

November 21, 2019

The regular Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, November 21, 2019, in the Board Room of the OPRFHS.

Call to Order

President Moore called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. in the Board Room. A roll call indicated the following Board of Education members were present: Matt Baron, Thomas F. Cofsky (attended electronically), Gina G. Harris, Craig Iseli, Ralph Martire (departed at 6:50 and returned at 8:00 p.m.), Dr. Jackie Moore and Sara Dixon Spivy. Also present were Dr. Joylynn Pruitt-Adams, Superintendent; Greg Johnson, Associate Superintendent; Roxana Sanders, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Dr. Gwen Walker Qualls, Senior Director of Pupil Support Services; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant Clerk of the Board.

Closed Session

At 6:35 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, 2019, Dr. Moore moved to enter closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District and independent contractors and specific volunteers, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2 (C)(1); amended by P.A. 101-0459; Discussion of lawfully closed meeting minutes, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21); seconded by Ms. Harris. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 6:42 p.m., the Board of Education resumed the open session.

Joining the meeting were Greg Johnson, Associate Superintendent; Carolyn Gust, Dr. Gwen Walker-Qualls, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Christopher Thieme, Director of Technology; Michael Carioscio, Chief Operations Officer, Karin Sullivan, Executive Director of Communications and Community Relations

Visitors

Ben and Jordan Chambers, Conrad Grant, Clark and Robert Greendyke, Anthony and Robert Kolovitz, Charlie Kuznich, Eli & Patrick Nash, Fletcher Neri, and Jenni Townsend, Boys Scouts of America, Michaela Bragg, Isabelle Caperllo, Munirah Curtis, Chris Hammert, Anita King Hermann, Audrey Kessner, Amanada Massie, Kevin Peppard, Amy Pokras, Monica Sheehan, community; Mary Haley, League of Women Voters, Maia Huang, Eva Powell, and Solana Oliver, students.

Employees of the Month

Tonight's Board meeting marks the start of the OPRFHS recognition program. The OPRFHS Recognition Program is based upon the concept of promoting a culture of warmth and celebrating excellence! OPRFHS recognizes and values our most important asset: people. The Board of Education want to continue to encourage and support a positive work environment that celebrates Those Things that are Best. Each month during the school year, the Board will recognize a faculty member, a staff member, and a volunteer who have made significant contributions to OPRF. During the month of November, 61 nominations total were received - 30 for the teacher of the month category, 18 for the employee of the month category and 13 for volunteers. The recognition committee reviewed all the nominations and selected

the three winners for the month of November. Dimitrios and Barbara to come to the podium.

Teacher of the Month: Kris Johnson

- Kris is one of our counselors.
- Like all of our counselors, Kris is a certified faculty member, which is why she was chosen in the teacher category.

Kris received multiple nominations. Here are just a few of the things people said in their nominations:

- “Kris is an effective leader who is driven to act rather than just wax philosophically about the need for change. In our division she is the first one in and last one out--daily! I admire her passion, work ethic, and desire to encourage those around her to be the best they can be.”
- “Kris has been honest and open when discussing [my son’s] ideas and decisions, and has truly helped shape the type of student and person he wants to be.”
- “Kris created an environment where she expected her students to interact directly with her, with nominal parental intervention. It fostered my son’s personal growth, maturity, and confidence.”

Employee of the Month: Dimitrios Bessas (Jimmy)

- Dimitrios, better known to some of his colleagues as “Jimmy,” works second shift as one of our custodians.
- His shift supervisors never discussed it with each other, but they both nominated Dimitrios for this award.
- They both noted that despite fighting stage 4 cancer, Dimitrios comes to work every day, fights through a great deal of pain, and gives his job his all.
- Assistant head custodian Donnie Davis talked about moving the bleachers in the Field House as an example. B&G uses a 20-year-old machine to do the job, and it’s difficult to move them. But when Donnie tries to persuade Dimitrios to let someone else handle the task, he won’t.
- “Dimitrios doesn’t want anybody to baby him,” Donnie said. “I don’t know if I could be as strong as him in that situation. He is a great employee and a great person.”

Volunteer of the Month: Barbara Dolan

- Barbara has been a volunteer with the OPRF Business Incubator since its inception in Fall 2017.
- For two years, she was a mentor for a team of students, guiding them as they developed a product idea throughout the year.
- This year, she has done a remarkable job as Community Champion.
- Barbara has forged new connections with local individuals and organizations, developed deeper ones with prior partner organizations, and has brought a consistent energy to the program that is contagious.
- One example of Barbara's commitment was her role in organizing, promoting, and then publicizing the recent Young Women in Business workshop.

Mr. Baron was admiring of Ms. Dolan for expanding the Business Incubator Program and attested to the fact that she was bringing more collaboration within the village.

Toni Hagins, OPRFHS head custodian, spoke on behalf of all of the B&G employees at the meeting who wanted to recognize “Jimmy” and Barbara. Criteria for receiving this accolade included being an exemplary employee and exhibiting professionalism. “Jimmy” displayed those charges and more, all while fighting an aggressive form of cancer. What defines him is the love for his son, his family, and his job. All appreciated his humor. No one is more deserving of this honor. “Jimmy” thanked the Board of Education and the District for all of their support because without his job he would be unable to provide for his family. He will not ever forget this honor.

**Student Council
Liaison Report**

Caroline Peavy reported, “The Tradition of Excellence was a huge success on November 8. The Student Council officers had meetings at the beginning of the month to finalize the speeches and contact the recipients. This year, the recipients were Maci Peterson, Nia Gilliam Wordlaw, and Howard Wiliens. They each had amazing speeches of their own. Because of this, much of the student body felt that this year’s assembly was especially captivating and they appreciated the diverse group of honorees selected. After spending the day with the honorees, the officers felt that this year’s group was extremely appreciative of the award and were very kind and interested to all of our future endeavors and us. As for the entirety of Student Council, we have spent the past week thinking of ways in which to show thanks to the faculty and school community. We are currently working on posters and cards to put up in the staff cafeteria to show thanks from Student Council. In addition, during this holiday season, the adopt-a-family program is in full swing throughout the school. Many classes, advisories and clubs are adopting families this year. Student Council in particular is adopting a family of four and we are excited to give back and help make someone’s holiday season extra cheerful. It is amazing to see how a lot of the student body cares about raising money to get the gifts for these families, and is showing their support and effort.

