

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Education
Willow Springs Consolidated School District No. 108
Tuesday, January 26, 2021
Willow Springs School Gym**

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić(Remotely), Tortorella, Hawkins(6:52), Bohac and Boswell Perreault
Administration: Superintendent Patrick & Principal Smuda

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President, Mary Ellen Weeg.

Acceptance of the Superintendent's Agenda

The superintendent recommends the approval of the Superintendent's Agenda.

Motion 21-071 by Ciota, seconded by Weeg as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the superintendent's Agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Public Comment

Community members are invited to share their questions, comments or concerns with the school board. When speaking, citizens should state their name and address for the record and limit their presentation to three minutes. All comments are a matter of public record and as such will be documented and recorded. Where possible, the board will answer factual questions immediately. A written response may be provided when information is not available. If a response would involve discussion of board policy or decisions which might be of interest to citizens not present at the meeting the board may place the item on a future meeting agenda.

Additionally, board policy 2:230 permits the Board President to shorten a person's opportunity to speak. "The President may also deny the opportunity to speak to a person who has previously addressed the Board on the same subject" (2:230)

The Union asked the Board to reevaluate the Positivity rate for the Blended model and for going back to full Remote. Their complete request is attached.

Teachers: Kim Cahill and Jill Craig, Andy Mace from Wipfli; Community Member: Greg Lauriano(300 Village Circle, A506) and Valerie Wacker who took the minutes.

Item 6A Presentation of the FY2020 Audit Report

Andy Mace, from Wipfli, presented the FY2020 Audit Report. This is the first year Wipfli has conducted the audit. It is unremarkable again this year. No deficiencies were noted. The acceptance of the report is in the Consent Agenda.

Financial Report

The financial report for the month of December was in the packet. Nick Cavalier from Baker Tilly was not available to attend the meeting. The financials look unremarkable for December. They are right on track for both expenditures and revenues. Nick further reports, "I did a quick review comparing December 2020 results to December 2019 results, year to date, and noted that revenues and expenditures are very comparable to the same time period as last year. The largest outlier relates to Transportation expenditures year to date, which is within expectations due to school closure. Noted bond payments recorded in the DS fund and consistent with budgeted amount for the year. (Principal)".

Minutes

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for December 15, 2020.

Motion 21-072 by Bohac, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for December 15, 2020.

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault
Abstain: Ristić**

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes from the Special Board Meeting for January 11, 2021.

Motion 21-073 by Hawkins, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the minutes from the Special Board Meeting for January 11, 2021.

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault
Abstain:**

Consent Agenda

The superintendent recommends the approval of the consent agenda.

Motion 21-074 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the consent agenda.

Consent #1

The superintendent recommends the approval of the payroll and the approval of the bills in the amount of \$197,540.58 (8A-1-2), the reimbursement of the Imprest Fund in the amount of \$0 (8B) and approval of the Activity Fund balance of \$55,334.27 (8C) for the month of January 2021.

Consent #2

The superintendent recommends the approval of the financial report for the month of December 2020. Fund balances: Educational: \$4,130,971; Operations & Maintenance: \$229,064; Debt Service: \$359,621; Transportation: \$631,586; IMRF: \$212,219; Capital Projects: 145,576; Working Cash: \$535,683; Tort: \$42,050; and Fire Prevention & Life Safety \$5.

Consent #3

The superintendent recommends the acceptance of the FY2020 Annual Audit Report as prepared and reported by Wipfli.

Consent #4

The superintendent recommends the approval of the 2020-2021 Seniority List.

Consent #5

The superintendent recommends the approval of Sarah Haussy's parenting leave beginning on March 27, 2021 and lasting through the end of the 2020-21 school year.

The superintendent recommends the approval of Lauren Herrera's parenting leave beginning on April 6, 2021 and lasting through the end of the 2020-21 school year.

The superintendent recommends the approval of Nikki Theodoropoulos's parenting leave beginning on April 12, 2021 and lasting through the end of the 2020-21 school year.

Consent #6

The superintendent recommends that as accurate minutes exist, the audio recordings for the April 30, 2019 and May 23, 2019 Closed Sessions be destroyed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

9 Notices and Communications

The superintendent presented the following news articles:

A-a. 1 Journal article related to National and Illinois Education Issues at this time.

A Chicago Tribune article reporting the widespread fraudulent unemployment claims being made across the country. To date, the District has had 10 fraudulent claims made.

