

League of Women Voters of Downers Grove-Woodridge-Lisle Observer Report

Governmental Body: Community High School District 99
Date: February 3, 2014
Type of meeting: Workshop Media: None

Absent: Davenport
The Board convened at 7 P.M.

Student Perspectives

Information about and attitudes toward the North High psychology club were presented by student club officers. The club is only a year old but has about 100 members. The students expressed great enthusiasm for both the club and its sponsor, Mrs. Roberts.

Quarterly Financial Report

Mr. Staehlin reported that fund balances are up, primarily because this year there were fewer transfers from operating funds to debt service and capital projects. Basically, the balances were in line with historical precedent.

Mr. Staehlin further reported that 91% of District revenues have been received, the same as this time last year. Revenue is right on target, despite “horrible” interest income figures due to lingering effects of the recession, with 99% of property tax having been collected.

With regard to expenditures, 46% of them were made by the end of December. The single biggest item, salary and benefits, is on target. Staehlin pointed out that the tuition expense includes all programs requiring tuition, but it is mostly devoted to special education programs.

Literacy Coaching Program

Christopher Bronke, the English Department Chair at North High, introduced a presentation about a literacy coaching program initiated at North High in 2005 and at South in 2008. The program is based essentially on one-on-one coaching of teachers from all subject areas. The coaches are English teachers who have acquired expertise in reading and literacy. The objective is to enable teachers of all subjects to also teach literacy.

Improvements in student comprehension and testing scores in many academic subjects have resulted from the coaching program. Four of the literacy teachers spoke about their coaching experiences with teachers of math, physical education, music, and social studies. They described their guidance to and interactions with the academic teachers and how the coaching helped the students. At this time, about 70% of the staff at North, and 66% at South, are in or have been through the program.

One of the goals of the program was to contribute to the local, state, and national conversation on literacy education. Accordingly, the coaches have presented at numerous professional organizations; the District has been visited by many other Illinois school districts; and the program has been cited in numerous professional publications. North High will host the Chicago Area Literacy Leaders Summit, and District 99 was recently officially recognized by the National Center for Literacy Education. The District is clearly perceived as a leader in the field of literacy education. The coaches expressed a desire to continue their contribution to the field by doing presentations and sharing their knowledge as much as possible.

Several Board members asked questions about the program and congratulated and thanked the coaches for this impressive program.

There were no speakers at the Reception of Visitors.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

For more detailed information see the District 99 website: www.csd99.org

Observer: Peggy Healy

Date submitted: February 23, 2014

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