“Finally, at Student Council, we have been discussing school issues, concerns, or comments. The main thing we have taken away from this discussion is about the construction taking place in the coming years. Many students are very excited and eager to see the new building as the plans progress. However, many are not fully aware of what is happening and would like more information about the timeline of the construction, how it will affect classes, whom it will affect, and other things. I think students would greatly appreciate more information on this topic as it will ultimately impact them and their school environment.”

FOIA Requests

Ms. Kalmerton reported that 5 FOIA requests had been received and 5 were resolved.

**Superintendent’s
Announcement**

Dr. Pruitt-Adams made the following announcements: Seven Huskies achieved *a perfect composite score on the ACT!* Congratulations to the following students (as well as one who preferred to remain anonymous): Veronica Brooks, Garrett Credi, Evelyn Drews, Aaron Freeman, Marissa Kuriakos, and Alex Yuan.

The following were chosen by their teachers as *Students of the Quarter*: Benjamin Nisbet, Josephine Delano, Esai Morales, Julia Maldonado, Jeremy Kantz, Julia Steinitz, Christina Anthony, Nana-Yaa Sarpey, Tim Jackson, and Kiersten Ruiz-Coburn.

Along with Inclusion Facilitator Lauren Arends, students Ruhi Advani, Carter Jones, Jackie O'Brien, Nicholas Sawyer, and Brady Walters attended the *Youth Activation Summit sponsored by Special Olympics Illinois*.

The following students Huskies were *inducted into the International Thespian Society (ITS)*, the honor society for secondary school theatre students: Declan Collins, Alyssa Coughlin, Lena Henry, Nathaniel Olson, Phoenix Sullivan, Gabriel Udofia, William Skubish, and Katherine Woodworth.

Prevention and Wellness Coordinator Ginger Colamussi was chosen to receive the *Bruce Scott Award from Euclid United Methodist Church* for her work of advocacy, support, and raising awareness of LGBTQ+ students and issues.

The girls cross country team competed at state and *finished in 13th place. All seven runners set personal records*. Congratulations to: Nora Wollen (All-State), Josephine Welin (All-State), Parker Hulen, Maggie Rose Baron, Avery Minnis, Audrey Lewis, and Jana Casey.

The Varsity Girls Volleyball team won the regional championship.

The upperclassman Ultimate Frisbee teams placed third *in the fall tournament* was also named Most Spirited.

Public Comments

Solana Oliver, Nasha, and Aynoa Cascio of the Animal Rights Club, made the following statement: “Hello everyone, we are the Animal Rights club at OPRF. Thank you for giving your time to listen to our proposal. We will be speaking about the possibility of Meatless Mondays in our school cafeterias and we are here to ask the board to initiate this program.

“Recently, people all over the world have brought the issue of climate change into their own hands by attending the Global Climate Strike, where a record of over 4 million people, many of whom were youth activists, joined together to create the biggest climate mobilization in history. As Climate Activist Greta Thunberg said, “I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis.” Climate change is one of the biggest crises we face today. In order for us to act in this crisis as effectively as possible, we need to have all the information we can. Although the science is now clear, many people remain unaware of one of the leading causes of climate change. It is as ubiquitous as the food we buy and eat. According to a study in *Livestock's Longshadow*, a book by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, animal agriculture is responsible for 18 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, more than the total combined emissions from the entire transportation sector.

“In addition to the huge amount of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from animal agriculture, a vast quantity of water and land is used unnecessarily by this industry. According to *Cowspiracy*, a documentary on the environmental impact of the meat and dairy industry, “2,500 gallons of water are needed to produce just 1 pound of beef.” We are living in an era where we see the negative effects of climate change every single day. The older generation is responsible for leaving the world like this to our generation. Changes have to

be made. Oak Park prides itself on the spirit of its community for being aware of this issue. The science makes it absolutely clear that the consumption of animal products is implicated in climate change. In a recent book *We Are the Weather*, Jonathon Safran Foer argues that no meat or dairy should be eaten before dinner time to cut down on the effects of climate change. Therefore, the absolute least we could do as a school is have Meatless Mondays in our cafeterias. We would be honored to have the board back up and endorse this program. There are countless alternatives that could be served and we would be glad to help develop those alternatives.

“OPRF is already late to the game. According to the [Evanston Township High School page](#), they’ve had meatless Monday since last year. OPRF should not only be interested in reducing their environmental impact but also in inspiring lifelong healthy habits among teenagers who live in a world where unhealthy restaurants like McDonald’s are located on every other block. ETHS has goals of reducing their environmental impact and promoting healthy habits which could be translated here, at OPRF. ETHS offers an array of meatless options such as chana masala made with curried garbanzo beans. By incorporating a meatless Monday program and by offering additional meatless options throughout the week, OPRF will have made a bold choice and be able to successfully claim a leadership role.

“We, the young people who will inherit whatever planet you leave to us, respectfully ask you to start making the choices that science tells us will promote a more sustainable future for all. Thank you.

Mai Huang, made the following statement: “My name is Maia Huang, and I am currently a senior at OPRF. I have come to this meeting tonight to address the present room numbering system at this school. As of right now, the classroom numbers are arranged in an illogical manner that causes an unnecessary amount of anxiety.

“This Monday, an 8th grader friend of mine told me that her biggest concern about high school is not the workload or the finals, but getting lost in the school. From personal experience, this is a real concern. Over the course of my four years here, I have traversed through many a wrong hallway, panicked, retraced my steps, and then taken a long, roundabout course to reach my class with barely enough time.

“During sophomore year parent-teacher conferences, my mother missed one of my conferences because she couldn’t find the room. Had the room numbers been arranged in a more logical manner, she may have found my classroom with more ease.

“The two people I just mentioned do not attend the school on a daily basis, so it is understandable that they may get lost. However, even current students are not satisfied with the classroom numbering system. In a survey of over 100 student responses, over 30% of students claim that they struggled with finding their classes in the first two weeks of school. 71% of the responders said that they wanted an improved numbering system. You can see some student responses on the sheet I gave you. As for people who did not feel that changing the numbering system would benefit the school, five of the short responses claimed that it was essentially tradition to get lost at OPRF. In my opinion, that is NOT the reputation OPRF

should have. Are we not “those things that are best”? We should not be “those things that are lost.”

“Imagine OPRF” is going to begin extensive changes to the building this upcoming summer, which would make this a perfect time to update the numbering system. According to the Facilities Master Plan 1, OPRF will renovate 76 general education classrooms, update student commons, improve resource centers, add three new science labs as well as several other construction projects. If OPRF is going through so much change anyway, why not also change the plaques in front of the rooms while we’re at it?

“If renumbering is not ideal at this time, I have a couple of other alternatives that could help the issue. Over the summer, perhaps more maps of each floor like the one on the page I provided could be installed around the school. Another alternative to renumbering the school could be reinserting the map of the school into the planner. From what I hear, the map was originally removed due to safety reasons, but the map was a lifesaver for me at the beginning of my underclassmen years, as I am sure it is for many other students. If it is not possible to restore the maps, then that is even more reason to renumber the classrooms.

“Rearranging the room numbers in a more logical manner is a simple change with large benefits. I appreciate you taking this matter into consideration. Thank you so much for your time.

Monica Sheehan and Amanda Massie took turns reading the following statement: “Good evening, I’m Monica Sheehan, and this is the first of a two-part public comment about the Paul Noble Secret Pension Deal. Amanda Massie will assist in its delivery. Kitty Conklin is unable to be here tonight, but fully supports this comment and its requests of the Board. Without her participation, our message may run a bit longer than six minutes. We thank you in advance for your understanding.

“On August 22, 2019, you, the D200 Board, voted 4 to 3 on a controversial request that created two serious issues:

“First, the vote itself which will cost D200 taxpayers approximately \$100,000 in the short-term and will cost all Illinois taxpayers potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars in the long run. The affirmative 4-3 vote was clearly not in the best interest of taxpayers. Board members Jackie Moore, Sara Spivy, “Ralph Martire and Gina Harris voted to reverse a D200 teacher’s irrevocable letter of resignation that he, Paul Noble, in his 28th year of D200 employment, voluntarily signed and submitted to retire early. Paul Noble knowingly gambled and lost when the Illinois General Assembly allowed the Early Retirement Option to automatically expire in July 2016.

“It’s important to underscore that this was the second time that Paul Noble asked a D200 Board for special pension treatment. He requested the same action of the prior board in 2017, and it rejected it. In a June 2017 “Wednesday Journal” story about the expiration of the early retirement program, Paul Noble was quoted and said, “It is no one’s fault but my own.” He acknowledged that his request of the Board would indeed have been financially costly to the district. Fast forward two years, and the difference now is that this new Board is overwhelmingly weighted with union interests.

“Second, there's an alarming lack of transparency surrounding the controversial vote. The item (VII. F.) was buried in the consent agenda. Moreover, the item's memo was and remains unlinked in the agenda nearly three months later. The "Memorandum of Agreement with Faculty Senate", D200's teachers' union, is becoming public knowledge now thanks to a citizen, Kitty Conklin, who happened to be present at the August meeting and noticed that the memo wasn't linked in the agenda and observed the irregularity in how the agenda item was treated. Even though it was pulled from the consent agenda, the board president did not discuss the item when it came up for a vote. In fact, there was no discussion of the memo or its ramifications prior to its split vote. Conklin subsequently submitted a FOIA for the missing memorandum.

“We respectfully request reasonable remedies for these two issues: the vote and its lack of transparency.

“First, repeal the controversial vote. It wasn't and isn't in the best interest of taxpayers, your constituents who you all took a solemn oath to represent.

“Furthermore, conflict of interest issues surround this vote. Board member Gina Harris is a union leader, AND both she and Ralph Martire receive money from the teachers' union. Ethically, they should have recused themselves from this vote and should recuse themselves from voting on any other union issue. Likewise, as teachers, if they taught Paul Noble at any point in time or if they were students of his, they would need to recuse themselves from voting on his special request.

“Second, this remedy is aimed at improving the D200 Board's accountability and transparency to the community. Paul Noble's Secret Pension Deal only became known because a citizen acted to communicate the issue, not the board nor the administration.

“One way to improve Board accountability and increase transparency is to begin live-streaming all of D200's general and Committee of the Whole meetings with closed-captioning, aligned with the respective meeting's agenda, and immediately archiving them on the school's website, just like the Village of Oak Park trustee meetings. Whether you implement this capability at the school or enter an agreement with the village to use its equipment in council chambers, the sooner, the better.

“The D200 Board has made a number of controversial decisions over the last two decades, seemingly in a vacuum, as most taxpayers are unable to attend meetings. Decisions such as issuing the 1998, \$18.5 million dollar, nearly \$29 million in current dollars, non-referendum bond issue ... to the 2003 decision removing the cinder track around the football field, effectively ejecting the boys and girls' outdoor track teams from campus, the largest sports teams at the school and two of its most diverse, ... to the infamous action utilizing a loophole to amass a cash reserve of \$125 million dollars, ... to the years-long pool saga, which included the Board's effort to bypass voters and spend \$37.5 million taxpayer dollars on an Olympic-size pool and natatorium, demolishing the 12-year old parking garage, ... to D200's false marketing of the 2016 pool referendum as an academic one... to the Imagine group's initial intent to demolish the south end of the building to accommodate an oversized

pool at taxpayer expense, ... to this latest action to secretly cut a special pension deal for Paul Noble, to the detriment of taxpayers.

“The time is long overdue for this Board to begin rebuilding trust with taxpayers. Begin by repealing the Paul Noble Secret Pension Deal and publicly release a statement explaining who is responsible for its lack of transparency and lack of communication.

“Make board meetings accessible to all. Begin live-streaming meetings with closed-captioning, in sync with posted agendas, and immediately archive them to the school’s website. “No more secret deals, and no more decision making in a vacuum. Thank you.”

Munirah Curtis, resident of 12 years, parent of a child with Downs syndrome, spoke to the Board of Education about the new construction. She asked the board to remember those whose physical abilities can’t keep up with their peers and want to be active participants of the society. This is a large and daunting place and it is difficult for those with disabilities to get from Point A to Point B. Any construction embarked upon must always take into account. She asked them to make this a priority. It will not be pretty and it will cost more money, but it is a choice: Accessibility is a choice. We have to make a choice. If they can’t get to wherever they are going they won’t be learning. As a mother and pediatrician, please take them into account and don’t forget those who can’t.

