

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 186, SPRINGFIELD,
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Tuesday, April 12, 2022 (6:00 PM)

The Board of Education convened in Special Session on April 12 A.D., 2022, at 6:00 p.m., there being present thereat:

Present: Anthony Mares, President
 Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Erica Austin
Sarah Blissett
Buffy Lael-Wolf
Micah Miller
J. Michael Zimmers

Jennifer Gill, Superintendent of Schools

CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Roll Call

President Mares called the meeting to order.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Mares detailed how to provide public comment during the hearing.

2.1 Planned Consolidation of Hazel Dell and Laketown Elementary Schools and Proposal to Include Southern View Elementary School

Resolution: That the Board of Education adjourns into the Public Hearing regarding the Planned Consolidation of Hazel Dell and Laketown Elementary Schools and Proposal to Include Southern View Elementary School and upon conclusion of the Public Hearing, the meeting will adjourn.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Sarah Blissett**) Moved to approve the agenda. Member (**Erica Austin**) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion, 'That the Board of Education adjourns into the Public Hearing regarding the Planned Consolidation of Hazel Dell and Laketown Elementary Schools and Proposal to Include Southern View Elementary School and upon conclusion of the Public Hearing, the meeting will adjourn.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **5** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 5 - 0**

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller
Those voting "no": None

The Board adjourned into the public hearing at 6:02 p.m.

Superintendent Gill provided an overview of the planned consolidation and proposal to include Southern View Elementary School. Board members were provided with copies of the presentation. Copies have been filed with the Official Minutes and are available for public viewing on the District's website.

Superintendent Gill reported that the evening's hearing is the third of three public hearings that the Board of Education has held regarding the recommended consolidation. She reported that the presentations have been the same at each school and each hearing is an opportunity for the community to provide input about any of the three schools.

Superintendent Gill then introduced a panel of individuals that have been working on the Facilities Plan, and consolidation of Laketown and Hazel Dell, in particular, including, Darrel Schaver, District 186, Director of Operations and Maintenance, Mike Grossen, District 186, Director of School Leadership & Facilities Planning, Todd Cyrulik, Principal, Lead Designer and Director of Education Design Studio, BLDD Architects, Tim Hickey, Preconstruction Manager, O'Shea Builders, David Leonatti, Principal/Owner, Melotte, Morse, Leonatti, Parker, LTD. (MMLP), and Mark Vasconcelles, Veenstra and Kim, Inc.

Superintendent Gill overviewed the recommendation, a portion of which was approved during the facilities planning. She indicated that in conjunction with the Board-approved Our Schools Our Future Master Facilities Plan, consolidation of Hazel Dell and Laketown Elementary Schools on a new site is recommended. Additionally, due to the facility needs and location of Southern View Elementary, it is recommended that Southern View also be included in the consolidation into a new state-of-the-art facility on the south side of Springfield.

Next, she provided information on how the recommendation was developed. She reported that the District held nine community engagement sessions from February through November 2017. The sessions covered the following topics: the current state of the District's facilities, 21st-century programs and designs, planning principles, educational standards, prioritization, final vision document, a review and draft plan options, and final draft plan review and selection. She reported that the facility plan was created using the planning principles, educational standards, and other feedback from the Community Engagement sessions. She indicated that funding for the projects is from the one percent countywide sales tax passed in November 2018, the first voter-approved increase for school funding in 34 years. She reported that the sales tax garners over \$10 million per year to support school construction needs. She overviewed other ongoing construction projects.

Superintendent Gill then overviewed the Facilities Planning Principles. She reported that the five principles guiding the planning are as follows: Equitable - Each facility will be equipped with an auditorium, media center, science labs, kitchen/cafeteria, and spaces for arts and athletics; Student-Centered - Students are active participants in the learning process. As such, we will be purposeful with the selection of furniture, fixtures, and equipment and students will be provided with the ability to access technology; Safe and Secure - Buildings will be built with the goal of having transparent environments, that are easily observed and have controlled access while also providing a feeling of home; Up-to-date infrastructure - Buildings will have high quality and sufficient quantity of electrical lighting. They will be equipped with adequate outlets for various technologies, providing students the ability to connect to a global community of learners; Welcoming environment - Buildings will have beautiful aesthetics and

inviting exteriors. School pride will be displayed with appropriate color palettes for the various grade levels.

