

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

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November 1, 2018**

Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Calumet City School District No. 155 was called to order by President Long at 6:00 p.m. On the Roll, the following members were physically present and answered present; Valle, Crull, Eveland, Oberman, Stern, and Long. Absent; Davis.

Also present were: Dr. Joseph H. Zotto, Catherine Locallo (Board attorney), Nancy Ernst, Lisa Stuart, Sharon Davis, Deborah Smith, Joshua Crull, Lamarr Miller, Brandie Terry, John Gibson, Julie Stephan, Shannon Brown, Norma Doyle, Brandon Crull, Bonnie Rising, Louise Garza, Tara Lawrence, Yvette Franklin, Erin Kading-Davis, Lychelle Reed, Alexis Boyd, April Caldwell, Leisl Brown, David Brown, Nick Dwyer, Geo Grenchik, Regina White, Averill White, James Hernandez, Valerie Wilhoite, Nicole Gabriel, Yessenia Santoyo, Andrea Torres, Sheldric Moore, Domanique Burrell, Oveen Parker, Monique Campbell-Weaver, and Natasha Graham.

President Long led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Zotto presented Deborah Smith, Principal at Woodrow Wilson Elementary, to present achievement awards to two students. Ms. Smith asked the students to stand with her for her presentation. Ms. Smith discussed the charm necklaces the students were wearing, the successes of both students, and read brief statements about each student. Ms. Smith thanked the teachers and parents for their support and thanked the recipients for being first-class students. Dr. Zotto presented the students with their achievement awards.

Moved by Member Valle, seconded by Member Eveland, that the Board open the floor to the public for comments. Unanimous voice vote. Motion carried.

Catherine Locallo advised that public comment would be shortened to three minutes per person and that the Board would listen diligently but will not respond to public comment and would follow up as necessary.

Lamar Miller asked questions regarding public comment policy, the Superintendent's contract, and a Business Director position.

Yvette Franklin asked a question regarding an investigation of Board members and also thanked the Board for the robo dial to inform the public of the Board meeting.

A member of the public stated concerns regarding recent stories in the news, the Assistant Superintendent position, salaries, and an investigation of Board members.

April Caldwell asked questions regarding openings in gates behind Wentworth, procedures during dropping students off, and obtaining a hard copy of the audits that were done.

Nicole Gabriel asked questions regarding an itemized list for the bonds, where the bond money would be used, textbooks and technology, mold in the buildings, and transportation to Wilson for second grade students.

A member of the public requested to have a translator at the Board meetings and expressed concern over the amount of movies their student was watching in school. Dr. Zotto asked this member to call the District Office tomorrow to speak with him through a translator.

Julie Stephan asked questions regarding the Comptroller at the District Office, tracking attendance days, and where unused donated days go.

A member of the public asked questions regarding the bond referendum and changes in the members of the Board.

George Grenchick discussed the recent resolution and a nepotism policy adopted by another school Board.

A member of the public discussed removing board members and addressed the community regarding the upcoming election.

Let the record show that Member Davis arrived at 6:18 p.m.

Discussions among the public took place regarding desired changes and school lunches running out.

Richard Jones discussed student safety during arrival and dismissal times, the traffic during these times, past attempts at addressing the issue, facilities and the mold issue, and parents volunteering at the schools.

A discussion took place regarding when public questions would be answered by the Board.

A member of the public asked for messages to be sent out in Spanish. Dr. Zotto advised that the system did not allow the option for a Spanish message to be selected but that he would look into it more. Concerns about students being overworked were brought up.

Dr. Zotto advised parents could reach out to him at the District Office to speak through a translator.

Yvette Franklin discussed meetings being for the parents and attitudes of Board members.

Lamar Miller spoke about Board member conduct and advised that he was running for the Board. Mr. Miller discussed the lack of evaluations for the Superintendent and a stipend for a performance bonus with no evaluations.

A student asked a question regarding using the restroom during school hours.

A students asked a question regarding school lunches, dress code, and discussed a previous issue of lice in school.

Ms. Locallo advised the public that specific employees cannot be discussed in open session but the Board would allow an opportunity to speak in executive sessions with public members regarding specific employees.

Nicole Gabriel expressed concern over the current state of textbooks, and asked about receiving new textbooks. Ms. Gabriel also asked about an itemized list for the bonds from 2009 and where the money from the new bonds will be used.

A question was asked regarding where the money for a "dress down" day was being used. Norma Doyle, Teacher, gave an example of how that money is being used for an upcoming science vendor to come in to school.

Monique Weaver asked questions regarding school supply lists and an inventory of current supplies. Ms. Weaver also inquired about a newsletter for parents to be informed about upcoming events.

Dr. Zotto advised that he is committed to making changes and putting a memo together for parents. He discussed many issues being present and prioritizing those issues.

Kevin Weaver inquired as to whether the Board members lived in Calumet City.

James Hernandez discussed previously trying to donate his time to help with student safety and volunteering in the morning and afternoon. He discussed parent involvement and safety concerns previously being brought up. Mr. Hernandez expressed thanks for the opportunity to voice his concerns.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Crull, the Board close the floor to the public for comments. Unanimous voice vote. Motion carried.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Crull, the Board approve the Consent Agenda items as listed. Unanimous voice vote. Motion carried.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Crull, the Board approve the gross payroll figure for the month of September 2018 in the total amount of \$650,164.85. Valle, aye; Oberman, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Crull, aye; Eveland, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board approve the gross payroll figure for the month of October 2018 in the total amount of \$601,909.81. Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Oberman, aye; Eveland, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board approve the following pre-lists of invoices and authorize the Board President and Secretary to sign the appropriate documents.

