

STARK COUNTY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #100
Stark, Knox, Marshall, Henry & Peoria Counties, Illinois

Regular Meeting – December 18, 2023

The Stark County Community Unit School District #100 Board of Education met Monday, December 18, 2023, at the Stark County Elementary School cafeteria. Members present were Emily Leezer, Ann Orwig, Erin Price, Joseph Rediger, Brian Rewerts, and Bruce West. Dane Richards was absent. Also present were Brett Elliott, Superintendent; Jenna Bibb, Elementary Principal; Megan McGann, Jr./Sr. High School Principal; Rebecca Lane, Unit Clerical/Payroll Clerk; Mike Bunch, IT; several Stark County students and staff members, members of the community, and a member of the press.

With a quorum present, the meeting was called to order by President, Mrs. Orwig, at 6:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance, and the Mission and Vision statements were recited.

President Orwig opened the Public BINA Hearing Concerning the Intent of the Board of Education of Community Unit School District 100, Stark, Knox, Marshall, Henry and Peoria Counties, Illinois to Sell \$6,600,000 Funding Bonds. Mrs. Orwig reminded the public that comments are limited to 5 minutes of sharing time per person. The board does not make it a practice to respond to statements made by the public. There were no public comments, but Mr. John Ballentine asked for clarification as to what the bonds were for. Mrs. Orwig responded that the bonds are for the track and gym projects. The BINA hearing was closed.

President Orwig opened the Public Truth in Taxation Hearing. Mr. Elliott presented the rationale for the proposed tax levy and any increase. He noted that even though the amount of money that the school is asking for has increased, due to the increase in EAV, the school district's tax rate will actually decrease. Mrs. Orwig asked if there were any comments from the public.

Mr. Eric Siewert stepped forward to give his opinion. He does not have any kids in school, he is retired and moved to Stark County to keep his taxes low. The county assessor has raised his EAV, Stark County Board is raising his taxes due to the jail and insurance, and now the school is raising his taxes too. He asked when the tax increases are going to stop. He does not feel that a new gym and track are needed, and asked when there are ever more than 300 people in the gym. Mrs. Orwig thanked him for stepping forward to make a public comment. She noted that the board does not make it a practice to respond to statements made by the public, but that she would like to add that she has heard that EAV increases are common across the entire state of Illinois, not just Stark County. Mr. Siewert stepped out of the meeting. Mr. Elliott added clarification that the amount of money that the school is asking for is increasing but the school district's tax rate is actually going down due to the increases in EAV. Seeing no other comments from the public, President Orwig closed the Public Hearing.

Motion was made by Mr. West, seconded by Mrs. Price, to approve the consent calendar. Items approved under the consent calendar were:

- Approval of the November 20, 2023 Board Minutes and November 30, 2023 Special Board Minutes;
- Approval of the November JH/HS Activity Funds, November Self-Insurance Fund, November Imprest Fund, and November Treasurer's Report;
- Approval of the November LEA checks as follows: City of Wyoming \$989.78, Stark County CUSD #100 \$149,134.53, Guardian \$359.11, Guardian \$3,148.34, Guardian \$589.14, Guardian \$454.31, Office of the State Fire Marshall \$200.00, IHSA \$2,722.12, Leezer Insurance Agency \$64.00, Office of the State Fire Marshall \$125.00, Stark County CUSD #100 \$166,708.06, State Bank of Toulon \$88,348.99, VISA \$1,938.53, VISA \$1,594.86, VISA \$1,658.01, VISA \$2,005.33, Angie Roark \$525.00, State Bank of Toulon \$788,200.00, Stark County CUSD #100 \$500.00, Accident Fund Insurance Co. \$1,026.00, Amazon Capital Services \$5,354.05, Black Hawk College \$17,210.00, US Bank Equipment Finance \$3,385.14, Imprest Fund \$8,892.33.

Motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Next on the agenda was the approval of December bills. Mr. Elliott noted that the IDEA payments on page 3 are paid out but we will receive the money back in January. There were no questions on the bills. Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. Rediger, to approve the December bills of \$521,615.25. Motion was approved 6-0.

President Orwig presented Pride and Excellence Recognition to the Stark County High School FFA Program. Our FFA program recently competed at the national level producing incredible results. We are proud to honor the following students' accomplishments on the national stage.

