

**Board OF EDUCATION**  
**COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 64**  
**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held at 7 p.m.**  
**November 16, 2023**  
**Jefferson School - Hendee Rooms**  
**8200 Greendale Ave, Niles, IL 60714**

Board president Pearl called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Other Board members in attendance were Garreth Kennedy, Rachel Georgakis, Matthew Doubleday, Phyllis Lubinski, Monica Milligan and Demetri Touzios. Also attending were: Superintendent Dr. Ben Collins, Dr Adam Parisi, Chief School Business Official, Dr. Joel Martin, Assistant Superintendent of HR, Dr. Samantha Alaimo, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning, Alicia Schmeisser, Director of Student Services, Matthew Tombs, Director of Innovation and Technology, Noel Mendoza, Director of Facilities, Frank Borkowski, Assistant Director of Facilities, Chris Lilly, Communications Specialist and Christine Bednarek, Assistant to the Superintendent. Approximately 40 members of the public were present as well.

Board of Education meetings are videotaped and may be viewed in their full length from the district's website at <http://www.d64.org>. The agenda and reports for this meeting are also available on the website or through the District's Office at 8182 W Greendale Ave, Niles, IL 60714.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Lincoln Students lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **OPENING REMARKS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD**

Dr. Pearl began the meeting by stating that since this is the month of Thanksgiving she wanted to be sure to thank the Orchestra for their performance as well as the Board for being there as well working together the past few months.

#### **SPOTLIGHT ON MUSIC**

Dr. Collins introduced Max Hellerman and the Lincoln Middle School Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Hellerman introduced the orchestra and directed the orchestra in playing *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*.

Next Ms. Erica Faulhaber introduced the other music instructors who were in attendance, Mr. Hellerman and Mr. Tetter. She then recognized the students who represented the district at ILMEA this year. She stated, "These students auditioned and were selected to participate in the Illinois Music Educators Association Festival, one of the most competitive and most prestigious music opportunities in the state. More than 800 of the finest band and orchestra students from over 50 middle schools in the north suburban area auditioned for a position in these all-star groups."

The Board then took a picture with the students present.

#### **RECOGNITIONS**

Dr. Collins kicked off the School Board Member Appreciation by showing a video including student interviews as well as building administrator thank yous to the Board of Education. He stated one of the things that's really important to remember is that the board members give up so much of their time throughout the school year to help the school district make some really hard decisions that often have no perfect solution or answer to them at the end. And that it's incredible that we as a district have people who are so dedicated to the community. Dr. Collins thanked the board members on behalf of the entire staff, the district office and all of the buildings "because at the end of the day, this building, this district does not function without a really great school board."

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Dr. Ryan Maxwell from Silver Lining Chiropractic addressed the board regarding the Nervous System and how chiropractic medicine can help with students and staff. He addressed funding and that it would be through insurance. He stated that every kid counts, every teacher counts and every staff member counts.

## **APPROVAL OF MAINTENANCE GRANT FY24**

Chief School Business Official (CSBO) Dr. Parisi told the board that this is the third year the state has offered this program. The School Maintenance Project Grant is a dollar for dollar state matching grant program providing awards up to \$50,000 to grantees exclusively for the maintenance or upkeep of buildings or structures for education purposes.

Dr. Parisi and Mr. Mendoza, Director of Facilities, have identified a need at Field Elementary School in one of the air handling units that brings in fresh air that needs to be fixed. The grant monies would be applied toward this project.

### ACTION ITEM 23-11-1

It was moved by Board member Milligan and seconded by Board member Georgakis that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge-Niles, Illinois, approve the School Maintenance Project Grant FY24 application as presented.

The votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Lubinski, Pearl, Georgakis, Milligan, Doubleday, Kennedy, Touzios

Nays: None

Present: None

Absent: None

The motion carried.

## **APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #1324 AUTHORIZING THE ENGAGEMENT OF REAL ESTATE BROKER TO SELL REAL PROPERTY**

Chief School Business Official (CSBO) Dr. Adam Parisi stated that there were no sealed bids submitted and that the next step would be to engage a broker to accept bids. He stated that the advantage of a broker is they can market it in different ways than the district can. They must use the minimum price set by the board, but the broker can solicit bids and advertise for that.

