

**Official Minutes of the Monday, April 23, 2018
Board of Education Meeting**

Call to Order The Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 59 in County of Cook, State of Illinois, held a meeting in accordance with provisions of the Open Meetings Act, according to Illinois law, at the District 59 Administration Center, 2123 South Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois on Monday, April 23, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

Roll Call **Members Present:** President Barbara Somogyi, Vice-President Janice Krinsky, Sunil Bhavé Secretary - Members: Tim Burns, Karen Osmanski, Sharon Roberts, and Mardell Schumacher

Members Absent:

Others Superintendent, Dr. Arthur Fessler; Associate Superintendent, Tom Luedloff; Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, CBSO, Vickie Nissen; Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Kelley Zerfahs; Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Maureen McAbee; Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services, Karen Starr; Assistant Superintendent for Innovative Learning and Communication, Ben Grey; Executive Director of Facilities and Operations, Tony Rossi; Executive Director of Literacy, Dr. Kim Barrett; Executive Director for Innovative Learning, Dr. Katie Ahsell, Director of Social Emotional Learning; Ross Vittore, Executive Director of Innovative Learning; Director of Communications and Design, David Pohlmeier; and Recording Secretary, Kathie Lange.

Also Present Meg Weickert, Forest View Principal; Melissa Dominguez, Forest View Asst. Principal; Rob Bowers, Holmes JH Principal; Crystal Jimenez, John Jay Assistant Principal; Monika Farfan, Juliette Low Asst. Principal; Sara Magnafichi, Byrd; Ann Wing DEA President and Friendship JH; John D’Anza, DEA Exec. Board and Grove JH; Matt Legg, Juliette Low; Michele Lara DEA Exec. Board and Salt Creek

A scanned copy of the Guest Sign-In Sheet from April 23, 2018 is attached to minutes of this meeting (Attachment #1).

Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.01 Refresh of K-2 Primary Device

Assistant Superintendent for Innovative Learning and Communications, Mr. Ben Grey, shared an update with the board regarding discussions and planning for a potential student device refresh for students in grades K-2. Teachers have received a survey. Data and feedback will continue to be gathered and further discussion will take place at the May 14, 2018, board meeting.

Mrs. Schumacher read an excerpt from a handout on technology that she had previously distributed at the Board of Education meeting on 7/10/2017. ([Click here to view](#)).

Mr. Grey explained the purpose of technology in District 59.

Ms. Krinsky asked what else might be competing for the money that would be spent on a device refresh in grades K-2.

More information on cost and data from the survey results will be brought to the Board at the next meeting.

4.02 Review Board Policies From Press Update #97

- a. Policy: 2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure
- b. Policy: 4:40 Incurring Debt
- c. Policy 5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited
- d. New Exhibit- 5:20-E Resolution to Prohibit Sexual Harassment
- e. Policy - 5:200 Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal

The board will take action on the recommended policy changes at the May 14, 2018 meeting.

4.03 Typically Developing Preschool Students Five Day Program Fee: 2018/2019 School Year

Currently District 59's Preschool Program has space to host 50 typically developing students at the Early Learning Center. In 2012/13, the District moved to offering the 4-day afternoon program to typically developing children, thereby reserving the 5-day morning program solely for At-Risk and Special Education students.

To best meet the needs of the early learners, in 2017/18, the District expanded the preschool opportunities to families and offered a four-year old typically developing preschool program at Ridge Family Center at no cost. This no cost program will not be offered for the 2018/19 school year.

In anticipation of increasing demands of the tuition-based typically developing preschool program, administration is recommending a five day typically developing tuition preschool program. The recommended tuition for the five day, morning only, preschool program would be \$285/month, reflecting the additional days of student attendance.

4.04 Award of Bid For Parking Lot Asphalt Resurfacing for Devonshire Elementary School

Parking lot resurfacing at Devonshire Elementary was included in the 2018-2019 Capital Improvement Projects resolution which was approved at the February 12, 2018 Board of Education meeting. RTM & Associates, the District's Civil engineering firm, prepared drawings and bid specifications for the project.

Twelve (12) bids were received, opened, and reviewed on April 13, 2018. A scope review was held with the lowest responsible bidder Accu-Paving Company, along with Scott Digilio from RTM & Associates, and representatives of the District.