Audrey Kessler, a senior, student spoke about composting at the high school as it was a service learning project. She stated: “I want to implement composting trash cans within the cafeterias throughout OPRF. Composting would be an easy, and green way to help combat climate change. Our school sends out emails all the time claiming to be going “greener” by using reusable energy sources but fails to use one of the simplest ways to be environmentally friendly. Our ecosystem is declining fast. America produces the most food waste at an amazing rate of 110 kilograms of waste per person, per year. A lot of this waste ends up in landfills; in fact, over 51% of food waste ends up in landfills to be burned. The gas produced by burning waste in landfills is around 50% methane, which is 26 more times effective at trapping heat than CO2. The fewer food scraps and waste we allow into landfills, the less methane gets released into our atmosphere. By composting, we reduce the release of methane. How to do this? I believe that implementing this change is a simple solution. We would need to put trash cans in the lunchrooms, as well as signs above them showing what can be composted, and what to keep in the trash. Along with this, I think we can put in a segment about composting, its benefits and how to do it in an episode of news scene, to be shown to students during their Advisory period. We can also have the trapeze include an article on composting in the newspapers, as well as a section on composting in the Stall Street Journal to ensure that every student is at least aware of the composting system in our school. To collect the compost, we would need a separate dumpster that is designated to composting, which can be collected by the Oak Park Waste Management. By implementing compost in our school, not only are we taking a step forward to becoming green, but we are also combating climate change.”

Micaeia Bragg spoke about school start times and the fact that many students are sleep deprived because of student activities, jobs, homework, etc. Many schools have adjusted their start times, some schools around Chicago start as late as 9:00 a.m. Starting late also helps with expenses. She expressed her concern that the lack of sleep can cause problems

for students. Some middle schools and high schools start between 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. She noted the Board responsibility for the wellbeing of students.

Isabelle Coarrillo had outlined a 3 week first aid course which she offered to share with the Board of Education. This could be offered in health and gym classes. While it could be expensive, she felt it would ultimately save lives.

Kevin Peppard, 715 Thomas, Oak Park, read the following statement: "I want to talk about the Swimming requirement. Years ago, I wrote an Op-Ed in the Wednesday Journal about this. For whatever reasons, we built two pools over 90 years ago. To fully utilize those expensive assets, we have required that aquatics-related classes be taken twice in a student's PE career, the only activity like that in PE. Now that we know we will eventually be deep-sixing the existing pools, why have not we re-examined the need for doubled-up aquatics? A single 25-yard pool for PE would suffice for one PE required class and fit in the building. To adapt for athletics, an adjustable shallow end could be built converting it for water polo - it's been done elsewhere

"You've got things backwards. The Phase II construction should not assume a large pool. Instead, the size of the pool needed should drive Phase II. The pool chosen is a prime determinant of your large capital needs, yet you continue to refuse to bite the bullet. This is not a decision that should be left to the Administration or PE Department. It's not like adopting a new approach to English or Mathematics instruction, where the expertise of the teachers should be consulted. The PE and Athletics Departments do not have to consider the costs involved with their wish lists. You do. This does not require any further investigation.

"Instead, keep it in the school, and focus on water safety. As it is, little or no instruction is given in that, and it would be impractical in a large class size. As things stand now, learners are often told to stay in the shallow section, and their experience is of no value. Have small sections for such beginning instruction, maybe with two teachers, and run it for perhaps only half of a school quarter, transitioning back to much larger PE sections focusing on calisthenics and running/walking. Learning to swim is largely a matter of overcoming fear and gaining confidence. Allow capable entering freshmen to test out, and that will generate the savings for small classes followed by large.

"Quit dreaming that someone is going to donate scads of money. There is perhaps only one family with the resources and motivation for that, and all it does is pay for part of an unnecessarily large pool. Your focus should be on learning. Tag Arista means "Those things that are best." Remember that the word "those" is selective. You have delayed this decision long enough, and it should be in your hands. Take policy control of your own institution."

Amy Pokras, parent of an OPRFHS graduate and current sophomore, spoke about the master plan presentation with regard to access issues. She spoke of her daughter's significant health issues which required her to use a wheelchair and to use the elevators between all of her classes. The current evaluators are old and break down. The elevators are not ADA compliant and Project 1 calls for one, which she felt was insufficient for a building with one million square feet. Ms. Pokras timed how long it would take to go from the north elevator to the new library. It took 1.5 minutes to get to the elevator and then she had to wait 3.5 minutes for the elevator to arrive, which amounted to five minutes of class time, a significant amount of time lost for students with disabilities. That

is not equitable. She wanted to see funding for Project 1 used to rectify this situation, noting that the school had budgeted \$4.6 million for green roofs.

Anita King Hermann, 2020 freshman, talked about accessibility issues. She thanked the Board of Education for making sure the school was accessible. She was excited about the new student center and cafeteria. Her questions for discussion were: 1) will there be a new elevator. 2) How will the new space accommodate disabilities that are different from mine? She thanked the board for making students a priority and their time.

Eva Powell, as a Civics learning project, spoke about homework. She has two to three hours of homework every night. That amount of homework is difficult to handle for many students, as they have other responsibilities as well. A potential solution to this problem might be to have a school-wide homework agreement, which would stop teachers from assigning long homework projects.

One person who is a civil engineer looked at the facilities' plan for the proposed areas and asked how students would exit the spaces if there were a fire, a bad accident, or a terrorist attack. Is an accessibility review necessary?

Jackie Moore gave a shout out to the River Forest Boys Scouts who attended in order to earn their Arrow of Light badges.

Consent Items

Dr. Moore moved to approve the following Consent Items:

- A. Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated November 21, 2019
- B. Monthly Treasurer's Report
- C. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Phone System Contract
- D. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Phone Service Agreement
- E. Personnel Recommendations including Resignations
- F. Open and Closed Minutes of October 24 and November 12, 2019 a declaration that the closed session audio tapes of April 2018 shall be destroyed and a declaration that the closed session minutes from January 1, 1986 through November 12, 2019 shall remain closed.

seconded by Mr. Baron. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion Carried.

Facilities Master Plan Design Presentation

Mr. Carioscio assured the audience that there would be an elevator in the Student Resource Center. The District is now in the final phase of the schematic design for the new South Cafeteria and Student Resource Center. The current design was shared with the Board of Education, along with design concepts for some of the other Project 1 components. Presented were the current schematic design for the South Cafeteria and student resource center as well as design concepts for the main entrance, welcome center, and student commons. Josh Cernia and Mike Denz from FGM architects also presented.

