

BOARD OF EDUCATION DISTRICT NO. 170

Dixon, Illinois
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
March 19, 2025

The Board of Education met in regular session in the Board Room at the Administrative Center on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, and was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President, Linda Wegner. Notification of the meeting together with an agenda and other Board material had been electronically downloaded to the individual Board members on Friday, March 14, 2025, and to the news media on Monday, March 17, 2025.

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. Linda LeBlanc-Parks, Secretary; Mr. David Fritts; Mrs. Melissa Gates; Mrs. Kathleen Schaefer; and Mr. Jon Wadsworth

Electronically Present: None

Absent: None

Also present were: Mrs. Margo Empen, Superintendent; Mr. Marc Campbell, Chief School Business Official; Mr. Kevin Schultz, Director of Building and Grounds; Mr. Jared Shaner, Principal of Dixon High School; Mr. Matt Magnafici, Principal of Reagan Middle School; Mrs. Kellie Glenn, Principal of Washington School; Mr. Joey Sagel, Principal of Madison School; Mrs. Crystal Thorpe, Principal of Jefferson School; Mrs. Janine Huffman, Principal of Thomas J. Dempsey School; Mrs. Kim Bork, DEA Co-President; Mr. Jim Manley, Technology Director; Mr. Bob Wendt, Tech; media, parents, staff and community members.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Charlie Bishop 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, Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, Rogers, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approve DPS & LCSEA Treasurer's Report and 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

Mr. Magnafici announced the March Students of the Month as Emily Wendt and John Cocar. Both students were acknowledged for their leadership, character, academic excellence, and involvement in activities at Reagan Middle School. Both students provided a video for the Board to view.

Mr. Shaner announced that Siena Kemmeren was selected as the Dixon Public Schools Foundation Student of the Month for March. Siena received this award based on her excellence in academics, her character, and her involvement in activities at Dixon High School. Siena submitted a video for the Board to view.

Mrs. Kim Bork, DEA Co-President, announced the March teachers of the month – Danielle Dewitt, Libby Folgers three times, Sara Dunn twice, Theresa Sholders twice, Jordan Miller, Carmen Heim, Clara Haas twice, Jill Alston three times, Kenzie Shipman, Hele Rowley, Molly Ferguson, Maria Peterson, Laura Gaulke, Ashley Venier, Carie Ramirez, Mandy Dallas, Maggie Olson twice, Amy Doane, Maddie Armstrong, Ronda Scott, Angie Ortgiesen, Teesha Kingham twice, Lisa Hoyle, Bre Shippert twice, Jen Kuehl, Danielle Andrews twice, Lauren Merrill, Candace Buikema, Keely Dewey, Kelsey Stone, Leah Saunders twice, Kim Conderman twice, Jeff Masters, Britney Pitzer, Jordan Saunders, Jordan Miller, John Barker, Elizabeth Bushman, Candy Lind, Wendy Fitzanko, Tom Padilla, and The Negotiations Team (Brandon Woodward, Candy Lind, Kim Bork, Alicia McPhillips, Mandy Dallas).

Mr. Manley and Mr. Shaner presented Mr. Charlie Bishop as the IDEA Educator of the Year. Mr. Manley provided background information on the IDEA and presented the nomination that was submitted for Mr. Bishop. Mr. Shaner shared some of the positive ways that Mr. Bishop is impacting the high school and District. The award was presented to Mr. Bishop at the annual IDEA conference in February.

Mrs. Glenn presented the Pre-K for All team with certificates for achieving the status of a Gold level program in the state of Illinois.

Ms. Carmen Ayala from the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) provided the Board and guests with an update on the IASB Superintendent search process. Ms. Ayala presented a timeline for the search process, the announcement of vacancy brochure, and results from a survey that went out to the Board, staff, and community on what are important characteristics in the next Superintendent. The anticipated posting date for the vacancy is in July. The Board was able to ask questions and make comments on the presentation.

CITIZEN'S AGENDA

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ACTION ITEMS

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the second reading of Board policies. 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 – Gates, Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schaefer, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc-Parks, to approve that the closed session minutes are to remain confidential. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the IHSA renewal for DHS. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – LeBlanc-Parks, Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Schaefer, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc-Parks, to approve the IESA renewal for RMS. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to reject the door and door frame hardware bid for RMS. 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 – Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, Rogers, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mrs. Gates, to approve the door and door frame hardware and installation bid for RMS. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Fritts, Gates, Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, Rogers, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Mr. Campbell went over his Business Report. Areas he highlighted: the USDA has selected the District to participate in data collection for the organization. The District recently went through a food service procurement review through ISBE and procurement will be added to the 5-year food service review. Whitsons, who is the District's food service provider, is implementing a 3.6% increase to pricing next school year. The official contract and pricing with Whitsons will be released at a future Board meeting.

Mr. Campbell and Mr. Manley are in the process of a request for proposal for the copy and printing machines for the District. The current contract is through RK Dixon, and all copiers and printers in the District are leased through RK Dixon. A new contract and lease of equipment will be presented at the April Board meeting.