- a. Pre-list dated 10/01/2018 (Voucher #1072) in the amount of \$90,083.51
- b. Pre-list dated 10/12/2018 (Voucher #1082) in the amount of \$200,420.29
- c. Pre-list dated 11/01/2018 (Voucher #1092) in the amount of \$717,562.10

Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Eveland, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board approve the Resolution Authorizing Intervention in Property Tax Assessment Proceedings. Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, nay; Davis, aye; Eveland, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 6-1.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board approve a one (1) year contract with Sunbelt Staffing for Registered Nurse, Geraldine Stevens-Chambers. Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Eveland, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Dr. John Gibson gave a presentation to the Board regarding the 2017 tax levy. Dr. Gibson reviewed last year's levy and what was requested. Dr. Gibson discussed exemptions that the district received last year and the transportation fund levy. Also discussed was the of the current levy percentage, the estimated levy amount, and the revenue growth from last year. Dr. Gibson discussed the adjusted 2018 levy to make sure funds most in need will have money needed for operations, the education fund being the one adjusted, and a total increase in 2017. Dr. Gibson stated it is difficult to estimate property values until things stabilize. Dr. Gibson advised that the total of all tax cap funds being presented to the Board is a 2.14% increase and that the 2018 levy would be collected by the Cook County Clerk and remitted to the School District in the fall and summer installments.

Moved by Member Valle, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board Approve the Resolution Regarding Estimated Amounts Necessary To Be Levied For The Year 2018. Crull, aye; Eveland, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Valle, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board employ Anne Anobian, Library Aide at Wentworth Intermediate, for the 2018-2019 School year pending receipt of the required documents which include the Illinois State Background Investigation Report and placing her on the appropriate entry level pay. Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Eveland, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board employ Mercedes Yruegas, Secretary at Woodrow Wilson, for the 2018-2019 School year pending receipt of the required documents which include the Illinois State Background Investigation Report and placing her on the appropriate entry level pay. Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Eveland, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board employ Yolanda Ponce, Substitute Cleaner, for the 2018-2019 School year pending receipt of the required documents which include the Illinois State Background Investigation Report and placing her on the appropriate entry level pay. Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Eveland, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Valle, seconded by Member Crull, the Board employ Dennis Denard, Resource Officer, for the 2018-2019 School year pending receipt of the required documents which include the Illinois State Background Investigation Report and placing him on the

appropriate entry level pay. Oberman, aye; Eveland, abstain; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Valle, aye; Crull, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 6-0-1.

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Moved by Member Valle, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board employ Ronald Pierre-Pierre, 6th Grade Math Teacher at Wentworth Junior High, for the 2018-2019 School Year pending receipt of the required documents which include the Illinois State Background Investigation Report and placing him on the appropriate Lane and Step of the 2018-2019 Salary Schedule. Crull, aye; Eveland, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Valle, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Moved by Member Eveland, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board approve and ratify the 2018-2019 salary of \$57,845.00 for Rebecca Schwartztraub, Speech Language Pathologist. Valle, aye; Crull, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Eveland, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Member Crull read the enrollment total of 1,119 students.

Member Davis indicated nothing to report for a Policy update.

Member Valle indicated there was not a lot going on with SCOPE but there should be a better report next month after the sessions.

Norma Doyle, Teacher's Union President, invited the Board members to a family fluency night and passed out flyers. Ms. Doyle stated that the certified staff looked forward to working with Superintendent Dr. Zotto.

Valerie Wilhoite, Paraprofessional Union President, asked a question regarding a decrease in enrollment. Dr. Zotto stated there is a slight difference but it has been consistent this school year.

Erin Kading-Davis, Teacher and Wentworth Junior High, invited the Board members to a Math and Science night on November 7th.

Dr. Zotto indicated not having any unfinished or new business to discuss.

Principal Deborah Smith presented to the Board. Ms. Smith discussed continuing to build the accelerated reading program for students, having a new library aide and stocked bookshelves with accelerated reading books. Ms. Smith also discussed a point system at Wilson where a

party is given to students who achieve their goals. Ms. Smith also discussed being a part of the Metro Chicago Math initiative and encouraged students to get involved and ask questions. Ms.

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Smith also indicated that all three schools at District 155 had improved on the school report card and were rated as “commendable”.

Dr. Zotto acknowledged the staff and how evident it is that the hard work they put in with the students and their focus and efforts on student growth. Dr. Zotto stated he was proud to be a part of the District and a colleague to all the staff members. Dr. Zotto acknowledge that all three schools improved to a “commendable” rating on the school report cards and discussed his previous work as the Assistant Superintendent and Curriculum Director. He mentioned the collaborative work done with staff to present opportunities to students. Dr. Zotto thanked the parents for their involvement and acknowledged that a lot of work needs to be done and that he plans to address issues at the District in time.

Ms. Locallo read a statement from the Board congratulating and welcoming Dr. Zotto as the Superintendent of the District.

Dr. Zotto responded and thanked the Board, staff, parents, and community members for the opportunity. He expressed his appreciation and briefly discussed his current plan for the District moving forward.

Moved by Member Crull, seconded by Member Oberman, the Board adjourn. Valle, aye; Eveland, aye; Stern, aye; Davis, aye; Crull, aye; Oberman, aye; and Long, aye. Motion carried, 7-0.

Adjourned: 7:40 p.m.

Stanley Long, President

Barbara Crull, Secretary