



Mokena School District 159

Board Highlights for April 20, 2022

Communications

Public: The following parents and student expressed their support for the continuation of the Dual Language Program and encouraged the Board to fulfill the commitment the district made to this program years ago: Abigail White, Liz White, Kate Varnado, Pamela Shanahan, Joy Kokolus, Nicole Morin, Adriana Boerma, Ashley Nappo, Angela Swenson, Kelli MacMillan, Tessa Quinlan, Brian Shanahan, Brian Cheesman. Amber Maccari spoke on behalf of the D159 Parent Council and shared that parents feel ignored and disconnected and are looking forward to a partnership with the district.

MTA: Heather Sullivan highlighted the Kindergarten Team as they have had to take a deep look into merging the rigorous learning expectations with developmentally appropriate practice all while adhering to Covid protocols. Kindergarten teachers are often the first people to introduce students to the world of education and help to develop students into lifelong learners. A special “shout out” to Debi Blank who will be holding a Cancer Support Center fundraiser with a Cancer Walk/Run event that will be held during recess at MES on May 18th and during gym time at MIS on May 19th. Proceeds will go to the Cancer Support Center.

MCSA: None.

PTA/MEF: None.

BOE: None.

Discussion

Board of Education Meeting Dates – Dr. Cohen presented the 2022-23 regular session Board meeting dates to the Board with no objections.

Dual Language Program – Dr. Cohen presented an overview of the Dual Language Program and shared parent feedback from a recent survey. The administration, after looking at parent feedback, teacher feedback, and student outcomes, does not recommend that the program continue in its current form. Dr. Cohen presented the Board with two options: Option 1 -Dissolve the program or Option 2-Dedicate resources to improving the program.

Information Reports

Superintendent – Dr. Cohen

- With Staff Appreciation Week approaching, Dr. Cohen recognized all the teachers and support staff for all their outstanding efforts this year.
- Covid cases are slightly up since Spring Break. The district is keeping an eye on the numbers regionally. Fortunately, there have been no cases of Covid transmission in our schools since the district lifted its mask mandate in February.
- The District 159 Galaxy Award is a program to specially recognize the above and beyond accomplishments and/or contributions of district employees, students, parents, and community members. All nominations need to be in by April 29th. The selected winners will be notified via a surprise announcement in May 2022. Winners will be formally recognized at the June 2022 Board meeting.

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction – Dr. Johnson

- April Early Release Day included professional learning aligned to school improvement plan goals and specific department needs. Instructional Coaches at MES and MIS offered “Snack and Share” professional learning sessions this month. The topic was Quick and Easy Ways to Engage Students in Partner Activities.
- The K-5 ELA Committee is bringing a recommendation of the adoption of 95% Group Phonics and Word Study materials for implementation at the start of the 2022-23 school year. The district is recommending the adoption of the Project Lead the Way curriculum to extend learning for students in the existing STEM exploratories at MJH. A big thank you to Hillary Tibble and Dr. Cohen for the initial exploration of the program. These curriculum programs will be on display in the District Office for 30 days for Board, Staff, and Community to review.
- D159 curriculum initiatives identified for next school year and the corresponding professional development includes: K-5 Foundational Skills curriculum program implementation; 5-8 Eureka

Math updated curriculum program implementation; 6-8 Project Lead the Way STEM Exploratories curriculum implementation; K-5 ELA Curriculum Adoption Process (Comprehension, Vocabulary, Writing, and Grammar).

Director of Student Services – Ms. Cirone

- A huge “shout out” to the district’s paraprofessionals! Without them, the district could not service students with disabilities. They are the heart and soul of the department and are appreciated by staff, students and families.
- Students from Bree Bosco’s room were on the hunt for Easter Eggs all over MES on April 13th. The students used important communication and socialization skills. Kuddos to the classroom team and team of related service providers for supporting students with real world applications of the skills they learn every day.
- Special Olympics-Young Athletes Culminating Event will be held May 13th. MES will host both a 9:30 am and 1:00 pm event for students preschool through age eight. Parents of participants, Board members, and district administrators are invited to cheer on these students.
- The district continues to struggle to provide adequate substitute coverage for paraprofessional positions due to a lack of available candidates and mid-year resignations.

