



BOARD OF EDUCATION *Highlights*

Highlights from the November 4, 2013 workshop meeting

To see the meeting video, visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqPyKu2Q6NQ&feature=c4-overview-vl&list=PL437FAF3A8077265B>

Student Perspectives



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Five students from North High shared information about the new German and Spanish clubs. Previously, all languages were part of a one, overall “World Languages” club. By establishing separate clubs for each language this year, the students said they are better able to focus on the cultural aspect of their respective languages.

- Senior **Emily Hurst** and juniors **Tyler Kropp** and **Trevor Kropp** talked about their participation in the German Club. They recently spent a language immersion weekend in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, which they said improved their language skills immensely. An Austrian chef will visit the club this month and teach them how to make “apfelstreudel” (apple streudel). Also, the group will head downtown to visit the Christkindlmarkt.
- Senior **Yessenia Barrera** and junior **Heesha Kumar** are members of the Spanish Club. The students encourage others to join their meetings even if the students aren’t familiar with Spanish, hoping to broaden their outreach of sharing Spanish culture. The group recently celebrated and learned the significance of the “Dia de Les Muertos” (Day of the Dead), and has plans to explore Spanish cooking, Latin dance and Cinco de Mayo. The group also has organized a school supply drive to help inner city students in the Chicago Public Schools.

“I moved here from India four years ago, and have really learned about the Spanish culture,” said Kumar.

The Board members praised the students for how they are celebrating diversity and bringing new



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cultures to others.

Board Workshop



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Common Core State Standards Presentation

Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning **Gina Ziccardi** and department chairs from the schools provided the Board with a comprehensive update of what has been accomplished so far with Common Core, what current plans include and what the future holds. (See [http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9D5RVU64B71C/\\$file/Common%20Core%20Board%20Presentation%20%2011%204%2013.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9D5RVU64B71C/$file/Common%20Core%20Board%20Presentation%20%2011%204%2013.pdf))

Ziccardi reported that this past August, during the teacher institute days, one fifth of all teachers were involved in the sharing and discussion of Common Core State Standards. Teachers met both within their departments as well as in cross-departmental gatherings, fostering greater collaboration between teachers to support the district's integrated approach to the standards.

Math Department Chairs **Paul Stevenson** (South High) and **Jon Heldmann** (North High) gave an update on how the new Math 1 course is progressing. They explained how the "Habits of Mind" serves as the foundation for the new math curriculum, and encourage students to think differently in the past. For example, students are taught how to make sense of problems, how to persevere when they get stuck and how to be precise in their responses—all skills that are useful in math as well as other subjects.

The chairs are currently developing the Common Core Math 2 course for implementation in the 2014-15 school year, as well as mapping out Math 3 and what the options include once a student completes Math 3.

"Advanced Placement courses will continue to be in place," said Stevenson. "We have no intent to reduce those and want to make sure that students are prepared to take those options."

To better communicate with parents with students in Math 1, the chairs have started sending monthly newsletters. In addition, they launched a Q&A online at <http://www.csd99.org/faq/>, and visitors can submit their own questions about the math curriculum.

Associate Principals for Curriculum **Georgia Hash** (South High), **Janice Schwarze** (North High) and Social Studies Department Chair **Jill Rose** (North High) discussed their progress with the English and Language Arts (ELA) Common Core Standards. The district has implemented the "speaking



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and listening” portion of the ELA standards, which is integrated into all subjects.

Teams of teachers studied the standards and created learning targets. The targets are stated in student-friendly language, making it easier for them to understand how they’re performing and how to improve.

The targets have been placed into standardized rubrics, which are uniform across subjects.

“We’ve always talked informally with teachers in other subject areas, and it’s nice to now have a formal structure to have those conversations,” said Rose.

Rose added that the rubrics send a message to students that they are held accountable for their performance in whatever class they’re in. For example, they will be held to the same standards whether they are giving a presentation in social studies or P.E.—the expectations will be the same.

Schwarz reported that teachers are embracing the standards, and that the standards have been helpful for students of all academic levels. Following the standards across the subject matters also has saved teachers instructional time, because they don’t have to keep explaining the expectations to students.

The district will next tackle the writing standards and also survey teachers as to what their professional growth needs include to keep moving forward.

Ziccardi reported that the state is recommending that schools use an integrated approach to following the standards, as the district has done. District 99 has taken a leadership position not only with associated elementary and middle schools, but also in helping neighboring school districts with how to implement the standards effectively.

“You would be hard pressed to find even a unit district that is more prepared than we are,” said Heldmann.

The Board members called the district leaders “an inspiration” and congratulated them on their efforts.



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School Signs

Superintendent Dr. Mark McDonald reiterated the benefit of possibly installing digital signs. Doing so would provide the district with an opportunity to better engage the community, in particular those with no current connections to our schools. From academic and activity announcements to weather and crisis notifications, a digital capability would allow the schools to easily and quickly communicate.

Director of Facilities Jim Kolodziej showed the Board members the suggested placement and size



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of signs at both schools. The type of full-color digital sign recommended is similar to the signs at Naperville Central High School and Hinsdale Central High School.

See [http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9D32MY70CC7F/\\$file/110413-Signage.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/il/csd99/Board.nsf/files/9D32MY70CC7F/$file/110413-Signage.pdf) for the presentation and examples.

The Board members were unanimous in their support of moving forward.



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Future Agenda Item

Board Member Mike Davenport proposed that the idea of corporate sponsorships be added to a Board meeting agenda in the future. He asked if other members would be willing to discuss fundraising and sponsorships to help offset fees and other costs.

Board members were unanimous in their willingness to discuss the topic.

Upcoming Board Meetings

November 18, 2013 7:30 p.m.

November 25, 2013 6:30 p.m. – *South High School (Student and Staff Recognition, followed by District Open House)*

December 2, 2013 7 p.m.

December 16, 2013 7:30 p.m.

Administrative Service Center
6301 Springside Avenue, Downers Grove

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