A-b. 4 Newspaper and related articles related to Willow Springs School

1. A Des Plaines Valley News article reporting on school board races in the area.
2. A Des Plaines Valley News article about the December donation from RPH Properties to Willow Springs SD 108 teachers. \$10,000 in supplies.
3. A snippet from the Des Plaines Valley News concerning phasing into in-person learning.
4. A public Meeting calendar is a new feature in the Des Plaines Valley News. Though they did not Have our district number right.

A-c. 0 Newspaper and related articles related to early childhood education.

Item 9B Legislative/SCOPE report: 1 Item.

The legislature met in its lameduck session during the first week of January. The biggest news was the election of Chris Welch as Speaker of the House. In the past, he has been an advocate for education.

The legislature did complete a few other tasks. It passed a huge education omnibus bill. In its original form, the bill was enormous – even calling for fifteen additional school days for students, plus 5 additional institute days for staff – but with no funding attached to the bill. Twenty days is a full month of workdays. This portion of the bill was removed and sent to the P20 Council (they discuss education initiatives from pre-school through age 20). A change to the Evidence Based Funding formula, which attempted to provide more equity for students of color, was removed and sent for further study.

What did pass was high school graduation requirements, a review of how US history is taught, codifying of the KIDS (kindergarten) assessment, demanding new computer science standards, changes to the accelerated placement program, and the establishment of a Whole Child Taskforce which will study and recommend trauma informed practices for schools.

The legislature also passed criminal justice and police reform bills, which do not directly impact schools. Restrictions on Seclusion, Time Out and Restraint did not pass the House. It is expected that a bill will be reintroduced in the new legislature.

Item 9C State Board of Education Correspondence: 0 Items.

Item 9D Illinois Association of School Boards Correspondence: 0 Items.

Item 9E AERO Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 9F EBC Health Insurance Co-op Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 9G Village of Willow Springs Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 9H County Clerk Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 9I Intermediate Service Center Correspondence: 1 item.

The notification sent stating the Board's appointment of Jessica Boswell-Perrault to the Board through the April 2021 election.

Item 9J Township Treasurer Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 9K

Superintendent Correspondence Received: 0 items.

Superintendent Correspondence Sent: 6 items.

Six letters to our families about the move to in-person learning were sent.

Item 9K-A Freedom of Information Act Requests and Notices 0 items.

Special Education

Bohac reported: Students will return to in person learning on February 1st. About 50% are doing in person and 50% are remote. This is not across the board, with multi-needs having a greater percentage participating in remote.

AERO are still short approximately 40 paraprofessionals, however, they are in the process of hiring 12 new para's.

AERO needs our enrollment projection for their school and services (OT/PT) for next year by mid March. They need to propose a tentative budget on April 7th.

Having a hard time getting staff their vaccinations through Stickney Township. Dr. Grunnell has asked staff to seek out the shot through the county and/or their doctors at this time!

Principal's Report

Principal Smuda reported:

After 312 days of no students in the building, the EC-2nd graders and some special ed classes returned last Wednesday!!!! Their energy was so positive! Students wore their masks and were showing understanding of the six foot distance requirement. The principal has been emphasizing the 3Ws: Wear your mask, Watch your distance, and Wash your hands. The 3rd – 5th graders returned yesterday and the junior high students return tomorrow. The smallest regular ed class is 6 and 8A has the largest class at 16.

Administration is very happy to be able to offer both the blended/in-person and remote models of instruction to all of the families. Approximately 58% selected blended and 42% remote. The schedules can be VERY confusing!! Ms. Flores has created several different forms for the Willow Weekly to help parents to better comprehend.

The six foot social distancing guideline will be the hardest for our students to learn. Each classroom has colored squares to define each student's sit spot and standing spot to keep students safe. Also, most of the hallways have large circles placed along the perimeters to help in their understanding.

Students have been taking their mid-year assessments in reading and math. The MAP tests are usually administered to everyone, however due to remote learning, the younger students are taking alternative assessments. When all tests are complete, calculations will be made of how many of the students made growth from the fall to the winter season. This calculation will be used in the teacher evaluation process.

The 8th grade classes registered with ARGO High School for their freshman level classes. This year, the counselors met their new students virtually over Zoom.

We are offering four informational support sessions for parents next month. Presented by Aurora Advocate Health, the titles are:

- COVID Concerns: Hear from a Pediatrician
- Parenting During Uncertain Times
- Managing Fear: Tactics to Reduce COVID Related Fear
- Well-being for Families

Each session will be held at 7:00 in the evening, held over Zoom and are about an hour long. The principal will be raffling off a \$25 Amazon card for each session!

Go Guardian was installed to monitor students. Teachers can see what tab(s) they have open for all K – 8th grade classes. Teachers can shut down the sites that students should not be on.

