

**League of Women Voters
Community High School District 99 Observers Report**

Board meeting attended: Special/Workshop Meeting

Date and Location of meeting: 22 Jan 2018
Administrative Service Center, 6301 Springside Avenue

Meeting started: 7:01 pm **Meeting adjourned:** 8:25 pm

Board Members Absent/Tardy: None

League Observer: Linda Derrig

Estimated Number Attending (excluding Board and Staff): approximately 12 persons in the audience at the start of the meeting including students and staff

Meetings are taped and posted at:

<http://www.csd99.org/boe/meeting-highlightsvideos.cfm>

Agenda can be found at:

<http://www.csd99.org/boe/Meeting-Agendas.cfm>

3) Student Perspectives:

A. Four students from South High School's English Learner (EL) program discussed how meaningful the program has been for them. In most cases, the students said, they started the program with little to no English. They spoke of how in the program the students learn English as well as content. Several acknowledged, through the EL program, they have become the only English speaker in their household and help other family members navigate English-speaking society.

Board President Kupka told the students she was very glad they were here and said she was in awe of their ability to speak English so well in such a short period of time. Board member Pavesich echoed her thoughts saying, "It's just amazing, amazing".

B. Student Board Member Questions Comments. South High board member Simone Black provided updates from South including:

- First finals before winter break- she and her friends liked this
- The DGS speech team hosted a speech event attracting more than 1,200 students
- A café/coffee house w/ silent auction fundraiser is upcoming as is a Black History play
- A group of some 20 students attended the Illinois Theater Fest in Bloomington in mid-January. DGS was represented by several staff including the Executive Director of the all-state play.

4) Board Workshop

A. Facility Naming Request:

The board heard a proposal to name North High Band and Orchestra rooms after early faculty who were identified as important to the development of the band and orchestra programs at the school and within the district.

The proposals were originally brought to the board more than 5 years ago. However, due to several “naming/honoring” requests at that time, the District 99 board instituted a policy calling for a five year waiting period before they can consider any request.

The proposal, brought to the board by DGN Fine Arts Department Chair Brayer Teague, is to rename the North High Band Room (Room 142) Shoemaker Hall after the first DGN band chair; and to rename the Orchestra Room (Room 138) Svoboda Hall after orchestra director from 1950-1977 who is credited with building an instrumental music foundation in the district.

Teague said naming practice spaces as “halls” is common practice, especially at the collegiate level. The original proposal, he said, dates back about 16 years. Currently at North, there is a plaque identifying the choir room as “Pohlmann Hall”. A similar plaque would be added to the band and orchestra rooms.

After questions from the board on their “Naming” policy, Superintendent Hank Thiele reiterated that board’s policy of a 5 year waiting period before formally considering any request. Thiele also said the request was run by the community advisory committee and that there were no concerns from that committee.

Board members also queried whether the families of the two former educators being honored would be notified. Teague confirmed that they would.

A vote on the proposals will be at the board’s next regular meeting.

B. Physical Education Exemption Procedures:

Staff presented a proposed change to the district PE Exemption for student athletes.

There are two changes being proposed to align with a new funding bill and existing learning standards.

- Exemption for 9th and 10th grade athletes participating on a varsity level sport. Currently, the district exempts only 11th and 12th grade students.
- All exempt students who are taking a study hall in place of PE will be expected to participate in a PE class when their sport is not active, i.e. return to the classroom once the varsity sport season is concluded or prior to the sport season starting.

According to Thiele, the proposal was reviewed by a small committee with department chairs, teachers and administrators to work through the specifics of how the change would be put in place.

Several board members expressed concerns around the change, including board member Don Renner who questioned why the underclassman exemption is only for varsity athletes and expressed concern that it might look arbitrary.

PE Department chairs were on hand to explain how they will make course content available for students when they are not actively in PE, leading to confusion among board members as to whether or not students would be responsible for material when they were not in class but

were active in their sport. Thiele indicated the particulars would be worked out by the policy committee but that it would depend on how many weeks students were able to participate in PE and that a threshold or thresholds would be established.

C. Master Facility Plan Community Engagement Update:

Thiele informed the board that efforts are ongoing to inform the community about the district tax referendum which will be on the ballot in March.

School staff is being provided with talking points.

Twenty minute presentations have been developed and the district is reaching out to key opinion leaders within the community to offer presentations for school groups, homeowners associations, etc. A speaker's bureau comprised of staff members is being developed.

An FAQ document, based on questions asked at previous presentations, is being developed.

A list of dos/don'ts is being circulated to the board and staff.

A fact sheet is being sent to every household within the district boundaries.

A formal presentation has been scheduled at each high school:

- 7 p.m. February 21 at South
- 7 p.m. February 22 at North

5) Reception of Visitors- Public Comment:

DeAnne Marek, a district graduate and parent, spoke in support of naming the orchestra room, Svoboda Hall, telling the board "Mr. S" was inspiring for generations of students and fostered a love of music for countless students during his long tenure in music education at both the junior high and high school.