BOARD OF EDUCATION DISTRICT NO. 170

Dixon, Illinois
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
BUDGET HEARING
September 24, 2025

The Board of Education met in regular session in the Board Room at the Administrative Center on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, and was called to order at 6:00 p.m. The Budget Hearing was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and regular meeting at 6:14 p.m. Notification of the meetings together with an agenda and other Board material had been electronically downloaded to the individual Board members on Friday, September 29, 2025, and to the news media on Monday, September 22, 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; Mr. David Fritts; Mrs. Kathleen Schaefer; and Mr. Jon Wadsworth

Electronically Present: None

Absent: Mrs. Melissa Gates, Secretary; 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; Mrs. Kellie Glenn, Principal of Washington School; Mr. Joey Sagel, Principal of Madison School; Mrs. Crystal Thorpe, Principal of Jefferson School; Mrs. Kim Bork, DEA Co-President; Mr. Paul Wilson, Tech; media, staff and community members.

In the absence of Secretary, Mrs. Melissa Gates, Mrs. Empen asked if anyone would be willing to serve at Secretary-ProTem, Mrs. Schaefer agreed to serve as Secretary – ProTem.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Mr. Shaner led the Board of Education, administrative staff, and visitors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Wegner declared the budget hearing open at 6:02 p.m. Mr. Campbell provided information on the FY 26 budget and a budget summary overview. After comments and questions from the Board concerning the FY '26 proposed budget, Mrs. Wegner declared the budget hearing closed at 6:14 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schaefer, seconded by Mr. Fritts, to close the budget hearing. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Fritts, Schaefer, Rogers, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

The regular meeting began at 6:14 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA
A motion was made by Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mrs. Schaefer, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Schaefer, Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, 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. 6th Day Enrollment Numbers and Discipline Report

E. Staff Development Report

F. Monthly Website and Social Media Activity

G. Building Reports

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mrs. Empen shared that the Pre-K for All Program once again achieved the Gold Circle of Quality of achievement with the state of Illinois. Mrs. Glenn introduced Pre-K staff that were present and commended the team for their hard work.

Mr. Magnafici announced the September Students of the Month as Lauren Wagner and Owen Breitzka. 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 Gage Helfrich was selected as the Dixon Public Schools Foundation Student of the Month for September. Gage received this award based on his excellence in academics, his character, and his involvement in activities at Dixon High School. Gage submitted a video for the Board to view.

Mrs. Kim Bork, DEA Co-President, announced the September teachers of the month – Mackenzie Shipman, Hele Rowley, Maggie Olson, Amy Doane, Ashley Venier, Jen Kuehl, Shana Engelkes, Lisa Hoyle, Greer Collins, Katie McNitt, Lynn Longan twice, Kelly Reul, Allie Goley, Rita Gillespie, Carrie Weidman, Chris Bishop, Amanda Sawyer, DHS Special Education Teachers, Charli Beck, and Tayla Schwarz.

CITIZEN'S AGENDA

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ACTION ITEMS

A motion was made by Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mrs. Schaefer, to approve the FY26 budget adoption, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, Schaefer, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the copier vendor and maintenance contract, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Wadsworth, Fritts, Schaefer, Rogers, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schaefer, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the first reading of board policies, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Fritts, Schaefer, Rogers, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve that the closed session minutes remain closed, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Schaefer, Rogers, Wadsworth, Fritts, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schaefer, seconded by Mr. Wadsworth, to approve the after-care agreement with the YMCA, as presented. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Wadsworth, Fritts, Schaefer, and Wegner. Abstaining – Mr. Rogers. Voting nay—none. Motion approved.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Mr. Campbell went over his Business Report. He highlighted the following: County wide facilities sales tax had another increase; Mr. Campbell also highlighted transportation costs in relation to similar district sizes across the state.

Mr. Campbell and Mr. Schultz gave an update on the Dempsey bus drive. As enrollment grows, the number of buses needed to transport students also increases. GRP was asked to come up with some ideas for updating the bus drive for functionality.

Mr. Campbell gave an update on the 10-year Health Life Safety Survey. We were able to complete this summer's anticipated projects considerably cheaper than originally projected. The anticipated projects and projected costs for summer of 2026 were briefly mentioned.

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

- DEA PRC met on September 8, 2025. Mrs. Wegner spoke briefly about each school's monthly report. Trainings will continue throughout the year for how to handle certain behaviors. Title I monies did not come through in July as they were projected.

