

**Central Community Unit School District 301  
Board of Education Minutes**

Where: Central CUSD #301 District Office  
Date: November 18, 2024

Meeting: Regular  
Time: 6:00 p.m.

**Board Members Present**

Junaid Afeef	Y
Marc Falk	Y
Dornetria Hemphill	Y
Eric Nolan	Y
Morgan Pappas	Y
Jennifer Volpe	Y (Left at 9:01 p.m.)
Jeff Gorman	Y

**Administrators Present**

Esther Mongan	Y
Matthew Haug	Y
Daina Pflug	Y
Shayne Birkmeier	Y
Stephen Buchs	Y
Daniel Carpenter	N
Graydon Engle	Y
Sarah Farrington	N
Rania Hamadeh	N
Jesse Hawley	Y
Ted Juske	N
Theresa Kolkebeck	Y
Kim Lewis	Y
Marilyn Mattei	Y
Megan Minehart	N
Matt Newquist	Y
Sarah Nolan	Y
Kristen Nowicki	Y
Alex Paszt	N
Edgar Pereda	N
Patrick Podgorski	Y
Dan Polowy	Y
Pam Porto	Y
Curtis Price	N
Tamara Proberts	N
Matt Rodewald	Y
Melissa Rourke	N
Vicki Shadel	Y
Erica Snyder	Y
Andrew Speiden	N
Brian Tobin	N
Jessica VonSchnase	N

Roll Call                      Roll was called at 6:00 p.m.

Present:            Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Absent:            None

Approve Agenda            Motion by Falk, second by Pappas, to approve the agenda as presented.

Voting yes:        Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Voting no:        None  
Absent:            None

- Consent Agenda      Motion by Hemphill, second by Pappas, to approve the consent agenda as presented.
- Voting yes:      Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Voting no:      None  
Absent:      None
- Approve Tentative Tax Levy      Motion by Pappas, second by Nolan, to approve the 2024 Tentative Tax Levy.
- Voting yes:      Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Voting no:      None  
Absent:      None
- Approve Renewal Larson & Darby      Motion by Afeef, second by Hemphill, to table the vote to approve the renewal of the contract with Larson & Darby.
- Voting yes:      Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Voting no:      None  
Absent:      None
- Approve 2025 School Maintenance Project Grant      Motion by Hemphill, second by Pappas, to approve the School Maintenance Project Grant as presented.
- Voting yes:      Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Voting no:      None  
Absent:      None
- Approve Cross Country Overnight Trip      Motion by Pappas, second by Falk, to approve the Cross Country overnight trip to the state competition in Peoria, IL that occurred November 8-9, 2024.
- Voting yes:      Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Voting no:      None  
Absent:      None
- Executive Session      Motion by Nolan, second by Afeef, to adjourn open session and move into executive session at 8:02 p.m.
- Voting yes:      Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Volpe, Gorman  
Voting no:      None  
Absent:      None
- Open Session      Motion by Afeef, second by Falk, to adjourn executive session and return to open session at 9:30 p.m.
- Voting yes:      Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Gorman  
Voting no:      None  
Absent:      Volpe

Approve October 21, 2024 Executive Session Minutes  
Motion by Falk, second by Hemphill, to approve the October 21, 2024 Executive Session Minutes

Voting yes: Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Gorman  
Voting no: None  
Absent: Volpe

Adjourn Motion by Afeef, second by Hemphill, to adjourn at 9:35 p.m.

Voting yes: Afeef, Falk, Hemphill, Nolan, Pappas, Gorman  
Voting no: None  
Absent: Volpe

#### BOE Meeting

##### 1. Meeting Call to Order

###### 1.A Roll Call

1.B Approval of Agenda - The Board approved the agenda as presented.

##### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

##### 3. Public Open Forum

3.A Recognition of Visitors – President Gorman and Superintendent Mongan welcomed attendees and those watching remotely. Dr. Mongan also recognized the Board members for Board of Education Appreciation Day last Friday and all District staff for American Education Week.

3.B Public Comments - Prior to hearing public comment, President Gorman read a statement reminding the public that Board members cannot speak to student issues, but that the safety of students, staff, and the community is their top priority. Public comment was heard regarding concerns about a student situation, the tentative tax levy, concerns about renewing the contract with Larson & Darby, a change to the format of the bills payable report, confusion about options on CHS' property, a desire for more special education and EL staff, and teacher retention rates.

##### 4. Action Items

4.A Consent Agenda – Business Manager Pflug reviewed the revenues and expenditures. The District received \$23,652.29 in impact fees for four new home starts but no transition fees this month. The bills payable reports for both Central 301 and Northern Kane are typical for November and include a bond payment of \$6,975,000. An ISBE audit of Northern Kane showed a couple account miscodings, but all dollar amounts were accurate. They have implemented new procedures to prevent this moving forward and ISBE has accepted our plan.

