



Mokena School District 159

Board Highlights for November 17, 2021

Special Recognition – Fire Chief Howard Stephens

Board President Bush congratulated Chief Stephens on his impending retirement and thanked him for his service and devotion to our schools and the community and the Board recognized the Chief with tokens of appreciation from the district and students.

Communications

Public None.

MTA: Katie Rodriguez showed her gratitude to the Board for their continued dedication to the students of Mokena. Ms. Rodriguez highlighted the great work the Second Grade teachers and Social Workers are doing with students such as the Disguised Turkey's project, the narrative writing that showcases students' creativity, thank you letters second graders sent to local veterans, and the random acts of kindness second graders are caught doing for each other. Ms. Rodriguez also thanked the Administration and Board for arriving at an agreement for Administrative Leave Days regarding Covid-19.

MCSA: None.

PTA/MEF: Laurie Kornmuller shared that the Fall Fling was a huge success. The calculation of money raised is not final, however, between auction items and sponsors, the amount is between \$18,000-\$20,000.

BOE: None.

Presentations – School Improvement Plans – Building Principals

All three building principals presented their school improvement plans to the Board emphasizing specific priority areas that the Building Leadership Team would like to focus on. The team used student data based off IAR scores and Fastbridge data to determine these priority areas and goals. Questions were asked by the Board and answered.

Discussion – Resolutions for 2021 Delegate Assembly Meeting

Board President Bush led the discussion between Board members as to how they would like to vote on the 2021 Resolutions to be held during the Delegate Assembly at the Joint Conference.

Information Reports

Superintendent – Dr. Cohen

- Dr. Cohen provided the most current Covid-19 data report to the Board.
- Transportation Update – During the 2020-21 school year, the district operated with 9 bus routes. Two drivers retired leaving the district with 7 drivers. Bus Driver Compensation was increased to \$18 per hour in an effort to bring in interest. The district suffered another setback with the resignation of the Lead Bus Driver and another driver needing surgery. With the hiring of a new Transportation Coordinator, the district is anticipating getting 9 routes up and running with 3 subs in the near future.
- School Report Card Released – Some details from the 2020-21 SY: Average class size was 21; student to teacher ratio was 19:1; student to certified staff ratio was 10:1; 5.4% of students were low income; average teacher salary was \$61,668; student to administrator ratio was 149:1; average administrator salary was \$105,456; the district's revenue met 99% of the state's target number based upon the evidence based funding model; the district's instructional expenditure per pupil in FY20 was \$6,900; the district's operational expenditure per pupil in FY20 was \$12,895; revenue sources were 87.4% local, 9.6% state, and 2.9% federal.
- Strategic Planning Follow-up – Next Steps were discussed for engaging the curriculum group in strategic planning. Dr. Johnson will be recording a voice over of her slides to push out to the participants in the group. A google form will be shared with them asking about areas of concern or high priority.

Assistant Superintendent of Instruction – Dr. Johnson

- Dr. Johnson shared with the Board data from the Illinois Assessment of Readiness from Spring 2021. As a component of identifying improvement needs in each school, the building administration reviewed the preliminary data earlier this fall with their building leadership teams.

- November District Professional Learning – Reading teachers at both MES and MIS finished their weekly book study on Meaningful Phonics and Word Study. MJHS continued their ALL teacher book study on a text from the Association for Middle Level Education called The Successful Middle School: This We Believe. Math teachers at MJHS also participated in a session led by Eureka Math. Teachers deepened their understanding of the structures of the program, explored additional digital features of the program, as well as previewed an upcoming enhanced version. Instructional Coaching Team, Principals, and District Office Administration team participated in full day of learning as the district continues to learn more about the student centered coaching model. The coaching team also reviewed a way to measure the impact on student learning through a form call The Results-Based Coaching Tool.
- Intergovernmental Agreement with Lincoln-Way – This agreement outlines the exchange of student information between the district and the high school district as it pertains to what is exchanged as well as the purpose of the information that is exchanged.
- K-5 ELA Committee – The committee is tasked with reviewing, piloting, and recommending a Foundational Skills/Phonics program for implementation for the 2022-23 school year.

Director of Student Services – Ms. Cirone

- Courtney Barnes’ specialized instruction classroom at MJH has resumed its coffee cart. Students in this classroom learn valuable math and life skills by taking orders, serving up delicious beverages and counting out change during these activities.
- Mallory Huddleston’s specialized instruction class at MIS did a fun monster mystery activity where they had to create the monster, and then try to draw a peer’s monster based only on written instructions. Logan Wyack, 5th grader, won!
- The district has secured a contractual physical therapy assistant. The district is also in the process of hiring three paraprofessionals.

