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PRESS RELEASE

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District 157-C December 15 Board of Education Meeting Recap

The regular Frankfort School District 157-C Board of Education meeting of December 15 was called to order at 7:07 p.m. The Roll Call was taken and a quorum was present. No one signed up to speak during the Public Forum portion of the meeting.

Assistant Superintendent, Curt Saindon, provided the Board with an update on the proposed levy.

Board President Christopher McFadden opened the public hearing on the levy.

After the public hearing was closed, the Board discussed the levy and adopted the resolution levying taxes for District 157-C for the year 2014 and authorized the filing of a Certificate of Tax Levy. For 2014 the total operating levy amount is \$26.155M. When factoring in the additional obligated debt services fund needs of about \$4.115M, and a proposed \$500,000 abatement of those debt services fund needs from existing Education Fund and Operations & Maintenance Fund reserves, the total levy request is expected to be about \$29.77M. (SEE SEPARATE PRESS RELEASE ON LEVY.)

The Board approved the open and closed session minutes of the regular meeting of November 17.

Correspondence included a thank you note from Susan Brisky for a book donated to the Grand Prairie Elementary School Library in memory of her mother.

Hickory Creek Middle School Principal, Dr. Kevin Suchinski, reported on the school's two main goal areas: the importance of teaching and learning, and the culture of high expectations. He also reported that the school is charting its changes and progression, as well as setting and accomplishing goals, since it earned its redesignation as a "Schools to Watch" facility. He stated, "We want to make sure we are meeting the needs of all kids and celebrating our successes. We want to get students involved and become leaders."

Chelsea Intermediate School Principal, Kristin Simpkins, reported on her building goals including Writers' Workshop, Understanding by Design and grading practices. She stated, "I applaud our teachers. Their number one concern is being fair and getting it right for the kids."

Grand Prairie Elementary School Principal, Eileen Nelson provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the goals and student expectations for her building. Superintendent Dr. Maura Zinni stated, "Teaching has changed so much with regard to the new standards, being data driven and so much more strategic. Our teachers are using new practices to make sure that that all of our students have reached the target by the time they walk across the stage at graduation."

As requested by the Board at the November 17 meeting, all three school principals provided information on the roles and responsibilities of their Assistant Principals.

Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Janet McClarence, updated the Board on the new initiative to determine how to best align curricular expectations to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS.) These standards were adopted by the State of Illinois in February and must be implemented by fall of 2016. District 157-C has joined with some fifty representatives from all area grade school districts and Lincoln-Way High School District 210. They are meeting regularly and working together to determine the plan for all feeder districts and the high school to align curricular expectations to the new standards. Mrs. McClarence stated, "This is a win-win for everyone. Lincoln-Way and all of the teachers are doing a phenomenal job."

Director of Technology, Jake Nelson, reported that it is a busy time of year for the technology team. They are working to implement the new Education Foundation grants. Numerous technology items have been granted to all three schools, including mobile laptops, tablets, a mobile technology lab and a computer monitor touch screen. Mr. Nelson stated, "We thank the Foundation members for everything they do for our schools."

Director of Special Services, Jennifer Bajda, reported on the District's goals for its Special Education program. She also reported that the Special Olympics kickoff was held recently and said that she is pleased to have twenty volunteers already sign up to help. This year the District will again sponsor a Track and Field team and is also implementing a Gymnastics team.

In the Superintendent's Report, Superintendent Dr. Maura Zinni reported that the calendar committee has met twice to discuss and develop drafts of the 2015-2016 school calendar. The committee is comprised of administrators and teacher representatives from each building. She will present these drafts to the Board in January. Dr. Zinni reported that the district's Performance Growth and Evaluation (PG&E) Committee is working on creating a valid, reliable and streamlined process to incorporate data and indicators of student growth into the overall performance rating for certified staff members. The plan that they develop will be piloted next year and implemented by September 1, 2016 as required by the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010. Dr. Zinni reported that she, Board of Education member Gina Briese, Director of Curriculum & Instruction Janet McClarence and Everest teacher Rebecca Trsar have met with a representative from the Illinois Association of Gifted Children to discuss best practices for evaluating the district's program for educating its gifted learners. A survey for parents of current Everest gifted students will be conducted after winter break to gain additional insight into the District's current gifted program. Dr. Zinni shared information from the recent Illinois Association of School Boards/Illinois Association of School Administrators/Illinois Association of School Business Officials Joint Conference and the Board also shared their session information.