National Environmental & Natural Resources CDE Members: Logan Goerks, Garrett Bruecks, Katelynn Allen, and Chelsey Stotler. The team finished with a Silver placing. Logan finished as a Gold Finalist while Garrett and Chelsey finished as Silver Finalists, and Katelynn as a Bronze Finalist. The team finished in the top 30% of the Nation!

Chelsey Stotler was also recognized as a National Finalist in early August 2023 for her Agri-Science project in the Food Products and Processing category. In September, she interviewed on Zoom with members of the National FFA Staff and Industry professionals, where she was questioned on her project. Her final placing was held on stage at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis where she placed second in the nation in her division.

Jacob McCauley performed on stage as a part of the 75th Annual National FFA Choir. Jacob began his journey in June when he was a member of the Illinois FFA Choir in Springfield. In July, he auditioned for the National FFA Choir and was selected in August to perform in October. Jacob arrived in Indianapolis four days before the start of the national convention in order to practice and prepare for their performance.

Ms. McGann spoke highly in regards to these FFA students. She commented that it was humbling to see Stark County students on such a large stage. It is a big deal to have 5 students from a small school recognized on a national level. Nice work SC FFA!

Also on a national stage recently was our FFA Director, Taylor Wilkinson. Ms. Wilkinson is one of six agricultural educators nationwide who received the 2023 National Association of Agricultural Educators Ideas Unlimited Award. Ms. Wilkinson was presented the Ideas Unlimited Award during the 2023 NAAE Convention, November 28 through December 2, in Phoenix. She presented her workshop in Phoenix with over 95 attendees, to do a hands-on activity using pool noodles. Ms. Wilkinson's students were showcased on stage utilizing this idea to over 850 educators. Thank you, Taylor, for your leadership. Ms. McGann expressed how proud she was of Ms. Wilkinson and mentioned how hard they had been working and brainstorming together to take Ag to the next level.

Next, Mrs. Orwig presented a Pride and Excellence Award to Lauren Best. For the first time in SCHS history, we had a student selected to the Illinois All State Band. Lauren Best has been selected for this incredible honor among tens of thousands of band students throughout the state, competing against large suburban, urban, and small rural school districts. Lauren is one of the best of the best. Lauren will represent SCHS in January 2024 at the All-State Band Performance. We are so proud of you Lauren. Ms. McGann added that she is so proud of Lauren, especially with her stepping up as a student leader as we have transitioned to our second band teacher this school year.

In the spring of 2020, Mr. Elliott was introduced to Mr. Denny Rewerts to help set up meet-and-greet sessions with local business and community leaders in the area. This quickly led to the creation of SCCI, "Stark Council for Continuous Improvement." This informal council met 3-4 times per year to explore how the community can continue to grow while wrapping around the school district as the heart of the community. SCCI has accomplished many ventures over the past three plus years and are now becoming a Not-for-Profit Organization including a new executive board. SCCI has also partnered with Discover Peoria, to coordinate a county wide marketing campaign to draw interest to our local economy, businesses, restaurants, schools, employment, entertainment, and more. These accomplishments would not be possible without the direct support of Mrs. Tami Rouse, who has coordinated every meeting to ensure success and has been our key communicator throughout the entire community. Mrs. Orwig presented a Pride and Excellence Award to the SCCI Executive Board, consisting of Denny Rewerts, Tami Rouse, Mark Rewerts, Michael Schott, and Brett Elliott. The SCCI Executive Board was honored for their leadership, vision, innovation, and passion for our community.

SCES Student Library Leaders including Evie Hess, Lucy Nagode, Gracie Hegwood, Tryson Blakey, Chelby Gentle, Graicyn Pheiffer, Hailey Lane, and Kaimbrey Steelman were presented with Pride and Excellence Awards for assisting Mrs. Kelly in the elementary library. Before Mrs. Kelly had surgery, she trained these students to help shelve books since she knew there would be a substitute in the library until she returned and that she would be unable to shelve books for an extended amount of time once she returned. These eight students have been so helpful, coming to the library to shelve books during the day, sometimes instead of going to recess, and also during their own library times. They have been a tremendous help to Mrs. Kelly and the substitute Mrs.

Collins. Mrs. Kelly spoke praises for these students and mentioned that this was her first ever group of student helpers at the elementary school. When Mrs. Kelly found the note from Mrs. Collins, praising them for their help and hard work, she knew that she wanted to do something to honor them, so she nominated them for the Pride and Excellence Award.

Visitor Comments:

There were no visitor comments.

