

**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200**  
**January 28, 2005**

A special meeting of the month the Board of Education of Community Unit School District 200, DuPage County, Illinois, was called to order at The School Service Center, 130 W. Park Avenue, Wheaton, IL, by Board President Andrew Johnson, on Friday, January 28, 2005, at 7:00 AM. Local legislators were present at the meeting to discuss educational issues and the funding of education in the State of Illinois.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon the roll being called, the following were present:

Board Members:     Andrew Johnson  
                          Ken Knicker  
                          Barbara Intihar  
                          Rosemary Swanson  
                          John Bomher  
                          Joann Coghill

Absent:                Marie C. Slater

Also in Attendance: Dr. Gary T. Catalani  
                          Dr. Lori Belha  
                          Mr. Bill Farley  
                          Dr. Margo Sorrick  
                          Mrs. Linda Knicker

Introductions were made around the room. Dr. Catalani thanked everyone for attending and stated that District 200 is proud of what happens in our schools that house approximately 14,200 students. District 200 is blessed with involved supportive parents, great staff, a Board of Education that supports programs, and support in Springfield from this group of legislators. The question the district is faced with every day is how do we make this work in tough financial times? The greatest challenge in education today is the No Child Left Behind Act. We agree with the moral aspect of the act that all students can learn and learn at high levels. However, this idea is difficult for some students because of the way they are held to standards that they can not meet. Another challenge of NCLB is the lack of funding for the mandates.

There was discussion about how the new State Board of Education is doing. Staff reported that there does not seem to be much change. The answers are the same and there are constant changes every day. The level of service appears the same. People seem to attempt to be more responsive, more customer friendly. There appears to be a reduction in the number of employees, there are inconsistencies in responses and they do not seem to have a realistic perspective of how the rules affect the districts.

There was a discussion of the impact of sub groups on NCLB standards.

Dr. Sorrick distributed information on the AYP status of all of the high schools in DuPage County and included some key facts about the make up of the high schools. This information also included a synopsis of the sanctions that will be applied to the schools not reaching AYP during the coming years. Dr. Catalani pointed out that the DuPage high schools are high performing schools and in a short time they will be restructured due to the current NCLB rules.

Mr. Bill Farley presented information about the funding of District 200 and distributed a sheet that shows the funding in the general state aid, state categorical and transportation budgets over the past four years. Because District 200 is a foundation level district, in the eyes of the state it is a “poor” district. Illinois is the only state to receive an “F” for the way it funds education. Member Knicker pointed out that due to poor funding of schools, the district has cut \$7M from the budget and will have to make decisions in the immediate future that will affect students in a negative way by means of program cuts or tax increases to the property owners.

There was a discussion of how the new teacher certification process is working. Dr. Belha stated that the Regional Office of Education does a fantastic job of keeping up with the process. It use to take 16 months to get a certificate and now it is done in 60 days. The paper work load is greatly reduced. The process is changing daily and it will be difficult for districts to meet the March 1 timeline. The State Board of Education needs to ask districts to help with the set up of the process. The NCLB requirement for highly qualified hurts districts because the certifications do not match the standards. The colleges can not change their programs fast enough to keep up with the constant changes and new teachers are not coming out of school with the correct requirements to meet the certifications.

It was suggested that LEND might be able to help get that resolved. Representative Hultgren requested a list of the problem areas so that legislators can discuss the issues with facts.

There was a discussion of the status of member initiatives. District 200 was promised money for construction work and money for a technology lab at Hubble. The district wonders if the money will ever be forthcoming. The legislators could offer no answers to this situation but said the district should not give up hope. It appears that the Governor will not spend what was appropriated. The legislators plan to stick together and continue to work towards getting these dollars released. There is approximately \$120M that has not been released.

There was a discussion regarding school attendance on election days. Dr. Catalani and Denie Young sit on the Regional Office of Education Calendar Committee. The committee met recently and decided to recommend that the decision regarding attendance on election days should not be legislated but left to the local districts to make their own decision. It was suggested that election days possibly be moved to Saturdays.

It was reported that District 200 held school on Veteran’s Day this year with very positive results.

Dr. Sorrick distributed information on how other states have done in response to NCLB.

Dr. Catalani and President Johnson told the legislators that District 200 is willing to do whatever they can to help the state with the issues discussed.

At 8:25 the Board took a 35 minute recess.

**MOTION**

At 9:00 AM, Member Swanson moved, Member Knicker seconded to adjourn the Special Session. Upon a voice call vote being taken, all were in favor and **the motion carried.**

**MOTION**

Member Knicker moved, Member Swanson seconded to open the Public Hearing regarding the District's intent to apply for a waiver to excuse freshman and seniors from school on the required PSAE spring testing dates each year. The request also seeks to have sophomores excused on the second testing date. Upon a voice call vote being taken, all were in favor and **the motion carried.**

Dr. Catalani explained the reason for the need for a waiver and the Board discussed it.

There was no one present to speak during the Public Hearing and no written comments were received.

**MOTION**

Member Coghill moved, Member Intihar seconded to close the Public Hearing and resume in Open Session. Upon a voice call vote being taken, all were in favor and **the motion carried.**

**MOTION**

There being no further business to come before the Board in Open Session, Member Intihar moved, Member Coghill seconded to adjourn the meeting. Upon a voice call vote being taken, all were in favor and **the motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 AM.

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**Ken Knicker, Secretary**

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**Andrew Johnson, President**