

Oak Park River Forest League of Women Voters Eyewitness Report

Observed by: Diana Shea

Date: August 13, 2019

Meeting Length: 2 hours 10 minutes

Meeting Name: District 97 Board of Education

D97 Administration Increases Teachers of Color by Eight Percent

What did the Board decide?

- Rob Grossi (Financial Advisor to the District) presented the [tentative budget](#) for FY2019-2020, with explanation of impact of the referendum and real estate tax levies. The D97 Board approved the tentative budget. Public hearing will be held Sept 24, 2019.
- Approval of [pay increases for specific support staff](#).
- Approval of [data sharing agreement with DePaul University](#).
- Approval of [memo of understanding](#) between D97 and Oak Park Teachers Association regarding additional responsibilities for elementary art and music teachers. The details of the agreement were not provided.
- Approval of [video security system upgrade](#) after hearing proposal from Michael Arensdorff and Jim Hackett. Implementation will begin immediately. The lifespan of the system is expected to be 7-10 years. Eight hours of training is included in the cost of the upgrade which will be provided to district staff. Video will be stored so long as there is capacity on the server, which is typically 30-45 days.

What else did the Board discuss or refer to committee?

- The D97 Board heard a report from Superintendent Dr. Kelley on the State of the District, which provided an overview of where we are with respect to the vision statement and promises to the community. Dr. Kelley mentioned that there are a lot of professional learning hours needed and not much time to fit it in. One way that the district addresses that is job-embedded coaching. Another highlight from last year is the increase in teachers of color. Last year at this time, 14% of staff were teachers of color, whereas there are currently 22%.
- Dr. Kelley shared the plan for upcoming special board meetings that are intended to engage with hard-to-reach families in the community around implementation of the equity plan. The meetings will be facilitated in small groups, looking for parent feedback on a series of questions. Individual responses will be collected by a notetaker as well as technology (a

system call Cahoot). In addition to the in-person sessions, the District will send surveys to gather more input. The Board discussed the outreach efforts and possible improvements that could be made. Some Board members expressed surprise that only one week notice was given to the community and that flyers were not posted at Hepzibah or Camp Spark.

- [The Facilities Committee recommended](#) to the D97 Board to replace the playground equipment at Lincoln after learning how much it would cost to repair the 15-year old structures.
- Committee and Community Engagement (CCE) is undergoing some changes due to turnover. The committee would like for the Board to identify a few topics for which they will want to engage with CCE to communicate with the community. At the meeting, the Board itemized the following “hot topics” for 2019-2020: Busing, MTSS, GTD changes. Board Member Kearney referenced some Community Engagement guides that had been shared by the community with the board, stating that he felt they were very comprehensive. He committed to forwarding all to Board Member Moore who will share with the CCE committee members with expectation of creating a best practices document suitable for D97.
- Policy Committee- Board members Leibl and Kearney stated that upcoming policies to be reviewed include a cell phone policy and facilities usage. The new sexual harassment policy was shared at a meeting with the community and it was well-received.