

# Minutes of Special Board Meeting for Building Closures for the Purpose of District Consolidation

## The Board of Education Harlem Consolidated School District # 122

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A Special Board Meeting for Building Closures for the Purpose of District Consolidation of the Board of Education of Harlem Consolidated School District was held Tuesday, January 27, 2026, beginning at 5:00 PM in the Harlem Administration Center - Board Room 8605 North Second St Machesney Park, Illinois 61115.

1. Call to Order of Special Board meeting at 5:00 p.m. by Mike Sterling
2. Roll Call—Mike Sterling, Kurt Thompson, Aaron McKnight, Diane McKinney, Rebecca Carlson, Diana Johnson, Evelyn Meeks  
Other Attendees: Pam Cook, Recording Secretary; Dr. Terrell Yarbrough, Superintendent; Dr. Shelley Wagner, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Dr. Michelle Erb, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Dr. Jason Blume, Assistant Superintendent for Communication & Community Relations
3. Pledge of Allegiance led by Mike Sterling
4. Approval of Agenda  
**1<sup>st</sup> Thompson    2<sup>nd</sup> McKnight**  
**Thompson, McKnight, McKinney, Carlson, Johnson, Meeks, Sterling- 7 ayes**  
**Motion Carried**
5. Harlem School District Mission Statement:  
The Mission of the Harlem Consolidated School District, as a vital part of the community, is to help diverse learners realize their unlimited potential by providing an educational program dedicated to academic excellence and the development of strong character in a safe and respectful learning environment.
6. Comments from the Community  
-Mr. Don Campbell expressed his concern about the \$3M debt and the number of households in the District and offers help to brainstorm how to keep schools open; a lack of comprehensive surveys and communication about the options being considered; emphasized the importance of community involvement  
-Ms. Caitlin MacRoy advocates for the sister school option citing its benefits for students and resources for the building; highlights the importance of communication and the district's mission to provide a safe and respectful learning environment; she urges the board to consider the best interest of the student in their decision making.  
-Mr. Jeremy Hissong concerned about a bus incident and the lack of communication to parents; emphasized the importance of communication for the safety of students and the community; points out potential risks of longer bus rides and younger children being alone on buses; reiterates the need for better communication and transparency from the District; asking the board to make the right decision when choosing the consolidation plan

-Ms. Lynnette Hofmann asked the board to speak louder and clearer when having conversations.

7. Administrative Reports

- A. Recommendation to approve building closure of Maple Elementary School and Olson Park Elementary School for the purpose of District Consolidation

*-Rebecca Carlson inquired about the reasons for choosing Maple over Windsor, noting was it the proximity and the traffic concerns. Dr. Yarbrough explained the decision-making process and the goal of dispersing student more evenly across the district.*

*-Diana Johnson clarified that closing of Maple and Olson Park is the only thing that is being voted on. Mike Sterling agreed and a consensus will be on the option.*

8. Action Items

- A. Approve the building closure of Maple Elementary School and Olson Park Elementary School for the purpose of District Consolidation

**1st Johnson      2nd Sterling**

**Sterling, Thompson, McKnight, McKinney, Carlson, Johnson, Meeks- 7 ayes**

**Motion Carried**

9. Announcements and Discussion:

*Mike Sterling asked for a consensus on a consolidation plan*

*Aaron McKnight chose option one*

*Diane McKinney chose option four*

*Rebecca Carlson chose option one*

*Diana Johnson chose option four*

*Evelyn Meeks chose option one*

*Kurt Thompson chose option four*

*Mike Sterling chose option one*

*Consensus is for Option One- Neighborhood Schools*

*Mike Sterling reflected on all the changes that have happened in the District, and suggested a need for longer lasting future plan.*

*Kurt Thompson and Mike Sterling expressed their support for the decisions made, and acknowledging the difficulty and importance of the choices.*

10. Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Employment of Personnel (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1),

**1st Thompson      2nd McKnight**

**Johnson, Meeks, Sterling, Thompson, McKnight, McKinney, Carlson- 7 ayes**

**Motion Carried**

*The Board took a brief recess at 5:20PM and went into Closed Session at 5:24PM; returned to Open Session at 5:55PM*

11. Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn at 5:55PM**

**1st McKinney      2nd McKnight**

**Thompson, McKnight, McKinney, Carlson, Johnson, Meeks, Sterling -7 ayes**

**Motion Carried**

Meeting adjourned at 5:55PM

Respectfully Submitted by,

*Pam Cook*

Recording Secretary

ATTEST

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary