

Board of Education Highlights

October 24, 2007 – Washington Elementary School

Superintendent's Report:

The 5th Annual Parent University was held this last Saturday at Monroe Middle School. Ten different classes were offered on all aspects of parenting and 65 District 200 parents participated in this valuable morning of learning and sharing with teachers, social workers, parents and session leaders. Our own Deb Durrbeck, Parent Mentor, and Sue Waters, Director of Middle School Special Services, conducted a great session on communication and have been asked to offer their sessions again so that more parents could have the opportunity to attend. All of our District 200 social workers were in attendance on Saturday morning to greet and be available to parents during the morning. A big thank you to Donna Kozica, Department Chair for Social Work, for her vision for Parent University and all she did to make this a valuable and rewarding morning for our community.

Dr. Drury introduced Wheaton North High School student Christine Ward and Wheaton Warrenville South High School student Ali Winberg, the Board of Education student representatives, who presented their reports.

Dr. Drury made a recommendation to the Board on the sale of the Hubble property should there be a successful referendum on February 5, 2008 to build a new Hubble Middle School. On May 29, 2007, then Superintendent, Gary Catalani submitted to the Board his recommendation regarding the disposition of the current Hubble site. It was Dr. Catalani's recommendation that upon the successful passage of a referendum to build a new middle school, that the district sell the current Hubble Middle School property. Dr. Catalani cited seven poignant reasons for his recommendation. They included: 1) enrollment trends that indicated little to no growth through the year 2014; 2) reusing the current site for a preschool replacement would be cost prohibitive and not educationally feasible; 3) maintaining the current site would present an additional tax burden challenging program delivery; 4) redeveloping the current Hubble property would increase the district EAV, thereby aiding overall school finance; 5) selling the current Hubble property would help offset the construction costs of the new building; 6) redeveloping the Hubble property would assist the City of Wheaton with infrastructure problems along the Main Street corridor; 7) we can make plans for relocating Wheaton Park District programs to other district sites.

After reviewing Dr. Catalani's recommendations, Dr. Drury informed the Board of Education that he concurred with Dr. Catalani's conclusions. Dr. Drury recommended that the Board of Education, upon a successful passage of a middle school referendum, make plans to sell the current Hubble site.

The Board took the following action:

The location of the December 12 Board meeting has been moved from Bower Elementary School to Longfellow Elementary School. The Board will celebrate with staff and community the Blue Ribbon Award recently given to Longfellow.

Approved ING Financial Advisers as a Third Party Provider of the 403(b) Sheltered Annuity Program offered to District 200 employees. ING Financial Advisers will be responsible for all administration services of the plan.

Action Items:

The Board received School Improvement Plans for all nineteen schools as well as the District Improvement Plan for review and approval. While this is a requirement under the No Child Left Behind regulations for schools not making AYP, our District is committed to continuous school improvement. Although the major components of each plan are similar, they have been individualized by each school to meet their staff and student needs.

The Wheaton Warrenville South library renovations are complete and the Board requested an occupancy permit from the Regional Office of Education.

Oral Report:

Dr. Margo Sorrick, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services, shared the District's school improvement plans with the Board of Education. She reported: that the trend data on student achievement continues to be positive for the District; math trends in some levels have increased to performance ceilings; the District has identified achievement gaps for some sub groups; student mobility is a significant challenge to achievement across all subgroups; and both high schools are in restructuring efforts that are in line with and being monitored by the State of Illinois.

Mr. Bill Hepworth, from Robert W. Baird, reviewed the four financing options for the Hubble referendum question. Mr. Hepworth, when asked for his recommendation by the Board, supported option A that would maintain the current debt bond rate of 44 cents and not extend the District's indebtedness beyond the present 14 years. Under this plan, there would be no increase in taxes for this project for the first two years and then 10 cents per day for the third year. The largest increase in debt tax would occur in the year 2021 at \$1.25 per day. This plan is built on very conservative assumptions that EAV will increase at 5% and home values will increase at 4% annually. This plan does not consider the effects or the reduction in debt should the current Hubble property be sold and the proceeds used to reduce debt or the increase in revenue to the community should the property be developed. The Board of Education will take action on the financing package at the November 14 meeting.

Next Meeting:

November 14 at Edison Middle School