Board Member Doubleday asked if there was a broker we work with already and Dr. Parisi said he would recommend the same broker used last time. Board Member Lubinski stated that the broker shouldn't have any affiliation with the board or its members.

### ACTION ITEM 23-11-2

It was moved by Board member Milligan and seconded by Board member Kennedy that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge-Niles, Illinois, adopt Resolution #1324 authorizing the engagement of a real estate broker to sell real property with broker's fees not to exceed 7%.

The votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Pearl, Lubinski, Milligan, Doubleday, Georgakis, Touzios, Kennedy

Nays: None

Present: None

Absent: None

The motion carried.

### **APPROVE SUMMER 2024 CONSTRUCTION BIDS**

Dr. Parisi stated we worked with the construction manager to bid the packages several different ways so that we could provide ourselves flexibility. At this time what we are recommending is that the board approve bid package one, which will be the general trades package, including the extra doors and lunch tables.

We are going to ask to hold off on the flooring project after some recent information.

We would like to go through the additional steps of doing tests on the floor. The decision of whether or not to abate is a challenging decision and we just want to make sure that we have the best available information before we go and do that.

Dr. Pearl asked if there were any questions and Member Kennedy asked if there could be a new motion removing the floor work. Member Milligan asked if delaying the floor decision would delay the project. Dr. Parisi stated that as long as it went to the December meeting it should not impact the project. Board President Dr. Pearl asked if this would affect the summer programming at the schools and Dr. Parisi stated there should not be any issues regarding the summer programming.

### **ACTION ITEM 23-11-03**

It was moved by Board member Milligan and seconded by Board member Touzios that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve the awarding of the general trades package #1 to RB including the alternate bids for the additional doors and additional tables of \$1,249,000.

The votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Georgakis, Pearl, Milligan, Doubleday, Touzios, Kennedy, Lubinski

Nays: None

Present: None

Absent: None

The motion carried.

### **PRESENTATION OF THE 2022-23 ILLINOIS SCHOOL REPORT CARD**

District 64 continues to report high proficiency data on IAR. The focus will be on a higher growth rate for all the students of the district. ISBE gives a summative designation for each school consisting of ELA Proficiency, Math Proficiency, Science Achievement, ELA & Math Growth,

Franklin was rated as Exemplary being in the top 10% and all the other schools in the district were rated as Commendable.

Members Lubinski stated that parents have reached out and they are grateful for the presentations from Dr. Alaimo. Board Member Kennedy also thanked Dr. Alaimo and stated that he felt the math scores were a bit troubling and a concern for him. Is there a root cause analysis of why the scores are where they are at. He also asked if it's time we change the comparable districts. Dr. Alamo stated that she would like to review the demographics and determine exactly what our comparable districts are. Board Member Lubinski asked why is it that the math scores are lagging especially with interventionists.

Dr. Alaimo stated, "I don't want to say the way that we're teaching math is different, but there's different approaches to different learning styles. So if any of you have any children in the district, you'll notice that your child may learn three ways to do a math problem as opposed to one because we want everyone to master it no matter how your brain is sifting through a problem. So there is a little bit of shift right there, so I'm just hypothesizing right now. I'd like about two more

years of data or at least one before I can really give a sound answer to that. But it's interesting to think about. We haven't seen a decrease as we send kids to 207 of how they're performing at high school."

Dr. Collins added that nationally the Math scores have not recovered similar to ELA scores. The ELA recovery looked like a U. It dipped and it kind of came back at a pretty easy, nice slope. The math recovery right now looks like a hockey stick. The growth is coming back fast, but the proficiency is still lagging way behind and people are really scratching their heads about that. I wish we had more answers on it, but that is something that we're seeing across the board. One of the things we talk about all the time is, is it just us or is it going on somewhere else? A lot of school districts are seeing the same thing.

Member Doubleday wanted to know if the comment that District 207 students are excelling was measurable. Dr. Alaimo stated that District 207 is on a mastery system. They're looking for students to master skills and that's their ultimate goal. It's all about mastery learning in the math department right now. They're not getting A, B, C, D or F. They're looking at students to continuously grow and then place them. And I'd like to look at that data a little bit more as we talk with District 207 and then what final grade are they getting or level of achievement are they getting for a standard. I think that'll tell us a lot too, especially as we talk about standards-based learning as a district.

