

School District U-46
Elgin, Illinois

May 22, 2017

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 5:45 p.m. at the Educational Services Center, 355 East Chicago Street, Elgin, Illinois. The following Board members answered roll call: Phil Costello, Traci O'Neal Ellis, Sue Kerr, Veronica Noland, Melissa Owens, Jeanette Ward, and Donna Smith.

President Smith requested a motion to move into closed session to discuss information regarding collective negotiating matters between the school board and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. The motion was made at 5:47 p.m. by Ms. Noland, second by Ms. Kerr. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

A motion was made at 5:56 p.m. by Ms. Owens, second by Mrs. Ward to reconvene into open session. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

The business session began at 6:04 p.m. Present for the business session of the meeting were the same Board members listed in the first paragraph above, Student Board Member Casey Pearce, Chief Executive Officer Tony Sanders and Chief Legal Officer Miguel Rodriguez. The following administrators were also present: Steve Burger, Dr. Suzanne Johnson, Dr. Jeff King, Dr. Terri Lozier, Melanie Meidel, Dr. Ushma Shah, Mary Fergus, John Heiderscheidt, Brian Lindholm, Luis Rodriguez, and Leatrice Satterwhite. Also present were: media representatives Rafael Guerrero of the Courier and Seth Hancock of the Examiner, as well as other administrators, guests, and visitors. Ms. Pearce led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was held in honor of Marcus Price, a student at Highland Elementary School.

1. Comments from the Audience

Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford spoke about her concerns with the proposed EMSA Charter School proposal. Ms. Brumbaugh-Cayford asked what services and programs will be cut or diminished because of the charter. Ms. Brumbaugh-Cayford asked the Board to please respond to her questions in writing and provide the answers to every U-46 family.

Larry Bury spoke about his concerns with the proposed Elgin Charter School proposal. Mr. Bury feels that there are far too many questions that have been left unaddressed. Mr. Bury has grave concerns with this contract. He is floored to learn that this could allow the diversion of between \$6 to \$8 million per year. Mr. Bury is stunned at the number of previously undisclosed ways this contract will divert funds away from schools and the complete lack of protections for U-46 taxpayers. Mr. Bury is appalled that this contract

will leave U-46 on the hook to pay for repairs to a property that is not owned by the District. Mr. Bury is grateful that the Board is conducting this meeting.

Ledewel Crigler spoke about her concerns with the Elgin Charter School proposal. Ms. Crigler currently home schools her children and is considering placing her daughter into U-46 schools. Ms. Crigler has concerns that her tax dollars are going to go to a school that only serves a small group and that is not fair. Ms. Crigler feels that the District has come a long way but there is still a lot to be done. Ms. Crigler asked that if the District wants to do something great they should take their money and put it towards helping all kids in the District especially African American male children and bringing the District together culturally. Ms. Crigler does not agree with this proposal.

Megan Larson spoke about her concerns with the proposed EMSA Charter School. Ms. Larson questioned how the charter school could propose to target 60% low-income at-risk students from eleven communities and not offer transportation to them. Ms. Larson feels that a refusal to provide transportation will greatly limit the pool of students to families with the wealth and means to transport their kids to and from school every day. Ms. Larson stated that EMSA was not the right charter for U-46 three years ago and it was still not right today. When EMSA proposed their charter to the state the state denied it because EMSA failed to locate an acceptable facility, lacked a transportation plan, failed to comply with charter law and they questioned EMSA's financial plan. Ms. Larson asked how much the quality of education for 99% of the District's students will be compromised to fund this school. Ms. Larson does not approve of this proposal and asked the Board to deny the EMSA Charter School proposal.

Veronica Betz spoke about her concerns with the EMSA Charter School proposal. Ms. Betz feels that the District finances are in jeopardy due to the budget stalemate in Springfield. She asked the Board to publicly state how they propose the District will afford to pay \$4.5 to \$8 million dollars annually to EMSA, what cuts will be made. Ms. Betz feels that the District's teachers and staff are already asked to do more with less and to give away millions of dollars in funds to EMSA is a disservice and is disrespectful to the many needs of the District. Ms. Betz asked how EMSA proposes to serve a 60% at risk population if they will be using a lottery to choose students and are not providing any transportation. Ms. Betz feels that this charter is gerrymandering. Ms. Betz urged the Board to vote no to the EMSA Charter proposal.