Next, Superintendent Gill overviewed consolidation considerations. She provided the functional suitability scores for the three schools: Hazel Dell at 47%, Laketown at 48%, and Southern View at 50%, the three lowest scores across the District. She indicated that each school has major structural issues, including no air conditioning at Laketown Elementary. She reported that including Southern View in the consolidation eliminates the cost of renovation for the building. While a larger K-5 school will cost more than planned, design efficiencies can be realized with new construction.

Superintendent Gill then reported that the new school will have approximately 450 students and will be similar in size to Lindsay or Harvard Park Elementary School. She compared current, declining enrollment figures of 117 students at Hazel Dell, 116 at Laketown, and 149 at Southern View to the remainder of elementary schools in the district which have anywhere from approximately 200 students to over 450 students per building. She further compared those enrollment numbers to 2011-12 enrollment numbers for the buildings which were 243 at Hazel Dell, 220 at Laketown, and 227 at Southern View.

Next, she provided a host of benefits associated with the recommended consolidation, including that a new school will empower students and families, that students will be provided with transportation, consolidation will increase program availability, provide more equitable educational opportunities as funding can be consolidated and targeted into one school with dedicated staff that will not have to travel between two or three schools, and provide increased teacher collaboration opportunities.

Superintendent Gill then provided information on the site selection. She indicated that a team of individuals from BLDD, Veenstra & Kimm, the Sangamon County Water Reclamation District, MMLP, and the District's legal counsel worked on the site selection. She reported that a site analysis was completed on Hazel Dell and Laketown in conjunction with the Facilities Plan.

Superintendent Gill then shared an aerial view of a possible layout on the Laketown site for the consolidation of two schools. She indicated that the building would be two stories, will have inadequate parking, and will need to be built approximately ten to fifteen feet from the property line of several houses. Currently, those houses look out onto green space. Next, Mr. Vasconcelles spoke to the sewage and drainage issues associated with the site. He indicated that the area has ongoing drainage and sewage issues, and very few sidewalks, which would create a dangerous situation for any students walking to school. Additionally, if a building is built on the site, a retention pond would be required, as would increased sewer drainage service. He reported that the Environmental Protection Agency requires the calculation of the number of gallons per day of sewage water created per student and staff. He indicated that the Sanitary District regulates the number of gallons per day (flow) of sewage water that is allowed to leave the site based on the acreage. He indicated that based on these calculations, the largest school that could be built on the lot would house 204 students and 65 staff members. He reported that comparatively, the 11th Street site is 15 acres. The site would not require an off-site storm sewer and it could support 1100 students. He reported that each of these factors contributed to the decision to recommend building on the 11th Street property. There was some additional information provided regarding regulations and building codes.

Superintendent Gill provided benefits of building a new school on a new site which included that a new school will provide a safe and secure environment. A new school will be student-centered, eliminating nine mobile units. It will be functional and provide separate areas for a library, cafeteria, and gym.

Additionally, a new building will provide separate drop-offs for cars and buses and provide ample parking for staff and visitors. She reported that infrastructure at two of the three schools is of issue, as two of the three schools do not have air conditioning. A new school will provide an updated HVAC system. Additionally, students will not be displaced if a new building is built on a new site. A new site will provide the opportunity to keep students in their current buildings while construction is completed on the new building, ensuring students and staff only have to change buildings one time.

It was noted that Mr. Zimmers joined the Public Hearing at 6:23 p.m.

Superintendent Gill then discussed the site selection and shared photos of the proposed 11th Street property. She shared an aerial photo of the current boundaries of Southern View, Laketown, and Hazel Dell Schools. She reported that the property is owned by the HD Smith Family Trust.