All students get a grab and go breakfast and lunch as they leave for the day. Breakfast/Lunches are left at the exits and students grab one as they leave. Remote parents can pick up here at Willow or in Sterling estates each day for all their children 18 and under. The kitchen staff are doing their best at estimating how many lunches to make.

11A Class Size Information

Enrollment continues to fluctuate slightly. The report was given out at the Board meeting.

Item 12A Blended Learning Update

The transition to in-person learning for K-2 and XC went pretty smoothly the week of 1/19. We learned a few things and tweaked a few procedures. Four hours for this set of kids can be a long time. They've been able to take breaks outdoors this week – a mild January week.

3rd – 5th grades started on Monday, January 25th and 6th – 8th grades start on Wednesday, January 27th. The transition for the 3rd – 5th grades went smoothly. Administration is hoping the same for the 6th – 8th grades.

We are running at about 56% in-person, 44% remote. On January 22nd, we had 10 in-person students quarantining and 1 staff member quarantining.

In South Cook, 55% of districts are in a blended model of some sort.

While we will not participate in the athletic conference this spring (if conference games are even viable), Jason Noble and Emily Moses are planning for afterschool intramurals after Spring Break for our 6th – 8th graders who attend classes in-person. It will be outside only and focus on soccer, volleyball and softball. More information to come.

On vaccine news: Illinois officially opened up group 1B (all school employees) on Monday. We know that Cook County is running behind other parts of the state because of the sheer size of Cook County. More people take more time to vaccinate. The Cook County Department of Public Health projects a mid-February start for group 1B. The South Cook ISC is working with the CCDPH to establish sites for school employees when it becomes available. Those talks are reported to be very productive.

If you work in suburban Cook County you are eligible to receive the vaccine in suburban Cook County. All of us are covered. We are on the list. We are also doing some parent professional development through Advocate Aurora Hospital. They have placed us on their list as well because they are doing business with us as even though they are in DuPage County. It might be quicker? Finally, the folks that do our health screening and flu shots are looking to be providers for their clients. They are not approved yet, but when they are, we will be on that list as well. Wherever we come up first is where we will go.

The superintendent asked the Board if it wanted to address anything from the Union's comments made during Public Comment. Once again, Mrs. Weeg expressed her great frustration with the lack of solid guidance from any of the health departments leaving each district to make up its own rules, often in conflict with a neighboring district. In discussing the currently adopted 30% threshold, there was consensus that it should be lowered. After much discussion, it was determined that using the State of Illinois' metrics for moving between Tiers be used, particularly looking at what moves a region from Phase 2 to Phase 3. It was recommended that as rates fluctuate greatly from day to day, that the District move to full remote learning when the rolling 7 day positivity rate average exceeds 13% for 14 consecutive days (using the combined 60480 and 60458 zip codes). To return to blended learning, the rolling 7 day positivity rate average would need to be below 12% for 14 consecutive in the same 2 zip codes.

The staff asked the Board to reevaluate the Positivity rate for the Blended model and for going back to full Remote. After a thorough discussion the Board made a motion.

Motion 21-075 by Tortorella, seconded by Bohac Based upon Illinois metrics of Tiered Mitigations, when the positivity rate is 13% or greater, using the averaged zip codes of 60480 and 60458, using the rolling 7 day rolling average for 14 consecutive days, the District will move to full remote learning. The District will return to blended learning when the positivity rate is below 12%, using the averaged zip codes of 60480 and 60458, using the 7 day rolling average for 14 consecutive days.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Item 12B Board Secretary Payment

The superintendent recommends the payment to Valerie Wacker \$900 and Lauren McSweeney \$20 for taking and preparing Board minutes for 2020.

Motion 21-076 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the superintendent the payment to Valerie Wacker \$900 and Lauren McSweeney \$20 for taking and preparing Board minutes for 2020.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Item 12C School Calendar Revision

We currently have a Teacher Institute Day scheduled for Monday, February 15. The superintendent would like to reschedule that Teacher Institute Day for 2 reasons: we're just getting into the routine of having in-person learning. He hates to disrupt the pattern; with; with the vaccine becoming available to teachers, and hoping that we will be able to schedule all of our staff for the same day, He would plan to use a Remote Learning Planning Day for that – which would be a non-attendance day for students. We won't be able to have enough sub coverage otherwise. Hopefully, that would be sometime in February. Two in-service days in February, are a lot. The superintendent would like to hold off scheduling the official Institute Day for the time being.

The superintendent recommends making Monday, February 15, 2021 a regular student attendance day.