Barbara Njus spoke about her concerns with the EMSA Charter School proposal. Ms. Njus feels that this is a terrible proposal for the District. She feels that this is in no way equitable and that this proposal is not fair to parents and teachers that work hard to provide what is needed to all students. Ms. Njus stated that the District does not need a school that takes millions of dollars and in no way benefits the majority of students. Ms. Njus asked the Board to please not put the District back into financial difficulties for a school that will only advantage a few and will disadvantage many.

Nancy Burnidge spoke about her concerns with the EMSA Charter School proposal. Ms. Burnidge raised concerns with the millions of dollars that EMSA will cost the District

every year. She feels that it is the duty of the Board to inform the public about how this will impact the budget and what cuts will be made.

Ryne Mitchell spoke about her concerns with the EMSA Charter School proposal. Ms. Mitchell stated that while the District cannot control the cuts that may need to be made due to a lack of State funding, they can control additional cuts that may need to be made for EMSA. Ms. Mitchell asked who is going to look out for the children. Ms. Mitchell wondered if the parents that are speaking in support of this charter school would be speaking out if they knew their children would not be selected to attend it.

Kerry Kelly, the President of the EMSA Charter School, spoke in support of the proposal. Ms. Kelly thanked the Board and Administration for their time. Ms. Kelly stated that the support for EMSA is broad and deep. She stated that the Illinois State Board of Education showed their support with a \$950,000 grant. Ms. Kelly stated that they have received congratulations and support from State Superintendent Tony Smith and many elected officials. Ms. Kelly stated that EMSA has over 200 families preregistered, over 830 Facebook followers, and over 500 supporters in writing. Ms. Kelly thanked the EMSA design team and Board. Ms. Kelly feels that all these people have volunteered their time because they deeply believe in the Expeditionary Learning curriculum. Ms. Kelly stated that EMSA stands ready to work with U-46 Administration and the School Board to make this opportunity a reality for thousands of deserving students.

Eric Larson spoke in support of the EMSA Charter School proposal. Mr. Larson read a written statement in response to a negative Facebook post regarding EMSA. Mr. Larson said the post stated that the EMSA design team is driven by those that live in the Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA) of Elgin. Many leaders of the EMSA initiative do live in the neighborhood but that is separate from active membership or involvement with the organization. NENA takes an active role in the development of property in and around the neighborhood such as the former site of the Fox River Country Day School. NENA has not taken a position for or against the EMSA initiative but instead has encouraged residents to educate themselves on the issue.

2. Work Session

A. Elgin Charter School Initiative Elgin Math and Science Academy (EMSA) Charter School Agreement

The Board of Education discussed the Elgin Charter School Initiative's EMSA Charter School Agreement and gave further direction to Administration regarding the proposed contract. Administrative presenters were Mr. Tony Sanders, Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Miguel Rodriguez, Chief Legal Officer, Dr. Leatrice Satterwhite, Director of Specialized Student Services, Brian Lindholm, Professional Development and Project Manager, and Luis Rodriguez, Staff Attorney. Mr. Sanders stated that on April 10, 2017, the Board passed a resolution granting approval of the charter school proposal dependent on a mutually agreed upon contract. Section 2 of that resolution stated that the conditions to be discussed were to include but not limited to: A) special education services and budget, B) economic soundness C) charter school facility D) at risk populations,

E) systems alignment and F) student discipline. EMSA submitted a draft contract to administration and administration presented their recommendations of changes to that proposed contract.

3. Adjournment

Motion by Mrs. Ward, second by Ms. Noland, to adjourn the Special Board Meeting of May 22, 2017, at 10:01 p.m. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Approved this 24th day of July, 2017.



President



Secretary