

BOARD OF EDUCATION DISTRICT NO. 170

Dixon, Illinois
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
May 13, 2026

The Board of Education met in regular session in the Board Room at the Administrative Center on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, and was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Notification of the meeting together with an agenda and other Board material had been electronically downloaded to the individual Board members on Friday, May 8, 2026, and to the news media on Monday, May 11, 2026.

The meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the Dixon Public Schools YouTube channel the day after the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Physically Present: Mrs. Linda Wegner, President; Mr. Brandon Rogers, Vice President; Mrs. Melissa Gates, Secretary; Mr. David Fritts, Mrs. Linda LeBlanc-Parks, Mrs. Kathleen Schaefer, and Mr. Jon Wadsworth

Electronically Present: None

Absent: Mrs. Linda LeBlanc-Parks

Also present were: Mrs. Margo Empen, Superintendent; Mr. Doug Stansford, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Marc Campbell, Chief School Business Official; Mr. Kevin Schultz, Director of Building and Grounds; Mr. James Manley, Director of Technology; Mr. Jared Shaner, Principal of Dixon High School; Mr. Matt Magnafici, Principal at Reagan Middle School; Mr. Joey Sagel, Principal of Madison School; Mrs. Crystal Thorpe, Principal of Jefferson School; Mrs. Kellie Glenn, Principal of Washington School; Mrs. Janine Huffman, Principal of Dempsey Day School; Mr. Paul Wilson, Tech; media, staff, and community members.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Dixon High School state wrestling qualifiers led the Board of Education, administrative staff, and visitors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Fritts, Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approve DPS and LCSEA Treasurer's Report and DPS Monthly Bills
- C. Approve Balance Sheet and Monthly Expense Report
- D. Discipline Report
- E. Staff Development Report
- F. Monthly Website and Social Media Activity
- G. Building Reports

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mrs. Wegner read a resolution honoring all 2025-2026 Employee of the Year nominees. Mrs. Wegner then read a resolution honoring the selected employees as the 2025-2026 Employees of the Year. Lindsay Mitchell

was named the Certified Employee of the Year, and Carissa Sotelo was named the Non-Certified Employee of the Year. Mr. Joey Sagel honored both Employees of the Year by sharing what each employee contributes to their students, Madison School, and the District. Both recipients shared their appreciation for the award.

Ms. Ashley Almquist and Mr. Chris Hansen a representation of students that participated in band and choir in Music in the Parks. Both groups received superior ratings from the judges, which is the highest honor they can receive.

Mr. Micah Hey introduced and congratulated the five Dixon High School state wrestling qualifiers.

Mr. Shaner introduced and congratulated the first-time state qualifying Scholastic Bowl team.

Mr. Shaner announced that Keegan Shirley was selected as the Dixon Public Schools Foundation Student of the Month for April, and Gage Farster was selected as the Dixon Public Schools Foundation Student of the Month for May. Both students received this award based on their excellence in academics, character, and involvement in activities at Dixon High School. Keegan and Gage submitted videos for the Board to view.

Mrs. Bork also announced the May teachers of the month – Kim Bork, Alicia McPhillips, Jenn Freeman, Sarah Hansen, Reni Metzler, Julia Thornton, Chris Bishop, Maggie Curry, Shanna Withrow, Calista Crone, Pete Hill, and Caitlin Irvin.

CITIZEN’S AGENDA

Mr. Chris Bishop shared that there are now daily announcements at RMS, and presented student artwork that can be used throughout the Boardroom. He also stated that the equipment from the Cal Ripken Sr. was delivered. Mr. Bishop also shared that the new bridge dedication will be on July 4th, and he presented the Board with decorations that could be used on Dixon High School during the dedication. Additionally, there will be a Red, White, and Blue Ball on June 22nd, and the proceeds go to Wounded Warrior Project.

Mrs. Mindy Donoho thanked the Board for ratifying the DESPA collective bargaining agreement at the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ACTION ITEMS

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to establish the budget hearing for the FY 26 amended budget, as presented. Mr. Campbell gave information on the budget hearing and provided the Board with the budget for FY 26. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schaefer, seconded by Mrs. Gates, to approve the bid for garbage services, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the resolution selecting WOLD Architecture for engineering services, as presented. Mr. Campbell and Mr. Shaner explained the project and the need to waive the RFQ process. The Board was able to ask questions and make comments. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Rogers, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mrs. Gates, to approve the first reading of Board policies Issue 121, as presented. Mrs. Empen went through the highlights of the policies. The Board was able to ask

questions. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the DESPA collective bargaining agreement for the 2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029 school years, as presented. Mrs. Gates thanked the bargaining team for their work on the agreement. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Fritts, Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved. DESPA representatives and Board members signed the collective bargaining agreement.

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mrs. Schaefer, to approve the renewal of the 2026-2028 Byron swimming cooperative agreement, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Fritts, to approve the renewal of the 2026-2028 boys and girls competitive swimming and diving agreement with Byron, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the student fees for the 2026-2027 school year, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Rogers, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mrs. Schaefer, to approve the updated District wellness policy, as presented. Mr. Magnafici presented the new wellness policy for the District. The Board was able to make comments and thank the committee for its work on the policy. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Mr. Campbell went over his Business Report. He highlighted the following: initial allocations for Title programming, and financial dashboard changes for the future.