A 3-D model was presented. While the original design had no elevator, the current design does in the northeast corner. Students will be able to access it from the corridor on all three levels and the cafeteria. The capacity size is being targeted at 3500 lbs. and would be big enough to carry a stretcher.

The status of accessibility review is that it will be completed in early December and a full report will be given in February.

Front Door Enhancements:

- A new airlock vestibule to give more space in the Welcome Center and make it safer for students.
- The doors are controlled by electronics from the security desk and will be made of glass similar to a car windshield, which would buy time for law enforcement to arrive to address a situation. The attendance office is in the vestibule. The types of seating will be identified after the design.

Student Commons

- New collaboration areas.
- The elevator would be accessed from the corridor side.
- Book of learning stairs.

A virtual walkthrough began from the front of the school through the vestibule, the Welcome Center, a video wall in the waiting area, office space was reconfigured. The School Resource Officers will be relocated here as well.

People entering the building will exit into the secure vestibule. Both the attendance office/multipurpose space will be relocated to the vestibule with the approximate same space that they had in the old space. Only those students needing IDs would need to access this space.

- The stairs leading to the auditorium will be extended with a landing that could be the size of a classroom.
- Casual seating areas will be created off to the sides of the stairs. A wheel-chair accessible ramp to the auditorium will be added.
- A new balcony space above will also be added.
- A book of learning stairs was highlighted.

A tour of the second floor area showed two points of access to an elevator, which will be available, in addition to the existing stairs and the student balcony.

South Cafeteria

- Floor to ceiling windows on the west side.
- Seating choices will include large and small groups, or individual ones. The large number of students will dictate the maximum density areas that need to be achieved.
- A raised area with wheelchair accessible ramps on either side
- Wood acoustical ceiling would add warmth and reduce stress levels.
- The serving doors will be removed and the space refreshed.
- Elevator has access to the corridor.

Second Floor

- Transparency between coordinator and new Student Commons
- Makerspace
- Help Desk for one-to-one devices
- Learning stairs, which could fit two classes at one time. Have drop down projection screens, but also used for casual collaboration space.
- The open space at the bottom of learning stair has a space for wheelchairs.
- On the other corner of the learning stair is the elevator.

Discussion ensued about the location of the classrooms relative to the learning stairs and the acousticals. How will the sound be managed? The classroom walls will be acoustically rated. One could be in the classrooms and louder activities could be happening all around them without disturbance.

The floor area of the South Cafeteria is driving the addition of the Students Resource Commons. The Makerspace and the library need areas are flexible. The layout will help to connect the South Cafeteria and the Student Resource Center. If there were no learning stair, the recommendation would be for an open and large communicating stair.

This plan provides extra/new collaboration space and can accommodate more students at one time. Questions: Had there been communication with the faculty about the spaces? How many high schools have learning stairs? The response was that learning stairs are ubiquitous with every learning space that has happened across the country in both high schools and secondary schools. FGM designed learning stairs for Morton West, Stevenson High School, and New Trier. Some elementary schools even have these. Learning stairs can be used for elective classes. Cushions were incorporated into the design. One member was concerned about the security and the number of people required overseeing those spaces, especially in the absence of a class. The administration has heard consistently during the IMAGINE process that space for students was needed in the afternoon and morning. Dr. Pruitt-Adams believed that if a tone were set for what is expected, students would feel they have been heard and will respect it. One member felt that whatever the space is called is how it will be perceived. Classroom space is would not be a place to eat.

A tour of the third floor showed that the learning stairs would help with daylight over this space. The circulation desk, a reading room area, small group rooms, learning and lounging areas overlooking the fields were incorporated. Amongst the books, seating for groups and individuals with overhead lights were introduced. Elevator access will be available.

In addition to using materials to muffle the sound, LED lights can be dimmed when there is an abundance of daylight. Ultimately, supplemental lighting may be turned off. The window shades will create a calming environment.

Exterior

The architects coordinated colors from the other buildings along with the clay colors from the roof to enhance the outside of the south cafeteria. Because the existing cafeteria is two feet higher than the mall, an outdoor amenity was created to allow for wheelchair accessibility. In the event of an emergency (fire) within the south cafe, students would make their way to the egress area and first responders would assist.

The size of the South Cafeteria is 11,000 sq. ft. on the first floor and the second and third floors repeat that same square footage.

The renovation will allow for 22,000 of additional space to the existing facilities.

First responders will be trained on how to access the space in collaboration with the person who communicates to the Fire Department. The Student Commons will have a sprinkler system. The building codes have been reviewed with the Fire Department.

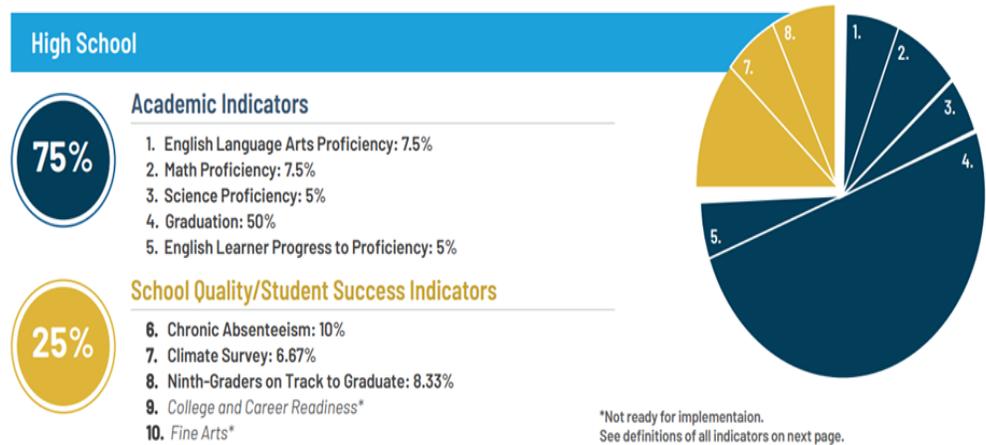
The ingress to the South Cafeteria from the mall would be controlled by OPRFHS and, thus, would not have the same type of doors as the Welcome Center.

Dr. Moore suggested that the Board of Education and the administration should discuss safety and accessibility.

State of the District

Dr. Pruitt-Adams was charged to educate all students, which is echoed in the Strategic Plan. She shared some of the top awards in Math, Science, Humanities, Arts and Athletics. There were successes ranging from state level honors all the way up to international recognition. OPRFHS is a public school that truly does provide a comprehensive, well-rounded education for its students.