Education Committee Report:

President Orwig provided an update from the Education Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. A variety of topics were presented by both principals, Mrs. Bibb and Ms. McGann, including state policy and mandates, grants, Junior Achievement, dual credits, and more. There were no questions for Mrs. Orwig.

Finance Committee Report:

Vice President West provided an update from the Finance Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. At the meeting they discussed the proposed tax levy as presented in detail by Mr. Elliott earlier in the meeting.

Policy Committee Report:

Secretary Leezer provided an update from the Policy Committee meeting also held earlier in the evening. PRESS policy updates received last month were presented with no further questions.

Henry Stark Governing Board Report:

President Orwig provided an update from the December Henry-Stark Governing Board meeting. The meeting included the standard personnel approvals, Mrs. Orwig noted that there were not as many resignations at this meeting as there had been in recent meetings. They also approved some scholarships at the meeting. The Henry-Stark Governing Board has negotiated a lower tuition rate with Grand Canyon University for continuation of staff education. Stark County staff are eligible for this lower tuition rate because we are a member district. There were no questions for Mrs. Orwig.

Education Foundation Report:

Mr. Rewerts added that the Education Foundation also had a meeting recently. They approved teacher grants, discussed their successful trivia night fundraiser, and are working on senior scholarships. Mr. Elliott added that the Education Foundation and Parents' Club will be partnering this year to host a fundraising auction in March.

Administrative Reports:

Stark County Elementary School Principal, Jenna Bibb, shared that Mrs. Kunkel and her team hosted a Data Review Day to review progress monitoring of students currently receiving Tier 2 interventions as well as to identify students who may need intervention based on winter benchmarking. SCES will be launching their third master schedule for the year in order to incorporate Miss Elswick into our music program. Teachers have been flexible and understanding with many changes taking place this year to accommodate our music shortage. Mrs. Bibb announced that the SCES Parents' Club

and Education Foundation Auction is scheduled for March 9, 2024. There were no questions for Mrs. Bibb.

Stark County Junior High/High School Principal, Megan McGann, shared that Miss Wilkinson was awarded the Region IV Ideas Unlimited Award sponsored by National Geographic and Cengage Learning. She traveled to the NAAE Conference in Phoenix, AZ to present to Ag Educators from across the US! We are so proud of Miss Wilkinson's advancements for our Ag department. We are currently implementing STAR Winter Benchmark testing for Reading/Math, as well as Wayfinder Mid-Year surveys. Counselors are meeting with students at risk of not graduating and Freshmen determined as Off Track to finish the semester strong. Congratulations to Lauren Best, our first ever Stark County All State ILMEA Band student since consolidation! Lauren is a true leader within the fine arts department and we look forward to honoring and recognizing her in January at the ILMEA performance. Three SC football players (Matthew Bowser, Avery Gerber, and Luke Rewerts) were recognized with Academic All State Recognition. These seniors display the importance of excelling in the classroom and on the field! Coach Bohm and the 8th Grade Lady Rebels had a great season, achieving another Regional title. Our Winter Concert was super successful, offering performances with both JH Band/Choir and HS Band/Choir. Special recognition to Dr. Parks and Mrs. Roark for their support in the process. Four SCHS students were recognized as Illinois State Scholars: Hannah Allen, Morgan Brooks, Logan Goerks, and Will Rumbold. Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), the state's college access and financial aid agency, presents this important recognition of academic achievement to exceptional Illinois high school students annually. Our December Attendance Incentive, "Presents for Presence" has been a hit – encouraging students to attend school every day all day! We have seen an increase in student attendance percentages, specifically at the JH throughout the month. The 12+ Days of Holiday Cheer and Festive Fridays hosted by student council have been a great boost for the holiday season and end of first semester. Mary Horsley, High School Secretary is retiring, with her last day being tomorrow. She will be greatly missed in the office. There has been some discussion about vape detectors, more information to come. There were no questions for Ms. McGann.

