



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
SCHOOL DISTRICT 25, WEST CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
March 10, 2025**

**Call to Order**

President Rogers called the regular meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 10, 2025, in the Administrative Service Center, Boardroom, 28W250 St. Charles Road, West Chicago, IL 60185.

**Roll Call**

Board Recorder Solly Garcia took a roll call vote of the members present: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause, Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis. Other Attendees included John Langton, Interim Superintendent; Dr. Mike Fitzgerald, Principal and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum; Dr. Joel Filas, Business Manager; Dr. Julie Salamone, Director of Student Services; Sarah Smith, Evergreen Principal; and Allison Agres, Evergreen Assistant Principal.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

President Rogers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approve Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda as presented. This motion was made by Jodi Krause and seconded by Gina Vlantis. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None

**Approval of Minutes**

- Approval of the Draft Minutes from the Regular Board of Education Meeting on February 10, 2025.  
Motion to approve the minutes as presented. This motion was made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Andrew Drinnin. Passed.  
Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None
- Approval of the Draft Minutes from the Executive Session Meeting on February 10, 2025.  
Motion to approve the minutes as presented. This motion was made by Jodi Krause and seconded by Bridgette Pedersen. Passed.  
Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None
- Approval of the Draft Minutes from the Special Board of Education Meeting on February 20, 2025.  
Motion to approve the minutes as presented. This motion was made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Bridgette Pedersen. Passed.  
Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,



Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis

Nays: None

- Approval of the Draft Minutes from the Special Closed Session Meeting on February 20, 2025. Motion to approve the minutes as presented. This motion was made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Bridgette Pedersen. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,

Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis

Nays: None

- Approval of the Draft Minutes from the Special Board of Education Meeting on February 24, 2025.

Motion to approve the minutes as presented. This motion was made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Bridgette Pedersen. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,

Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis

Nays: None

- Approval of the Draft Minutes from the Special Closed Session Meeting on February 24, 2025. Motion to approve the minutes as presented. This motion was made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Bridgette Pedersen. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,

Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis

Nays: None

**Learning and Teaching Report:** Dr. Fitzgerald updated the Board on implementing the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt literacy curriculum for K-5 students. He detailed the transition to Version 3 of the structured literacy pathway, prioritizing an integrated approach to writing and grammar instruction throughout the curriculum. This iteration aims to equip students with essential literacy skills and enhance their ability to articulate ideas clearly and effectively in written form.

Additionally, Dr. Fitzgerald discussed the selection process for new science instructional materials, identifying Savvas Elevate Science as the preferred resource. This selection was made following a thorough evaluation process, emphasizing its alignment with established educational standards and its focus on inquiry-based learning methodologies. The Savvas Elevate Science curriculum engages students with experiential learning through hands-on experiments and real-world applications, thereby deepening their comprehension of scientific principles.

The Board has designated funding for procuring these new science materials for the fiscal year, underscoring the district's strategic objective to bolster its science curriculum. Looking ahead, Dr. Fitzgerald indicated that enhancements to English Language Arts (ELA) resources are planned for inclusion in next year's budget.

**Business and Operations Report:** Dr. Filas updated the Board on March's Business Operations, highlighting several significant financial developments. A key discussion point was the state's allocation of an additional \$350 million to bolster educational funding across various districts. However, it was noted that District 25, categorized as Tier 4, will receive a disproportionately small portion of these funds. Specifically, the district's allocation is \$519, translating to roughly \$0.96 per

student. The district's property tax levy was confirmed to align with previous forecasts, ensuring fiscal stability for upcoming operations. The district secured an \$850 grant for library enhancements, which will help expand educational resources for students. The meeting also addressed the impending 2025 bond issue, with an anticipated interest rate of 3.34%. This favorable rate is projected to yield approximately \$161,000 in savings for the district, facilitating better allocation of financial resources to essential projects.

