

**Board of Education
School District No. 155
Calumet City, Illinois
Special Meeting**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Calumet City School District No. 155 was called to order by President Davis at 6:30 pm. On the Roll, the following members were physically present and answered present; Davis, Oberman, Long, Franklin, and Miller. Absent members; Stern, Rising.

Also present were: Dr. Joseph Zotto, Adam Jordan

Public Comment

Moved by Member Long, seconded by Member Miller, a motion that the Board open the floor to the public for comments. Unanimous voice vote. Motion carried.

There was no public comment.

Moved by Member Miller, seconded by Member Long, a motion that the Board close the floor to the public for comments. Unanimous voice vote. Motion carried.

ECHO Capital Improvement Project

Dr. Zotto introduced Dr. Thomas and Dr. Grossi to discuss the ECHO Joint Agreement capital improvement project.

Dr. Sandra Thomas, Superintendent of ECHO Joint Agreement, passed out handouts to the Board to introduce and discuss the proposed capital improvement project. She advised that historically, ECHO has moved staff and students every two to three years. Every move costs the organization around \$125,000 and their current lease agreement for one of the programs is being terminated at the end of this school year. She stated that the move after this school year would last only one year, would cost almost double than what they current lease is, and would last for only one year.

Dr. Thomas clarified that this project would not affect the current classroom leases that are in place with the other Districts.

She discussed debt service payments and reducing the annual operating expenses. She advised that the ECHO debt certificates will not impact the working cash fund bonds of the participating districts.

Member Long inquired about staffing if the project moved forward and Dr. Thomas advised that they would do a staff analysis at that point.

Dr. Thomas discussed the history of ECHO and advised that they are made up of 17 school districts, servicing around 1,100 children. The PACE program works with students with

socio-emotional concerns, the ABLE program is for students with severe autism. The FEP program is a 0-3 year old program with 180 students, services the southland area and assists parents.

Member Long asked if the additional students later on are being taken into consideration in the project. Dr. Thomas advised that ECHO has additional buildings with programs that will stay put. She walked through the schematic plan of the proposed building. In walking through the plan, she showed flex classrooms for potential expansion of programs later on. She showed areas where parents and community members will be able to work with the District to help their needs.

Dr. Grossi addressed the Board and discussed the financial implications of the proposed project. He is the treasurer for 18 school districts in South Cook County and works closely with the State Board. He advised that this is the only co-operative in the area that does not have their own building and that part of this is about creating stability for special education students in the area. He discussed the current projections for what it is costing ECHO to lease classrooms and stated that trying to replace the lease payment amounts with something lower and in debt payments is the goal. The cost is about 19 million, ECHO will use 6 million in reserves, and the remaining would be split up amongst the rest of the 17 school districts that are a part of ECHO. The districts will own the building once it is paid in full which will eliminate the need to pay for leases thereafter. The net tuition costs project to be less to attend a new building as opposed to leasing as well.

A conversation took place about what would happen if some districts could not make their portion of the payments later on. Dr. Grossi advised that the other districts would not be left to make up that difference in the event that happens. If a district pulled out, they must continue to make those payments.

Dr. Grossi discussed a paragraph stating that the Districts that are over their debt limit do not have any ownership of the ECHO debt because it cannot be considered debt for those districts. If a district did pull out, then they would not be able to use the services for one year. District 155 is one of those districts.

Dr. Thomas advised that students that are currently in school in District 155's buildings will not move and the classroom leases will be maintained. The types of services that a student needs determines what building they would be schooled in.

Dr. Thomas and Dr. Grossi have met with most of the districts and will meet with the remaining ones soon and it is not known that any of the districts are opposed.

It was discussed that any additional support that may be needed would be pulled from ECHO's reserves, that ECHO will be going after capital improvement dollars from the State, and that the borrowing is not to exceed 13 million.

Executive Session

Moved by Member Miller, seconded by Member Long, a motion that the Board enter Executive Session pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Open Meetings Act to discuss the employment,

compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body. Ayes; Miller, Franklin, Long, Oberman, Davis. Motion carried, 5-0.

Time: 7:09 pm

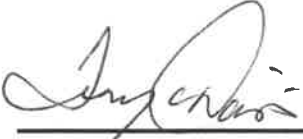
Moved by Member Miller, seconded by Member Long, a motion that the Board return to regular order of business. Ayes; Franklin, Long, Oberman, Davis, Miller. Motion carried, 5-0.

Time: 7:24 pm


Adjournment

Moved by Member Miller, seconded by Member Frankling, a motion that the Board adjourn. Ayes: Long, Franklin, Rising, Miller, Davis, Oberman. Motion carried, 5-0.

Time: 7:25 pm



Board President



Board Secretary

