

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Education  
Willow Springs Consolidated School District No. 108  
Tuesday, February 22, 2022  
Willow Springs School Library**

**Call to Order**

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

**Roll Call**

Members present: Weeg, Ristić, Hawkins, Anderson, Mierop(6:33) and Nunez  
Administration: Superintendent Bahn & Principal Oreeluk

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**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)

Community members: Tiffany Carlisle(1047 Testa, Justice); Vicki Buss(1350 Prospect Ave., Justice); Richard Stringham(1307 Vinewood Ave.); Danijela Brankovic(214 Mound St.); Renaé Craig(219 Louis Drive); Jessica Perreault(8590 S. Archer Ave.); Erin Chambers(205 N. Oakwood); Ivana Grzesiak(11 Cliffside Circle Dr.); Doug Ciota(1364 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St.); Laura Szymczyk(8784 Archer Ave); Adrian Gonzalez(1350 Prospect Ave.) and Joanna Stasik(8141 Lake St.). Students: Alexis Carlisle and Susann Dunlap.

Teachers: Kim Cahill, Joy Tristano, Laura Baricovich, Deanna Swicionis, Ann Musto, Michaele Strauch, Sharon Conrad, and Michelle VonBank. Custodial Staff: Mary Sheehan and Juan Garcia.  
Valerie Wacker took the minutes.

Tiffany Carlisle, community member spoke:

For over a year Willow Students have been in person wearing masks. Like it or not, mitigations in school became their new normal. We all are hoping the end game for COVID is near. But it seems premature to abandon mitigations so close to the finish line. I urge the Board to follow science and common sense. Many districts went remote out of fear of paper terrorism by a political group whose end goal is to divert funds from public education. Before this board moves forward, the community should know the following:

ESSER III funding, Will Willow remain eligible for the \$800,000 if it is remote?

What are the vaccination percentage for staff and students?

How many students are shield testing and will that continue?

Will students or staff exhibiting COVID symptoms be required to test for COVID or at the very least wear a mask to stay in school?

Will Willow still be requiring masks for athletes participating in indoor sports? My 8<sup>th</sup> grader who has asthma post COVID is really interested in this answer.

None of these questions are a violation of HIPAA and you should be able to answer them all before this board can responsibly vote to end any mitigations.

While this board creates a plan to move from required to recommended mitigations, keep in mind that Ableism is discrimination in favor of able-bodied people. A mask optional policy may be a form of Ableism. The ablest solution throughout this pandemic for those with medical needs has been to exclude them when lifting COVID policies. Please do not continue that policy path. It is possible to create a plan to recommend reducing mitigations that takes in account All of District 108. Spring Break and open windows are still weeks away for us. The Leadership of this board has got us through this school year with minor need for remote learning, a good plan will help continue that trend.

Thank you for your time.

Richard Stringham, community member spoke:

He stated that child safety should be number one priority.

He talked about a situation with his kindergarten son and asked about school policy pertaining to when there are threats of a weapon being brought to school.

Renaé Craig, community member spoke:

She stated it was hard for her to explain to her son, why students two hours away are not wearing masks but that Willow students are still having to wear them. She also stated that children need to be challenged more and that a lot of families left because their child/ren were not being challenged. Her son is doing multiplication facts in fifth grade and should be beyond that. She also talked about a lack of a community service officer in the building, like we had before COVID.

Doug Ciota, community member spoke:

He has subbed at Willow since mid-September and before that was on the Board of Education.

He stated that the teachers are not over paid they have a hard job.

He spoke out about the student lunches and would like to see a change in the menu. He would like a committee created to research this to include a 4 team members, 1 teacher, 1 Board member, 1 Administrator and 1 child.

He also stated the TIF 1 ends in 2023 and that will bring in the budget. He would like to see the Special Education budget be tripled. That department really needs it.

He also did not like to see staff paying for water from the water cooler. He believes the school has enough funds to pay for it.

### **Board/Superintendent Announcements**

Superintendent Bahn stated Nick Cavaliere from Baker Tilly could not make it to the meeting tonight.

### **Financial Report and Tax Levy Discussion**

The financial reports for the months of January 2022 were in the packets. The superintendent stated that finances are on track.

### **Consent Agenda**

The superintendent recommends the approval of the consent agenda.

**Motion 22-057 by Weeg, seconded by Nunez as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the consent agenda.**

#### **Consent #1**

A copy of the Regular Board Meeting December 14, 2021 minutes were in the packet.

