



BOARD OF EDUCATION *Highlights*

Highlights from the April 14, 2014 workshop meeting

To see the meeting video, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cn0PIKrIHYY&feature=em-uploademail>

Student Perspectives



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North High (l-r) student Mandy Gibbons, Librarian Rebecca Scott, Principal Scott Kasik, Librarian Stephanie DeVicentis and Student Mogueli Jimenez

North High senior **Mandy Gibbons** and junior **Mogueli Jimenez** both read all 22 titles from “[The Abraham Lincoln Award: Illinois’ Grades 9-12 Readers Choice Award](#)” master list. The program is designed to encourage high school students to read for personal satisfaction and become familiar with authors of young adult and adult books. North High librarians encourage students to participate, and deem those who read all the books on the list as “Abe’s Double Deuces.”

Both students shared their love of reading and their favorite books with the board. Gibbons has been a member of the school’s book club for three years, and her favorite title is “Fault in Our Stars,” by John Green. “One of my favorite places growing up was the library,” she said.

Mogueli is also a member of the book club at school. “I was very young when I started loving books,” he said. “I love unique characters, a unique plot, a unique setting—the more unique it is, the more interested I am in it!” His favorite title is “Ready player one” by Ernest Cline.

The Board members congratulated the students on their accomplishments.



BOARD OF EDUCATION *Highlights*

Board Workshop



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School Fundraising

Administrators from both schools updated the board about budgets and fundraising for athletics and activities:

- North High Athletic Director **Denise Kavanaugh** shared the budget process and timeline in athletics. She also shared that no items that are personal property of a student are paid out of district funds. Among the items purchased through fundraising efforts are uniforms with a student's name or items purchased out of the regular rotation cycle.
- North High Activities Director **Kristin Bormann** reviewed the fundraising process, emphasizing the coordination between the athletic and activities directors. The activities director has final approval for all fundraising requests.
- South High Athletic Director **Randy Konstans** emphasized the need for clear communication with coaches, students and parents that the school can take care of program needs. He explained that fundraising occurs when a group wants an item sooner than when it was budgeted for, wants an item that is above and beyond the needs of the program, or wants an item that is for personal use.
- South High Activities Director **John Aldworth** spoke about the school-wide philanthropic fundraising that takes place at both schools, and how it instills unity in the school and leadership in students. Most recently the Make-A-Wish Foundation, St. Baldrick's and PADS have been recipients of these efforts.

The Board expressed concerns about fundraising, including:

- community perception that fundraising is necessary for programs and that the schools are not providing needed items;
- that fundraising is required for student participation;
- that coaches expect and require students to sell; and
- that the cost to participate in sports is significantly more than the registration fee.

The Board asked for an update before the start of school next year on how the schools will educate coaches, sponsors, parents and the community about fundraising and the controls that will be in place.

To see the presentation slides, please visit [Athletics and Activities Budgets and Fund Raising Power Point.pdf \(201 KB\)](#).



BOARD OF EDUCATION *Highlights*



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School Fee Discussion

The Board discussed the idea of a “fee cap” for those families with multiple children at the district. At its meeting in February, the Board approved student fees for the 2014-15 school year; there is no increase in fees compared to the current 2013-14 school year.

School fees are an important revenue stream for the District, representing \$1.7 million annually, or about 2% of the total budget, and the district attempts to make school fees reasonable and consistent with other communities in the area. Controller **Mark Staehlin** presented information as to why fees are necessary. Due to the state of the economy, the district has seen fee waivers more than double. Currently, 27% of students now qualify for free and reduced lunch.

Staehlin explained that fees help support the District’s broad curriculum, rich programming and strategic initiatives, such as the Common Core and 1:1 technology, and does not recommend a cap on fees.

Several Board members expressed concern about families who have three or more children in the district at the same time, and wanted to explore the potential of capping fees. In addition to fees, property taxes have increased, which has placed additional burdens on families. Those who do not qualify for a waiver may still need help.

The district cited a number of concerns with implementing fee caps. The amount in interest the district receives each year has decreased from \$2 million to \$100,000, that service costs are increasing faster than the rate of inflation and that issues continue with funding on the State level all are factors that make the district’s budget less stable and certain. Despite the uncertain economy, however, the district has continued to cut costs without reducing programs and has continued to support students with additional math and reading teachers.



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School Signs

The district updated the Board about its pursuit of digital signs at both North High and South High. Three signs at the schools are not compliant with the Village of Downers Grove sign ordinances. Leaders from both the Village and schools have met to discuss options, and the Village is currently working on changing the sign zoning ordinance to allow for different institutional zoning.

Director of Facilities **Jim Kolodziej** presented information on the costs of replacing the signs and suggested specifications and locations of the signs. The Board viewed a sample of the proposed signs in the parking lot. The Board gave general approval to move forward with the planned signs.

To see the full presentation, go to [041014 School Signs.pdf \(1,194 KB\)](#).



BOARD OF EDUCATION *Highlights*

Board Action



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Disciplinary Action

The Board voted to accept the report of the Board Appointed Hearing Officers in the matter of three students, and expelled three students for the remainder of the 2013-14 school year and the summer session of 2014. Two were also expelled for the 2014-15 school year.



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Reception of Visitors

Patricia Miller addressed the Board on school fees and stated the additional fees can be crushing. She also stated that families that do not qualify for a fee waiver are struggling and that payment options need to be more publicized.

Upcoming Board Meetings

April 21, 2014 – Business Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Administrative Service Center – 6301 Springside Avenue, Downers Grove

May 5, 2014 – Workshop Meeting 7 p.m.

Administrative Service Center – 6301 Springside Avenue, Downers Grove

May 12, 2014 – Recognition Program 6:30 p.m.

District 99 Open House immediately following
North High School – 4436 Main Street, Downers Grove

*This publication is for information purposes only;
minutes approved by the Board serve as the official meeting record.*