

# Community Unit School District 200

Administration and School Service Center  
130 West Park Avenue

Phone: (630) 682-2002

Wheaton, Illinois 60189-6400

Fax: (630) 682-2227

## 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, January 17, 2024, 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 (See Board Policy 2:230)
3. Approval of Minutes – November 15, 2023
4. Question of the Month
5. CAC Bylaws Revisions Approved December 13, 2023
6. Final Facilities Community Engagement Report and Next Steps
7. FY25 Budget Development Discussion
  - i. 5-Year Fiscal Projections
  - ii. Enrollment Trends and Related Budget Impacts
  - iii. Staffing Allocations and Support Allocation Model
  - iv. Capital Improvement Plan (Sherman Dergis)
  - v. Learning Acceleration Supports
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)

### January 17, 2024 - Meeting at SSC

#### Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by CAC Chair G. Biziarek.
- This meeting was conducted in the BOE Room at the SSC.
- 26 CAC members were present for the meeting.
- Others present: Supt. Dr. Jeff Schuler, Asst. Supt. Dr. Brian O'Keeffe, Executive Director of Special Education Erica Ekstrom, Director of Communications and Community Engagement Alyssa Barry, Board Member Julie Kulovits.
- Katy Ebbesen (alternate) joined the committee tonight for the balance of the year. We had a member who had to step aside from the committee.

#### Public Comment

- None

#### Approval of Minutes from November 15, 2023

- Motion to approve the minutes: C. Dabavich; second: R. McIntyre. All in favor.
- The minutes of November 15, 2023, were approved.

#### Question of the Month

- Dr. Schuler asked the group to discuss in table groups a question regarding e-learning: when the plan is up for renewal at the end of this year, is it something that should be continued rather than simply calling an emergency day (that is made up at the end of the school year). Yes or no and the reason.
- This is a timely discussion - executed the e-learning plan twice in the last week.
- There are two options when we have to take a day off of school - use an emergency day and make up on the back end of the calendar, or call an e-learning day.
- The current approved e-learning plan only goes through this year. If we want to continue using this, will need to go through a process to approve this Spring.
- Comments/Questions:
  - Really good job and well done for D200. Heard some negative comments on other Districts.
  - When calling an e-learning day, will it be like we have done or could there be any variation of the current plan? While there can be a variation of the current e-learning plan, do not believe District 200's would vary significantly from the way we have mapped out the experience (quite a bit of structure embedded in the plan). Do not anticipate that would change.
  - Confirm the number of e-learning days that you can have - by School Code, a District can take up to five e-learning/remote days per school year. Note: If we were to use a remote learning day at just one site, it would count as an e-learning day for the whole District.
- The table groups were asked to discuss and provide feedback based on the current e-learning experience.
- Feedback forms were collected from the group.

### **CAC Bylaws Revisions Approved December 13, 2023**

- Chair Greg B. provided an update to the group on the bylaws and revisions made over the last couple of months.
- A small committee talked about public comment for CAC, an oversight that was not addressed at the last bylaw revision meeting.
- Greg A of CAC was on the bylaws subcommittee and he helped with this, along with the chair and co-chair of CAC. A recommendation was developed and made to the Board.
- Wanted public comment to be fair to the meeting.
- CAC is a Board committee and wanted to pull in the public comment process the Board of Education uses (limit public comments to three minutes per comment).
- The Board approved the revision at their December meeting.

### **Final Facilities Community Engagement Report and Next Steps**

- The final community engagement report came to the Board in December. This was built around a second community phone survey that was done, along with an available online version. The community engagement leadership team, as well as CAC also weighed in on the final report.
- The second survey pulled together both the project options with some of the money elements.
- Feedback was not significantly different than the interim report. The high option had the strongest level of support in all survey groups, followed by the medium option, and then the low option.
- The final report went to the Board in December. The Board discussed and gave direction for the facilities committee to continue with plan development at the January meeting. The goal is to have detailed plans, timeline elements, and funding/finance pieces completed by the April/May timeframe.
- Anticipate being back in front of the Board several times in the Spring as this process continues, as well as sharing an update with CAC as we move through the process.
- Reflecting the interest of the community expressed through the engagement process.
- Information on the final community engagement report was attached to the December Board meeting oral report.