**The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting on January 25, 2022 and the minutes from the Special Board Meeting on February 5, 2022.**

#### **Consent #2**

**The superintendent recommends the approval of the payroll and the approval of the bills in the amount of \$300,043.42 (7b), the reimbursement of the Imprest Fund in the amount of \$204.00 (7c) and approval of the Activity Fund balance of \$51,106.86 (7d) for the month of February 2022.**

### **Consent #3**

**The superintendent recommends the approval of the financial report for the month of January 2022. Fund balances: Educational: \$4,174,313; Operations & Maintenance: \$115,448; Debt Service: \$360,977; Transportation: \$570,742; IMRF: \$155,266; Capital Projects: \$148,345; Working Cash: \$539,005; Tort: \$40,880; and Fire Prevention & Life Safety \$5.  
Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, Hawkins, Anderson, Mierop and Nunez**

### **Item 8 Action Items**

#### **Item 8A Approval Willow Springs COVID-19 Plan**

The superintendent stated much has changed related to the guidance, recommendations, and executive orders related to COVID-19 mitigations in schools in the state of Illinois since the last Board meeting. He shared a presentation which included relevant information and recommendations for the Board to consider. The present mandates expire on 2/13/22.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the COVID-19 plan as presented.

**Motion 22-058 by Mierop, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the COVID-19 plan as presented.**

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, Hawkins, Anderson, Mierop and Nunez**

#### **Item 8B Approval of the 2022-2023 School Calendar**

The superintendent included a copy of the updated school calendar for the 2022-2023 school year. This is the final draft of the school calendar and includes changes that were discussed during last month's Board meeting. The calendar has been shared with the Willow Springs Leadership Team, as well as the entire staff. Feedback was provided to him from both groups and has been shared with the Board. There are a few additional calendar related items which were discussed including the placement of parent/teacher conferences, and the implementation of a weekly early-release day. There is still a lot of work to be done for the early release days. He plans to work with the Willow Springs Leadership Team on these items and communicate with the staff and families in the weeks ahead.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the 2022-2023 school calendar as presented.

**Motion 22-059 by Hawkins, seconded by Weeg as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the 2022-2023 school calendar as presented.**

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, Hawkins, Anderson, Mierop and Nunez**

#### **Item 8C Approval of Lawn Maintenance Contract**

The superintendent included a copy of the contract for the lawn maintenance of Willow Springs School for 2022. The details of this agreement are included within the contract. He supplied the Board with the additional information they asked for regarding the cost of prior years' contracts and he shared the previous contracts with the Board via email.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the lawn maintenance contract with Bustos Landscape Inc. of Berwyn, Illinois for 2022 in the amount of \$5,920.00.

**Motion 22-060 by Anderson, seconded by Ristić as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the lawn maintenance contract with Bustos Landscape Inc. of Berwyn, Illinois for 2022 in the amount of \$5,920.00.**

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, Hawkins, Anderson, Mierop and Nunez**

#### **Item 8D Approval of FMLA Request**

The superintendent included a letter to the Board from Ms. Emily Moses – physical education teacher. Ms. Moses is expecting a child in early May of 2022, and is requesting a leave beginning on May 2, 2022 and continuing through the end of the current school year.

As with any FMLA request, the start date of this leave is subject to change. The superintendent will work with Ms. Moses regarding the dates of her leave and update the Board of any changes. He will also work with the principal to identify a replacement for this time.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the FMLA request for Ms. Emily Moses for the period of time indicated within her letter.

**Motion 22-061 by Ristić, seconded by Weeg as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the FMLA request for Ms. Emily Moses for the period of time indicated within her letter.**

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, Hawkins, Anderson, Mierop and Nunez**  
**Item 9 Presentations/Committee Reports**

### **9A Principal's Report**

Principal Oreluk reported:

Valentine's Day Grams were sold for one week prior to Valentinus's Day. Students had the opportunity to send their friend(s) a Valentine's Day themed item or sticker for \$0.25 - \$0.50 cents each. A profit of \$100 was made.

PFC Popcorn Day was on Friday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. PFC volunteers and Willow Staff supported this event. About 450 bags of Popcorn were sold and a profit of over \$400 was made! The Caught Being Good raffle gave out 12 bags of popcorn for prizes.

Parents for Children update:

- Meetings continue to be on the day of the Board of Education meetings in person and on Zoom options.
- A survey in Spanish and English was sent out to all guardians and staff at Willow. There were 25 responses.
- Six were staff members and the rest were community members.
- They are thinking of bringing back Nacho and Popcorn days.

Parent Teacher Conferences took place on February 21<sup>st</sup> both in person and on Zoom meetings. There were 120 Zoom conferences scheduled of which 99 were attended which equaling 82.5% attended. There were 152 in person conferences scheduled which 129 were attended equaling 84.9% attended. It's great to have communication between parents and staff!