Mr. Campbell shared health insurance cost information. As of January 1st, the District became fully insured through ISIN. Mr. Campbell is anticipating a refund of the District's self-insured health insurance reserve once all claims prior to January 1st have been paid out of the reserve. Mr. Campbell also shared that health insurance costs are continuing to increase, and as a result, the District needs to be proactive and look at ways to minimize the impact of health insurance costs to the District. The District's benefits broker anticipates a six percent increase in health insurance next year. Discussions of a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) have begun with the Insurance Committee, and negotiations with the DEA for premium costs and implementation will begin soon.

Mr. Campbell gave an update regarding solar power on school properties and the implementation of an electric bus program and micro-grid for the District. The project and grant are in jeopardy of being cut by the Federal government. A decision on the electric bus project will be made in July on if funding will be available from the government to continue the project.

Mr. Campbell provided information on transportation financials, including evidence-based funding and mandated categorical payments for transportation through the state of Illinois. Mr. Campbell also shared a summary of the current transportation cost to the District, and contract extension conversations with Illinois Central.

Mr. Manley shared information on internet provider options for the District for the 2025-2026 school year. Bluebird was selected as the provider and will be a second option as a back-up to the current internet provider for the District should the main internet provider go down. Bluebird would cost less than \$3,000 per year due to the E-rate program through the government.

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

Brandon Rogers shared information from the Insurance Committee that met on March 4th. Mr. Rogers stated that the HDHP was the focus of the meeting, and more information will be shared soon.

Mrs. Wegner shared building updates from the DEA PRC that met on March 10th. A District wide calendar of events was also discussed.

Mrs. Gates shared building updates from the DESPA PRC that met on March 17th.

Mr. Wadsworth shared information from the Community Engagement Committee that met on March 18th. Amy Scott has created marketing materials and graphics for the campaign. An attendance webpage is in development.

Mrs. Gates shared building updates from the Special Ed Committee that met on March 19th.

Mr. Shaner invited the Board to the high school graduation ceremony on May 25th.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Empen discussed Vision 2030, which highlights the focuses and goals of education in the State during the next ten years. Topics included mandate relief, future-focused learning, shared accountability, and predictable funding. Mrs. Empen asked the Board members if they would be in agreement with bringing a resolution to the April Board meeting showing that the Board and District are supportive of these initiatives. The Board agreed to having the resolution brought to the April meeting.

We have had 4 FOIA requests since the last Board meeting. Michael Rost from Allium Data requested current property and casualty insurance policies and premiums; Sheri Reid from SmartProcure requested purchase order records from April 21, 2023 to current; Payton Felix from Shaw Media requested employment and discipline information on an employee; and Patricia Manarin from Deltek, Inc. requested documents associated with our copier lease and maintenance services. We have complied with all requests.

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

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

New Hires

Lauran Frye, 35-Hour Paraprofessional at Washington School, effective March 10, 2025

Jared Shroyer, 35-Hour Paraprofessional at Reagan Middle School, effective March 20, 2025

Alexa Reeder, Title I Reading and Math Specialist at Madison School, effective for the 2025-2026 school year

Change in Status

Margo Goff, from 5th Grade Resource Special Ed Teacher to 4th/5th Grade Special Education Teacher Self-Contained at Madison School, effective for the 2025-2026 school year

Debbie Sneek, from Office Assistant at Reagan Middle School to Paraprofessional at Thomas J. Dempsey School, effective April 10, 2025

Kris Baker, from Assistant Principal to 7th Grade Social Studies Teacher at Reagan Middle School, effective for the 2025-2026 school year

Cynthia Paul, from Lunchroom Attendant at Jefferson School to Attendance Secretary at Dixon High School, effective for the 2025-2026 school year

Jennifer Kuehl, 3rd Grade Teacher to 3rd Grade Accelerated Teacher at Jefferson School, effective for the 2025-2026 school year

Resignations

Zina McCoy, Paraprofessional at Washington School, effective February 25, 2025

Ereka Harshman, Paraprofessional at Washington School, effective March 10, 2025

Allison Johnston, Special Ed Teacher at Dixon High School, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 school year

Dakota Shuck, Special Ed Teacher at Madison School, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 school year

Britney Pitzer, 3rd Grade Teacher at Jefferson School, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 school year

Kim Bork, 4th Grade Facilitator at Madison School, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 school year

Stacie McCullough, Pre-K Teacher at Washington School, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 school year

Retirements

Eric Ferguson, Social Studies Teacher at Reagan Middle School, effective at the end of the 2028-2029 school year

2024-25 Reagan Middle School School Coaches

Evan Thorpe – Head Track – effective for the 2024-25 school year

Alicia McPhillips – Assistant Track - effective for the 2024-25 school year

Don Randick - Assistant Track - effective for the 2024-25 school year

Mandy Dallas - Assistant Track - effective for the 2024-25 school year

Kolten Dorty - Assistant Track - effective for the 2024-25 school year

2024-25 Coaching/Activities Resignations

Alicia Willey, JV Volleyball Coach at Dixon High School, effective February 19, 2025

Jake Gaither, Basketball Coach at Reagan Middle School, effective January 30, 2025

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mrs. Gates, to approve the renewal of certified staff and administrators for 2025-26 school year, as presented. The motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea - Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to adjourn to executive session at 8:40 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; The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired.

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

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, and seconded by Mr. Rogers to return to Open Session at 9:29 p.m. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, Gates, Schaefer, LeBlanc-Parks, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Gates, seconded by Mr. Fritts to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 p.m. All were in favor.

President

Secretary