world language programs and prioritizing the program based on the District vision.

Mr. Borkowski also shared his viewpoint on the structure and unintended consequences of the Mandarin Immersion program, that equity is one of the major issues and that labeling at Cherokee school is not healthy. Mr. Borkowski stated that he wants an exceptional experience for every student and also stated that he is pleased to have an engaged community. The administration is charged with developing a long-term recommendation that will be brought to the Board for consideration. Mr. Borkowski thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated that the District is comprised of passionate community members, awesome students and great schools.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Simeck stated that the District is very fortunate to have seven(7) devoted Board members who were elected as trustees and are charged with doing what is best for all students.

Mr. Simeck advised that there were three parts to his presentation: 1) a review of the Mandarin program, 2) a look at the Kindergarten decision and 3) a look at the world language program review and the rationale for that. Some background information included the difference between a Strand program, a partial immersion

school, an immersion program and a partial immersion program. District 67 has close to a partial immersion program. Mr. Simeck gave his views on the Mandarin program and noted that the Mandarin parents are enthusiastic about the program but understand that it is not perfect. Some of the issues from the beginning included: an overwhelming demand for the program that grew from a strand into something that tipped the balance in the school, “start it now” was the message, meeting parental demand meant no time to plan, declining enrollment caused the Mandarin program to outpace the English program, in first grade there are only (2) two classes of 12 and 11 students in the English program and in Kindergarten one class of 14.

Three reasons prompted the recommendation to place the Kindergarten program on hold: 1) a decision was needed in order to enroll kindergarteners, 2) the district did not want to repeat the past two years’ of problems with English students and 3) time was needed to process ideas. A Mission, Vision and Goals review is in progress, is a big undertaking that has not been done for fifteen years and charts the future for the District.

Mr. Simeck looked at enrollment numbers in the English program including students who transferred out of Cherokee, chose private schools or looked at homes in other parts of the District. The Mandarin program has significantly outgrown the English program. Mr. Simeck reported that the remaining fourteen kindergarten students in the English program would travel together for the next 5 (five) years, no-one agrees that it is a good idea to mix them up, it treats them like they are 8<sup>th</sup> graders and for interventions with students split between teachers the district would have to hire double or triple the staff. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade the Explore program begins and students will spend large parts of their day with even fewer students, diversity of thinking is not great enough and the program runs the risk of a problematic mix of students.

All of the reasons bring the District to thinking about a Language-focused school or an immersion school. The difficulties are: a perception of the have and have-nots, rationing slots would exacerbate that, it creates divisiveness in the community over the changes in the building, there would be an inability of Mandarin parents and students to celebrate, a perception that students are having very different experiences in the building and there is also a benefit of a common and unifying experience for students, staff and parents to have a language focused school.

There are six different options on the table: 1) one language for all, 2) two languages and parents pick, 3) language focused neighborhood school, 4) spread the program and put one immersion section at each school, 5) continue with the present program and 6) a language focused school with no changes to world language at other schools. All of the options have an issue. There is not a lot of interest in one language for all and the cost factor is \$200,000, the option of 2 (two) languages is cost prohibitive, there is broad resonance about the value of Latin, there are demographic/generational differences, and there is no likely impact of expanding immersion on the teaching staff, due to upcoming retirements. The District also hears that parents do not want a new program for all students grades Kindergarten

through 4<sup>th</sup>, that any new language program would need to roll up and be allowed to grow year by year, a large number of pre-school students have foreign language exposure, mainly Spanish, and for incoming families interest in Spanish Immersion is roughly double that of Mandarin.

Several surveys have been done and results indicate that incoming parents strongly support both Immersion and English. Current Cherokee Kindergarten respondents said if given the choice again roughly: 15% would choose English, 59% would choose Mandarin, 11% would choose Spanish. Everett and Sheridan indicate stronger interest in Spanish and parent interest in Immersion increases after informational meetings. With the issue of enrollment on the horizon the District is looking closely at World Language. Mr. Simeck spoke of the benefits of starting at a younger age, starting at 4<sup>th</sup> grade students reach a level of “novice high” which is general knowledge, starting at 1<sup>st</sup> grade results in a level of “intermediate high” which covers social interaction and Immersion results in improved tonal quality, fast, easy and fluid, foreign language proficiency is achieved through time on task. One thing the District is looking at is rolling the program up for example beginning Spanish in 1<sup>st</sup> grade with the following year 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and rolling up. Language choices would expand in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Mr. Simeck discussed what is next for the District and advised that he will meet with Mandarin teachers, English teachers, a phased decision will be made and a recommendation will be presented to the Board on April 22.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Michael Loiacano, Mr. Terrill Laughton and Mr. Stew Kerr addressed the Board on behalf of a group of Mandarin immersion parents in response to the decision to eliminate the program from Kindergarten for the year 2014-2015. Mr. Loiacano asked the Board to reverse the decision and permit incoming kindergarteners to enroll in the Mandarin Immersion program. Mr. Laughton reported that there is a very high demand for the immersion program and language acquisition opportunities, that the broad community and adoption of the Immersion program and the needs of the children to compete in a global environment should drive the future direction. Mr. Kerr reported that he studied Mandarin Chinese as a senior in high school, in college and in Hangzhou, China and felt that despite making great strides during his immersion experience in college he will likely never gain the degree of fluency as those who begin foreign language education in kindergarten. Mr. Kerr asked that the Board not deprive the District 67 students of the opportunity of an early immersion program.