5.0 COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Jennifer Randolph, president of the District 59 Education Foundation, addressed the Board of Education to share details of the successful District 59's Got Talent event and to thank the Board and administration for their support.

Mary Cosenza Vicars addressed the Board of Education to share what she wants from her elected school board members. A copy of her address is attached to the minutes of the meeting. (Attachment #2).

Beth Kaim addressed the Board of Education to thank Dr. Fessler and Mr. Grey for their presentation on District 59 that was given to a group of local realtors.

Leo Cox addressed the Board of Education on a number of topics. A copy of his address is attached to the minutes of the meeting. (Attachment #3).

Courtney Lange addressed the Board of Education to express her support for Ms. Krinsky's ability to serve as president of the Board of Education and to share her thoughts on standardized test scores.

Judy Cox addressed the Board of Education on the topics of the District's reading program and the coaching model. A copy of her address is attached to the minutes of the meeting. (Attachment #4).

Deb Manka addressed the Board of Education to share concerns about statements she has read on social media sites.

Joan Burke addressed the Board of Education on the topics of financial resources and at-risk students. A copy of her address is attached to the minutes of the meeting. (Attachment #5).

Jaime Essler addressed the Board of Education on a number of topics. A copy of her address is attached to the minutes of the meeting. (Attachment #6).

Kris Griffin, a second grade teacher at Ridge Family Center for Learning, addressed the Board of Education on the topic of the pending K-2 student device refresh.

Dan Makowski addressed the Board of Education on the topic of the District's curriculum.

Michelle Notini and Caryn Davidson addressed the Board of Education on the topic of the District's curriculum. A copy of their address is attached to the minutes of the meeting. (Attachment #7).

6.0 ACTION ITEMS

6.01 Board Reorganization

a. Adoption of Board Policy Manual

MOTION by Mrs. Roberts, seconded by Ms. Krinsky to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT on the 23rd day of April, 2018, the Community Consolidated School District 59 Board of Education hereby reaffirms the adoption of the District 59 Board Policy Manual.

Roll Call

Ayes:	7	Bhave, Burns, Krinsky, Osmanski, Roberts, Schumacher, and Somogyi
Nays:	0	
Absent:	0	
Abstain:	0	

Motion Carried: 7-0-0-0

b. Determination Of Length Of Office -- President, Vice President And Secretary To the Board Of Education

MOTION by Ms. Krinsky, seconded by Mrs. Roberts to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT on the 23rd day of April, 2018, the Community Consolidated School District 59 Board of Education establishes the length of office for the president, vice-president, and secretary to be for a period of one (1) year; the next election of officers will be held in 2019.

Roll Call

Ayes:	7	Bhave, Burns, Krinsky, Osmanski, Roberts, Schumacher, and Somogyi
Nays:	0	
Absent:	0	
Abstain:	0	

Motion Carried: 7-0-0-0

c. Establishment of Stipend For The Board Secretary

Through discussion, the board confirmed there will be no annual stipend to be paid to the elected board secretary as compensation for the performance of the duties of this office. This continues to be the established board practice. No action was taken.

d. Nomination and Election of President

NOMINATION Mr. Bhave nominated Ms. Janice Krinsky for President of the Board of Education.

NOMINATION Mrs. Schumacher nominated Mrs. Barbara Somogyi for President of the Board of Education. Mrs. Schumacher stated that she feels the Board needs the type of leadership Mrs. Somogyi has provided the last two years. She stated that due to the current climate in the community, the Board needs stability. She believes Mrs. Somogyi can provide that stability.

Dr. Burns asked for a point of inquiry to confirm that Mrs. Somogyi would accept the nomination.

Mrs. Somogyi explained that nominations do not require a second and that they are taken in the order that the nominations occurred. If the first nominee is elected, there would be no need for a roll call for the second nomination. Mrs. Somogyi confirmed that if Ms. Krinsky was not elected as president, she would accept the nomination. She thanked the Board members for their support during the last two years.

Roll Call for Nomination of Ms. Janice Krinsky to serve as President of the Board of Education.

Dr. Burns clarified before his vote that he would like to see Mrs. Somogyi continue as president, but in order for that to happen, he would have to vote no for Ms. Krinsky. He stressed that his vote does not indicate that he has any lack of faith in Ms. Krinsky serving as president.