In 2018, the state began giving each school an overall rating, based on eight different measures. This rating is called the school’s “Summative Designation.” The designation is a measure of progress in academic performance and student success. There are four designations given by the state. The ISBE gave OPRFHS a summative designation of Commendable, which means that there are no underperforming student groups, a graduate rate greater than 67 percent and whose performance is not in the top 10 percent of schools statewide. The Summative Designation Index Score is 81.21. While pleased by the designation of a commendable school, the administration is not satisfied and believe OPRFHS can be an exemplary school. A score of 85.42 is needed to earn an Exemplary Designation and OPRFHS is just a little more than 4 points away from earning the state’s most prestigious designation. Its focus is on the chronic, racially predictable disparities seen year after year. As such, the strategic plan focuses on curriculum evaluation, data analysis, and enhanced focus on professional development. The indicators that go into the summative designation are 75% Academic and 25% School Quality/Student Success Indicators.



Dr. Pruitt-Adams reported on the 11th graders proficient in English Language Arts from 2017 to 2019. The data has been stagnant for a while. As a group, OPRF

juniors continue to perform significantly higher than their peers across the state on the SAT. Sixty-six percent of OPRFHS juniors meet or exceed the proficiency standard in English Language Arts compared to the 39% of juniors across the state. Yet, there is disparity among groups of students in 2019 by race.

The same pattern plays out in math proficiency. As a group, juniors continue to perform significantly higher than their peers across the state on the SAT-- 59% of OPRFHS juniors meet or exceed the proficiency standard in Math compared to 35% of juniors across the state. In 9th grade, 91% of the students were on track to graduate, but a decline happens when students take the SAT. Thus, outcomes are racially predictable. The Strategic Plan's overarching goal is not to have achievement gap. As colleges move away from these tests, what will be the arbiters? OPRFHS needs to do a better job tracking its cohorts over four years. The class of 2021 will be the first class with four years of data--8th and 9th and 10th grade PSATs and SAT in 11th grade.

The District is collaborating with West 40 to work with students who are challenged with attendance and behavioral incidents. Instead of looking at the core group of students who get MultiTier support, the administration has identified an additional number of students beyond that core group.

On 35% of the students are meeting the math state standards of the SAT. The size of the group has been relatively constant.

Mr. Martire stated that math scores were crucial because it is indicative of the school and the administration can make the greatest difference. The Professional Review Panel used statewide data sets to see if there was a systematic differential irrespective of income. The answer was yes. That means there is a flaw in the educational system. OPRFHS has to make the case to the community that the data is compelling something different to be done in order to affect different outcomes. He was not happy with the District's announcement that it was pleased to be designated as commendable. OPRFHS should be excellent and it is not providing an adequate educational opportunity to black and brown students. That is the reason that this Board of Education has taken the more equitable route. The performance of black and brown students is lower irrespective of income. The administration is making excellent recommendations to change the system. A big challenge will be to provide more and better professional development. The building's practices and culture will take time to change and additional resources will be necessary. This must be communicated to the community. These present outcomes are not tolerable given the school's capacity from a financial resource perspective. Dr. Pruitt-Adams stated that the community prides itself on a great school, but if something is not done to change, OPRFHS will no longer be a great school because it is predominantly failing to educate black and brown children.

Discussion ensued about the 4-year graduation rate. In 2015, the graduation rate was close to being balanced. In 2019, the rate dropped. The administration asked itself what it missed. The ultimate goal is to have students graduate with their cohorts. The students who did not graduate were mostly black and brown students. Ten of the students on the list, who can continue to be educated at OPRFHS until age 22, are not considered graduates of their cohort group. In five of the students on the list graduated in the summer and that data point was missed. Also, OPRFHS has

a partnership with Fenwick and Trinity High Schools. Sometimes their students end up on both enrollment roles, i.e., OPRFHS and Fenwick or OPRFHS and Trinity. Three students have IEP and three transferred out of state. The District must look to see how enrollment is entered and removed. More data mining is necessary. Mr. Johnson continues to seek to discover where the missing students are. Mr. Martire asked to have a final report.

Note: the technology department has created a mock report card to see where the state is getting its numbers.

OPRFHS's dual credit information is different from that of the ISBE's and the administration could not determine how it reported its number. A better job of educating the students is the bottom line.

OPRFHS is working with West 40 on chronic absenteeism by providing wraparound services.

A component of the report card is tied to the 5Essentials, evidence based, reliability measure that changes organizations through the survey and had been given every other year. Teachers, parents, and students take the survey. It reflects the effectiveness of the leadership, the collaboration of teachers, the involvement of families, the supportiveness of the environment, and ambitious instruction. Historically, the district scored low with regards to effective leaders. Beginning this year, this survey will be given every year. The administration is able to see the comments. Seemingly, a lack of trust and support for building leadership was expressed. The administration choose to look at the results as to how the administration as a whole ranked.

Ninety-two percent of the teachers filled out the survey and twenty percent of the families. Dr. Moore felt that the teacher data may give more insight. The survey for effective leaders specifically talks about the principal, so how can one extrapolate over all. Dr. Pruitt-Adams felt that her role relates to overall leadership. For her, there were hidden messages because she heard people say with the walkouts, America-To-Me, the New York Times Town Hall, times and when the principal was missing, that teachers did not feel they were heard as it relates to students and that the administration should have been more sensitive. That went beyond the building principal and when he was not there, the administration was not providing something needed to students and staff.

Mr. Martire stated that effective leadership is taking ownership and he applauded Dr. Pruitt-Adams' comments. The collaborative teacher score bothered him as collaboration with faculty is a major cause of concern. Dr. Pruitt-Adams agreed. PD needs to be revamped and deliberate with adaptive change. The retention and evaluation is satisfactory and the per pupil instructional expenditure is double that of the state yet the achievement level is flat and PD time is limited. Something more focused and that reaches out across the district is necessary. All of the information, which included surveys, 5Essentials, etc. that could change academic outcomes for students came back to PD.

Mr. Martire noted that evidence-based funding has 24 basic elements, that research identifies. So, the administration is not only positive but it comports with the best practices about affecting student achievement.

