

# Community Unit School District 200

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Administration and School Service Center

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## NOTICE

### CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
DISTRICT 200  
DUPAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

A Meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) of Community Unit School District 200, DuPage County, Illinois will be held on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the School Service Center, 130 W. Park Ave, Wheaton, IL. The agenda of the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Welcome and Introductions
4. Approval of Minutes – May 17, 2023
5. Presentation and Discussion on Comprehensive Approach to Student Safety
6. Review of Bylaws and Potential Agenda Topics for 2023-24 CAC Year
7. Discussion of Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2023-24 School Year
8. What is the Buzz?
9. Adjourn



Rob Hanlon  
Board of Education, District 200



Superintendent of Schools, District 200

Community Unit School District 200 is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to attend and/or participate, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or the facilities, are requested to promptly contact the School District's ADA/Section 504 Coordinator at (630) 682-2000. TT/TDD Service is available through the above number.

## **Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

**August 23, 2023 - Meeting at SSC**

### **Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Dr. Schuler.
- This meeting was conducted in the BOE Room at the SSC.
- 32 CAC members were present for the meeting.
- Others present: Supt. Dr. Jeff Schuler, Asst. Supt. Chris Silagi, Asst. Supt. Matt Biscan, Director of Community Engagement & Communications Erica Loiacono, Board Member Dave Long.

### **Public Comment**

- None

### **Welcome and Introductions**

- Thankful and appreciative for the time individuals give to CAC.
- History and purpose of CAC:
  - Authorized through charter of the Board; bylaws approved by the Board.
  - Through these last years, the committee has been a great source of input and reflection on topics..
  - While the committee does not make decisions, it does help with policy topics. The discussion helps to inform info that is shared with the Board and helps them to make decisions.
- Committee is as good as the participation of members with the admins and each other.
- Use a lot of table group conversation, providing the opportunity to interact with others.
- Asked everyone to introduce and share information about themselves.

### **Approval of Minutes from May 17, 2023**

- Motion to approve the minutes: G. Aimonette; second: C. Berning. All in favor.
- The minutes of May 17, 2023, were approved.

### **Review of Bylaws and Potential Agenda Topics for 2023-24 CAC Year**

#### **Discussion of Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2023-24 School Year**

- Copy of the bylaws on each table. The duties of the CAC chair and vice chair are noted in the bylaws.
- If people are interested in becoming chair/vice-chair, let Dr. Schuler know by the time the next meeting agenda comes out.
- Next meeting - candidates will introduce themselves, and vote by ballot to select officers. Two officers meet with Dr. Schuler one week in front of each meeting to affirm what the agenda will look like.
- Some agenda items are identified through the bylaws, and others are from the interest of the committee or the interest of the Board if they are asking the committee to review.

### **Presentation and Discussion on Comprehensive Approach to Student Safety**

- Dr. Silagi and Mr. Biscan shared the presentation that was made last week at the Board meeting on Student Safety, and some adjustments being made in hiring processes and other policies. This presentation is part information/education and equal parts feedback. Action/policy steps have been outlined and would like feedback on these steps.

- Mr. Biscan is responsible for the two high schools and has oversight of Human Resources/ Personnel and general school safety. Dr. Silagi oversees the elementary schools and all of Student Services (including SEL programs and Erin's law)..
- *The Comprehensive Approach to Student Safety* Presentation was reviewed.
- Organizational Values
  - Kids first, Positive Relationships, Safety, Learning
  - If the first three are present, students can learn at a higher level
- Keeping Students Safe
  - Student Connectedness, Preventative Work in place - SOS (Signs of Suicide) at the HS level and Erin's Law, Risk of Harm practices within the district - Risk of harm to self and to others (developed with local police and mental health professionals), Referral GPS, Parent Communication (the importance of timely communication), See Something/Say Something (when you build relationships with kids, they are more apt to share), Safety Protocols (executing fire drills, ALICE drills, etc.), Staff Training (child abuse, grooming and sexual misconduct), Relationships with Police, Safe Hiring Practices and Faith's Law.
- Student Connectedness
  - Connection to school - 95% of kids in the district say they have a trusted adult in school. Up from 89%, still have work to do with the 5% that do not feel connected. Ongoing work and this is at the heart of our SEL work.
  - Connectedness strategies - connect students through co-curricular opportunities, individual conversations, learning student interests to get them involved in clubs, activities, athletics, and learning.
- Prevention and Safety
  - Teaching our kids ways to stay safe (safe/unsafe touches), how to communicate and report, health curriculum (sexual abuse, healthy relationships, and how to communicate and advocate for themselves, Mandatory annual training (and new staff receives additional training at new teacher orientation), Support team structure, Resource guide for abuse available on the D200 website, Parent communication, Referral GPS/Access to care.
- Hiring practices of our district - goal to get the best people in front of our students.
- Our Current Hiring Process - State mandated - IL School Code and D200 Board Policy 5:30 require school districts to initiate a fingerprint-based criminal background check for all applicants before the date of hire. This includes the following components:
  - 1) Submit applicant's identifying information to the State Police for a fingerprint-based criminal history records check of State Police and FBI records
  - 2) Perform a check of the Statewide Sex Offender Database
  - 3) Perform a check of the Statewide Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Database
- 4th component - added through Faith's Law (effective July 1st)
  - 4) (Effective July 1, 2023) signed affidavit from employee regarding Faith's Law - IL State Board of Education (ISBE) Sexual Misconduct Disclosure for Applicant
  - Recommended candidates must sign an affidavit that they are not disqualified from employment. Cannot start in the district until the affidavit is completed. (EHR - employment history review).
  - Provide a list (including name, address, telephone number, and other relevant contact information) of recommended candidate's current employer, and all former