Member Milligan asked if District 207 has information about whether students when they go to secondary, post-secondary institutions take remedial math classes? Dr. Alaimo replied, yes. And they've actually been behind some of the legislative changes to try to change some of those, where those benchmarks are and what remedial aspects of college looks like. They also have a lot of clearinghouse data which we could at some point decide to look at and that would be something that we would engineer as part of the IGA as well. We basically want all their data.

#### **PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT CALENDAR FOR THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dr Collins stated that the start and end dates mirror District 207's start and end dates. One of the new things proposed to the calendar planning group was to add an additional institute day in the fall. He stated, if we took one of our student attendance days and turned it into an institute day with the amount of curriculum work that we're doing and trying to improve and talk to our teachers about our growth and really trying to shift the focus into that from our achievement conversations. He also talked to the Park District which runs a lot of programming for our families. A lot of our families depend on that for a lot of reasons. This calendar, if aligned, does allow their labor, which is typically high school students, to be available at the same time that their customers, our students, are available. Last year it was a really big challenge. And the Park District heard that loud and clear. I've Dr. Collins has heard the same on the parent transition team loud and clear as well. A teacher in the group stated that once we reach Memorial Day on the calendar the students are done. So, that is one of the things that could be an advantage to this where it's basically maximizing all of our days because once we hit Memorial Day, we're basically into the last four days of school.

President Pearl suggested having the fall institute day on a day other than a Tuesday, as currently scheduled, given the difficulty it may place on families.

Member Milligan suggested looking at when the ELA units may end for scheduling an institute day.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDED PERSONNEL REPORT**

Dr. Martin, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, stated it was a short report only containing 4 people.

President Pearl asked if the floater custodian position was new and Dr. Martin stated it was not.

Thalia Koupas - Employ as Level IV Human Resources Administrative Assistant effective October 30, 2023 - \$20.65 hourly.

Alejandro Ocon - Employ as District Floater Custodian effective November 6, 2023 - \$19.60 hourly.

Eric Wade - Employ as Educational Support Professional at Roosevelt School effective October 23, 2023 - \$19.77 hourly.

Eleni Pappas - Retire as Educational Support Professional at Jefferson School effective at the end of the 2023-24 school year.

ACTION ITEM 23-10-5

It was moved by Board member Milligan and seconded by Board member Kennedy that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve the Personnel Report dated November 16, 2023, noting that the Personnel Report is based on the recommendation of the superintendent, and not upon the Board's direct knowledge regarding any of the specific individuals selected for employment.

The votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Pearl, Doubleday, Georgakis, Milligan, Lubinski, Kennedy, Touzios,, Pearl

Nays: None

Present: None

Absent: None

The motion carried.

**5-YEAR FACILITY PLAN UPDATE AND POTENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AT LINCOLN**

As we talk about Lincoln we are talking about two separate programs, one being a Structured Learning Community and the second being an emotional support classroom.

One of the first exercises we did was trying to take a look at the space utilization in Lincoln to figure out if there was a way that we could use the current space and renovate it in a way so we can make use for these programs. After quite a bit of time and conversations between district level and Lincoln administration, it just wasn't possible to do that. The reason it was not possible is because it would have to displace something that already existed.

The out of district placement costs after reimbursement is \$1.14 million and the transportation costs after reimbursement is \$280,000. Significant cost from our financial lines, not to mention the academic and emotional advantages of educating our students in our home schools.

A similar program started at the high school two years ago, and it started with about seven students. There are 13 now. All of those students were in a place where they would be outplaced before that. This is a growing group of students across the country, and this is an estimate for us right now. Any student above this estimate would just add to the cost savings.

Member Milligan asked if the number of students was the whole population of the numbers or if it was narrowed? Most of it is from our current enrolled students. Member Kennedy asked if we could require students who have been outplaced to return if we had the services. And the answer was yes and it would be recommended at their IEP meeting.

Staffing needs for these programs are about \$600,000. However, just based on the students that we feel would be coming into our program, we're looking at close to \$100,000 savings annually. Board Member Kennedy questioned whether having the Assistant Principal salary should be included in the costs.

Board Member Georgakis questioned whether or not it would be possible to host the programs at already existing spaces, i.e. Emerson? As it was mostly centered around the SLC, and when we were thinking about what we were going to do with SLC as those students age, having the SLC program already at Washington, and then considering there might be some situations where we're either sharing spaces or potentially sharing staffing things, that made the most sense to us. In addition there is no space at the other schools either to accommodate the programs.