Dr. Schuler introduced Alyssa Barry, the new Director of Communications and Community Engagement; Erica Ekstrom, the Executive Director of Special Education, and Brian O'Keeffe, the Asst. Superintendent for Business Operations.

### **FY25 Budget Development Discussion**

#### **i. 5-Year Fiscal Projections**

#### **ii. Enrollment Trends and Related Budget Impacts**

#### **iii. Staffing Allocations and Support Allocation Model**

#### **iv. Capital Improvement Plan (Sherman Dergis)**

#### **v. Learning Acceleration Supports**

- The District is embarking on the development of the next fiscal year budget. The budget process is a twelve-month cycle that never ends.
- Transitioning from the adoption of the levy which funds the next year's budget, and launching into the building of that budget.
- The process starts with the development of the 5-year projections, which will frame out what our financial position looks like moving into the development of the next budget.

- Will spend some time identifying some of the levers that are going to significantly impact the budget development into next year.
- Our District benefitted greatly from the federal money that came in during the pandemic - this will have some lever impact as this is expiring.
- Making some decisions as to where and how we allocate resources as we move into March.
- Dr. Brian O'Keeffe shared information on the budget timeline and development of the budget, which begins in January with the Board approving a resolution authorizing Dr. Schuler and Dr. O'Keeffe to prepare the tentative budget for the next fiscal year.
- 5-year projections - based on assumptions we believe are conservative and reasonable.
- February through May is spent working on the budget, noting the District's operating budget this fiscal year is \$210M. Spend a lot of time getting every level and every department involved in this process. This is a top-down and bottom-up conversation.
- July - final development of the tentative budget, with the Board approving the final budget in September.
- The tentative levy is presented in November and the final levy is in December.
- At the Board Committee of the Whole meeting next week, the presentation of the 5-year financial forecast will occur. Noted you can find the last five years of the District 200 5-year forecasts on the finance section of the D200 website.
- The 5-year forecast/projections - use the last audit/AFR, and the current year's budget as a starting point.
- The business office finance team and the Board finance committee work through inputs for the projections - some are known elements (such as CPI) and some are projections (such as new construction and interest earnings).
- When the 5-year forecast is presented next week, this is not a document that is presented and done, as it is ever-evolving. It does give the Board an initial sense of what the model looks like.
- Reviewed the Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Revenue and Expenditure by Allocation, the D200 Enrollment from 2017-18 through 2023-24, and the 2021-24 ML (multilingual learner) Enrollment.
- Most of our money comes from local property taxes, then other local revenue, evidence-based funding, federal revenue, and other state revenue.
- Major revenue considerations include CPI, CPPRT, Federal Grants, and Registration Fees.
- CPI is always a local driver of the levy. CPI is what is used for the property tax cap law to drive levy for the following year. Last calendar year's CPI will factor into the levy that is passed at the end of this calendar year. Always works in a cycle that is offset by a year.
- CPPRT (Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax) - very hard to explain where that money comes from at the state level, but have come off of a couple of years where CPPRT went from a very low number to a significant increase in terms of distributions to school districts. It is now coming back down.
- Provided some of the history on CPPRT. Now it is based on income. The estimation that comes from the IL Dept. of Revenue is what drives CPPRT. For this fiscal year, there is a huge reduction of almost \$900M throughout the state (Every govt agency that has access to CPPRT) - \$900M in taxes was overestimated for tax year 2021. The estimate on this number is never close to being right. And with a District our size, a seven-figure reduction is not easily made up anywhere in a tax-cap environment.
- The \$900M affects the "Other Local Revenue" piece of the budgeted revenue allocation by source.