Stark County Superintendent, Mr. Elliott shared pride in the completion of another highly successful semester where we saw continued growth in our teachers and learning, facilities, athletics and extracurricular activities. Our students, teachers and staff continue to live the PHEARCE philosophy that is producing a tremendous culture of learning. Tonight we honored several Pride and Excellence recipients as evidence of our relentless pursuit of excellence. Our track project is well underway with earth moving complete and concrete work to be finished by the conclusion of the calendar year. In the spring, the project will continue with an early summer completion date. We have been working with Farnsworth and CORE on our new gym project and they are here tonight to present the latest renderings. The SC News Grant is underway with the team creating infomercials with our local manufacturers and businesses, promoting future employment opportunities post high school in our efforts to continue to promote college and career readiness. Winter Break begins Wednesday, December 20th - January 5th, with students returning Monday, January 8th. Teachers will return Friday, January 5th for our annual winter institute. We want to wish our students, staff, administrative team, board of

education and the entire community a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! Mr. Elliott provided a budget update on expenditures through 41.7% of fiscal year 2024, stating that we continue to stay on pace. The Hairy for Hegwood fundraiser has started in support of one of our own, Katina Hegwood. After only 24 hours live, the Go Fund Me page is already up to \$1,000. There were no questions for Mr. Elliott.

Unfinished Business:

Farnsworth provided the board an update on the planning on the new gym project including color schemes and sign options. The board got to see pictures of potential gym designs, ask questions, and express their preferences. Mr. Ballentine asked when they plan for the construction to start. Farnsworth/CORE answered that it could be as early as March 2024. No action taken

Next on the agenda was the adoption of the tax levy. Mrs. Orwig made a motion to adopt the 2023 Tax Levy as presented and to direct the superintendent to submit the certificate of levy to the county clerks. Mr. West seconded. Motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

It is recommended that we officially review the updated Risk Management Plan at the time of the Tax Levy approval. Summary of Coverage in the Tort Fund Includes: annual insurance, legal cost/liability, percentage of salaries (Superintendent 50%, Building Administration 35%, School Nurses 20%, Maintenance Director 10%). Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve the 2024-25 Risk Management Plan as presented. Motion was seconded by Mr. Rewerts and passed 6-0.

The Board Policy committee met earlier this evening to review Press Issue #113 that includes updates to the following: 2:20, 2:120, 2:150AP, 2:200, 2:220, 2:220E2, 2:220E6, 4:10, 4:30, 4:60, 4:60AP1, 4:80AP2, 4:90, 4:130, 4:130E, 4:160, 4:160AP, 4:170, 4:170AP1, 5:120AP2, 5:150AP, 5:200, 5:210, 5:220, 5:220AP, 5:250, 5:285AP, 5:330, 6:15, 6:50, 6:60, 6:60AP1, 6:230, 6:230AP, 6:230AP, 7:60, 7:160, 7:165, 7:190, 7:190AP9, 7:270, 7:270AP2, 7:285AP, 7:290, 7:290AP, 7:345AP, 8:30; ALA Library Bill of Rights. Mr. West made a motion to approve PRESS Policy, Issue #113, as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Price. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

New Business:

Superintendent Elliott explained that the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act requires that all school boards in Illinois take action annually to comply with the law. One requirement is that each year, you set the maximum allowable reimbursement for travel, meals and lodging expenses for board members and employees. This is an annual item for board approval. It is acknowledging the \$35,000 amount that we have allocated for travel purposes. Mrs. Orwig made a motion to approve expense reimbursements for the amount of \$35,000 for FY24. Mrs. Leezer seconded, passed 6-0.

Superintendent Elliott recommended a board retreat for continued growth, to be held before the Tuesday, January 16, 2024 school board meeting. The board planned to meet at Stark County Elementary at noon for lunch with the board retreat to follow and board meeting time to remain at 6 pm that day.

Items for Next Meeting:

Approval of Final Bond Resolution; Board Retreat Update; Illinois State Scholar Recognition; Discussion of School Calendar.

Executive Session:

Motion was made by Mr. Rewerts, seconded by Mr. West, to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing employee compensation, performance, resignations, retirements, and employment at 7:12 p.m. Motion was approved 6-0.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. West, to reconvene from Executive Session at 7:39 p.m. and to hold the Executive Session minutes, Not for Release. Motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mrs. Orwig, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of November 20, 2023 and November 30, 2023, Not for Release. Motion was approved 6-0.

Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve Sophia Elswick as K-12 Music Teacher for the 2023-24 school year. Mr. West seconded and motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mrs. Orwig, to approve Cole Hartley as Innovation Lab Supervisor for the 2023-24 school year. Motion passed 6-0.

Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve Tyler Brown as 7th grade volleyball coach for the 2023-24 season. Seconded by Mr. Rediger and passed by a 6-0 vote.

Mrs. Leezer announced the resignation of Chad Acree as Junior High Girls Basketball Coach.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. West, to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Motion was approved 6-0.

Ann Orwig
President

Emily Leezer
Secretary

Approved 1/16/2024