Ayes: 5 Bhave, Krinsky, Osmanski, Roberts, and Somogyi

Nays: 2 Burns and Schumacher

Absent: 0

Abstain: 0

Motion Carried: 5-2-0-0

Dr. Fessler presented Mrs. Somogyi with a card and thanked her for servicing as Board President for the last two years. Mrs. Somogyi has 37 years of service on the District 59 Board of Education.

Ms. Krinsky took over the meeting as President of the Board of Education.



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 59, Cook County, Illinois that regular meetings will be held on the following dates:

Monday, July 9, 2018 - Business Meeting

Monday, August 6, 2018 (Public Hearing)
Monday, August 13, 2018 - Business Meeting

Monday, September 10, 2018 - Business Meeting
Monday, September 24, 2018 - Discussion and Reports

Tuesday, October 9, 2018 - Business Meeting

Tuesday, November 13, 2018 - Business Meeting
Monday, November 19, 2018 - Tax Levy Hearing and Financial Workshop

Monday, December 10, 2018 - Business Meeting

Monday, January 14, 2019 - Business Meeting

Monday, February 11, 2019 - Business Meeting
Monday, February 25, 2019 - Financial Workshop

Monday, March 11, 2019 - Business Meeting

Monday, April 15, 2019 - Business Meeting
Monday, April 29, 2019 - Financial Workshop

Monday, May 13, 2019 - Business Meeting and Budget Presentation

Monday, June 10, 2019 - Business Meeting

Regular Board Meetings will normally begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be held in the Boardroom of the BOE/Administration Center, 2123 South Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005 until the New Administration Center is available. Once the New Administration Center is available, the meetings will be held in the Boardroom at 1001 Leicester Road, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007.

DATED this 23rd day of April 2018, at Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Roll Call	Ayes:	7	Bhave, Burns, Krinsky, Osmanski, Roberts, Schumacher, and Somogyi
	Nays:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	Motion Carried: 7-0-0-0

MOTION h. **Appointment of IASB Governing Board Representative**
Dr. Burns recommend Mrs. Somogyi to be appointed as the IASB Governing Board Representative, Ms. Krinsky seconded the recommendation:

6.03 Proclamation for Staff Appreciation Week - May 7-11, 2018

MOTION by Mrs. Schumacher, seconded by Mrs. Somogyi to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: *Preparing Students to be Successful for Life* is the mission of Community Consolidated School District 59; and

WHEREAS: the economic future of our community, state, and nation is dependent upon a knowledgeable and informed citizenry; and

WHEREAS: the week of May 7-11, 2018 has been designated as National Teacher Appreciation Week;

WHEREAS: members of the Board of Education desire to recognize teachers and all employees of School District 59 during this week;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT on the 23rd day of April, 2018, on behalf of the residents, parents and students, and especially members of the Board of Education, the week of May 7-11, 2018, is hereby proclaimed as Staff Appreciation Week within Community Consolidated School District 59 as a time to recognize employees of District 59 for their dedicated contributions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the President and Secretary of the Board of Education will sign the proclamation attached hereto and a certified copy of the proclamation will be sent to each school within Community Consolidated School District 59.

6.04 Approval of Solicitation for Donors Choose for Brentwood Elementary School

MOTION by Mrs. Osmanski, seconded by Mrs. Roberts to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT on the 23rd day of April, 2018, the Community Consolidated School District 59 Board of Education supports the request to solicit donations in the amount of \$856.77 from Donors Choose, DonorsChoose.org, 134 West 37th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10018 which when received will be used for Everblocks at Brentwood Elementary School.

Roll Call	Ayes:	7	Bhave, Burns, Krinsky, Osmanski, Roberts, Schumacher, and Somogyi
	Nays:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	Motion Carried: 7-0-0-0

6.05 Approval of Solicitation for Donors Choose for Brentwood Elementary School

MOTION by Mrs. Roberts, seconded by Mrs. Somogyi to adopt the following resolution:

Mr. Ben Grey indicated that he had provided an update on initial costs to the Board of Education in the weekly update.

Mrs. Schumacher expressed her opposition to videotaping Board of Education meetings and added that she could support audio taping the meetings.

Dr. Fessler stated that he would like to get more detail on the specific costs of the equipment and the cost per month for a streaming contract. He hopes that the Board can take action by the end of May.

Mrs. Osmanski brought up the topic of the review the District's Strategic Plan. Board members agreed that community involvement would be desired. Mrs. Roberts suggested the possibility of forming a Sub-Committee to develop the framework for the Strategic Plan. The Board agreed to add the topic to the agenda of the next meeting.