- Federal Grants - in the final year of expenditure of those federal dollars. Any of the positions that are funded through the grant dollars (reading and math interventions and coaching positions) have been left in the model but have backed out the funding/revenue that comes from that.
- Registration fees - in the 2020-21 school year, registration fees at all levels were cut in half. Did that for a couple of reasons - used some federal dollars to support the purchase of technology and some things that would normally be funded out of there. The revenue impact to the District was about \$1M. Have left the registration fees at that level since that time. At some point, need to have the conversation on the registration fees.
- Expenditure side - the biggest percentage is salaries and benefits; followed by purchased services (includes outsourced contract services - transportation, food service, custodial services), supplies and materials, and capital outlay.
- Personnel side - existing labor contracts are built into there (WWEA and CEA); trend in increased costs in healthcare benefits.
- Big external contracts - transportation, food service, custodial - typically run on 3-year initial renewals with opportunities to extend by a year until you go out to bid.
- Provided updates on the current contracts for transportation (finishing up a 3-year contract followed by two 1-year extensions), food service (finishing up a 5-year contract and are required by the state to go out to bid), and custodial services (current contract is in place for another couple of years)
- Transportation - have gotten quotes on that; the numbers are not great
- Foodservice - going through the RFP process vs standard bid. Doing tours with those interested in bidding this week, should receive submissions by the end of February. Operate under NSLP (National School Lunch Program). Anticipate having a 5-year contract.
- If we are in a place where we have to tighten, generally has to come in the way of headcount as there is not a lot in the other buckets to tighten.
- The staffing model starts first by looking at the number of students at each of our grade levels.
- Current school year - enrollment came up this year, with the largest push of enrollment coming from our younger grades (K-3).
- The composition of our student population and how that has impacted resource allocation.
- As the overall headcount has gone down, where have those staff gone?
- Much of the staff that has come out of core classrooms, has gone into specialized areas.
- 2021-2024 ML enrollment - multilingual learners, students that are serviced out of our multilingual department.
- Two significant trends - the number of students being supported through the ML side, and two, the newcomer population. Definition of newcomer (students that are brand new to the country and come in likely at a level one in terms of language development/acquisition) and how the programming model is different for the newcomers.
- The number of newcomers this school year (to date) is 89 and that number continues to grow.
- Two specific areas within our student population that have adjusted - one is ML. Also noted this spread of ML learners is across the District.
- It is important from a resource allocation to understand that all of the D200 student attendance centers have been affected by this.
- Do not think this trend is going to shift or change.



- Questions and/or comments:
- Newcomers are only considered newcomers for one year. Yes, blue is only for this number
- The District does not get additional funding for these students because of where we are inside of the funding tier in EBF (evidence-based funding) - tier 3 and climbing up.
- There is no federal money received for ML. There is some state money we have access to.
- EBF model - there are 27 factors built into the model. Noted as soon as you get to 100% funded (tier 4), the increase received is pennies.
- There is not going to be new money for the School District, need to find the money within the budget.
- How the EBF tiers are determined - our funding level relative to what the state has calculated for each District based on student enrollment and adequacy target.
- Property taxes, EAV, students and demographic areas, CPPRT, etc.
- Tax cap - only eligible to receive CPI on top of the prior operating tax year.
- Assessment is only driving what total EAV is - no control over that in the school district. Also, the District has no control over the tax extension or the tax bills.
- Responsibility is to ask for what we are legally responsible for that we need to support kids.
- Requested this discussion so the committee understands the budget as it relates to the middle school projects, educational offerings for students, etc., and where these things will come from out of the budget.
- The teacher contract and where we are sitting currently in the projections.
- The abatement that the Board approved has nothing to do with the operating budget, only has to do with the debt service fund.
- Where are we allocating the resources, noting the resources coming from the pool of money in the budget.
- The bond and interest and referendum-funded projects are completely separate, but Sherman Dergis (the \$7.2M for capital projects) does come out of this bucket.
- The group was asked to discuss this at the table groups. The goal is to begin to collect questions to talk about at future meetings.
- Erica Ekstrom presented a Special Education Programming Update.
- Three Guiding Questions:
  - What is the continuum of programming for Special Education in D200?
  - How has the Special Education population adjusted over time?
  - What is being monitored as we move into FY25 staffing plans?
- Special Education Programming EC-12+ - D200 provides a range of special education programming.
  - Resource, Instructional Classrooms (includes SKILLS, Essentials, SAIL, PISA, and Direct), Blended Classrooms, Transition, Out-of-District Programming
  - Provided handout with a description of the programs and the learners in each of the programs
- Typical classroom experience in a General Education Setting vs. Instructional Setting.
- Instructional Level Classrooms - have seen the number of instructional classrooms per level increase (34 in 2019 to 41 in 2024), with trends showing the biggest increase coming at the elementary level.
- Staffing requirements for instructional classrooms generally include a teacher, teaching assistants, and a portion of time from the following: speech pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, nurses, psychologists, and social workers.