Additionally, updates on current construction initiatives within the district were discussed. The construction containment has resulted in a reduction of available outdoor space for student recreational activities. The timeline for grass restoration and field accessibility was clarified, with optimism that these areas will be fully accessible by fall. Furthermore, plans for gymnasium floor repairs will occur during spring break to minimize disruption to students and existing schedules.

**Superintendent's Report:** Mr. Langton briefed the Board on the ongoing process of selecting a new superintendent, highlighting the recently implemented focus group meetings to collect stakeholder input. These groups were designed to ensure a comprehensive representation of the community. Although attendance varied significantly, important input was received. Alongside the focus groups, a community survey was initiated to solicit resident feedback on priorities and preferences regarding the superintendent search. The survey was deliberately open-ended until midnight to maximize community participation. The League of Women Voters has scheduled a candidate forum for April 1st. This forum will allow community members to interact with candidates and assess their visions and qualifications. In addition, updates were shared regarding the Forest Preserve District's land acquisition interests. It was confirmed that plans to acquire the Kuhn property have been shelved, marking a strategic pivot in future discussions surrounding land use and conservation initiatives.

### **Board Reports:**

#### **Board Planning Calendar**

President Rogers reviewed the monthly planning calendar. The following dates were discussed.

- March 12, 2025: Early Release for Evergreen
- March 14, 2025: PTO Open Gym Night
- March 24, 2025: Special Board Meeting - B25 ReImagine
- March 28, 2025: Last Day to submit 5Essentials Survey
- March 31 - April 4: Spring Break

#### **Enter Closed Session**

Motion to enter Closed Session under Exemption #1 of the Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 12/02 (c) at 7:36 P.M. The motion was made by Jodi Kruse and seconded by Gina Vlantis. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,

Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis

Nays: None

#### **Return to Open Session**

Motion to return to Open Session at 7:46 P.M. This motion was made by Jack Buscemi and seconded by Dennis Peterson. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,



Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None

**Public Comment on Agenda Items:**

None.

**Consent Agenda: Items Removed**

None

**Consent Agenda**

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. This motion was made by Jack Buscemi and seconded by Dennis Peterson. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None

**Action Items (Roll Call Vote)**

**Approval of the Transfer of Funds from Working Cash to Capital Projects Resolution.**

Motion to approve the Fund Transfer from Working Cash to Capital Projects Resolution as presented. This motion was made by Jodi Krause and seconded by Dennis Peterson. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None

**Approval of the Transfer of Funds from Operations and Maintenance to the Educational Fund Resolution.**

Motion to approve the Fund Transfer from Operations and Maintenance to the Educational Fund as presented. This motion was made by Gina Vlantis and seconded by Bridgette Pedersen. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None

**Approval of the DuPage West/Cook Resolution**

Motion to approve the DuPage West/Cook Resolution as presented. This motion was made by Jack Buscemi and seconded by Bridgette Pedersen. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None

**Approval of the Amendment to the Interim Superintendent Contract**

Motion to approve the Amendment to the Interim Superintendent Contract as presented. This motion was made by Andrew Drinnin and seconded by Gina Vlantis. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,  
Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis  
Nays: None

**Approval of the HYA Agreement**



Motion to approve the HYA Agreement as presented. This motion was made by Jack Buscemi and seconded by Andrew Drinnin. Passed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Jack Buscemi, Andrew Drinnin, Jodi Krause,

Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis

Nays: None

Bridgette Pedersen, Dennis Peterson, Eric Rogers, and Gina Vlantis

Nays: None

#### **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items**

None

#### **Discussion Items**

Mr. Langton provided a brief overview of Board Policy 2:140, emphasizing the importance of open communication between the Board and all Benjamin 25 stakeholders. He addressed an email from Ms. Willming and will continue to provide updates on any new correspondence.

#### **Adjournment (Voice Vote)**

Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. This motion was made by Jodi Krause and seconded by Gina Atlantis.

Voice Vote: Passed

Respectfully submitted by:

Solly Garcia, Board Recorder

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President, Board of Education

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Secretary, Board of Education

Recorded: March 10, 2025

Approved: April 14, 2025