Board expects plan from Moyer for 2021-22 by March 16

By Chris Fox

The Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205 Board held a regular meeting on Feb. 23 at the District 205 Center, 162 S. York St. All seven board members attended the meeting.


Several of the parents who spoke at the meeting also noted that public and private schools in the area are offering five days per week of in-person instruction. Multiple speakers also told the board that the community needs to know the district's plans for what amount of in-person instruction it will offer in the 2021-22 school year. That plan, they said, needs to be announced well before the start of the next school year.

Moyer responds, offers COVID-19 update

District 205 Superintendent David Moyer told the board during the Feb. 23 meeting that the area's COVID-19 positivity rates are dropping. He also noted that at its Feb. 9 meeting, the board approved COVID-19 surveillance tests for district students in grades 6-12. Those saliva tests will begin during the week of March 8. Moyer also said that many district staff members will receive their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine during the week of March 15. According to the district administration, as of Feb. 23, approximately 60 to 80 percent of the district's staff had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Difficulties on the road to full days of in-person instruction

Board member Jim Collins said the district cannot spend the upcoming summer with parents speculating whether the district will be offering full days of in-person learning at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year. Collins added that no calamities have occurred in other districts that have been open for in-person instruction.

Board member Christopher Kocinski said that he would like the district's schools to fully open after staff members are fully vaccinated. He said the district has many safety layers in place, and that parents would still have the choice to have their children receive fully remote instruction. Kocinski also said that it's clear the community wants its children back in school buildings.

Board member Karen Stuefen noted that the district needs to have a clear plan for the 2021-22 school year to allow parents to make decisions about where they will send their children.

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ICGS second graders hold ‘Pioneer Day’

The students in Ms. Kennedy’s second grade class at Immaculate Conception Grade School celebrated Pioneer Day on Thursday, Feb. 25. In social studies, the students had been learning about life in the time of the early settlers and took part in pioneer activities like making butter and weaving placemats. Story and more photos inside.
Bernard Kleina’s photographs ‘In Focus’ at the EAM
Activist took part in civil rights movement from Elmhurst to Selma and back again

On Thursday, March 4, the Elmhurst Art Museum (EAM) will open a new soul-stirring exhibition reflecting on historical and contemporary responses to fair housing in the Chicagoland area. “In Focus: The Chicago Freedom Movement and the Fight for Fair Housing” features rare color photographs of 1960s civil rights marches by the activist and photographer Bernard Kleina. The show also includes a variety of local responses to housing issues including first-person accounts, historical photographs, and a project by the Museum’s Teen Art Council and York Community High School’s Black Student Union.

The centerpiece of the exhibit are 40 photos by Kleina, who started his journey as a lifelong activist while serving as a priest and Dean of Boys at Immaculate Conception High School in Elmhurst. Ironically, that decision to go to Selma was made literally just a stone’s throw from where the Elmhurst Art Museum is now located.

“On Sunday, March 7, 1965, I watched TV the news reports of men and women who were marching for voting rights, being beaten, tear-gassed and trampled by horses, after crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma. At that moment, there was no turning back; I knew I had to do something more than just [watch] the TV reports. That ‘something’ turned out to be flying to Selma with a teacher/friend to respond to Dr. King’s call for clergy to come to Selma and join in their fight for voting rights. “At the time I was a Catholic priest. I taught and was Dean of Boys at Immaculate Conception High School in Elmhurst, but as an example for Selma March, most probably the first of its kind in Elmhurst or its neighboring suburban communities. “When I returned to Elmhurst from Selma, I was welcomed by a Church packed with people who supported my mission. When I addressed them from the pulpit, I was quick to point out that I was wearing the very same clothing that I wore when I was arrested in Selma. So, I begin my talk with an apology for showing up in my ‘prison’ clothes.

“This was a fitting start to my fight for fair housing, Civil Rights and racial equality. “Looking back, it seems impossible that my life would change so dramatically after watching the news reports on TV, but that’s exactly what happened.”

For additional insights into Kleina’s life and activism be sure to watch the “Virtual Artist Talk: The Most Disliked Man in DuPage County, Bernard Kleina” available starting Thursday, Mar. 11 on the museum’s Museum From Home web page. The exhibition “In Focus: The Chicago Freedom Movement and the Fight for Fair Housing” opens on Thursday, Mar. 4. This was submitted by the Elmhurst Art Museum.