Dr. Moore struggled with knowing that this data is the same since the beginning of her tenure on this Board. During that time, teacher collaboration teams were started and instructional coaches were put in place to enhance PD and collaboration. Have there been evaluations on the resources that has been put in place? Clearly, they are not working. Dr. Pruitt-Adams explained that the evaluation of the instructional coaching program showed that teachers are changing their practices, which is the intent of the program. The program is also voluntary. Putting pressure on someone to accept coaching, is discouraging and makes them stop wanting the help. TLC's focus this year is on data, curriculum and what needs to change. Previously teachers were not meeting together to do curriculum work regularly: It was done in an ad hoc during the summer. If systems do not line up, collaboration will not happen. When Dr. Moore observed that the data is compelling as to what needs to happen and asked how does the District stay the course in the future, Dr. Pruitt-Adams stated that as Mr. Johnson and the teams push more into division meetings. TLCs are beginning to have a mind and culture shift. The administration has charged itself to share the data with staff as a whole more frequently. Everyone feeds into the climate of the building and the academic performance of the building. While the administration has charged itself to increase PD, there are yet not enough days for it.

Ms. Harris questioned how much targeted work was being done around the questions on the survey as it seemed to be about relationships. It seemed to her about relational trust, etc. Dr. Pruitt-Adams noted that the administration was using a multifaceted approach and talking about Restorative Justice. Division leaders started meeting in circles and they are trying to infuse all of that into the work being done to enhance student outcomes. While understanding, Ms. Harris stated that teachers respect for others. They are the experts at their craft and she was not sure if Restorative Justice practices got to the heart of the matter. She asked how much collaborative effort was going on. Mr. Johnson noted that if the systems are not working well, it is hard for the teachers. The administration can do at normalizing the great jobs that are being done here and can talk about it. Ms. Sanders has identified ways to celebrate the achievements of the adults in the organization, including the educator. Dr. Moore asked how much buy-in was there from the teachers and how engaged were they in identifying PD? Dr. Pruitt-Adams noted that this year more teachers wanted and asked to be more involved than in the past. The administration is trying to bridge that gap to remove an "us against them" mentality. She felt she was seeing a shift.

Mr. Iseli reflected on how big the building was and asked if the administration had data on places or parts in the building that are working well. There is a cultural issue. While Dr. Pruitt-Adams did not have quantitative data, the administration stated there were pockets of excellence throughout the building: Teachers and teams who are doing extraordinary innovative things. People need to be willing to learn from others and others to say go and try this. The culture of uncertainty and how it will be received needs to be removed. Mr. Iseli asked how can the administration find what is good and reinforce it. Dr. Pruitt-Adams responded that at staff meetings, the administration is providing information on how to move forward collaboratively.

Mr. Martire suggested the pieces of what drove collaboration and effective leadership be looked at to see how they fit into the logic model. Then the Board would say what changes needed to be made, give the metrics, and ask for periodic status reports. It would be helpful to have insights on appropriate evaluations. A way to work collaboratively is to have in place a long-term model for systems change. District 90's faculty had a difficult time and a number of things were done over time through PD. PD was key and even more collaborative time was negotiated in the contract.

Mr. Cofsky asked what does the administration hope to achieve and how does it plan to get there as it relates to the resources. The District has invested significantly and is spending at a rate much greater than the state. Discussion has ensued about more investment. He noted that just because it can be explained, does not mean it is acceptable. Things need to be done differently.

Dr. Pruitt-Adams continued that in many student outcome areas, the data has been stagnant. The purpose of detracting of curriculum work is a way to give access to all. If the District sticks to the Strategic Plan, changes will be made and the opportunity gap will be closed. Student achievement measures on SAT across all demographic areas. The trajectory needs to change.

Ms. Dixon Spivy stated that the student spending per pupil and includes downstate districts without comparable budgets and hourly pay. She asked the administration to get Chicagoland data. The administration will and noted that OPRFHS was double the state average.

Discussion ensued about the African-American population decreasing in Oak Park. Dr. Pruitt-Adams noted that 10 years ago, a junior high school enrollment in Oak Park was 46% African-American, but today it is 12%. There is no statistical difference at the high school at this time.

Mr. Iseli noted that a challenge is focusing on those things that will have the biggest impact, rather than an exhaustive list.

**Approval of
Estimated Levy**

Per the request at the November 12 Committee of the Whole meeting, Ms. Sidor had presented the following four levy options. She reviewed the packet material which showed the effect of each of the options.

Option 1 - CPI, TIF, New Property

Option 2 - No CPI, TIF, New Property

Option 3 - CPI, TIF, New Property, Abate \$1.7 million for Property Tax Relief Grant

Option 4 - CPI, No TIF, New Property

Ms. Sidor had presented four options. The administration recommended that the Board of Education approve Option 1, which included taking the CPI of 1.9%, the new property, and the TIF funds and not abating back the Property Tax Relief Grant. The CFAC also supported this recommendation. The Board needs to approve estimated levy to put on public display and put in the paper.

A chart showed that from 2013 to 2018 the district levied \$46 million less than what it was entitled to. Since the 2013-2024 tax year, District will extend LESS than it was entitled by an estimated: 2019 CPI / TIF / New Property – \$68 million 2019 Abate \$1.7M - \$79 million 2019 No CPI / TIF / New Property - \$76 million 2019 No Expiring TIF - \$92 million.

The CFAC recommended increasing the 2019 levy by CPI at its November 5, 2019 meeting.

It was noted that the new property in the TIF were coming on line. Mr. Martire noted that the rate equals the levy divided by the equalized assessed value. If the District does not assess the against EAV possible, the denominator reduces and increases the rate. So the rate everyone pays not in the TIF goes up as they are covering more of the levy than if the EAV were larger. So that is a tax burden shift to those who not in the TIF. He did not know of a rationale not to assess the new property. If you do not assess on new property when it comes on, that revenue is lost forever.

Mr. Baron noted that the properties will be taxed and it is a matter of whether the overall amount taken in is spread out over more properties that are paying in to the overall tax base. Mr. Martire stated that if the District does not capture money this year in the TIF district forever more those properties in the District will have a lower share and a higher share for other properties outside of the TIF District. It has to be new property for this to work. Ms. Sidor stated that new homeowners would be getting the increase in taxes. It will only mean new taxes to the new homeowner of the property.