Mrs. Elena Daniel stated that she has a child in Kindergarten and one in second grade and she is shocked and surprised by the recommended options and also by the fact that she had not seen the proposal from the LASIC Committee recommending a magnet school. Mrs. Daniel asked the Board and parents to petition against a magnet school as every child is entitled to a traditional English education based at their home district.

Mr. Carlos Cardona advised that he had two basic reasons for not supporting the Mandarin Immersion program: 1) is the ethical and moral reason of taking money from the Chinese government, a totalitarian dictatorship, and 2) is that it is the wrong language as it does not use the western character set and as a result you do not get the benefits of using that set.

Mrs. Kristina Frede advised that she has three children who have transferred to Everett School. Mrs. Frede was on the LASIC committee and did not feel that it was balanced or that either she or Cherokee School were represented.

Mr. Jim Kyriakou stated that he is focused on evidence and did not see, in the presentation, what is the best way to teach children to improve the cognitive processes and how to help all the students. Mr. Kyriakous stated that if the program is cancelled the cohort of students in the program is going to skyrocket and then the District will wonder why the program was cancelled. Some students de-code Mandarin characters easier than standard English and he wondered why that would be taken away.

Mrs. Laura Collins has two students in the traditional program and does not like what has happened to Cherokee, is dissatisfied with the size of the traditional English class, that there is not enough focus on learning the things that are needed in the English language and feels that the Board has ignored the traditional students and the impact that the Mandarin Immersion program has had on families. Mrs. Collins would like the magnet school option to be removed and would request that Cherokee is not the only school affected by the Mandarin program.

Mr. Andersen thanked everyone for their comments.

## **REPORTS**

### **BOARD COMMITTEES**

Board Education Committee – Lesley Fisher, Jeff Folker, Beth Clemmensen  
Mrs. Fisher advised that the Education Committee had not met.

Board Finance & Operations Committee – Rick Schuler, Rob Lemke, Mike Borkowski  
Mr. Schuler advised that the Finance and Operations Committee had not met. The next meeting is scheduled for March 20, at 10:00 a.m.

Board Policy Committee - Mike Borkowski, Jeff Folker  
Mr. Borkowski advised that the Policy Committee had not met. A meeting will be scheduled in April and will be posted on the district website.

Compensation Committee – Rob Lemke, Bill Andersen  
Mr. Lemke reported that the Committee met on March 17, at 5:00 p.m. A review of the benchmark districts that are historically used in contract negotiations was

presented. A determination was made to use test scores, location, and minimum daily attendance as the criteria. A Board workshop will be scheduled in April in order to bring a refined recommendation to the Board. The Committee discussed a new format to better inform the Board when making compensation decisions that will also be shared with the Board in April.

### **DISTRICT COMMITTEES**

#### North Suburban Special Education District - Mike Borkowski

Mr. Borkowski reported that the Governing Board met on March 5. The NSSED policy committee is drafting a new Fund Balance policy. District 67 Administration will provide their input. The financial report and school calendar were approved currently NSSED is in good financial standing. Stevenson High School District 125, Lincolnshire-Prairie View Elementary District 103 and Kildeer-Countryside Elementary District 96 are pursuing a withdrawal from the Special Education District of Lake County, SEDOL. Mr. Borkowski stated that the District would remain focused on the withdrawal given that Highland Park had also recently withdrawn from NSSED. The next NSSED meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2014.

#### Illinois Association of School Boards/ED-RED – Bill Andersen

No meeting had taken place.

#### Curriculum Coordinating Committee – Lesley Fisher

The Curriculum Coordinating Committee had not met. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 3.

#### Spirit of 67 Foundation – Lesley Fisher.

The Spirit of 67 Foundation met on March 11 at 9 a.m. Mr. Simeck spoke about the World Language review process and the successes within the Bridges Math Program. The Home Tour is scheduled for May 8<sup>th</sup> and volunteers are very excited about the homes and the outdoors that accompany the homes. The grant process is complete and grants will be awarded in April. The next meeting is scheduled for April 8 at 9 a.m.

#### APT – Lesley Fisher

The APT Executive Board held its annual meeting on March 12, at CROYA, the entire community was encouraged to attend. Michael Simeck was the keynote speaker and discussed Mission and Vision. Elizabeth Lombardo, Everett Parent and author, shared her suggestions for happiness. The candidates for 2014-2016 Executive Board were voted in. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, at 9:00 a.m.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

#### Approval of Finance and Operations Committee Charter

Mr. Schuler advised that everyone has reviewed the Charter and recommended approval.