Chief School Business Official – Dr. Shaw

- Finance Committee met on April 11th and the amended budget was discussed. The next meeting will be held on May 9, 2022 and the topics will be a technology review and the second look at the amended budget for FY22.
- Finance Report – Posted on website.
- After the visit from the National School Lunch Auditor, the district was informed that the Summer Seamless Lunch program will be discontinued for the 2022-23 school year. The district will be reverting back to a paid lunch program in the Fall of 2022.
- Due to supply chain issues, the MES unit ventilator project timeline cannot be meet with certainty. An addendum will be issued to the RFP that was approved by the Board last month.
- Amended Budget Highlights: Expenses were adjusted by less than ½ percentage point in the aggregate, locally funded items were coded to be paid by ESSR funds, ISBE grants are still being approved-SPED may change to next month, revenues were adjusted based on the Local Levy Tax; Levy 2020 funds FY21 and FY22; FY21 Will County changed tax payments from 2 payments to 4 payments; Did not alter the local revenue in Budget FY21; Under \$869,249 from the Levy 2020 in FY21; Budgeted the Levy 20 into FY22 as the original Levy 2020; Over \$863,437 in FY22 budget, Differential of -5,810 or 0,032%; Over FY21 and FY22 received 99.7% of Levy 2020.
- Still negotiating with the District Engineer company for a final contract with fees.
- The new Bus Routing Software will provide a simple, yet comprehensive transportation management solution for the district’s transportation. This product will help make scheduling stops and changes easier as well as a simple set of routing instructions for sub drivers to follow.
- Food Service Report - After the visit from the National School Lunch Auditor, the district was informed that the Summer Seamless Lunch program will be discontinued for the 2022-23 school year. The district will be reverting back to a paid lunch program in the Fall of 2022.
- Transportation Report – The district welcomes new hire bus drivers William Schroeder & Katherine Jones.
- Buildings and Grounds Report – Mulch front of MES building; replace south gym lights at MIS; installation of LED lights in the gyms at MJH. Upcoming/Ongoing Projects: Maintenance to clean up outside and planters; landscaper to refresh mulch; MJH parking lot replacement; MES/MIS sidewalk/curb replacement; MIS rooftop for office replacement; MIS south gym replacement of lighting using ComEd incentives; MJH replacement of lighting in main gym and west gym.

Director of Technology – Mr. Smith

- The district is planning on \$245,690.10 worth of classroom technology purchases this summer. Out of that amount, \$199,992 will be paid for via the ESSER 3 Grant.
- Purchase order for the district radios has been submitted and waiting on delivery timeline.
- After completing the security audit with Mindsight, they presented the district with a report on the current state of our security posture along with recommendations on how to mitigate

various issues. They also scoped and ranked projects that would provide the district with the best cost per value. Some projects on the list looking to move forward on or before the end of the school year: fully managed endpoint security; security awareness training; MFA expansion; network access control upgrade; VLAN segmentation.

- Extended hardware lead times have made plans for a network overhaul this summer an impossibility. Tech Department has spent the last month shuffling other projects around to see if we can fit them into this displaced summer vacancy: access control upgrade; security camera expansion; visitor management system; wiring project.

Principals Reports – Dr. Rolinitis shared that it's field trip season and 6th grade went to I-Fly Illinois, 7th grade will be going to Springfield and 8th grade will be going to Washington DC. Dr. Rolinitis also mentioned that the Geography Bee was able to continue with the help of the History department. **Mr. McAtee** shared that IAR testing is going very smoothly and almost over. Mr. McAtee also shared that 5th graders will be going on a field trip to Camp Manitouqua. **Mrs. Chorley** mentioned that it's been wonderful getting back to some normalcy in the building with having parent volunteers hide 1,500 easter eggs for Kindergarteners, bringing desks back together again, and students being able to sit next to their friends during lunch in the Commons. Mrs. Chorley congratulated Heather Esgar on her intent to retire!

Action Items that were approved include:

- Previous Month Minutes
- District Bills
- Personnel – Classified-New Hire: Katherine Jones. Classified-Resignation: Dianna Nielson, Laura Betourney, Dave Turner. Classified -Retirement: Geralyn Turner. Certified-New Hire: Heather Rossi, Ashley Wojciechowski, Eric Rutter. Certified-FMLA: Molly Blitstein. Certified-Retirement: Heather Esgar. Certified-Long-Term Sub: Mary Imgruet. Certified-Resignation: Courteney Barnes.
- Consent Agenda – 1) Bus Routing Software. 2) K-5 Foundational Skills Curriculum Adoption-1st Read. 3) MJH Project Lead the Way Curriculum Adoption-1st Read. 4) 2022-23 Parent Student Handbook.
- Dissolve Dual Language Program effective 2022-23 school year.
- Strings Program
- Golf Program

For the Good of Mokena

- Dr. Rolinitis shared that 8th Grade Graduation will be on May 22nd at noon at Lincoln-Way West and invited the Board to attend.

Respectfully,

Submitted on behalf of Dr. Mark A. Cohen, Superintendent