Motion 21-077 by Bohac, seconded by Tortorella as recommended by the Superintendent for the approval to make Monday, February 15, 2021 a regular student attendance day.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Item 12D Graduation Date 2021

Argo is set for graduation on Tuesday, May 18. Stagg's is set for Monday, May 24. Currently the superintendent doesn't believe we have any 8th graders with senior siblings at Stagg. At this point he believes we have to plan for an outdoor graduation ceremony of some sort. As it stands now, we are planning on using last year's ceremony as our model. Because it will be outdoors, and we need daylight, he is recommending Friday, May 21st starting at 2pm. The last day of school is scheduled for Wednesday, May 26th.

The superintendent recommends that Friday, May 21, 2021 be established as the 8th grade graduation ceremony.

Motion 21-078 by Hawkins, seconded by Ristić as recommended by the Superintendent 8th grade graduation date be established on Friday, May 21, 2021.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Item 12E Board Meeting Calendar Revision

With the change in Graduation dates, the superintendent recommends moving the May Board meeting to Tuesday, May 25 at 6:30pm. It's currently scheduled for Monday, May 24 at 5:30pm, which would have been just prior to the Graduation ceremony if we were able to have a traditional one indoors.

Also, the Board is scheduled for a Special Meeting on Saturday, February 6 at 9am. This has traditionally provided the Board with some deeper reviews of school programs and initiatives. The superintendent hit a scheduling conflict for himself and is unable to attend on that date. He is requesting that the meeting be postponed until summer. This will allow the new principal to take part.

The superintendent recommends that the May 24, 2021 Board meeting be moved to Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 6:30, and further recommends that the February 6, 2021 Special meeting be postponed and rescheduled at a later time.

Motion 21-079 by Ciota, seconded by Tortorella as recommended by the Superintendent that the May 24, 2021 Board meeting be moved to Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 6:30, and further recommends that the February 6, 2021 Special meeting be postponed and rescheduled at a later time.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Item 12F Summer School 2021

Assuming that we will be able to have an in-person summer school, and there is no reason to believe we would not be able to, the superintendent is recommending a more robust program than we've offered in the past.

The principal and superintendent are recommending a 6 week, 5 day a week program to happen in the mornings. They would also be looking at least 1 teacher per grade level. The cost will be roughly between \$40-\$50,000. They would use the COVID relief federal money that was granted in December for this project. The dates would be June 21 – July 30. (No school on the 4th of July.) This would provide 3 weeks for cleaning at both ends of Summer School. The superintendent is concerned about getting the cleaning done this summer, especially if we are lucky enough to return to full day 100% in-person next school year. He is looking at a regular school start date of August 23 for teachers.

The superintendent recommends that the Summer School program run from June 21 – July 30, 2021.

Motion 21-080 by Bohac, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the Superintendent that the Summer School program run from June 21 – July 30, 2021.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Item 12G Principal Search

The search for the principal replacement has begun. The position was posted the week we returned from winter break, and the application deadline is February 1st. So far, we have about 30 resumes. From those prospective principals, the superintendent will invite 10-12 to answer some written questions, 5-6 of them, depending upon their answers, will be brought in to interview with a small panel of staff. Second interviews will be offered to the final four. The final 2 candidates will be invited to spend the morning here at school. Then, the superintendent will interview the 2 finalists and make a recommendation to the Board. The goal is to make the recommendation to the Board at the March meeting.

Item 13 Closed Session

The superintendent did not find a need to go into Closed Session.

Item 14 Final Actions

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes of the October 27, 2020 Closed Session.

Motion 21-081 by Weeg, seconded by Hawkins The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes of the October 27, 2020 Closed Session.

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, and Bohac
Abstain: Hawkins and Boswell Perreault**

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes of the December 17, 2020 Closed Session.

Motion 21-082 by Ristić, seconded by Bohac The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes of the December 15, 2020 Closed Session.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

The superintendent recommends the approval of the Board’s findings that the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of the following closed session minutes as presented.

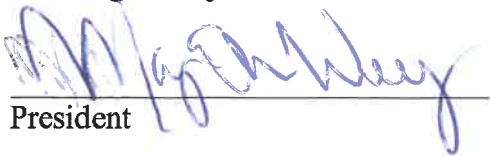
Motion 21-083 by Ciota, seconded by Tortorella The superintendent recommends the approval of the Board’s findings that the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of the following closed session minutes as presented in the attachment.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Ristić, Tortorella, Hawkins, Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Item 14

Item 16 Adjournment

**Motion 21-084: Adjournment at 8:28 pm
Motion made by, Ciota Seconded by Hawkins
Hearing no objections so moved.**



President



Secretary