

April 10, 2023

The Board of Education, Community High School District 99, met in a Workshop Meeting with Action Item at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 10, 2023 at the Administrative Service Center.

Upon the Secretary's roll call, the following Board members answered present: Nancy Kupka, President; Mike Davenport, Vice President; and Members Christopher Espinoza, Sherell Fuller, Jennie Hagstrom, Terry Pavesich and Joanna Vazquez Drexler.

Also present were Hank Thiele, Superintendent; Gina Ziccardi, Associate Superintendent for Student Learning; Scott Wuggazer, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Jill Browning, Director of Communications; Courtney DeMent, North High Principal; Arwen Lyp, South High Principal; Student Board Members Luka Paulauskas and Kaitlyn Vincent; and Juli Gniadek, Secretary.

There was one visitor. A copy of the Visitor Roster is attached.

### 1. STUDENT PERSPECTIVES – NORTH & SOUTH HIGH SCHOOLS

North High students Luka Paulauskas and Madeline Topic and South High students Mia Cassin and Jonny Klaeren spoke about Snowball. Ms. Cassin provided some history of Snowball and shared District 99 has a North event, a South event and a District-wide event. Ms. Topic explained Snowball's focus is on wellness, mental health, social emotional learning and preparing students for life after high school. Information about the student led workshops and closing activities was shared by Mr. Klaearen. Ms. Paulauskas spoke about the large group topics and the workshop facilitators. All of the students shared that Snowball helped them to learn to be themselves and provided a very welcoming environment. The students thanked the Board for supporting Snowball and presented Board members with warm fuzzies.

The Board thanked the students for sharing their experiences at Snowball and their enthusiasm.

### 2. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Ms. Vincent shared upcoming South High events including the Mustang Trot, the production of *Mama Mia* and Prom. She noted there are several students interested in being the next South High Student Board member. Ms. Paulauskas shared this is a stressful time for sophomores and juniors due to state testing. Upcoming activities, including the Ritter Invite, National Honor Society Awards Night, Prom and the trip to Six Flags, are just some of the things students are looking forward to, according to Ms. Paulauskas.

### 3. RECOGNITION

Dr. Thiele recognized Courtney DeMent on receiving the Illinois Principals Association Herman Graves Award. Those in attendance congratulated Dr. DeMent. Hank Thiele also recognized Rod Rousseau, Director of Technology and Information Services, who is retiring this year, on receiving two awards from the Consortium for School Networking – the “Impact 30” award and the “Volunteer of the Year” award – for his work with cybersecurity.

### 4. RECEPTION OF VISITORS – PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

**5. STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM COORDINATORS**

Antonia Stamatoukos, South High Student Assistance Coordinator, presented an overview of the Student Assistance Program and its focus on substance use and prevention. She noted marijuana, nicotine and fentanyl use were targeted this year for both awareness and prevention through the “99 Reasons” campaign, ACCESS lessons and Red Ribbon Week. Keith Bullock, North High Student Assistance Coordinator, presented information on the Illinois Youth Survey (IYS). He reported, based on the survey results, alcohol, nicotine and marijuana use are decreasing and the number of students experiencing the symptoms of depression are increasing. Mr. Bullock shared how the Student Assistance Coordinators are using the data from the survey and some of the supports provided to students and families.

**6. STAFF RECEIVING TENURE**

Hank Thiele stated the District does not grant teachers tenure, the State does. The list of District 99 teachers receiving tenure was displayed.

**7. RECEPTION OF VISITORS – PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments. One comment was submitted on line. A copy is attached.

**8. PUBLIC HEARING**

President Kupka stated the purpose of said hearing will be to receive public comment on a proposed application to waive a portion of Section 27-6 of the School Code to allow Driver Education to substitute for one semester of Physical Education and that Public Comment will be taken during the Public Hearing. She stated all noticing requirements have been met for the Public Hearing, per the waiver requirements. President Kupka explained that following the Public Hearing the Board will take Action on the School Code Waiver Application to allow Driver Education to substitute for one semester of Physical Education.

No oral testimony was given and no written testimony was received.

Member Davenport moved and Member Espinoza seconded the motion to close the Public Hearing.

Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Davenport, Espinoza, Fuller, Hagstrom, Pavesich, Vazquez Drexler and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

**9. APPROVAL OF SCHOOL CODE WAIVER APPLICATION TO ALLOW DRIVER EDUCATION TO SUBSTITUTE FOR ONE SEMESTER OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Member Davenport moved and Member Pavesich seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the School Code Waiver Application to allow Driver Education to substitute for one semester of Physical Education.

Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Davenport, Pavesich, Vazquez Drexler, Espinoza, Fuller, Hagstrom and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

**10. CLOSED SESSION**

Member Davenport moved and Member Pavesich seconded the motion that the meeting be adjourned to Closed Session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the District or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1); collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); and litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)

Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Davenport, Pavesich, Vazquez Drexler, Espinoza, Fuller, Hagstrom and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

President Kupka stated, after the Closed Session, the Board would reconvene in Open Session to adjourn and no Action would be taken.

The meeting adjourned to Closed Session at 7:26 p.m.

**11. RECONVENE TO REGULAR SESSION**

The meeting was reconvened in Open Session with the following members of the Board of Education in attendance Nancy Kupka, President; Mike Davenport, Vice President; and Members Christopher Espinoza, Sherell Fuller, Jennie Hagstrom, Terry Pavesich and Joanna Vazquez Drexler.

Also present were Hank Thiele, Superintendent; Rob Lang, Assistant Superintendent for Staff Services; Jeree Ethridge, Chief School Business Official; and Juli Gniadek, Secretary.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business or discussion, Member Davenport moved and Member Fuller seconded the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Upon the unanimous voice vote of the seven members in attendance, the President declared the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

  
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Nancy Kupka, President  
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Juli Gniadek, Secretary



## Comment Submitted Online Prior to the April 10, 2023 Board Workshop Meeting with Action Item

Timestamp	Please provide your full name	Please share your comment here	Email Address
<p>4/10/2023 4:40:50 PM</p>	<p>DGS Girl Basketball Booster Club</p>	<p>It has come to our attention that DGS Girls Basketball Assistant Coach, Coach Armato could potentially not be retained for the upcoming season. The DGS Booster Club members are writing in support of Coach Armato returning for the next season and beyond, and also to express our dismay and extreme disappointment that this is even in question. We would think that a school would appreciate one of the more successful programs in the athletic department which is coming off of a conference championship season. This season was made possible in large part to the effort and dedication of Coach Armato. This season, and this team has been the most impactful, satisfying, and positive season that our daughters have experienced. Such a season would not have been possible without Coach Long and Coach Armato, it is of the utmost importance for athletes in girls sports to have strong female role-models to look up to and the school is lucky to have these girls basketball coaches putting in their blood, sweat, and tears into the program for the past ten years.</p> <p>The reasons that Coach Armato should be retained run deeper than simply because she has inspired our daughters. Her dedication and commitment to the DGS Program is something that should be applauded, not dismissed or taken for granted. In addition to working in special education, she dedicates countless hours to teaching the girls in the program the right way to train in the weight room, on the court, and between games and seasons. In addition, these coaches spearhead fundraisers every year to donate thousands of dollars to the Pat Summit Foundation for Alzheimer's research. In a day and age where many high school coaches have limited knowledge of the game they coach and even less commitment to the kids they coach, we need more coaches like Coach Armato; she is an exemplary example of a coach that can make a difference in the lives of these young women.</p> <p>We have brought our concerns to the DGS Athletic Director – Tom Freyer, and the Principal – Arwyn Lyp, as have numerous parents, student athletes, and former student athletes; however no valid answers or explanations have been received and any efforts at compromise have been stonewalled. It is also our understanding that the change was made without consulting the head basketball coach and made months in advance of any decisions regarding other coaches in the program, which is very unusual. Overall, the communication and compassion that this administration has shown their student athletes in this case is sorely lacking.</p> <p>In closing, we hope that the entire coaching staff from last years conference championship team will be retained for next year and beyond. They have built something special and to treat Coach Long and her staff with anything but respect is a travesty of leadership. We can't express how happy we are with the DGS Girls basketball coaching staff, specifically Coach Armato, and how disappointed we will be if District Board doesn't support them.</p> <p>Thank you for your time. The DGS Girls Basketball Booster Club</p>	<p>loreo24@gmail.com</p>