Chief School Business Official – Dr. Shaw

- Finance Committee met on November 8, 2021; topics included: Tentative 2021 Levy and Section 4 of the Board Policy’s Manual. There was also conversation regarding transportation salaries.
- Finance Report – Posted on website.
- The district successfully went through the process of hiring a Transportation Coordinator. Welcome Mr. Ervin Walker.
- Bus Driver Compensation - In order to stay competitive with other districts in this very tough job market, the district is proposing a starting salary increase to \$21 per hour. The district does not want to lose drivers to other schools or bus companies.
- The budget has been submitted to the Will County Clerk’s office and the State Board of Education. A timeline for processing the Levy for 2021 is in Dr. Shaw’s written report.
- Food Service – The district will be receiving \$48,433.61 from the government. Total funds brought in was \$52,402.36. GFS continues to have shortages with some of their food products. As a result, parents can expect some lunch days to serve a different entrée than what is listed on the menus.
- Transportation – Compared to the month of October, we are up 9 riders. The district is continuing to work on hiring more bus drivers and would like to expand from 8 to 9 routes.
- Maintenance – Every morning, a thorough walk through is done by the interim Director of Custodial and Maintenance to inspect the cleanliness of classrooms, hallways, bathrooms and common areas. Completed projects include: MES emergency generator removal; MJH emergency light replacement; district wide contractor painting.

Director of Technology – Mr. Smith

- 2021-22 Projects – Most needed projects: Switches; Access Points; Ethernet Upgrade; Ethernet Upgrade; Internal Fiber. Project changes: Due to E-Rate funding concerns, the district will only be scoping out fiber upgrades at MJH. The Tech Team is planning on doing the fiber runs at MES and MIS in-house which will be a cost savings of 40%. The district will hire out for the MJH fiber runs because all the original runs were installed through underground pipes during original construction.

- Conferences will be done the same way as last year. At MJH, we are doing team conferences scheduled through Skyward. At MES and MIS, we purchased Calendly Accounts. The district had to upgrade to a \$15 per seat cost. If the district holds virtual conferences again next year, the district will most likely move to a new platform.
- Network Security Audit – The Tech Department is working out the best solution for our environment for the money. The target date is over winter break.

Principals Reports – Dr. Rolinitis shared that the Marching Meteor Band and the Color Guard Team will be marching in the Lighting of Front Street parade. He also mentioned that MJH will host the 6th Grade Girls Basketball Conference tournament this weekend. **Mr. McAtee** mentioned D.A.R.E. graduation will be live streamed to parents on December 19th. He also gave a “Shout Out” to his front office crew who keeps everything going for MIS! **Mrs. Chorley** gave a “Shout Out” to all the consistent subs at MES! She also thanked Mrs. Arduino, Miss Clifford, and Mr. H for all their efforts with the Virtual Veteran’s Day Assembly. She mentioned students will dress as their future self during American Education Week.

Action Items that were approved include:

- Previous Month Minutes
- District Bills
- Personnel – Classified – New Hire: Tanya Spilchen, Ervin Walker, Lisa Gilbert. Classified – Resignation: Eileen Arsich. Certified – Long-Term Sub Teacher: Kellie Cismoski. Administration – Retirement: Dr. Michael Rolinitis.
- Consent Agenda – 1) Section 4 Policy Revisions, 1st Read; 2) PRESS Policy Revisions – 1st Read; 3) Annual Statement of Affairs; 4) Disposal of Equipment-Maintenance/Custodial.
- Approval of Tentative Levy 2021
- Approval of School Improvement Plans
- Approval of Bus Driver Compensation
- Approval of Lincoln-Way Intergovernmental Agreement-Sharing of Student Data

For the Good of Mokena

- Mr. Everett highlighted how nice it is to hear the kids having fun and burning off that extra energy during recess.
- Mr. Andresen shared that the Lion’s Club will be partnering with Berkots to provide 20 Thanksgiving dinners to families in need.
- In honor of School Board Member Appreciation Day, Dr. Cohen expressed his gratitude to the Board Members for all their dedication and giving of their time to the students and staff of Mokena School District. Dr. Cohen shared a video presentation created by the Meteor Broadcasting/NJHS Students in honor of School Board Member Appreciation Day as well as a booklet of cards and letters from students at MES and MIS.

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