Mr. Campbell shared information on the 2026-2027 breakfast and lunch prices. Breakfast and lunch prices will remain the same for next year.

Mr. Manley provided an update on a district-wide phishing campaign. He also gave an update on the district's E-Rate funding. Mr. Manley provided an update on the Canvas breach and communication to the community.

Mr. Stansford provided information on summer school.

Mr. Shaner recognized the DHS scholarship winners, Illinois State Scholars, senior signing night for athletics, and teacher signing day.

Board members who attended other committee meetings had the opportunity to share discussions from those meetings:

Mr. Wadsworth gave an update from the Community Engagement Committee meeting on April 21st.

Mrs. Wegner gave an update from the District Wellness Committee meeting on April 27th.

Mr. Rogers gave an update on from the Curriculum Committee that met on May 7th.

Mrs. Gates gave an update from the Special Education Committee meeting on April 29th.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Empen let the Board know that the Joint Annual Conference is November 20th-22nd in Chicago. Any Board members that would like to go should let Erin Grubic prior to June 1st.

Mrs. Empen shared information on the end of year ceremonies happening throughout the district. Baccalaureate will be at DHS on Wednesday May 20th, and 7:00 p.m. RMS promotion will be on Friday, May 22nd at 6:30 p.m. DHS Graduation will be on Sunday, May 24th at 1:00 p.m. The DPS athletics and activities golf outing will be on Friday, June 12th at Lost Nation Golf Course.

There have been 3 FOIA requests since the last Board meeting: Kayla Hitt from FOIA Professional Services requested information related to the most recent Energy Saving Performance contract; Justin Wenig from Starbridge requested all executed contracts, purchase agreements, and POs with professional development/learning for the last 3 years; Viviana Koch from The Data Branch requested all executed contracts, agreements, or order forms from Raptor. We have complied with all requests.

PERSONNEL REPORT (new hires, resignations, retirements, and coaches)

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Fritts, to approve the following personnel items. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results; Voting yea – Fritts, Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

New Hires

Nicole DiGrazia, Special Education Teacher at Dixon High School, effective for the 26-27 school year
Lisa Hellyer, 4th/5th Grade Special Education Resource Teacher at Madison School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Change in Status

Candace Buikema, from 3rd Grade Looping Teacher to 2nd Grade Looping Teacher at Jefferson School, effective for the 26-27 school year
Maranda Dallas, from 1st Grade Teacher at Washington School to 5th Grade Teacher at Madison School, effective for the 26-27 school year
Katie Dewey, from 2nd Grade Teacher to 3rd Grade Teacher at Jefferson School, effective for the 26-27 school year
Elizabeth Escamilla, from Paraprofessional at Madison School to Paraprofessional at Jefferson School, effective for the 26-27 school year
Janine Eykamp, from Paraprofessional at Washington School to Paraprofessional at Madison School, effective for the 26-27 school year
Jennifer Kessel, from Paraprofessional at Washington School to Paraprofessional at Madison School, effective for the 26-27 school year
Lynette Kirk, from Paraprofessional at Washington School to Paraprofessional at Jefferson School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Daniele Lewis, from Paraprofessional at Washington School to Paraprofessional at Madison School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Leah Meeks, from 5th Grade Teacher at Madison School to Music Teacher at Jefferson School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Alicia Oleson, from Paraprofessional at Madison School to Paraprofessional at Reagan Middle School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Alexis Point, from 3rd Grade Teacher at Jefferson School to 5th Grade Teacher at Madison School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Candi Rogers, from Physical Education Teacher at Washington School to Physical Education/Driver's Ed Teacher at Dixon High School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Jared Shroyer, from Paraprofessional at Reagan Middle School to Paraprofessional at Madison School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Shauna Slotter, from Paraprofessional at Madison School to Paraprofessional at Reagan Middle School, effective for the 26-27 school year

Resignations

Nicole DiGrazia, Paraprofessional at Dixon High School, effective at the end of the 25-26 school year

Bernadette Lybarger, Paraprofessional at Reagan Middle School, effective at the end of the 25-26 school year

Alexa Reeder, Title I Teacher at Madison School, effective at the end of the 25-26 school year

Tayla Schwarz, Social Studies Teacher at Dixon High School, effective at the end of the 25-26 school year

Ashley Venier, Kindergarten Teacher at Washington School, effective at the end of the 25-26 school year

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mrs. Gates, to adjourn to executive session at 7:51 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee to determine its validity; Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body 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; Student disciplinary cases.

This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea- Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, and seconded by Mr. Fritts, to return to Open Session at 8:22 p.m. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Rogers, Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mrs. Gates, to approve the raises for the non-certified, non-union staff for the 2026-2027 school year, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Schaefer, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Schaefer, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schaefer, seconded by Mrs. Gates, to approve the substitute teacher rates for the 2026-2027 school year, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results:

Voting yea – Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Rogers, Schaefer, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. All were in favor.

President

Secretary