George Gauthier from Wight & Company took the board through initial plans for an addition at Lincoln to accommodate the programs. His estimation was that the project would cost \$7-\$8 million dollars.

There was additional discussion about adding a second floor to the addition without finishing the space but leaving it for potential growth and whether or not that was cost beneficial. In addition there was conversation surrounding a complete renovation as well as the addition and what the future overall plan for Lincoln Middle School would look like.

Dr. Collins stated that he would recommend that we move forward with a space study at the middle school level, district wide and also have a discussion surrounding what the vision is for instruction and what those classrooms need to look like. We need to have schools that meet our kids' needs now and for their future.

There was then a discussion on timing specifically if the project was to be completed for the start of the 2025-26 school year.

It was recommended to move the agenda item A-11 Update on Financing prior to the A-10 Update on Financial Projections to allow Liz Hennessy from Raymond James to present to the Board prior to heading out to the Joint Annual Conference.

### **UPDATE ON FINANCING**

Liz Hennessy from Raymond James presented to the board on the current bond situation, the current market and the borrowing power of the district. She stated that both the district's debt limit and working cash bond limit were both very large at \$171.9 million and \$49.5 million respectively. This leaves an option for \$10 million bonds issued in January of 2024 so we can get them on that 2023 levy. They would be paid back through 2038. So they go out a ways, but they leave room in that debt service extension base in the year 2034 allowing the district to do this again if needed. If the district waits until May 2024 to issue the bonds versus January 2024 we have to capitalize some interest because we have about a year and a half to collect the taxes from 2025 to pay the bonds, which is an additional cost. Over the life of the bonds, it increases debt service by about a million dollars (\$1,015,275). Waiting until May would also lose access to the 2023 levy which allows you to pay principal and interest on these bonds sooner. Delaying the issue also gives you a little bit of a roller coaster in your tax rate. You know, 1 or 2 cents isn't huge, but it's not that nice stable debt service tax rate.

She then presented a timeline to borrow the bonds on the 2023 levy. It is a three month timeline which would need to be completed by February 15, 2024.

Member Kennedy asked what the maximum amount would be that could be bonded. Ms. Hennessy stated the maximum would likely be around \$25 million however she wouldn't recommend that as the advisor as it would tie the hands of future boards.

Prior to moving on to A10 Update on Financial Projections President Pearl polled the group as to whether or not everyone was good with having George move ahead with the master planning. Board Member Georgakis questioned whether the master plan would include a comprehensive view of all of the buildings and not just the Lincoln space. There was some conversation surrounding the master plan for the middle schools for right now and in addition doing a master plan for the elementary schools as well. The group was in agreement to move ahead. There was also mention of needing a fresh demographic study.

### **UPDATE ON FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS**

Dr. Parisi presented the board with the projections from September and in addition a new projection taking into consideration the \$10 million bond sale on the revenue side as well as the \$8 million Lincoln Middle school construction on the expenditure side. He also mentioned that the new scenario included the \$1.2 million ELA adoption, as well as the additional SLC staff, emotional support staff and new administrators for those programs

Board Member Milligan asked if the new ELA curriculum was already in the budget and was it an increase over what was budget. Since it would be for next year it was not yet budgeted for and would be included in that budget. Dr. Collins stated that this came out of the committee work that everyone is doing and we know it's going to be an expenditure that would be brought to the board eventually so we're talking about it now even though it's a bit premature. Member Kennedy pointed out that it is a one time charge of \$1.2 million with the program being utilized over 5-6 years.

Board Member Georgakis asked if the projections included any grants or if there were any grants available that could potentially be applied for example in regards to the special education spaces. Dr. Parisi answered that the projections currently do not include any grants but that is something that the district would look into and leverage to the best of their ability.

Board Member Kennedy asked whether or not Kindergarten tuition was removed from the projections in 2027. Dr. Parisi replied that the projections still included the tuition payments as the state has not yet made a determination on whether or not school districts would still be able to charge tuition.

There was discussion around conducting a Special Board Meeting sometime in early December to further discuss the bond issuance. Board Member Kennedy asked if we could include the gymnasium floor abatement in that discussion as well.

