



BOARD BUSINESS

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

SCHOOL REPORT CARDS

Dr. Scarsella reported on the Illinois State Board of Education's 2020-2021 state report cards. He noted that Palos 118 families and community members can now view school report cards by visiting www.illinoisreportcard.com and searching for Palos 118. He pointed out that despite the many challenges presented by the pandemic, Palos 118 remains one of the highest performing school districts in the area and across the state. In south suburban Cook County, Palos 118 ranked first in math performance and second in reading. Statewide, Palos 118 schools all performed in the top tier of all elementary school districts.

He thanked the Palos 118 teachers, support staff, and families for their efforts to ensure that students are learning at the highest levels every day. He also thanked the School Board, Administration, and Teachers' Union for their commitment to provide in-person learning last school year, attributing it as a major contributing factor in how well Palos 118 students performed.

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

Dr. Scarsella reminded the community that the school district is embarking on a project to engage our major stakeholders in developing a **Portrait of a Graduate**. The portrait will embody the school community's aspirations for its Palos South graduates through the identification of the skills and attributes our graduates will need to be successful in high school and beyond. There will be four community forums scheduled for January 10 and January 11, both in-person and virtual. Community members will be receiving additional information in the mail in early January, and in the meantime can visit our dedicated Portrait of a Graduate web page to learn more at <https://www.palos118.org/quick-links/portrait>.

January 10

- **Virtual:** 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. (Login info will be posted online in January)
- **In-Person:** 7-9 p.m. at Palos South, 13100 S. 82nd Ave., Palos Park, IL.

January 11

- **In-Person:** 9-10:30 a.m. at Palos 118 Central Office, 8800 W. 119th St., Palos Park, IL

- **Virtual:** 12-1:30 p.m. (Login info will be posted online in January)

The community can also submit their feedback online by taking a short Portrait of a Graduate **online survey**

For more information, visit the **Portrait of a Graduate page on our website** or send an email to **palosportrait@palos118.org**

YVONNE LESCHKIES RECOGNIZED

Dr. Scarsella recognized Yvonne Leschkies, Administrative Associate to the Board of Education & Superintendent, for her 29 years of service to Palos 118. A video with well wishes from former board members and photos from her years of service was shown and Mrs. Leschkies was presented with a plaque for her service. Mrs. Leschkies began her career with Palos 118 at Palos West Elementary before moving to the District's Central Office where she served for 25 years under 6 superintendents.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE

Mr. Pizur reported that at the recent Finance Committee Meeting, Mr. Kevin Bissell from Mueller CPA provided the Committee with an overview of the FY20 audit. He thanked Mr. Veihman and the staff in the Business Office for their assistance with the audit and noted the financial statements in all material present fairly the respective financial position of the governmental activities in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. Mr. Bissell congratulated the school district on receiving the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting last year and stated he anticipates the school district receiving the award again this year.

Mr. Veihman also provided a budget variance presentation to the Committee. He noted the school district ran a slightly larger deficit than originally reported. The total deficit for FY21 was \$2.1 million, the large majority of which can be attributable to the pandemic and unanticipated special education costs. He also shared updated operating fund projections with the Committee. Mr. Veihman reviewed proposed bus leases for next school year with the Committee. Three leased buses will be returned and replaced with three new leased buses.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Mrs. Paris reviewed recommendations that the Board made to modify Board Policy 2:80 E-2 School Board Governing Commitments and to create Board Policy 2:130 E-1 Board/Superintendent Communication Expectations. The Committee discussed the creation and use of a Board Scorecard to monitor committee and board performance. The Committee reviewed Board Policy 6:280 Grading and Promotion and discussed grading practices. Committee members provided a recap of sessions attended at the recent Triple I Conference in Chicago.

The Committee accepted the recommendations the Board made to modify Board Policy 2:80 E-2 School Board Governing Commitments and to create Board Policy 2:130 E-1 Board/Superintendent Communication Expectations.

The Committee also adopted a Board Scorecard to monitor committee and board performance.

STUDENT OUTCOMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Dr. Baker reported on a review presented by Dr. Cozza of the District's student academic information and outcome data for the 2020-2021 school year and fall 2021 which showed that although regression in learning was indicated by the data, Palos 118 students made gains during the 20-21 school year but at a lower rate compared to pre-pandemic trends. Dr. Cozza informed the Committee that Palos 118 students continue to perform well above their peers nationally on NWEA MAP and statewide as measured by the Illinois Assessment of Readiness.

MUSIC PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Paris gave an update on the MPA's successful holiday music programs which included in-person performances by the South Middle School Performing Arts Ensemble and concerts by the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade bands which were also broadcast via Facebook Live.

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Educational Foundation President Sheila Pacholski introduced the Foundation's directors at the meeting which included Anne Marie Chronopoulos, Jill Fiscelli, Zoe Kopanis, and Bessie Mihas.

She also presented a check for \$30,000 to Palos School District 118 that will be used to replace aging smart boards with new equipment in the District's two elementary schools. Despite canceling its Laps for Literature and Trivia Night fundraiser, she indicated that the Foundation intends to restart its efforts for the 2022/23 school year.

PARENT FACULTY ASSOCIATION

Christy Wright, PFA president, gave an update on the organization's fall fundraisers. The PFA raised \$16,000 and logged over 130,000 minutes read in their fall Read-A-Thon and raised another \$7,000 with its Charleston Wrap sale.

The PFA's next meeting is Wednesday January 5th at 7 p.m. The meeting will include a presentation from Dr. Nolting, District 230's superintendent, who will be talking about the transition from 8th grade to high school.

Also at the January meeting, the PFA is looking for new volunteers to step into leadership roles as the current board is set to transition out at the end of the school year.

Mrs. Wright thanked Mrs. Leschkies for her 29 years of service and for her efforts behind the scenes to support the PFA, serving as its liaison to the District over the years.