

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT 99

Education Foundation outlines plan to increase fundraising efforts

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DOWNERS GROVE – The District 99 Education Foundation recently presented a comprehensive plan to the Community School District 99 Board of Education on how to grow the foundation.

During the Dec. 7 board of education meeting, the foundation president said to help increase funding they plan on hiring a full-time executive director and requested that the district help pay for the position's salary for the first three years and the benefits for the foreseeable future.

Foundation board President Eric Olson and Don Renner, who is a board member for both the district and the foundation, said fundraising has stagnated and projected they will need to raise more than \$190,000 annually by 2019 in order to remain viable.

"We have been operating at a net loss the last three or four years," Renner said.

The foundation uses donations to provide grants for district programs.

Olson discussed several new or re-

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Don Renner

District 99 Education Foundation co-founder

vamped fundraiser activities, which he said the foundation would roll out over a couple of years.

New fundraisers could include gala and golf events, which would start in 2017 and 2018, respectively.

The foundation also would like to increase the board membership, with a goal of doubling to 16 members.

Although the goals are both realistic and important, Olson and Renner stressed that it's imperative they hire an executive director in early 2016.

The foundation said it will need to offer \$80,000 in total compensation to the executive director in order to be competitive – \$65,000 in salary and \$15,000 in benefits. The compensation would have a 3 percent costing-of-living increase each year.

With the foundation's proposal, the district would pay 75 percent of the salary for the first year, 50 percent for the second year, 25 percent for the third year and none of the salary afterward. The foundation then would pay back the salary the district paid over a five-year period.

Renner said the foundation cannot provide benefits to a single employee itself, but it is possible it could come to agreement with the district to compensate for the cost.

Board members generally agreed that investing in strengthening the foundation could have long-term benefits for the district if it is successful.

Board member Julia Beckman said any alternative source of revenue is good with the uncertainty of state funding.

Board member Michael Davenport added that the foundation needs to hire the right person as the executive director. He said he was a member of the District 58 Education Foundation when it hired an executive director several years ago and it failed because the person was not right for the job.