9.0 REPORTS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mrs. Schumacher distributed a handout on Early Music Training for Preschool (Attachment # 8). She shared that she will be helping with Explore More Day at Clearmont.

Mrs. Somogyi provided highlights from the NSBA Conference held in San Antonio. She distributed a [hard copy of her report](#).

Dr. Burns shared highlights from the NSBA Conference.

Mrs. Osmanski and Mrs. Roberts shared that they met with the District 59 Education Association representatives to discuss the role of Board members. They thanked DEA President, Ann Wing, for the invitation and opportunity to have a discussion.

Mrs. Osmanski shared that several Board members and District administrators attended the well-planned Diversity Parade at Robert Frost Elementary. Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi and Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky also attended.

Board members thanked David Pohlmeier for the work he has done in the district and wished him well in his new position outside of the district.

10.0 REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S TEAM

Mr. Tom Luedloff shared the dates for 50th Anniversary Celebrations for two schools:

- a. Admiral Byrd on 5.3.18 @ 5:30 pm
- b. John Jay on 5.9.18 @ 6:00 pm

Mrs. Maureen McAbee shared that Title I application has been submitted and approved.

Dr. Fessler shared that he and Mr. John Harrington, Grove Jr. High Principal, will attend a meeting on Tuesday, April 24, 2018 in Springfield for the ESSA IL-Empower Plan.

11.0 CLOSED SESSION

MOTION at 9:25 p.m by Mr. Bhave, seconded by Mrs. Schumacher to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT on the 23rd day of April 2018, the Community Consolidated School District 59 Board of Education recess in a closed meeting for discussion of "The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act - amended by P.A. 99-646" 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) of the Open Meetings Act.

Roll Call	Ayes:	7	Bhave, Burns, Krinsky, Osmanski, Roberts, Schumacher, and Somogyi
	Nays:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	
			Motion Carried: 7-0-0-0

12.0 RECONVENE

MOTION at 9:40 p.m by Mrs. Schumacher, seconded by Mrs. Roberts to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT on the 23rd day of April 2018, the Community Consolidated School District 59 Board of Education meeting is reconvened.

Roll Call	Ayes:	7	Bhave, Burns, Krinsky, Osmanski, Roberts, Schumacher, and Somogyi
	Nays:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	
			Motion Carried: 7-0-0-0

13.0 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION at 9:41 p.m by Mr. Bhave, seconded by Mrs. Osmanski to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT on the 23rd day of April 2018, the Community Consolidated School District 59 Board of Education meeting is adjourned.

ATTACHMENT #1 SIGN IN SHEET FROM 4/23/2018

GUESTS April 23, 2018	
NAME	ADDRESS
Ann Wing	FJHS
Sara Magnafichi	Byrd
John D'Anza	Grove
Monika Farfan	Low
Meg Weichers	F.V.
Matt Legg	Low
Jayne Ester	
Dan Makowski	A.H.
Marcus Viana	AH
Courtney Lang	AH
J.P. [unclear]	AH
Holly Ligenza	AH
Rob Bowers	Holmes JH
Jodi Briggs-Drey	AH
Crystal Jimenez	Jay
Melissa Dominguez	FV
Muckle Lane	SL - DEA
Beth Kam	

ATTACHMENT #2

Mary Cosenza Vicars April 16, 2018 BOE Meeting

This is what I want from my elected school board members:

To listen to all the residents' concerns, to respond to our concerns in an open and transparent way at open meetings so that as residents we know and understand your positions, and to objectively evaluate our superintendent so that the taxpayers can assured that our money is being spent properly and we are providing a quality education for all our children.

At a time of low and declining scores on PARCC and PSAT8 scores, we need board members who will work with the community to achieve academic success for all kids, as measured by these standardized tests. Shouldn't our Board President question the administration's policies? Shouldn't he/she work with all community members? Do we want a divisive person to lead the board at this critical time when we need to come together?

That is why I am asking you tonight to not elect Janice Krinsky as our District 59 Board President.

