

Board of Education Highlights

September 14, 2005 – Emerson Elementary School

Superintendent's Report

AYP Status--The two Title I schools that did not make AYP last year under the NCLB guidelines made AYP this year and are removed from the list. Congratulations to the teachers at Johnson and Monroe for their very targeted efforts to increase the achievement levels of all students and especially those in the subgroups that previously did not meet the AYP criteria. The two high schools remained on the list of schools that did not make AYP, as is the case with most other DuPage County high schools these past several years. Our staff continues to work with students in the subgroups that didn't meet the standards to improve their achievement levels.

Parent University--From managing anger to dealing with sibling rivalry, parents face a multitude of child rearing issues every day. District 200 social workers are offering help for parents during the annual Parent University on October 22. District 200 staff and community experts in child development will be on hand to lead workshops and discussions on a variety of timely issues related to parent/child relationships. For more information or to register, visit the District's web page at www.cusd200.org.

Web Based Calendar--Also on the District's web page is the new District 200 web based calendar. The calendar allows visitors to view activities scheduled at any or all of the schools with a few simple keystrokes. The calendars are also accessible from each school's website.

The Board took the following action:

Adopted the 2005-06 budget. The \$162 million budget shows expenditures up only 1.27 percent, with revenues increasing slightly less than 4 percent. The increase in state aid authorized by the legislature last spring did little to help District 200 as general state aid remains at about the same level as last year. More information about the budget is attached.

Approved a resolution seeking approval from the Regional Office of Education for the use of a mobile classroom at Hawthorne Elementary School. The mobile unit was relocated from Wheaton North High School to provide additional space for music and art classes.

Approved a change in the Board meeting calendar so that the September 28 meeting will be held at Longfellow School and the October 12 meeting at Johnson School.

Approved the purchase of a dump truck for use by the building services department.

Next Meeting:

September 28 at Longfellow Elementary School

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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September 14, 2005

Board Moves Closer to Balanced Budget

Three years of spending reductions and a concerted effort by the staff to find other operating efficiencies enabled the Board of Education to adopt a budget that is nearly balanced for the first time in several years. The Board adopted the \$162 million budget, which includes \$22 million for the high school expansion projects, September 14 following several months of discussion and a public hearing during which no members of the public spoke to the budget proposal.

The budget shows revenue increases of slightly less than 4 percent over last year, while expenditures are up only 1.27 percent. Despite the small increase in expenditures, the District continues to incur significant increases in the cost of services over which it has little or no control, such as property insurance, medical insurance, worker's compensation, tuition for students placed out of the District, payments to the state for teachers who retired early, and increased fuel costs. The increase in state aid authorized by the legislature last spring did little to help District 200 as the total amount of general state aid allocated to District 200 is about the same as last year at \$9.1 million.

The District's main operating fund, the education fund, is balanced. The other two primary operating funds—transportation and operations and maintenance—have a combined deficit of about \$700,000 due to tax dollars being reallocated to the education fund. The deficits are covered by existing balances in those funds.

The budget reflects many of the items citizens said they wanted or valued in the school district when they participated in focus groups last February and responded to a community-wide phone survey in June. The highest responses in both activities centered on high quality teachers and programs. In those areas, the new budget provides funds for:

- A varied professional development program.
- A mentor program for new teachers.
- A competitive salary and benefit package.
- A strong administrative support system.
- A continuous improvement model of curriculum development.
- A number of initiatives designed to improve student achievement.

The budget also provides funding for other top priority items as identified by the community, including the maintenance of the extra-curricular and athletic programs, small class sizes, classroom technology, and individualized instruction.

Although the 2005-06 budget is nearly balanced, the financial outlook for the District remains problematic. Fund balances have absorbed deficits in the past, but those are dwindling and are projected to run out as early as next year in some funds and in all funds by 2010. Auditors recommend that school district maintain fund balances equal to about 20 percent of the total budget to cover expenses between the two major tax collections in June and September. Without the fund balances, the District would have to borrow money from outside sources and incur interest charges for the loan. Further reductions in the budget will directly impact the classroom, according to Superintendent Gary T. Catalani.

The District's financial outlook is what led the Board of Education earlier this year to ask the community what it values in its public schools. The information is currently being used to develop a new vision and mission statement, which will provide the framework for future budget decisions. The community will be asked to review the statements before they are formally adopted.