DISTRICT HYBRID LEARNING OPTION POSTPONED AGAIN
The District had hoped to be able to offer a hybrid instructional option to its families starting on November 16, whereby students would attend school in-person two days per week and remotely three days per week. However, the ongoing surge in COVID-19 positivity rates in the region has, once again, caused the District to postpone the start of its hybrid programming. The District will continue to monitor the situation and will make any future decisions on the provision of hybrid instruction in adherence to Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines. Until it is deemed safe to initiate hybrid instruction, the District’s students will remain in remote learning mode five days per week.

DECEMBER 2020 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING RESCHEDULED
The regular meeting of the Matteson District 162 Board of Education has been rescheduled from Wednesday, December 16, 2020, to Tuesday, December 15, 2020, at 5:00 p.m., at 4601 Sauk Trail, Richton Park, Illinois. The meeting will take place in the second floor Board Meeting Room. The meeting also will be live streamed via the District’s website. Until further notice, all Board meetings will now commence at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD APPROVES 2020 PROPOSED TENTATIVE PROPERTY TAX LEVY
The Board of Education approved the 2020 Proposed Tentative Property Tax Levy. Mr. Craig Englert, assistant superintendent of business services, presented information on the proposed tentative 2020 tax levy, explaining that the levy is simply a request to the County Clerk for the amount to be raised by taxes from property owners in the District in 2020. Tax cap legislation implemented in 1994 limits any property tax increases to the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 5 percent, whichever is less. The CPI for this year’s levy is 2.3 percent. He reminded the Board that the District is a recipient of the State of Illinois’ Property Tax Relief grant, which provides a permanent $1.8 million increase in state funding in exchange for abating taxes on both the 2019 and 2020 levy by $1,972,837.

Mr. Englert explained that there are two factors that go into calculating a property owner’s tax payments: (1) the levy established by taxing bodies establishes the amount taxed to the entire taxing district and (2) the property values, or equalized assessed valuations (EAV), determine how much or what portion each taxpayer pays of that levy. He presented a chart showing historical EAV for District 162 and said he is projecting that EAV will increase 10 percent in the area. Mr. Englert also called the Board’s attention to the tax collection rates of the District and
presented a 10-year history of those collections, noting that they have fallen from an average collection rate of 95 percent in 2010 to about 90 percent currently. He explained that the county adds a loss factor to the levy to account for uncollectible taxes, particularly for bond levies, and that loss factor is currently 8 percent. Mr. Englert recommends that the Board of Education consider raising it to 10 percent to match the current amount of uncollected taxes. He said the tentative levy is $23,854,901—a zero percent increase over the 2019 final extension. However, when taking into account the loss factor, the levy will bring in that amount plus the increase in the Consumer Price Index or about $547,000, assuming no new property is added to the tax rolls. Mr. Englert noted that the actual amounts will not be known until about June of 2021. He said the effect on taxpayers will be an increase of about 2.5 percent, but due to new methods being used by the Cook County Assessor, residences may see lower increases than the projected 2.5 percent, while commercial property owners may see higher increases. The Board will vote on the adoption of the final 2020 tax levy at the December 15, 2020, meeting.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS
In additional business, the Board approved:

- the employment of Nodee McNeal, cadre sub at Richton Square School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Pamela Steward-Lightner, cadre sub at Arcadia School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Denise Taylor, cadre sub at Arcadia School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Tabitha FeFee, cadre sub at Indiana School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Danielle Lewis, cadre sub at Sauk School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Cheyene Wimberly, cadre sub at Sauk School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Catreasea Travis, cadre sub at Illinois School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Coretta Franklin, cadre sub at Illinois School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Brandon Blount, cadre sub at Huth Middle School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Tiffany Hill, cadre sub at Huth Middle School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Sam Bell, cadre sub at Huth Middle School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Iman Robinson, cadre sub at Matteson School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Dorian Mays, cadre sub at Matteson School, effective January 4, 2021.
- the employment of Gloria Mullins, computer technician, effective November 9, 2020.
- the employment of Timothy Omovie, custodian, effective November 2, 2020.
- the intermittent leave of absence, under FMLA, of Lynn Stevenson, paraprofessional at Richton Square School, effective October 19, 2020, for up to 60 days.
- the leave of absence, under FMLA (Families First Coronavirus Response Act), of Martine Hines, teacher at Sauk School, effective October 19, 2020, through October 23, 2020.
• the intermittent leave of absence, under FMLA (Families First Coronavirus Response Act), of Kellen Ellis, teacher at Huth Middle School, effective November 2, 2020, for up to 60 days.
• the leave of absence, under FMLA (Families First Coronavirus Response Act), of Rachel Harden-Maddox, counselor at Huth Middle School, effective November 2 2020, for up to 12 weeks.
• the leave of absence, under FMLA, of Kami Tweedy, teacher at Huth Middle School, effective November 12, 2020, through December 12, 2020.
• the leave of absence, under FMLA, of Laura Sproat, teacher at Sauk School, effective November 30, 2020, through February 19, 2021.
• the leave of absence, under FMLA, of Olivia Lopez, custodian at Huth Middle School, effective October 19, 2020, through November 30, 2020.
• the leave of absence, under FMLA (Families First Coronavirus Response Act), of Suzon Pulliam, teacher at Indiana School, effective November 2 2020, through December 4, 2020.
• the rescission of the intermittent leave of absence, under FMLA (Families First Coronavirus Response Act), of Jordan Fitzer, teacher at Huth Middle School, effective November 2, 2020, for up to 60 days.
• the retirement of Geralyn Phelan Youngblood, paraprofessional at Sauk School, effective January 4, 2021.
• the resignation of Angela Orr, custodian at Sauk School, effective October 26, 2020.
• the resignation of Maria del Rosio Bucio, custodian at the District Office, effective October 28, 2020.

WHAT’S NEXT
Board of Education Meeting, 5:00 p.m., December 15, 2020