Janice has done the following that should disqualify her from this position or any position on the board:

1. Recently the AG investigated Janice. She was not found guilty of violating the OMA, but we all know that what is not illegal, can be unethical. I have read every one of the emails between these four board members and Janice was one of the main organizers. When Janice used Esther Carrera to challenge the petitions, instead of letting the voters know that she was behind this, is that being open? Aren't the voters entitled to a Board President who is open and transparent?
2. On January 8, 2018, at 10:10 p.m., Janice announced that she did not want to go to referendum because "it was the not right thing to do." This item was not on the agenda and she brought it up after most of the audience had left. Was this just a coincidence that she had a change of heart at the very last time that she could so that there could be a special meeting on Thursday, so the District could file on Friday? Our attorney said that this was not open and transparent—is this who you want for Board President?
3. On more than one occasion on social media Janice has accused those who disagree with her to be negatively bashing the district. She even threatened to consult an attorney for slander. Like it or not, citizens can criticize their elected representatives. Do we want a President who tries to silence those who disagree with her?
4. Most importantly is the education of all our children. On social media, Janice says that 62 is doing better because of its early learning program. Yesterday she complimented 54 because of its parent outreach program. Do we want a Board President who makes excuses for our poor performance? When parents take the time to meet with Janice and Sharon on curricular issues, don't we want a President who will ask the hard questions of the administration?

5. In the year that I have attended these meetings, I have seen arguments that she has gotten into with board members. Whether you agree with Mardell or not over the 80/20 teaching of our Spanish speaking kids, Art, or anyone else does not have the right to criticize her views. Do you think Janice will be able to work with all the board members as Barbara has done?

I didn't always agree with Barbara, but she wasn't divisive. At time when we need to work together, should we choose a President who will add to the negative publicity that this district already gets? Choose someone else.

Attachment #3

Leo Cox
660 F Versailles Circle
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

School District 59 Board meeting 04/23/18

We, your constituents have been told “we have heard this over and over again.” Perhaps you have, but recently I came across a lucid, dissenting Supreme Court opinion, written just this month by Justice Sotomayor. She cited a line written by the Nobel prize winning author, Andre Gide, that may explain why I and other members of the public are speaking here today. Gide wrote, “Everything has been said already; but as no one listens, we must always begin again.”

In a previous Board meeting I spoke about an “invisible wall” that seemed to separate the administration from constituents. Somehow, each meeting’s Agenda “Comments and Suggestions from the Public,” appears as if this is the time for averted eyes and closed minds both by the Board and the Administration. You have heard our words but you haven’t listened to what we are saying. So I will begin again.

The recent, self-inflicted unforced error known as the new Administration building has led to the current scramble to reduce costs. Items up for reductions include everything from previously announced construction projects to the decrease of per pupil supply allocations by \$10 per student. I recently received an email from District 59 which contained, among other things, a comprehensive description of the Literacy program, plus links to a whole series of videos touting the benefits of innovative learning. These videos and attendant charts from the Innovative Learning and Communication Department (ILC) go beyond simple informative recordings of daily school experiences; actually becoming expensive, self-serving advocacy for Modern Learning. Looking for efficiencies? Salaries alone for ILC administrators represent more than one million dollars annually; for content that is primarily directed to parents – not children.

So what is Modern Learning? An introductory sentence in the video on Modern Learning caught my attention. I believe that it summed up that philosophy: “...facts that used to require memorization in order to be useful can now be retrieved immediately by any device connected to the internet. The usefulness of facts is not in their recalling, but in their application.”

So how do we apply facts? Those internet “facts”, transfer to the brain as images and vocabulary, joining prior concepts that were already recorded in one’s memory - through acquisition, rehearsal and connection of previous concepts in each brain. Information doesn’t just exist as a group of glowing pixels on a computer screen. Those previously accumulated concepts form building blocks which an individual can recall, without research, along with this new information which will coalesce into knowledge – for ultimate application in the world we live in. If a curriculum is simply based on a collection of “facts” from internet web sites, then District 59 risks becoming little more than organized home schooling.

Attachment #4

Presentation to the Board by Judith Cox- April 23, 2018

I have spent the better part of two weeks seeking the “research” that the District uses in their learning programs and “evidence” that supports the District’s policies. From the District’s website and information provided to me by the District, I focused on three areas of concern: The Reading Program, The Coaching Model, and Content area learning (Social Studies and Science).