### **2023 IASB RESOLUTIONS & ASSEMBLY DELEGATE DISCUSSION**

Board member Phyllis Lubinski will be the delegate at this year's assembly and will represent the board during the voting process. Members went over this year's resolutions and how they wished to vote. Below are the board's recommendations:

#### NEW RESOLUTIONS Chief School Business Official

1. Industrial Construction - Approve
2. School Resource Officer Funding - Oppose
3. Bus Driver Regulations - Approve
4. Employment History Review - Approve
5. Alternative Safe School Funding - Approve

#### ACTION ITEM 23-11-5

It was moved by Board member Milligan and seconded by Board member Lubinski that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve the Board's recommendations for the votes on the proposed resolutions at the 2023 IASB Assembly, as discussed at tonight's meeting and agreed upon.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Milligan, Georgakis, Pearl, Doubleday

NAYS: Kennedy, Tousios, Lubinski

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

The motion carried.

## CONSENT AGENDA

### Bills

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Fund Total</u>
10 - Education Fund	\$1,305,993.51
20 - Operations and Maintenance Fund	\$327,545.25
30 - Debt Services	\$41,123.57
40 - Transportation Fund	\$5,427.09
60 - Capital Projects Fund	\$55,688.90
<u>Total: \$1,736,353.32</u>	

### Payroll & Benefits (October)

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Fund Total</u>
10 - Education Fund	\$4,445,867.81
20 - Operations and Maintenance Fund	\$237,823.46
40 - Transportation Fund	\$1,926.91
50 - IMRF/FICA Fund	\$83,214.42
51 - SS/Medicare	\$115,166.07
<u>Total: \$4,883,998.67</u>	

The Accounts Payable detailed list can be viewed on the District 64 website's business services page at [www.d64.org](http://www.d64.org).

- Bills, Payroll and Benefits
- Approval of Financial Update for the Period Ending October 31, 2023

### ACTION ITEM 23-10-7

It was moved by Board Member Milligan and seconded by Board Member Georgakis that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve the Consent Agenda for November 16, 2023, which includes: bills, payroll & benefits; and approval of financial update for the period ending October 31, 2023.

The votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Touzios, Lubinski, Kennedy, Doubleday, Milligan, Georgakis, Pearl

Nays: None

Present: None

Absent: None

The motion carried.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

### ACTION ITEM 23-10-8

It was moved by Board Member Milligan and seconded by Board Member Kennedy that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64 Park Ridge-Niles, Illinois approve the minutes from the closed meeting on October 19, 2023; and the regular meeting on October 19, 2023.

The votes were cast as follows:

Ayes: Doubleday, Milligan, Lubinski, Georgakis, Kennedy, Pearl

Nays: None

Present:

Absent: None

The motion carried.



## **OTHER DISCUSSIONS & ITEMS OF INFORMATION**

We had a great Veterans Day celebration with Roosevelt Choirs in Hodges Park at the American Legion celebration. Staff shout outs included Lynne Condon presented on the Unpacking Resource for Collaborative Leadership, Jessica Kwaknski won a grant from Illinois Association of Special Education Administrators for adaptive musical instruments and materials to support inclusion of special education students in the general education classroom. We also have an upcoming training that we are doing with 13 other school districts for the I Love You Guys Foundation with our Park Ridge and Niles police departments and other police departments. We have a Kiwanis annual District 64 holiday food basket drive that's going on right now. 100% of those proceeds go to funds for families to help them get through the holidays. We're accepting donations, up to the 30th. And then one of the things that I definitely wanted to mention though, is that we are still experiencing really significant issues with our transportation company. It is definitely something that has been an issue and we know families are rightfully so furious. It's just unacceptable and Adam has been working really hard with our bus company, and we're doing everything we possibly can. All FOIAs have been or are being processed. And finally, have a great Thanksgiving. This is a great community, great schools, wonderful staff, and just a lot of caring people that want the best for kids. And so when you've got that, there's a lot to be thankful for. So, thank you.

President Pearl spoke to the board about potentially moving the superintendent address earlier in the board meeting. Board Member Kennedy agreed that the agenda could use some structuring.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business to discuss.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:45 , it was moved by Board Member Lubinski and seconded by Board Member Doubleday to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Signed Date: December 21, 2023.

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President

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Secretary