Assistant Superintendent Saindon provided the Board with the treasurer's report. He reported that Board bills for November totaled about \$2.20M, which is in the normal and expected range of about \$2.0M to \$2.25M for a typical month in FY 2014-2015. He reported that board bills for December totaled \$5,817,491.87, higher than usual due to normal expenses of \$2,021,939.37 and \$3,795,552.50 in debt payment services for outstanding bond issues. He also reported that investment rates remain extremely low and interest income is still very hard to come by. He said that the district is holding relatively small amounts of cash in liquid investment accounts because the current liquid interest rate environment is still very poor.

The Board heard a report from Board Vice President, Patrick Usher, on the Lincoln-Way Special Education District 843 Governing Board meeting of November 25 and the Lincoln-Way Area Special Education District 843 Advisory Committee meeting of December 9.

The Board heard a report from Board member, Gina Briese, on the most recent Frankfort Township Planning Commission meeting.

The Board heard a report from Board member, Cari Ann Mills, on the most recent Education Foundation and Family School Partnership meetings.

There was one Freedom of Information item.

In discussion, Assistant Superintendent Saindon reported on the need to make a temporary inter-fund loan of up to \$125,000 from the Working Cash Fund to the Debt Service Fund as needed. The loan would be repaid as soon as funds are available in the Debt Service Fund but no later than three years after making of the loan, unless additional Board approval is received to extend or make permanent this transfer of funds.

In discussion, the Board discussed the tentative tax abatement resolution for the 2014 tax levy. The Board reached consensus on making a \$500,000 abatement of Debt Service Tax Levy needs, to be paid for with \$250,000 of existing reserves from the Education Fund and \$250,000 of existing reserves from the Operations & Maintenance Fund. A corresponding Abatement Resolution and associated Certifications will be presented for approval at the January Board Meeting, and this documentation would be filed with the County Clerks and Tax Extension Departments in Will County and Cook County in a timely manner to ensure that said abatement would be reflected in the 2014 property tax bills to be delivered to all registered tax payers in April and May of 2015.

In discussion, Assistant Superintendent Curt Saindon reported on the district's comprehensive insurance coverage program through the Suburban Schools Cooperative Insurance Program that is due to renew on December 31.

In discussion, Assistant Superintendent Curt Saindon reported on the results of Request for Proposals for Audit Services from six identified and qualified service providers.

The Board took action to approve the payment of the bills as presented.

The Board accepted the resignation of James Martin, Full-Time Custodian at Grand Prairie Elementary School, effective December 26, 2014 as presented.

The Board accepted the resignation of Rosemary Georgen, Board Recording Secretary, effective December 11, 2014 as presented.

The Board approved the employment of Latuasha Holmes as a Full-Time Paraprofessional at Chelsea Intermediate School for the 2014-2015 school year contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board approved the employment of Jeremy Kenny as a Full-Time Paraprofessional at Chelsea Intermediate School for the 2014-2015 school year contingent upon the receipt and evaluation of employment documentation required by District 157-C and the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Board approved the appointment of Debbie Jankowski as Board Recording Secretary to be compensated at an hourly rate.

The Board approved the Resolution allowing for up to \$125,000 of existing Working Cash Fund reserves to be temporarily loaned to the Debt Service Fund, as needed. Also, that this loan is to be repaid as soon as funds are available in the Debt Service Fund for repayment, but no later than three years after the making of the loan, unless additional Board approval is received to extend or make permanent this transfer of funds.

The Board approved a \$500,000 abatement of Debt Service Tax Levy needs, to be paid for with \$250,000 of existing reserves from the Education Fund and \$250,000 of existing reserves from the Operations & Maintenance Fund. Additionally, that once approved a corresponding Abatement Resolution and associated Certifications will be presented for approval at the January Board Meeting, and this documentation will be filed with the County Clerks and Tax Extension Departments in Will County and Cook County in a timely manner to ensure that said abatement is reflected in the 2014 property tax bills to be delivered to all registered tax payers in April and May of 2015.

The Board approved the renewal of the district's Comprehensive Insurance Program (CIP) as provided through the Suburban Schools Cooperative Insurance Pool (SSCIP), and administered by Arthur J. Gallagher and associated entities, for 1/1/15 through 12/31/15 at an annual premium of \$63,843. This represents a 5.38% increase in premiums over the previous year (a \$3,256 increase over the 2014 premium), that will be partially offset by a \$1,000 credit for the district's subscription to the Global Compliance Network (GCN) On-Line Training System, bringing the net cost of the renewal to \$2,256, or 3.72%.

The Board went into closed session to discuss appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance and/or dismissal of specific employees; student discipline; student residency; student issue; reclassification of employees and pending litigation.

Following Closed Session, the Board took action to hire Alan Sraga, Teri Engler and Cynthia Baasten to provide legal counsel to the Board of Education.

The next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2015 at 7:00 PM in the Grand Prairie Board Room.