Since reading is the foundation on which the majority of our learning is based, I first looked into the best practices in reading education. This is what I found. The District uses the reading/writing workshop method to teach and support reading. It is an efficient method that addresses both the whole group’s needs and the needs of small groups and individuals but it is only part of a balanced, complete, reading program. What I can’t ascertain from the District is what materials from this program are being used. What support is given the teachers? What are the texts, teacher materials, specific references, shared readings, papers and books read? Are the only books in the class libraries “leveled” readers? Research has shown that there is no credible evidence supporting the learning benefits of using “leveled” readers exclusively.

In the last few years the District has invested heavily in the Instructional Coaching model for “increasing the achievement and engagement of every student” (Diane Sweeney 2011). Sweeney’s program was originally designed to be used with adults learning a second language. The jury is still out as to its effectiveness in the primary classroom. I could find no research that supports coaching having any impact on student achievement. In addition (see Brookings Institute article) a study done by the New Teacher Project, in which they studied “teacher effectiveness” showed “no evidence that any particular kind or amount of professional development made a difference in student achievement”. Having teachers attend numerous “professional development” sessions is not the answer. Maybe its not a “teacher problem”.

The third area of concern is content-area learning. I still can’t find anything about what the District is teaching, no vocabulary, materials, books, etc.

Where does the problem lie? Who is accountable for the present practices and policies in the District? Under our current system, it lies with our administration and the board. The Board creates the structures and the administration comes up with ideas about what might work. In something as important as the education of our children you(the board and administration) need to look further. We don’t seek one opinion when buying a house, deciding on whether to have surgery, or choosing a career. It is time for the District to seek a second, and maybe a third opinion as to their curriculum and policies.

P.S. In regards to parent surveys....surveys are not evidence. More information on parent survey at a later date.

Attachment 5

Joan Burke, Arlington Heights, IL BOE of 4/23/18

Last year I presented to the Board how six schools with very similar challenging demographics as D59 have done much better on PARCC's performance scores than us. Board member Krinsky on social media raised doubt about my presentation. Two of the schools were in Des Plaines D62. Krinsky stated "the reason their scores are higher is because they have a rigorous preschool program for at-risk children that starts as early as birth." "In contrast...most of the children in the Early Learning Center in D59 are children with special needs rather than those who are at-risk." She went on to say "District 62 also has an extensive library of materials that can be checked out by families." And then she gave the excuse "Unfortunately D59 does not have the financial resources to run such a program."

If the focus is on the children, why don't we have the financial resources to run an at-risk program? In 2016 the district built an Early Learning Center, without a library, at a cost of \$20 million dollars. Why build an early learning center if you had no intention of focusing on the at-risk children and providing financial resources to run such a program? Instead, the administration and the board decided to build a \$17million dollar administration center and not focus on the children. I have been told by a retired D59 employee that it was a very sad day when the books in the library were packed up for donation. Now our board is looking to the taxpapers of Elk Grove Village Library to provide books for our students.

A school board's most important responsibility is to work with their community to improve student achievement. According to the Illinois Association of School Boards an effective school board is accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more focused on policies to improve student achievement. Last year improving the PARCC scores were discussed at a board meeting but a percentage increase in scores couldn't be decided upon and that was the last we heard. Parents have spoken at board meetings about the lack of a rigorous curriculum. A curriculum that has been in the works since 2013 and is being developed by teachers. Do they have time to teach and develop curricula?

IASB states the best school boards know the difference between governance (board's job) and management (superintendent's job). The school board establishes the policies and monitors their proper implementation. Management sets the strategy of the district and makes sure the employees accomplish its objectives. D59's strategic plan has been in the works since 2013 and still is not complete. D62 initiated their strategic plan in late January 2018 and six months later it will go before their board. What is taking D59 so long?

Attachment 6

Hello – I'm Jaime Esler. Although I stand behind the education my son has received thus far, I've never said there isn't room for improvement. I am all for bolstering a curriculum to make our kids more well-rounded scholars. I am all for encouraging more STEM classes to engage and ignite new interests. I believe in teaching social and emotional learning so our children can become better and more tolerant people.

My issues are with the constant negativity surrounding our schools and our children.

I challenge our community members to celebrate our children's successes. There is no rule stating we can't celebrate our accomplishments and simultaneously work for improvements. And I don't know how you could not see that there are things to celebrate within our school district. Children have stood up and presented on what they are learning, parents have spoken about what our kids are working on, and teachers and principals have come in to highlight their students. This past month in regular third grade, my son worked in an engineering group to build a rollercoaster, a reading and writing workshop, began a book club, and will beginning writing realistic fiction stores. He also just participated in a 3rd grade play on the first 16 US presidents.