employers that were schools or school contractors (including former employers where the candidate had direct contact with children or students).

- A written authorization that consents to and authorizes disclosure by the recommended candidate's current and former employers of the information requested and which releases those employers from any liability that may arise from such disclosure.
- CUSD200 current hiring process - in addition to the state mandate
  - 1) Successful review of FBI, State fingerprint results, check of sex offender database, check of statewide murderer/violent offender against youth database and signed affidavit – ISBE Sexual Misconduct Disclosure for Applicant (Faith's Law). All must be cleared for a candidate to be employed and start working for the District.
  - 2) If there are any convictions that have occurred, a review is done against the enumerated felony offenses in the IL School Code that could preclude employment (there is a 7-year look back for specific felony charges) they would not be employed with the District.
  - 3) If there are any convictions that could prohibit employment outside of the enumerated felony offenses, the Asst. Supt. and/or Director of Human Resources will have the attorneys review the convictions regarding precluding employment.
  - 4) If there are any convictions that could prohibit employment outside of the enumerated felony offenses, the Asst. Supt. and/or Director of Human Resources will review those convictions against the District Code of Conduct and specific position expectations to evaluate employment.
  - *\*If there is a criminal charge that has been vacated, that would have resulted in a decision not to employ, a review will be conducted by the Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with the Board of Education, prior to a final decision to hire. (Added as of August 2023).*
  - 5) Prior to finalizing clearance for employment, the Asst. Supt. and/or Director of HR will meet with the individual to discuss convictions that have occurred to understand what were the events leading up to the arrest/convictions and the final outcome of the conviction. If necessary, additional background checks or references will be reviewed. Verification of any other arrests that have occurred outside of the background check. Once the final determination is made for employment, the expectation of adhering to board policies and expectations of an employee is explained to the individual. Additionally, it is the expectation of the employee that if any future arrests were to occur they would notify their supervisor and/or HR immediately.
  - 6) After an individual is fingerprinted with the District, the District does receive any subsequent convictions of new arrests that occur.
- What is Faith's Law?
  - Named after prevention advocate and child sexual abuse survivor Faith Colson, who graduated from an IL high school in the early 2000s.
  - Faith was sexually abused by a teacher at her high school.
  - Years later, during the course of legal proceedings related to the abuse, she learned that several adults within her high school suspected that the teacher's relationship with her was inappropriate but did not take appropriate action to report their concerns.
  - As a result of her experiences, Faith pushed to change to state laws related to educator sexual misconduct in K-12 schools.

- Faith's Law was passed by the 102<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly as two separate pieces of legislation.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Legislation (took effect in December 2021)
  - Established the definition of sexual misconduct within the school code.
  - Required schools to develop and post employee code of conduct policies.
  - Expanded the definition of "grooming" in the IL criminal code.
  - Added "grooming" to the list of conduct that qualifies a child as an "abused child".
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Legislation (took effect July 2023)
  - Focused on the prevention of sexual misconduct that was defined in 2021.
  - Employees, substitute employees, and employees of contractors are all subject to this.
  - Adds employment history reviews (EHR) as part of the hiring and vetting process.
  - Requires notices to be provided to parents/guardians and the applicable student when there's an alleged act of sexual misconduct.
  - If a district has reasonable cause to believe a license holder has committed an act of sexual misconduct, it must be reported to the State Superintendent and Regional Superintendent.
  - Could start the process of revoking or suspending their license and/or endorsement.
- Goal of Faith's Law Legislation
  - Give parents/guardians notice regarding allegations of sexual misconduct that involve their students.
  - Equip IL schools with better information regarding the employment history of an applicant or employee of a contractor.
  - Provide schools the resources necessary to make well-informed decisions about who they are employing/contracting with.
  - Protect students from acts of sexual misconduct by school employees, substitute employees, and employees of contractors.
- Future Policy and Procedural Focus Areas
  - Uniform Grievance Procedures
  - Employee Conduct Policy and Procedures
  - Communication Processes
- Our Goal
  - A physically and emotionally safe environment for ALL students and ALL staff

There were comments and/or questions on the following:

- FBI look - goes beyond state look and includes anything.
- The EHS form and the 3 specific questions included on the form.
- Board policy 5:120 (Employee Code of Conduct) - The definitions of sexual misconduct and grooming are included in the policy.
- Parent/guardian notice and what triggers that as part of Faith's Law.
- Does the district have a policy on reporting? What if it is regarding a staff member? All school district employees are mandated reporters. Noted training on that at the start of the year, as well as reminders throughout the year.
- Can an anonymous report be made if a staff member is suspected? A report made to the supervisor, DCFS. Circumstances around employment and employment laws related to this and what action can be taken.
- Grooming and the obligation to report to DCFS and the proper authorities.



