



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
SCHOOL DISTRICT 25, WEST CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
October 20, 2025**

Call to Order

Vice President Pedersen called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. on October 20, 2025, in the Benjamin Middle School Multipurpose Room, located at 28W300 St. Charles Road, West Chicago, IL 60185.

Roll Call

Board Recorder Solly Garcia took a roll call vote of the members present: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Don Sutenbach, and Gina Vlantis.

Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers.

Other attendees included Dr. Patrick McGill, Superintendent; Dr. Joel Filas, CSBO; Dr. Michael Fitzgerald, Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Teaching/Principal; Dr. Julie Salamone, Director of Student Services; Mrs. Sarah Smith, Evergreen Principal; Mrs. Allison Agres, Assistant Principal

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice President Pedersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approve Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented. This motion, made by Dennis Peterson and seconded by Vince Engstrom, passed.

Voice Vote: Unanimously Passed

Approval of Draft Minutes (Roll Call Vote)

Approval of Draft Minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting of September 9, 2025

Motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting of September 9, 2025. This motion, made by Dennis Peterson and seconded by Vince Engstrom, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach

Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis

Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers

Nays: None

Approval of Draft Minutes from the Policy Committee Meeting of September 15, 2025

Motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the Committee Committee Meeting of September 15, 2025. This motion, made by Don Sutenbach and seconded by Dennis Peterson, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach

Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis

Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers

Nays: None



Approval of Draft Minutes from the Regular Board of Education Meeting of September 15, 2025

Motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the Regular Board of Education Meeting of September 15, 2025. This motion, made by Don Sutenbach and seconded by Gina Vlantis, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach
Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis
Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers
Nays: None

Approval of Draft Minutes from the Executive Session Meeting of September 15, 2025

Motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the Executive Session Meeting on September 15, 2025. This motion, made by Vince Engstrom and seconded by Gina Vlantis, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach
Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis
Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers
Nays: None.

Approval of Draft Minutes from the Special Board of Education Meeting of October 6, 2025

Motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the Special Board of Education Meeting on October 6, 2025. This motion, made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Vince Engstrom, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach
Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis
Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers
Nays: None

Approval of Draft Minutes from the Executive Session Meeting of October 6, 2025

Motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the Special Board of Education Meeting on October 6, 2025. This motion, made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Vince Engstrom, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach
Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis
Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers
Nays: None

Presentations/Hearings

Audit Presentation By Baker Tilly

Mr. Nick Cavaliere, CPA and CFE Principal from Baker Tilly, presented the District's Fiscal Year 2025 Financial statement audit. He reported that the District received an unmodified opinion, indicating that the financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects under the modified cash basis of accounting. Mr. Cavaliere explained that the fiscal year involved complex financial activities, including multiple fund transfers and new bond issuances, which resulted in several material audit adjustments. He noted that the planned deficits in the Transportation and IMRF/Social Security Funds reflect intentional levy strategies consistent with the District's long-term financial plan. Mr. Cavaliere concluded that the District remains financially sound, with a Financial Profile Score of 3.55.

Reports

Learning and Teaching - Dr. Fitzgerald presented the Teaching and Learning Report. He shared that K–4 teachers are participating in training for the new TCI social studies program pilot, which has been extended through February. Dr. Fitzgerald, Dr. McGill, and Mrs. Smith have begun conducting classroom learning walks, visiting approximately 15–16 classrooms across grade levels to observe instructional practices. The mentoring program will meet later this month to discuss topics including school safety and parent-teacher conferences.

Dr. Fitzgerald also reviewed the work of the Emergency Day E-Learning Plan Committee and their recommendation regarding the District's approach to emergency school closures. The Committee recommends that Benjamin School District 25 utilize traditional "Emergency Days" in the event of school closures, rather than implementing an e-learning plan. For the 2025–2026 school year, five emergency days will be scheduled at the end of the academic year for potential use. For the 2026–2027 school year, the Committee recommends piloting one "Flex Day" and designating four traditional emergency days at the end of the year. Additional details are outlined in the Emergency Day Committee letter.

Operations Report - Dr. Filas complimented Tim, Director of Buildings and Grounds, for taking the time to inform residents about the recent water line work at Evergreen. He also highlighted recent safety upgrades, including the installation of key swipe access at exterior doors and expanded 360-degree camera coverage at both schools.

Mr. Greg Martin provided the Technology Report, sharing updates on DDoS prevention efforts, the district's redundant Comcast internet connection, which generates approximately \$40,000 in annual savings, and the provision of free internet service through the State of Illinois.

Dr. Filas reviewed key factors for the upcoming tax levy, including the 2.9% Consumer Price Index (CPI), Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV), and new property values. He noted that the lower CPI may result in approximately \$2 million less in local revenue through 2029 and recommended that the district estimate new property values to help offset potential revenue reduction.

Superintendent Report - Dr. McGill reported that the District's Strategic Planning Team has been formed, with an orientation meeting scheduled for December 4 and a data retreat scheduled for December 9. He noted that all related strategic planning materials will be posted on the District website to ensure transparency. Dr. McGill thanked the PTA for coordinating a successful Fun Run.

Dr. McGill and Dr. Fitzgerald recently observed West Chicago District 33's five-year strategic planning process and shared that the visit provided helpful insights as Benjamin School District 25 begins its own planning work. Dr. McGill also recognized Principal Appreciation Week and thanked Mrs. Smith and Dr. Fitzgerald for their leadership.

Dr. McGill highlighted upcoming Glenbard Parent Series (GPS) events on October 21, October 30, and November 5, with sessions offered at noon and 7:00 p.m. He also reported that the



District received and responded to a FOIA request from consultant Steve Watts for employee information, including names, titles, emails, work sites, and salaries.

SASED - Dr. McGill announced that Mr. John Langton has been approved to serve as the SASED Facilities Specialist. In this role, he will assist the District with facilities planning efforts and provide support for long-term maintenance and improvement initiatives.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

None.

Consent Agenda: Items Removed

None

Consent Agenda (Roll Call)

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. This motion, made by Vince Engstrom and seconded by Gina Vlantis, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach
Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis
Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers
Nays: None

Action Items (Roll Call Vote)

Approval of the Second Reading and Subsequent Adoption of PRESS Plus Issue 119

Motion to approve the Second Reading and Subsequent Adoption of PRESS Plus Issue 119 recommendations for the following school board policies.

- 1:10 4:90
- 1:20 5:270
- 1:30 7:130
- 2:10 7:140
- 2:130 7:300
- 2:240 7:325
- 2:80 7:40
- 3:30 7:90
- 4:180 8:110
- 4:50 8:80

This motion, made by Dennis Peterson and seconded by Don Sutenbach, passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Vince Engstrom, Bridgette Pedersen, Don Sutenbach
Dennis Peterson, and Gina Vlantis
Absent: Andrew Drinnin and Eric Rogers
Nays: None

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

None.

**Discussion Items**

Communication To and From the Board: As a reminder, per Board of Education Policy 2:140, during the Board's regular meetings, the Superintendent will report for the Board's consideration all questions or communications submitted through the active electronic link, along with the status of the District's response.

Adjournment (Voice Vote)

Motion to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting at 7:53 p.m. This motion, made by Vince Engstrom and seconded by Gina Vlantis, passed.

Voice Vote: Unanimously Passed

Respectfully submitted by:
Solly Garcia, Board Recorder

President, Board of Education

Secretary, Board of Education

Recorded: October 20, 2025
Approved: November 10, 2025