We speak a lot about measuring sticks and goals. It should come as no surprise to you that I do not believe the sole measuring stick for our children's academic success should be the PARCC test. But what I have not made clear was what my personal measuring stick is for my child's academic success. Let me share that with you.

I want him to love learning. I want him to be excited to go to school every day. I want to see him challenged on a consistent basis. I want to see him make a good group of diverse friends. I want him to be confident. I want to see him participate in sports and join clubs and activities. I want him to make good choices. I want him to work hard. I want him to juggle school and activities and learn to manage his time. I want him to make mistakes and learn from them. I want him to graduate high school. I want him to go college or a trade school – wherever his interests take him. I want him to pick a career that excites him and will support him and his family. I want him to be kind, generous, empathetic, forgiving, and inquisitive. I want him to be a productive member of society and somebody that I would love to have dinner with in about 20 years.

I don't care what his PARCC score is. Our children are advancing and learning and being challenged. More and more colleges are moving away from accepting kids on mere test scores and are looking to the whole person before accepting them. I don't understand why members of this community are so intently focused on a PARCC score. I don't understand how teaching to a test – one that will likely go away – will do anything for my child's education. But I have heard repeatedly what it will do for property values. Shouldn't the focus be on our kids?

I honestly think we are our own worst PR nightmare. If you want to start increasing home values, focus on all the wonderful aspects of our community. Focus on the many successes and achievements of our kids. If you don't know what they are, please find somebody who does. Focus on an amazing park district, block parties, great neighbors, lifelong friends. Negativity breeds negativity. But positivity breeds inspiration and change.

Thank you.

Attachment 7

Michele Notini and Caryn Davidson

As parents representing other concerned parents, we want to start by saying we share the District's vision of preparing students to be successful for life and welcome the incorporation of modern components such as technology, collaboration and creativity into the classroom. However, we cannot deny the impact the implementation process is having on our students and teachers. The focus on foundational skills is not clearly evident in the nine District outcomes. In order for students to be successful, they must be prepared for what lies ahead, which is junior high school, high school, college and then the workforce. Mastery of foundational skills and student accountability are critical to such preparation.

We are here to advocate for our students who are here now. There are many teachers who would like to do the same but have are not comfortable speaking up. Our intention is find a way to effectively work together with the district administration to address and remedy these gaps. We have had 2 meetings to date, in March and April.

Our research led us to the following discussion items at our meetings:

- Lack of a structured curriculum while a new curriculum is being developed.
- Lack of content and consistency in materials used to teach and practice skill development and assess student progress
- Lack of specific curriculum goals and measurable objectives related to content students are required to learn
- Lack of programs to effectively support students requiring intervention or enrichment

We requested board members attend these meetings to facilitate a conversation on curriculum issues as opposed to the one-way communications being expressed at regular school board meetings. Our first meeting on March 1st included five parents from schools across the district as well as Assistant Superintendent Ms. McAbee, Director of Math Ms. Niles and board members Ms. Krinsky and Ms. Roberts. At this meeting, we discussed our own experiences with the curriculum and learned more about the learning experiences and the methodology behind them. Our discussion revealed that development and implementation of learning experiences (with the exception of language arts) are still very much a work in progress and learning experiences are not being piloted and evaluated prior to district-wide implementation. The impact of this approach was addressed by parents, including instances of math experiences being shelved as student skills were not consistent with skills required to be applied. Also discussed were concerns about meaningful homework, challenging opportunities for advanced students and limited content of science curriculum. It was refreshing and productive to have the participation of Board members in this meeting. However, we found it necessary to have a follow-up meeting as many of our questions required the perspective of Dr. Fessler.

Parents met with Dr. Fessler, Ms. McAbee and Ms. Niles on April 9th. Board members were invited but for reasons out of our control, they did not attend.

In response to our concerns, Dr. Fessler explained the District's focus is to teach problem solving skills that can be applied to any content and research has shown this approach to be effective. Skills are being taught in context with Learning Experiences and teachers have autonomy to teach any skills they feel necessary to support their students. He also indicated that our observations are not consistent with feedback he is receiving and that parent and teacher surveys are positive. He asked us to provide evidence of our concerns.