- Anonymous report could trigger a report to DCFS; how you respond to that (from an employment perspective) - there are standards and laws that govern that piece. Sometimes those two sets of laws can create some challenges in terms of what can be shared and to whom, and how those pieces can be dealt with.
- In D200, when we call DCFS, our practice is we call the police (whatever police have jurisdiction over that area) to inform them as well.
- Vetting process for contracted services and volunteers - vetted the same as employees? Contracted service employees - custodial, bus, food service - yes; most often individuals called in from a contract service (ie. to fix an air conditioning unit, etc.) would be under the supervision of a district employee that has been through the background check process.
- HR fingerprinting authorization form - classroom or building volunteers (at least once a week on a regular/consistent basis, field trips where a chaperone is alone with students and not supervised by a teacher or district employee or other adults, overnight field trips, volunteer coaches, private tutors, and outside service providers.
- Affidavit - What if there are omissions? Is there a database to cross-check previous employment? Do not believe there is a database. If there is a gap in employment, that will warrant a discussion.
- Mandated reporting - formal documentation - what is the documentation process to ensure there is a paper trail and to ensure the supervisor takes the next steps?
- DCFS-mandated reporters - is there someone in schools to make sure it gets to DCFS? Incumbent on the teacher/staff member to make that call. A form (Cants-5) is filled out by the person who has made the call.
- Mandated reporters need to fully understand the requirements of the act and it is their obligation to follow up and follow through.
- How are we vetting translators if they are from out of the country? FBI and relying on what sits with them and the state police.
- There are practices in place before they are put in front of kids and practices in place while they are in front of kids.
- Background checks -HR should have a record of any time things happen.
- If you have been fingerprinted and there is an arrest that comes up - it is reported to the district.
- Paper trail in HR regarding internal investigations and complaints.
- Do the kids know what the rules and regulations are? That there is someone they can talk to in the school and they will not get in trouble if they see something or hear something? That is clearly articulated in a lot of different ways.
- How does our district compare to other districts? Faith's Law and the universal set of expectations for all school districts. D200 added internal process to address any situation that comes up on background checks.
- Fingerprinting - Who is responsible for making sure the volunteers are getting fingerprinted? This has been reviewed with all elementary principals. They are responsible for reviewing with their teachers and front office staff.
- Do the secretaries have a list that says if someone comes in, are they fingerprinted? Incumbent on the teacher to be sure regular/weekly volunteers are on the list to be fingerprinted.
- Distinction between PTA vs. school-sponsored pieces/events.
- Opportunities to make sure PTAs are aligned with this. Especially if operating during the school day.

- Fingerprint requirements for those volunteering in a classroom and there is a teacher there vs. working with students directly. Depends on the cadence that is happening.

A handout containing the nine action steps that the District created based on feedback from the community and the Board of Education was distributed to the table groups. They were asked to review the list of the action steps, and based on the information received, look at two questions:

- 1) Is there anything missing from this presentation that would strengthen our practices?
- 2) Is there anything in which you need clarification?

Each group was asked to document their discussion. Want to collect all of that feedback.

### **What is the Buzz? (What are people talking about out in the community)**

Dr. Schuler noted: The intent is never to address questions, but to hear thoughts, so we can capture them, and in some cases consider for a future agenda item.

- Request for Jason Spencer to report back on AI (Artificial intelligence) and its impact on learning.
- Lowell loves the new playground.
- A lot of parents are interested in Bookworms - curriculum and how they can support their kids and would like more information.
- Student at Franklin was hit by a car while on a bike; led to teachers thinking about kids who ride bikes unsafely, and Mr. Kish made calls to the parents of kids identified. Positive feedback from parents.
- Praise for Illustrative Math (IM) and kids having their own workbooks - kids are thrilled.
- Earlier start time - bus issues.
- Franklin's lunch schedule switched - bell schedule off, kids feeling anxious about this.
- Wiesbrook Birthday Book Club - did away with that this year - disappointed. PTA program.
- Lowell - parents not informed about the change in the number of P.E. days per week (at the elementary level) to four days per week.
- WWS - buzz about the new cell phone policy - overall, people like it, just wanted more communication about it, but otherwise was a positive change.
- A person working in the school district on the sex offender list; had issues with students, and why not officially fired by the district?
- Sandburg sidewalk on the side of the building on the first day of school - cones all around it; hard to get around.

Dr. Schuler noted starting on time and ending on time. If interested in being chair or vice-chair, let him know before the next meeting.

### **Adjourn**

Dr Schuler adjourned the meeting at 8:31 p.m.