**MOTION:** Mr. Schuler moved, seconded by Mr. Borkowski, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest School District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, approve the Finance and Operations Charter, as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Schuler, Folker, Clemmensen, Fisher, Lemke, Borkowski, Andersen  
Nays: None  
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Policy 7:185 Update – 2nd Reading

Mr. Borkowski advised that policy 7:185 deals with Teen Dating Violence and is presented to the Board for 2nd Reading.

**MOTION:** Mr. Folker moved, seconded by Mr. Schuler, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest School District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, approve the second reading of Policy 7:185.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Clemmensen, Lemke, Andersen, Folker, Borkowski, Schuler, Fisher  
Nays: None  
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Policy 5:210 and 5:290 Update– 2nd Reading

Mr. Borkowski advised that policy 5:210 and 5:290 deal with how resignations are accepted. The proposal in the updated policies is to delegate the authority to receive and accept resignations to the Superintendent.

**MOTION:** Mr. Schuler moved, seconded by Mr. Folker, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest School District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, approve the second reading of Policies 5:210 and 5:290, as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Borkowski, Lemke, Clemmensen, Andersen, Schuler, Folker  
Nays: Fisher  
Absent:

The motion carried.

Approval of Policy 6:40 Update– 2nd Reading

Mr. Borkowski advised that policy 6:40 deals with how pilot programs are implemented and the oversight required by the Board.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Clemmensen moved, seconded by Mrs. Fisher, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest School District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, approve the second reading of Policy 6:40, as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Borkowski, Lemke, Clemmensen, Andersen, Fisher, Schuler, Folker

Nays: None

Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Policy 4:20 Update- 1st Reading

Mr. Andersen advised that policy 4:20 update would be tabled.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Approval of Disbursements, Payrolls, and Financial Statements for February 2014

|                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Education Fund                   | \$474,737.21        |
| Building and Maintenance Fund    | 152,047.54          |
| Debt Service Fund                | -                   |
| Transportation Fund              | 95,280.82           |
| Municipal Retirement Fund        | 79,749.58           |
| Capital Projects Fund            | 72,028.00           |
| Procurement Card Expenses        | -                   |
| Direct Deposit Payroll and Taxes | <u>1,453,863.07</u> |

Total Expenditures \$2,327,706.22

Approval of Minutes of A Regular Meeting – February 25, 2014

Approval of Minutes of An Executive Session – February 25, 2014

Approval of Minutes of A Board Workshop – February 25, 2014

Approval of Minutes of An Executive Session – March 6, 2014

Approval of Minutes of A Joint Board Workshop – March 6, 2014

Disposal of audio recordings – June 26, 2012

**MOTION:** Mr. Borkowski moved, seconded by Mr. Folker, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest School District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, approve the Consent Agenda items, as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Andersen, Fisher, Schuler, Clemmensen, Borkowski, Lemke, Folker

Nays: None

Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA)**

Esther Castillejo, Better Government Association

Jennifer Harpold, Resident

Brian Anderson, Lee's Food Service Parts and Repairs Inc.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

|                             |                                                                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday, March 24 through 28 | Spring Break                                                            |
| Monday, March 31            | School Re- Opens                                                        |
| Tuesday, April 22, 2014     | Board of Education Meeting – 7:00 p.m.<br>LFHS West Campus, Board Room. |

## **RE-CONVENE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** Mrs. Clemmensen moved, seconded by Mrs. Fisher, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest School District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, re-convene Executive Session.

On voice vote, motion carried.

The Board continued discussion on the Human Resources items and compensation for the Human Resources position and returned to open session at 10:12 p.m. Mr. Andersen left the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

## **RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

A motion was made by Mr. Schuler and seconded by Mr. Lemke to return to Open Session.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

|         |                                                       |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Ayes:   | Clemmensen, Fisher, Schuler, Lemke, Folker, Borkowski |
| Nays:   | None                                                  |
| Absent: | Andersen                                              |

## Approval of Human Resources Items

Mr. Simeck recommended the approval of the Human Resources Items, as presented.

**MOTION:** Mr. Schuler moved, seconded by Mr. Borkowski, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest School District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, approve the Human Resources Items, as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

|         |                                                       |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Ayes:   | Folker, Schuler, Clemmensen, Fisher, Lemke, Borkowski |
| Nays:   | None                                                  |
| Absent: | Andersen                                              |

The motion carried unanimously.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

An executive session was held prior to the meeting and re-convened at 9:30 p.m. No action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Mrs. Clemmensen moved, seconded by Mrs. Fisher, that the Board of Education of Lake Forest District 67, Lake Forest, Illinois, adjourn the meeting.

On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

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Mike Borkowski, Secretary      Date