Each of the five parents proceeded to provide evidence of our concerns, including: lack of adequate materials to teach necessary skills which is leading to failure in math and language arts for some students and missed opportunities for advanced students - some parents are paying for private tutoring just to keep up or seriously supplementing at home to prepare for standardized tests which will determine student eligibility for advanced placement; junior high science units are lacking meaningful content and students are spending time doing simple activities rather than learning science concepts; scope and sequence of elementary school math, science, and social studies is not evident and important topics are being missed, for example, US geography is not consistently taught and many students cannot name or recognize US states; PARCC scores have been falling each year. While we recognize that PARCC is flawed and only one test, Dr. Fessler stated that the district's only other metrics are FAST scores, which are given only twice per year and do not provide feedback on specific gaps in learning to parents.

Parents went on to explain our group presence was intended to demonstrate our personal experiences, but even more importantly, our shared concerns with aspects of the new curriculum and our commitment to work together with the district to help find solutions soon.

In regards to surveys, parents indicated that district-created survey questions did not specifically address new curriculum implementation and that narrative responses were not provided with survey results. Also, per discussion with teachers, surveys were completed for Learning Experiences implemented and many were negative. Teachers have much meaningful input to share but often feel they have nowhere to go with it as teachers, principals and all other administrators are evaluated based on their compliance with district initiatives.

Our conversation concluded with apparent agreement that there are areas requiring improvement. Specifically, subject scope and sequence, content of Learning Experiences and their alignment with the IL State Board of Education requirements, and consistent, research-based resources to teach skill development. Also mentioned was the need for more intervention for students behind grade level, such as after school tutoring. We agreed to meet next month to review documentation of these items and to evaluate purchased math

curriculum options. Parents expressed they would like this meeting to pave the way for a committee comprised of administrators, parents and teachers regarding curriculum issues. Dr. Fessler indicated he would consider a parent focus group.

As provided in the Section 6:10 Board policy manual, we respectfully request the Board help us hold our District Administration accountable for their responsibility to provide “a well-defined and effective curriculum” which provides “meaningful teaching and learning opportunities to continually improve learner outcomes aligned with learner standards”. The administration's decision to develop their own curriculum adds significant additional responsibilities to this process. This responsibility should ideally include using experienced curriculum writers, adequately training staff, providing consistent, quality, content-rich materials, monitoring progress, encouraging honest feedback, and making adjustments promptly. As the elected leaders of our District, we hope the Board will realize their responsibility to oversee the fulfillment of these administrative duties in undoubtedly the most significant area.

**Attachment #8 Reports of the Board of Education
From Mardell Schumacher**

Early music training linked to abstract reasoning skills

A new research study establishes a strong link between early music instruction and intelligence.

The study, published in the February issue of *Neurological Research*, says music training, specifically piano instruction, is far superior to computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills necessary for learning math and science.

The report's authors, psychologist Frances Rauscher of the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh and physicist Gordon Shaw of the University of California at Irvine, conducted a two-year experiment with four groups of preschoolers.

One group received daily singing lessons and two private

piano lessons each week. The second group received only singing lessons, the third group received two private computer lessons each week, and the fourth received no extra instruction in music or computers.

The children were given mental ability tests at the start of the study and again six months later. The children who received piano lessons performed 34 percent higher on tests measuring spatial-temporal ability than the others.

This study reinforces earlier research by Rauscher, Shaw, and others that demonstrate a causal relationship between early music training and the development of neural circuitry in the brain that governs spatial intelligence.

These studies show that early experiences determine which brain cells (neurons) will connect with other brain cells and which will die away. Because neural connections are responsible for all types of intelligence, a child's brain develops to its full potential only with exposure to the necessary enriching experiences in early childhood.

The research shows that music training generates the neural connections used for abstract reasoning including those necessary for understanding mathematical concepts.

Noting that Rauscher and Shaw established for the first



It's never too early to learn about music.

mann says, "it's profoundly important to know that what we've felt intuitively over the years can now be proven scientifically."

What is unique about the latest study is its assertion that music beats computers at enhancing early childhood development, he notes, and this should cause school districts to think twice before cutting music instruction in favor of more computer classes.

The Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership, of which NSBA is a member, urges all states to require high-quality music instruction, along with the other arts, as an essential part of a basic education. ■

MUSIC EDUCATORS NATIONAL CONFERENCE