- Elementary increases for resource staff (many students both with and without IEP are supported by Special Ed teachers). Seeing an increase in students needing these specialized services from our resource teachers since 2019-20.
- Monitoring and Supporting Culture (support structures; feedback loops)
  - The new mentoring program has two tracks - general education or special education. The special education program provides job-specific training throughout the year.
  - Noted additional leadership positions (teacher leaders or administrators) - Student Support Specialists, Early Childhood Instructional Coach, Additional Director Support (for SAIL program), Asst. Principal of Bower Elementary (largest concentration of instructional programs).
  - Feedback loops - morale survey, shadowing resource teachers, admin/staff feedback to guide the FY25 staffing needs.
- Strategy - not unique to Wheaton; staffing shortages in special education are all over. Noted school psychologist position is hard to find; the way D200 is working to be proactive with hiring (including continuously recruiting Teaching Assistants).
- Noted Grow your own program/WN internships
- Hiring and staffing allocations for FY25
  - Seeing increases in instructional classrooms - special consideration for staffing needs
  - Working with elementary admins to analyze staffing supports for resource and tier 3 students.

There were questions and/or comments on the following:

- Why some of those students do not qualify to have an IEP? Students with IEPs, 504 plans, fluctuations, different levels/tiers of needs and services.
- Americans with Disabilities Act - what services, accommodations, and level of support may be needed.
- Is the need growing and where do we project five years from now? Monitoring our district trends. Students at the K-2 level were Pre-K at the time of the pandemic, and some of their early learning experiences/interventions were remote or paused.
- If a student has a disability, such as a speech issue, that does not impact their learning, what happens to those students? Every student that has an IEP or 504 has a comprehensive evaluation every three years and a team of professionals meets to review the results. Support plans are based on the results of the evaluation.
- Monitoring of other districts - number of special education students and services provided. Noted the DuPage Area Roundtable and trends that other districts are seeing.
- How many students are we outplacing? Definition of outplaced students One of the most intensive areas of service. Noted therapeutic day schools and residential placements. The number of students fluctuates. As of now, have approximately 120 students, and 18 awaiting placements. There are layers of approval for the out-of-district placement/services.
- Are we considering alternative incentives for teachers to come to D200? Ideas are being shared between districts.
- The impact of the pandemic on these kids - any federal programs that can offset some of these costs? Do have some layers of benefit - noted flowthrough grants specifically designed for special ed. There are a lot of laws that guide this. Flowthrough grants are not designed to cover all of the costs. This is also tied to evidence-based funding (noted tier 3).

- Do you have a sense of what that % is (the percentage of total cost for services that are being provided offset by fed or state funding)? This will be provided to the group. Cost of out-of-district - a formula that dictates what the district is responsible to pay per capita per year; fluctuates based on a variety of different financial features; not 100% fully reimbursed.
- Thank you to the special ed team.
- Takeaway - we have no money and have greater needs.
- Our job to go to government and ask for money to do all of the things being required.
- Not just about the taxes going up, it is also about the services going down.
- This was meant to look through this lens and what we are assessing over the next couple of months.
- Obvious our student needs are increasing and that becomes a balancing act of what is available and how to support all students.

Dr. Schuler noted the goal of tonight was to give the group the perspective of the levers we are going to be looking at. As we go into next week with the five-year projections, noted the District is conservative on both sides - how we project spending and how we project revenue. The need to figure out what approach we have to take in budget development, not all doom and gloom, but the honest realization of there being a finite pie and the decision to make as to where we put the money.

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

- E-learning days from Longfellow and Franklin - the communication from the District was great, and the teachers did a great job. Because the break was so long, then having these e-learning days was especially hard for two working-parent families. They had to take days off to assist kids with e-learning. An emergency day might be easier for them. Noted multiple emails that went out about the importance of school attendance and the timing of when this went out (after a two-week break and coldest time of the year) was not great optics. Feedback saying to shorten the winter break.
- Email that went out from principals on attendance- some confusion about what this meant kids being sick, kids not showing up? Had a meeting with the principal and noted it was about absenteeism or truancy, kids not showing up to school, how to get kids to school on time, and the importance of showing up. Not about sending your kids to school sick.
- Institute day was placed right after a two-week break.

#### **Adjourn**

There was a motion to adjourn: N. Mead; second: R. Perona. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.