

Minutes of Committee of the Whole

The Board of Education Harlem Consolidated School District # 122

A Committee of the Whole of the Board of Education of Harlem Consolidated School District was held Wednesday, January 14, 2026, beginning at 4:30 PM in the Harlem High School, Auditorium, One Huskie Circle, Machesney Park, IL 61115

1. EDUCATION: (60 minutes or as needed) started at 4:38PM

Administrator: Dr. Michelle Erb, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

A. Roll Call: Diane McKinney, Diana Johnson, Michelle Erb, Terrell Yarbrough, Pam Cook, Becky Logan, Jake Hubert, Shannon Rice, Union: Elana Schelling-Tufte/designee Members:

Loves Park

Machesney

Maple

Marquette

Olson Park

Parker Center

Ralston

Rock Cut

Windsor

High School

Middle School

B. Meeting Minutes Consensus: November 12, 2025- yes

C. Public Comments (if any)

Ms. Beth Winemiller highlighted the budget deficit, questioning the funds for the phone lockers at the high school over EC, long bus rides for students

Ms. Kelly Jury criticized the 29 page document, emphasized the need to cut administrators, argues that early childhood is crucial for long term success

D. Agenda Items

1. District Utilization Proposal

Dr. Yarbrough started the meeting by thanking the community for their engagement and the participation with giving the District feedback in this challenging process. Dr. Yarbrough acknowledges the challenge of closing schools, EC programming, declining enrollment and the financial concerns. He mentions the pause in the process to address the community feedback while expressing gratitude to staff, building administrators and board members for their efforts and resilience. Dr. Yarbrough presented modified options based on community feedback. He explained the rationale behind the north and south option. Dr. Yarbrough continues with describing the K, 1-5 neighborhood school option, the K-5 neighborhood school option, geographic region option, and the sister school option.

Dr. Jason Blume emphasized the efficiency of the grade band options and the need to be fiscally responsible. He continues to discuss the transportation challenges and the potential

for a two-tier system to reduce distances. Dr. Blume highlights the need for modifications to Parker Center for upper grades and the potential for moving playgrounds. He also emphasized the importance of maintaining specialized programs and the flexibility of building administration managing space.

Dr. Michelle Erb discuss the challenges of offering ESL in all buildings and the need for specialized programs in the magnet schools. She also outlines the intervention supports and MTSS facilitator for each building, with additional support based on socioeconomic needs. Then highlights the potential for increasing EC capacity with additional funding and the need for playground fences.

Josh Aurand discussed the financial savings with grade band options and the need to address the projected deficit.

Rebecca Carlson wanted clarification on the bussing for the geographic and sister school options. Student on the bus would be students that would be going to that school was reported back to her.

Diana Johnson asked about Honors Class for students versus ALP. Dr. Erb explained top 5% at each of our schools and invite them to be part of our advanced Learner Program, if they say, No, we keep going to a certain point and then once the gap is. That's where we have to stop, because then we aren't able to really offer that honors type of level. Offering an honors class at those fourth and fifth grade levels in both the geographic and the sister schools is getting them more of a service. With an honors type of option, you could be strong in Math and or Reading and still be able to be get some of those honors classes, where, in our current model, if you're strong in one and not in the other, you probably are not receiving an invitation for ALP.

Mike Sterling asked for a consensus for narrowing down the options. Kurt Thompson expressed his thought about keeping all options open to ensure fair representation of community feedback. Mike emphasized the need for a decision to move forward. The Board Members debate the benefits and the drawbacks of different options and the expressing concern of the complexity of certain options. After the Board Members were polled on what option they would like to move forward to the next meeting, Option 1 & 3 were agreed upon for further discussion. Mike mentions the need for a public hearing for the closure of Maple Elementary and Olson Park Elementary which will be closed in any of the Options. The meeting concluded with a plan to reconvene and finalize the decision based on community and administration feedback.

E.Adjourn at 6:17PM