- DESPA PRC met on September 23, 2025.

- Community Engagement Committee met on September 16, 2025. Mrs. Schaefer said that we have started to see results of the attendance campaign. There will be a survey send out to parents/guardians to help choose the next focus for the committee.

- Insurance Committee met on September 22, 2025. Mr. Rogers reported on dental, vision and health insurance renewals.

- Curriculum Committee met on September 4, 2025. Mr. Rogers talked about the mental health screening that will be implemented in the 2027-2028 school year. The screenings will be optional, and parents can opt their child out of the screening.

- Mr. Shaner reported that at the BNC Principal's Meeting it was discussed that all 10 schools in the conference are experiencing lower enrollment numbers.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mrs. Empen provided an overview of the 2025 Resolutions Committee Report with the Board and stated that each Board Member should have received a copy at their home address. At the October meeting, the Board will go through each resolution and agree to adopt or not adopt so that Mrs. Wegner, who is the Board delegate, will know how to vote on behalf of the DPS Board at the IASB Delegate Assembly meeting in November.

Mrs. Empen shared that the Washington Trunk of Treat will be Wednesday, October 29th from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Empen will be the board rep at this event.

We have had 6 FOIA requests since the last Board meeting – Justin Wenig of StarJump requested a report for all purchasing information from January 1, 2022 to present; Gonzalo Reyes requested the number of professional staff employed by DPS and how many self-identified as part of a minority group; Peter Medlin from Northern Public Radio requested copies of contract the District currently has for AI-based education services; Janie Jordan from Data Research Partners, LLC requested District contact information for all DPS employees; Marina Garcia requested contractual rates for vendors that provide special education services to the District; and Michael Rost from Allium Data requested copies of the current property and casualty insurance policies. We have complied with all requests.

PERSONNEL REPORT (new hires, resignations, retirements, and coaches & others)
A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to approve the following personnel items. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Wadsworth, Fritts, Schaefer, Rogers, and Wegner. Voting nay—none. Motion unanimously approved.

New Hires

Dennis Cardot, Custodian at Madison School, effective September 25, 2025

Elyse Drowns, Custodian at Dixon High School, effective September 25, 2025

Stacey Goldman, Paraprofessional at Washington School, effective September 25, 2025

Ian Gordon, Custodian at Dixon High School, effective September 25, 2025

Kris Kruger, Crossing Guard at Madison School, effective September 25, 2025

Kayla Sharp, Paraprofessional at Washington School, effective September 25, 2025

Facilitators

Paige Cater, K-5th Special Education Facilitator, effective for the 2025-2026 school year

Change of Status

Calista Crone, from Permanent Substitute to Special Education Teacher at Dempsey Day School, effective August 25, 2025

Paul Downs, from Custodian at Reagan Middle School to Head Custodian at Dempsey Day School, effective September 25, 2025

Resignations

Ruth Straw, Paraprofessional at Washington School, effective September 5, 2025

Dismissals

Heriberto Brito, Custodian at Dixon High School, effective September 24, 2025

2025-26 RMS Coaches/Activities

Jake Hubbell – Boys Basketball - .5 stipend – effective for the 2025-26 school year
LaQuan Pittman – Boys Basketball – effective for the 2025-26 school year
Oscar Van Sickle – Boys Basketball - .5 stipend – effective for the 2025-26 school year
Doug Hicks – Boys Basketball - .5 stipend – effective for the 2025-26 school year
Chad Weigle – Boys Basketball - .5 stipend – effective for the 2025-26 school year
Seth Nicklaus – Boys Basketball – effective for the 2025-26 school year

2025-26 Coaches/Activities Resignations

Sarah Hansen – Spring Musical Choreographer – effective for the 2025-26 school year

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mr. Wadsworth, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to adjourn to executive session at 7:22 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; 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; Student disciplinary cases; 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 session; Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes.

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

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Mr. Fritts, and seconded by Mrs. Schaefer, to return to Open Session at 10:49 p.m. This motion was submitted to a roll call vote with the following results: Voting yea – Fritts, Schaefer, Rogers, Wadsworth, and Wegner. Voting nay--none. Motion unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mrs. Schaefer, seconded by Mr. Rogers, to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 p.m. All were in favor.

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President

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Secretary