Illinois 5 Essentials Survey: 2021-2022. This survey provides teachers and guardians with the opportunity to share their thoughts about Willow. The survey helps identify areas of strength and areas for growth. As a District, we will use this information for our continuous improvement process.

There are five main areas that the survey measures. They include Ambitious instruction, Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment and Involved Families.

Information on how to take the Survey will be sent home to guardians this Friday. It will be put in the Willow Weekly, paper copy instructions will be sent home with each student, as well as putting it on the Willow website. All surveys answers will be anonymous. The principal will send our information on the feedback.

4B, Ms. Jaronczyk's Science class did a unit on Conductor or Insulator?

5A and 5B, Mr. Layer's and Mr. Weissenstein's classes had an Author Visit via Zoom.

Caught Being Good was a big success in February. A lot of happy raffle winners. The staff is going to Revamp this incentive for the next raffle.

### **9C Enrollment Report**

The enrollment report was in the packet. It includes grade level enrollment numbers cohort from the end of last school year, the middle of August 2021, October 2021, December 2021 and January 2022 for comparison purposes.

## **Item 10 Information/Discussion Items**

### **10A Willow Springs 108 Strategic Plan**

The superintendent stated that there has been discussion in regards to begin a strategic planning process for District 108. Since the last conversation, he met virtually with Perry Soldwedel from Consortium for Educational Change. He has worked with CEC and Perry previously in various areas, including the creation of strategic plans for school districts. The superintendent would like to move forward with the planning phase of the district's new strategic plan with Perry as a co-facilitator. They would lead this process in a collaborative manner with a large group of stakeholders including 2 Board of Ed members, 5-7 Willow Springs Staff, Union representation, 4-5 parents, and potentially former/current Willow Springs Students. He anticipates the process taking four months to complete. This would allow a presentation of the plan to the Board this summer and begin implementation of the plan during the 2022-2023 school year. The superintendent explained what a strategic plan is and that it is a long term plan for about 5 years which would include student specific plans, special education plans along with hiring and retaining highly qualified staff.

The superintendent included a standard proposal from CEC for this work. With Board approval, he will work with CEC to identify dates and next steps in this process. The entire cost of this work will be covered through the district's Title I grant funds. The district received rollover funding this year which will easily cover this cost and therefore not impact the current budget. This will be a contract package. Some pieces Mr. Soldwedel will pull back and the superintendent will cover those meetings.

The Board would like the superintendent to check out other companies and to ask for a proposal and additional quotes.

### **Item 10C COVID Update**

The superintendent provided an update regarding COVID and answered all questions. No plans to change the breakfast at this time. Staff will not police masks even when parents want their student(s) to wear masks and the students don't want to.

### **Item 10D AERO Update**

The superintendent reported:

He recently received the following information from Dr. Mike Riordan – President of the AERO Executive Board:

The AERO Executive Search Committee has reached a tentative agreement with Dr. Bill Roseland to become our AERO Associate Executive Director in 2022-2023, transitioning to the Executive Director position in 2023-2024.

Pending the approval of the Executive and Governing Boards, Dr. Roseland will come to AERO with extensive experience and outstanding qualifications that will enable him to provide sound leadership to the cooperative for years to come. Dr. Roseland has successfully served as the Executive Director of the Southern Will County Cooperative for Special Education since 2010, which makes him well suited to take the reins at AERO and continue the legacy that Dr. Gunnell will leave as he transitions to retirement. The superintendent attached Dr. Roseland's letter of application and resume for your review.

## **11 Communications/Correspondence**

### **Item 13 Items For Next Agenda**

2022-2023 staffing plan

### **Item 14 Closed Session**

Request to conduct a Closed Session pursuant to Chapter 102, Paragraph 2 of the Statutes of the State of Illinois and as per board policy for the purpose(s) of discussing pending legal actions; the appointment, employment, and/or dismissal of an employee(s) and/or other matters governed by the above-stated Statutes therein as per motion to adjourn.

The superintendent requested to conduct a Closed Session pursuant to Chapter 102, Paragraph 2 of the Statutes of the State of Illinois and as per board policy for the purpose(s) of discussing student discipline and employment of specific employees and/or other matters governed by the above-stated Statutes therein.

**Motion 22-062 by Weeg, seconded by Anderson to go into Closed Session at 7:50 p.m. with the purpose of discussing student discipline and employment of specific employees and/or other matters governed by the above-stated Statutes therein.**

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, Hawkins, Anderson, Mierop and Nunez**

**Board left closed session at 8:49 p.m. but did not have a need to go back into Open Session.**

**Item 16 Adjournment**

**Motion 22-063: Adjournment at 8:49 pm**

**Motion made by, Weeg Seconded by Ristić**

**Hearing no objections so moved.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
President



\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