She overviewed the benefits of the 11th Street site and reported that the location of the 11th Street property is within Southern View's attendance boundaries, close to offices for the Girl Scouts, Head Start, the Illinois Principals Association, the Illinois School Board Association, and the FBI. Additionally, the property offers easy access from several directions and provides a unique opportunity as it includes ample acreage that is already developed to easily accommodate the construction of a new school in a mixed-use area with retail, office, and residential uses all within the immediate vicinity. She noted that there are few, if any, other developed sites with access options and no existing buildings in a centrally located area like this property. She reported that students will be provided with bus transportation to a school built on this site. Additionally, the property is already fully developed, with adequate sewage and drainage to host a 450-student school. She reported that the readiness of the site will save a significant amount of money when compared to the updates and preparation that would be needed at the current school sites. It includes ample acreage with space for an outdoor learning area.

Next, Superintendent Gill surmised that as a community hub, a new school on the property will encourage more residents to move to the area which will increase the tax base with new and improved homes and continuation of the growth that has been seen along the 11st Street corridor. She indicated that the District will work with the communities surrounding the current schools to develop a plan for the vacated properties. She further reported that the site includes a building that will allow the District to consolidate administrative offices, which are currently spread across four sites. She stated that the site is approximately 35 acres. The size will give the District ample options to use the property, including plenty of parking, green space, a nature lab for students, and room for future development.

Superintendent Gill shared slides that demonstrated possibilities for a new school, including a layout of the building on the site and a possible layout for the inside of the school. She reported that the slides are preliminary ideas, as a team of teachers, administrators, and families will work with the architects to design the new school. She noted that the building could offer a dedicated community room, a gym that is separate from the cafeteria and kitchen, and dedicated wings for Pre-K and Kindergarten (together), as well as 1st grade, on the first floor. A second floor on the back portion of the building would house a 2nd and 3rd-grade wing, a 4th and 5th-grade wing, and a media center. The building will have an elevator to ensure it is ADA compliant, as well as an appropriate amount of space for collaborative learning, dedicated art and music rooms, and a stage.

Lastly, Superintendent Gill provided answers to a few questions that had been posed previously. She gave details of the timeline for the construction and reported that construction will take approximately 18 months. She reiterated that the District will work with the communities surrounding the current buildings to

develop a plan for the buildings and properties once they are vacated. She reported that class sizes will remain at a comfortable level. She addressed the school calendar, as Southern View currently follows a balanced calendar, while Hazel Dell and Laketown follow a traditional calendar. She reported that the calendar will be studied over the course of the next year, with conversations taking place between the staff from the three schools. With respect to questions about supports for students, she indicated that it is expected that supports for students will increase with the consolidation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

3.1 Public Comment

Mr. Mares read the following statement outlining requirements related to public comment:

“For those that may have come in during the presentation, the Board of Education and I encourage public comment and participation in this Public Hearing. If you would like to speak during this evening’s hearing, please sign up on the form located on the desk next to Ms. Hammers, preferably before you speak.

If you prefer to give written comment, there are forms on which you may provide that comment. These forms are also available on the desk next to Ms. Hammers and on the table near the entry. Please leave those with Ms. Hammers or mail them to her attention in the Board Office, 1900 W. Monroe Street, Springfield, IL 62704.

If you plan to speak, please step up to the podium and begin by providing us with your first and last name. Additionally, please note that comments are limited to three minutes per speaker. Ms. Hammers will keep time and the clock will start once you begin speaking.”

The following individuals addressed the Board regarding the proposed consolidation:

- Kenneth Elmore
- Claire Smith
- Pat Haynes
- Shaun Wilkinson
- Mindy Madonia
- Lindy Wilkinson
- Angie Barnard
- Kameron Lott
- Ursula Prowell
- Ashley and Lakya Mason
- Brad Skinner

ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 Next Regular Meeting — Monday, April 18, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. — Board Room

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Mares declared the meeting adjourned until Monday, April 18, 2022. The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Anthony Mares, President

Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Dated: May 2, 2022