4.B Approve Tentative Tax Levy – Business Manager Pflug reviewed the Tentative Tax Levy presentation with the Board, explaining that school districts need to ask for more dollars than anticipated in order to ensure they receive all funding to which they are entitled. As EAV continues to increase, the tax rate continues to decrease. The anticipated tax levy will be a 5.36% increase, which will require the District to hold a Truth in Taxation Hearing on Monday, December 16th at 5:45 p.m., immediately preceding the regular Board of Education meeting. This increase will still result in a tax rate decrease of approximately \$0.43 for homeowners.

4.C Approve Renewal of Contract with Larson & Darby – Superintendent Mongan shared that we have had a longstanding and positive relationship with our architect firm and would like to renew the master contract with the firm. The Board discussed whether it would be better to market the

contract to see what other firms may be out there to make sure this is the best partner for the District. The Board determined to table the vote on renewing this contract until we can hold an RFQ.

- 4.D Approve 2025 School Maintenance Project Grant – Grant Director Engle explained that he needs the Board to approve a matching contribution of \$50,000 in order to apply for the School Maintenance Project Grant. In the past this grant has helped fund generator projects in District buildings. This year we are looking to use funds from this grant to enhance school security features, specifically looking at new locking mechanisms on school doors.
  - 4.E Approve Cross Country Overnight Trip – Principal Podgorski shared that Abby Burke represented Central High School at the state Cross Country competition November 8-9, 2024. She took 27th place but beat her personal record.
5. Information Items
- 5.A Facilities Update – Facilities Director Polowy shared that they completed the reverse auction for electricity service as approved last month and have signed a one-year contract at a rate of \$0.07090/kWh. Nania Energy Advisors planted 81 trees on our behalf due to our partnership. We are finishing up the owner training for the new addition and furniture has begun to arrive. We anticipate being able to use the addition for the second semester. The Facilities Department is also working on establishing capital projects for next summer and updating their five-year capital projects plan. Director Polowy has been working with Athletics and Activities Director Juske to update facility rental policies, procedures and rates that will go into effect for the 2025-2026 school year.
  - 5.B Instructional Coach Presentation – Curriculum Director Birkmeier introduced some of the District's Instructional Coaches who shared a presentation about the work they do to support District staff and students. The team provides professional development to our staff through Mentor/Protege training, Teacher Institute days, ongoing professional development programs, individual coaching, and more.
  - 5.C Transportation Update – Transportation Director Porto shared that during National Bus Safety Week in October, the Illinois Department of Transportation conducted an audit of all District buses and, aside from one lug nut issue on one bus, we passed with flying colors. Over the course of the week, the Transportation Department shared valuable information about bus safety and the work that the department does to transport our students safely each school day.
  - 5.D Teacher Retention - Superintendent Mongan explained to the Board that teacher retention metrics reflected on the Illinois School Report Card changed in December 2023 and reflect a three year average of teachers who remain in the same building (school level retention) and in the same district (district level retention). She explained that, as a growing district that adds to our teacher count each school year, that automatically increases the denominator in the formula, resulting in a lower retention rate. While many factors contribute to teacher retention concerns, and we can always do better, the District has stayed fairly consistent since the State began tracking this information in 2014.
  - 5.E Enrollment Report - The enrollment report is in the Board packet and includes a quarterly report that reflects counts by grade and building.
6. Freedom of Information Act
- 6.A Mr. Carlton - We received a request for the names, titles/positions, email addresses, date of hire and building/office location for all full-time employees. – We were able to comply with this request.

- 6.B Ms. Martinez - We received a request for all meeting minutes, phone notes, and emails between Aramark and Dr. Mongan between April 1, 2023 and October 1, 2024 related to proposed services for the current or proposed high school. – We were able to comply with this request; however, there were no records regarding proposed services for the current or proposed high school.
- 6.C Ms. Karavasis - We received a request for materials provided to the Board of Education at the September 21, 2022 Board Retreat. – We were able to comply with this request.
- 6.D Ms. Karavasis - We received a request for Board of Education closed meeting minutes that have been approved for release between August 2021 and June 2024. – We were able to comply with this request.
- 6.E Ms. Welch - We received a request for invoices from Larson & Darby from April through September 2023 and payments issued to Larson & Darby between August and September 2023. – We were able to comply with this request.
- 6.F Ms. Tecza - We received a request for master agreements, amendments, addendums or agreements from Larson & Darby, IMEG, and Eriksson Engineering related to the proposed new high school. – We were able to comply with this request.
- 7. Executive Session
  - 7.A Adjourn to Closed Session - The Board adjourned to closed session to hear information regarding exceptions 2(c)(1), 2(c)(9), 2(c)(10) and 2(c)(21).
- 8. Open Session
  - 8.A Adjourn Closed Session to Return to Open Session
  - 8.B Action Items from Closed Session
    - 8.B.1 Approval of October 21, 2024 Executive Session Minutes - The Board approved the Executive Session Minutes from the October 21, 2024 Board meeting.
  - 8.C Board Discussion - The Board discussed options to respond in a general way to public comment when appropriate, such as through the proposed Board Bytes & Highlights format.
- 9. Adjourn

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Board President

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Board Secretary