Mr. Iseli stated that in terms of dollars, an additional \$120 million in additional EAV would come on when the TIF expires. That \$120 million has been paying taxes at a rate currently into the TIF district and then a chunk of those taxes has been spread out to the taxing bodies. Those properties are already paying a current rate. New property has not been rated and will be assessed a rate. What does the discussion about not taking the TIF mean? Ms. Sidor responded that if the District does not take that money, it will lose that money forever. The people who live in the TIF District will still pay the same amount of taxes that they were paying last year. If the District does not take the \$3.3 million for new property, then it will be spread among the taxing bodies if they so choose. Thus, if the District does not take these funds for new property, it will lose about \$350,000 in additional revenue. Mr. Baron asked the District to look at taking \$68 million versus \$70 million and then that \$2 million would then be divided by the number of households, etc. in the area and their taxes would be reduced by \$80 depending upon the rate that the property was assessed.

Ms. Dixon Spivy asked if the District does not take the levy or the new property is it abated back to taxpayers or shifted. Ms. Sidor said that the taxpayers would just have their taxes reduced by \$3.5 million. Ms. Sidor suggested leaving it off the Levy and not increasing the amount to be received.

Mr. Iseli stated that if one lives with the assumption that the spending curve is consistent with the spending curve of the past, it is fiscally responsible to try to manage the deficit and create a soft landing. However, he felt the spending curve of

the past needed to change. In addition, that was the reason for bringing forward more options to give money back. The Board of Education made a commitment to maintain spending growth consistent with CPI. Thus, not taking the TIF would go against that strategy. Not taking the TIF discussion while interesting, he believed that the additional TIF properties will lead to additional housing in downtown and students downtown. The school should be taking some of the increased value of the TIF because that is part of what occurred. To not do so, would not be fiscally appropriate. Of the \$5.8 million the District abated, the District receives some back via its evidence based funding and the gap was to \$1.7 million. Mr. Iseli felt the District should approve Option 3.

Mr. Cofsky felt that spending was the key part of the discussion. His support of the plan that continues to take the full CPI is dependent upon holding expenses, which have not been held. The District had already absorbed the prior debt of \$2.5 million. Spending is key to this discussion and it needs to change moving forward. He concurred with Mr. Iseli on the revenue side. The District has been receiving the TIF money and this has been in the projections for the last 10 years. He could tolerate taking the CPI increase, but the District needs to demonstrate it can limit its spending. The tax property relief grant was given to the high school because the communities' tax burden is high. The District should not be spending that money and it should be used as it was intended--to provide property tax relief. He concurred with abating the \$1.7 million, Option #3.

It was noted that the CFAC recommended Option 1 and it had looked at all of the risks that have to do with the potential property tax free and pension shift. If these things happened, it would have a huge impact if the District does not take these dollars. They were not presented with the option of not taking the TIF monies.

Mr. Baron suggested taking a lesser amount of TIF money. Ms. Sidor stated that the District could use a set amount, i.e. \$600,000, a difference of \$200,000, which would amount to a total loss of \$6 million in a decade.

Ms. Sidor stated that the District has received \$1.7 million this year from the Property Tax Relief Grant through state funding. It could be the long term arch, depending on how it gets funded. Mr. Baron supported taking CPI, but questioned taking all of the TIF funds, as this is a window of time to provide relief in a less painful way. He respected the viewpoints of the uncertainty of the future, but what the previous Board of Education did the community feels inappropriate even though the District has left \$50 million on the table. Having heard from the community, he believed the Board needed to do more because of the amount of money the District has in the bank and it is debt free. He also understood the other implications, but he felt the need for fiscal stewardship and providing relief was paramount. He also did not believe that the Board of Education needed to treat a referendum for funds as a plague. It is there for a reason. Mr. Iseli appreciated his perspective and understood the pushback. Two things needed to be managed: 1) the impact on the community; and 2) the rate of deficit and the rate at which the District comes into that referendum. If a large deficit has been created at that point and the Board of Education has abated back too much, the slope of the deficit will be very steep. Serious consequences would occur if a referendum did not pass. If that is managed differently, meaning continue to take \$1.7 million, save money, the slope going into the referendum will be flatter.

Dr. Moore also concurred and stated that the issue of those increased unknowns was concerning. Mr. Baron’s suggestion would increase the crisis mode potentially, and the Board may have to factor in the pension shift and tax freeze. She appreciated the CFAC wanting to err on the side of caution, but she felt it was unfair. The Board made the assumption of what it would do with the Property Tax Relief Grant and option 3 captures that scenario. More structure is needed around what is meant by “decreasing the rate of spending” so that the Board of Education can come to different decisions next year.

Ms. Sidor stated that of the 18 schools she surveyed on the Property Tax Relief Grant, 10 were not abating the Property Tax Relief Grant funds, and the other eight were giving it back in some form.

Mr. Martire was concurred with Mr. Iseli’s analysis. He felt the property tax freeze was more realistic for Springfield and the outcome should be known next spring. He felt the pension shift was less of an option now, as the politics had changed. The Board needs to be cautious of pushing into the referendum spending mode.

Dr. Moore moved to approve Option 3; seconded by Mr. Baron. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Baron moved to request of not capturing the anticipated \$3.8 million of new taxable property which would represent 3% reduction of the overall TIF capture and it would reduce the increase from 5.04% to 4.9%; no second.

A roll call vote resulted in 6 ayes and one nay. Mr. Baron voted nay. Motion carried.

Option 3 includes capturing new property from the TIF, which does not increase the District’s portion of property tax bills, plus a nominal increase for taxable new property in the District. Based on historical data, a projection of the total new taxable property to be \$123.8 million (\$120 million from the TIF and \$3.8 million from new property). The total recommended estimate tax levy request is \$71,326,589, which represents an increase of 5.04% compared to the final 2018 tax extension of \$67,902,244.

Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement with Hinsdale Township High School District No 86.

Dr. Moore moved to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with Hinsdale Township High School District No. 86; seconded by Ms. Dixon Spivy. A roll call voted resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Five-Year Projections The levy timeline was presented at the October 15, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting. This is for information only.

School Profile 2019-20 The levy timeline was presented at the October 15, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting. This is for information only.

Future Agenda Items Suspension letters.
Business Incubator Class

Safety and Accessibility

Adjournment

At 11:30 p.m. on November 21, 2019, Mr. Martire moved to adjourn the regular Board of Education meeting; seconded by Mr. Baron. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Dr. Jackie Moore
President

Craig Iseli
Secretary