



Board Briefs - [Para español, por favor haga click aquí.](#)
[October 12, 2021 Committee of the Whole Meeting](#)

Approval of Agenda

The Board voted to approve the October 12 agenda as presented.

Recognition

School Bus Driver Appreciation

In advance of School Bus Driver Appreciation Day celebrated in Illinois on October 22, District 113 Director of Transportation Brandon Hayes began the meeting by sharing his thoughts and expressing appreciation to District 113 school bus drivers for all they do. He emphasized that school bus drivers are the first and last faces many students see when they go to and from school, and the bookending of a student's day gives school bus drivers a unique opportunity for connection with the students on their routes. He concluded by thanking them for the important role they play in students' lives.

Board Reports

President

Board President Jodi Shapira echoed Mr. Hayes's sentiments, noting that for many parents and guardians the first experience to sending a child off to school is that photo of their kindergartner boarding the school bus and that school bus driver is the first person parents and guardians trust at the beginning of their child's school experience.

Administration Reports

Superintendent

Superintendent Dr. Bruce Law expressed his gratitude for school bus drivers and the importance of their work in safely transporting students every day and the care they take to connect with students as they do that.

Dr. Law then provided a summary of the first listening session and tour held at Highland Park High School on October 5. At the September 28 meeting, the Board announced two listening sessions, the first on October 5 at HPHS, the second at DHS on October 19. He began by apologizing to community members who did not receive the letter sent through the United States Postal Service announcing the meetings until October 5 or shortly afterward. He reiterated that

the Board's reason for holding the meetings is to listen to the community to hear what they have to say about the options presented for addressing the District's financial and facilities needs. He emphasized that the best and quickest way to get information from District 113 is to sign up for District 113 emails and he also asked for people to send any questions or comments they may have to Future@dist113.org.

Dr. Law then talked about the questions that could not be answered that night because additional information was needed to answer. Those questions were added to the "parking lot" and other comments and questions have been received through the Future@dist113.org email account and he said he wanted to take a moment to explore some of those questions in detail. An initial set of [FAQs](#) have been loaded to the Future 113 website as well as [a concise fact sheet](#).

Dr. Law noted that many questions October 5 related to the 2013 referendum so after the meeting, Administration researched documents related to it. Those documents show that as expected there were more projects on the list than those approved by taxpayers to be funded, including some \$37.8 million in infrastructure repairs. The final payment for referendum work was made in June 2018. The District allocated \$5 million in fiscal year 2019 for addressing ongoing facilities needs, which was far short of the amount of money that was needed to keep up with facilities needs.

Superintendent School Operations

As has been the case at every regular meeting since the start of the pandemic, Dr. Law provided an update to the Board on school operations. The link to the full presentation with detailed information can be found above.

Dr. Law advised the Board that as of September 30, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) changed the definition of an outbreak from two epidemiologically linked cases to three epidemiologically linked cases. He also called attention to the fact that although IDPH posts school outbreaks on its website every Friday, IDPH does not always notify schools of the outbreak designation before posting this information. Therefore, it is very likely District 113 will find out about any potential outbreak via the IDPH website posting at the same time the general public does so the District will likely not be able to provide any advance notice to families or staff.

Dr. Law also shared a follow up from the discussion on September 28 about holding Focus on the Arts in spring 2022. He relayed that as has been the practice since the beginning of the pandemic, the District follows the guidance and rules issued by the authorities with jurisdiction over schools: the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois High School Association, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and Executive Orders issued by the Governor's Office. Different entities have authority over different areas but the District must follow all of the rules, guidance or orders issued by those entities and apply them to all of the applicable operations.

Moreover, he said, citing summer of 2021 as an example, the ability of anyone in the District to accurately predict or plan by forecasting COVID-19 transmission rates or potential levels of

mitigation some six months in advance is simply not possible. Therefore, the only way to assess the ability to logistically run and execute such a large-scale event is to apply the requirements currently in place. Ultimately given all the rules and constraints, and despite all of the hard work and perseverance of Coordinator Jody Weinberg and her team to run Focus on the Arts at the high level of quality the community has come to know and expect under the constraints of pandemic mitigations, Ms. Weinberg determined that it could not be meet that quality level and canceled for spring 2022. Dr. Law said that the only silver lining is to begin working on the next Focus and to make a commitment that this D113 event be expanded to Deerfield High School.

Dr. Law then concluded his School Operations report by showing the new COVID-19 dashboard and sharing that in November there will be an update on student and staff vaccination rates.

FOIA Requests

Dr. Law reported the FOIA requests received since the last meeting and their disposition. The report is posted in BoardDocs online.

Discussion

Legal Firm for Property Tax Appeals

The Board discussed a recommendation from Administration to authorize the firm Hodges, Loizzi, Eisenhammer, Rodick & Kohn (HLERK) to provide legal representation on behalf of Township High School District 113 for property tax appeals. Representation would be for appeals seeking reduction of \$500,000 equalized assessed valuation (EAV) or more. An EAV in the amount of \$500,000 represents a fair market value of \$1.5 million. The item will come back for a vote at the October 26 meeting.

Action

Updated COVID-19 Testing Support Agreement with the University of Illinois for SHIELD Testing

The Board voted to approve as presented the updated COVID-19 testing support agreement with the University of Illinois for SHIELD testing.

HPHS Outdoor Education Field Trip

The Board voted to approve as presented the HPHS Outdoor Education field trips scheduled for October 21 and October 28 to Devils Lake, Wisconsin.

Consent Agenda

The Board approved the consent agenda as presented. The consent agenda includes personnel, stipends, and board bills. Click on [this link](#) to access the meeting agenda and then scroll down to see consent agenda items beginning under number 10.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings-

October 18, 2021 – Policy Committee Meeting

3:30 p.m.

Administration Building

October 19, 2021 – Facilities Committee Meeting
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Administration Building

October 19, 2021 – Tour and Listening Session
6:00 p.m. Tour, 7:00 p.m. Listening Session
Deerfield High School Auditorium

October 26, 2021 – Regular Action Meeting
6:00 p.m. Closed Session, 7:00 p.m. Open Session
Administration Building