



BOARD OF EDUCATION *Highlights*

Highlights from the February 2, 2015 workshop meeting

To see the meeting video, please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usGfm01tI5k&feature=em-uploademail>



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Report on 2014-15 District Goals

Superintendent **Dr. Mark McDonald** reported that the district is continuing to make progress on its goals set forth in the strategic plan, and wanted to update the Board on a few of the more challenging and timely items:

Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA)

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources **Pete Theis** talked about the district's plans surrounding state legislation that was passed in 2012, which requires teachers to be evaluated in part based on student performance. In 2016-17, student growth must count as 25% of a teacher's overall evaluation rating.

Theis has formed an "informal" committee comprised of both administrators and teachers to discuss the regulations and create implementation plans. Theis noted that teachers will not be evaluated on the growth of all of their students; instead, a subset of students, specific to each teacher, will be measured.

"The choice will be unique to different teachers and different departments," said Theis.
"There's no 'one size fits all.'"

Teachers will also select the type of assessments that are used to measure growth. Options for District 99 teachers will include standardized, district-wide or teacher-developed tests. The growth will be measured by examining the difference between pre- and post-test gains.

Theis said that the next steps in conforming to PERA include communicating with staff to diffuse any apprehension about the change, and creating a pilot program in 2015-16.

Standardized Testing (PARCC)

Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning **Gina Ziccardi** explained the changes in state testing requirements, and how the Prairie State Achievement Exam has been eliminated. This year, the district will administer the ACT for all juniors on March 3, with a make-up day on March 17. In addition, PARCC assessments (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) will be issued to Math 1 and English 1 students, who are primarily freshmen.



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North High Associate Principal **Janice Schwarze** highlighted some of the challenges of the PARCC. The assessments will be computer-based, which is different from the pencil and paper tests that students are accustomed to taking. In addition, PARCC will be given over nine days for two hours each day. Schwarze said that the schools have created a special schedule to minimize the amount of lost instruction.

Although the PARCC poses issues, Schwarze said there is a lot of value to them. For example, she said the PARCC is more “authentic” and better aligned to our curriculum than previous tests. In addition, the results will help teachers make better informed decisions about how to adapt their instruction to increase student understanding.

Schwarze explained that PARCC includes the Performance-Based Assessments (PBA) and End-of-Year (EOY) assessments, and that the tests are unrelated to one another and do not reflect “pre” and “post” growth.

“Synthesis is a high level skill and is really authentic to our curriculum,” said Schwarze as she showed a sample PARCC English Language Arts question, and how students must use evidence to defend their argument. “It’s what our schools would ask them to do and there’s value in it.”

There will be no “opt out” option. If student doesn’t come, the school will schedule a make-up.

“It’s very clear that we’re required to administer the PARCC tests,” said Ziccardi.

1:1 Learning Staff Development

The district is moving to a full 1:1 Learning program next year, and Ziccardi described the plans that are underway to continue to train teachers on how to best use technology to increase student learning. She explained that the district has collected input from a variety of sources, including from other schools to learn what models have worked best.

North High Associate Principal **Dr. Ken Sorensen** said that teachers have been a strong source of information and support for one another. For example, in June a panel of teachers who served in the pilot program shared their experiences with the entire faculty.

North High also hosted a “Chromebook Institute” last summer, which provided instructional technology training for teachers. Technology has become embedded into all of the district’s professional development offerings, which encourages teachers to think about how to incorporate it into the classroom.

“Not only are teachers doing wonderful things related to technology with students, but they are also wonderful teachers to their peers,” said Dr. Sorensen.

South High Associate Principal **Omar Davis** echoed the positive progress happening with technology training, and cited examples of the impact technology has made on student learning.



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He said that upcoming trainings are planned for February and June—and that training will be an ongoing process. Pilot program teachers will also conduct professional development sessions.

Community Advisory Committee

Jill Browning, director of communications, explained that the district has initiated a new network as a way to gain more insight and feedback from the community in order to improve communications. Thirty people, primarily parents, have volunteered to serve and meet three times throughout the school year. As a result of input received, the district has added email addresses to the websites and established a neighborhood email list.

To see slides from the presentation, please visit

[http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9T8UBN7B487A/\\$file/020215-Strategic%20Goals%20Update.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9T8UBN7B487A/$file/020215-Strategic%20Goals%20Update.pdf).



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Marketing Plan

Dr. Mark McDonald shared a proposal brought forth from the DuPage County's Regional Office of Education Superintendent **Dr. Darlene Ruscitti**. Dr. Ruscitti is advocating for DuPage schools to pool their resources and hire a professional marketing research and advocacy firm in order to develop more aggressive and positive messages about public schools.

Board members discussed the merits of and concerns about the proposal, and agreed that if the district provides funding, then it should have representation in the process. Dr. McDonald thanked the members for their input.

To see the full proposal, please visit

[http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9T6PKH646328/\\$file/IL%20School%20Supts%20Proposal%20Ruscitti%202014.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9T6PKH646328/$file/IL%20School%20Supts%20Proposal%20Ruscitti%202014.pdf).



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Upcoming Board Meetings

February 9, 2015 – Board Candidate Orientation 5:30 p.m.

Administrative Service Center – 6301 Springside Avenue, Downers Grove

February 23, 2015 – Business Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Administrative Service Center – 6301 Springside Avenue, Downers Grove

March 9, 2015 – Recognition and Open House 6:30 p.m.

South High – 1436 Norfolk, Downers Grove

March 11, 2015 – Workshop Meeting 7 p.m.

(NOTE: There is no public portion of the meeting)

Administrative Service Center – 6301 Springside Avenue, Downers Grove

March 16, 2015 – Business Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Administrative Service Center – 6301 Springside Avenue, Downers Grove

*This publication is for information purposes only;
minutes approved by the Board serve as the official meeting record.*