

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SCHOOL DISTRICT 33, DUPAGE COUNTY, WEST CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
February 6, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Rita Balgeman at 7:01 p.m. at Gary Elementary School, 130 E. Forest Ave., West Chicago, Illinois. On roll call, the following members were present: Mrs. Rita Balgeman, Mrs. Morgan Banasiak, Mr. Chad McLean, Mr. Tom Doyle, Mrs. Sandra Garcia, and Mrs. Janette Hernandez. Absent: Mrs. Felicia Gills.

**ALSO PRESENT**

Kristina Davis, Superintendent; Lea DeLuca, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning; Karen Apostoli, Executive Director of Business and Operations; Sarah Burnett, Director of Human Resources; Fred Cadena, Director of Buildings and Grounds; Catherine Park, Director of Assessment and Accountability; Matt Ryan, Director of Technology; and Sarah Norton, Director of Partnerships; Amie Correa, Gary School Principal; and Jessica Raiser, Gary School Assistant Principal.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Rita Balgeman led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ADDITIONS/CHANGES  
TO THE AGENDA**

No changes were made.

**SHARED AGREEMENTS**

1. *Make decisions according to what is best for ALL District 33 students.*
2. *Respect staff and other board members and their opinions.*
3. *Be willing to see things from the eyes of seven (7) people, not just one (1).*
4. *Allow everyone to complete their thoughts.*
5. *Commit to shared leadership.*
6. *Respect confidentiality.*
7. *Adhere to our belief in our students' full potential and successful future.*

**Strategic Plan Goals**

*Goal #1 – Student Growth and Achievement*

*Goal #2 – Learning Culture of Equity, Engagement & Agency*

*Goal #3 – Professional Culture of Teamwork & Continuous Improvement*

*Goal #4 – Family Engagement & Community Partnerships*

*Goal #5 - Effective and Innovative Use of Resources*

**SHARED AGREEMENTS  
REFLECTION**

At the July 18, 2013, meeting, the Board of Education finalized their “shared agreements” and agreed to begin each regular board meeting by reflecting on one agreement. The Board revised the shared agreements on November 6, 2014. The agreement's purpose is to help

maintain a positive environment in which to conduct board work. Vice President Morgan Banasiak shared her statement: “Today, I would like to quickly discuss Shared Agreement 1, ‘Make decisions according to what is best for ALL District 33 students.’ I would like to talk particularly about safety. Safety is just one area we have to consider for our students to help them with their education. We want all of our students to feel safe so that they can concentrate on their education. Over the last four years, we have made multiple decisions to address safety issues in our schools. We continue to set up drills for different scenarios, such as a tornado, fire, and active shooter, so the children know what to do in these situations and things can be done quickly and efficiently. We have added a Relocation Drill that parents and other community members have participated in, and this has encouraged others to follow suit.

A few years ago, we added Blue Point to our school's security. This allows the police and administration to know what is going on if someone unauthorized enters a building and we have added more cameras to fix any blind spots. We recently discussed adding better cameras to the door areas to make the system better. All doors are locked during school hours and only authorized individuals are admitted into the buildings.

We added a second SRO to better serve all the schools in the district, help with education regarding drugs, etc., and cover times when we see increased incidents of trouble.

The district has policies to help protect its children from bullying, fighting, drugs, and weapons. This board has taken any incident involving these issues very seriously. Decisions have involved further education for the students, suspensions, expulsions, and law enforcement when necessary.

We like to consider District 33 buildings one of the safest places for our children to be in this community. We will continue to address any safety issues that come to our attention. We want every child to be comfortable and ready to learn. A good education sets the stage for each child’s future, and we want to see everyone soar.”

## **RECOGNITION/SHOWCASE PRESENTATION**

### Recognition

#### **Gary School Superintendent for the Day**

On January 29, 2025, Julieta D., Izzy C. Joshimar, and Alan A. were superintendents for the Day at Gary School. The 3rd-grade lead teacher, Mrs. Larson, provided highlights of the day. The students started the day with healthy snacks, wrote in their notebooks, and reviewed freckle goals and growth. Then, they visited the 3rd-grade classes and explained their purpose.

The students praised Mrs. Jirove, Mrs. Larson, Mrs. Meyer, and Ms. Swierenga for their great work. They also shared what they learned about being a Superintendent and what they would like to keep or change. Izzy shared, “When Mrs. Davis came to visit, I learned that she is a superintendent and oversees all the schools in D33. She has two dogs and two children.” Julieta shared, “ One thing that I liked about the day was that we got to go to the classrooms and ask questions about Math Goals in Freckle.” Alan shared, “One thing that I love about Gary School and would like to keep forever is all of the events

and Clubs.” Joshimar shared, “In third grade, the teachers have been teaching about tornados and hurricanes. I liked that we saw a live-action tornado.”

#### Showcase

##### ***Gary School Showcase- Parent Involvement Group***

Mrs Cruz, lead specials teacher, presented the Parent Involvement Group to the board.

As a team, special teachers, Mrs. Cruz, music teacher; Mr. Heidron, PE teacher; Ms. Nelson, Library teacher; Ms. Walker, art teacher; and Ms. Christodoulou, SEL/Health teacher, developed a SMARTGoal around family involvement and developed a plan that aligned with the District Goals. Music and Library developed events and activities to involve school and community families. SEL and PE teachers brought family members who co-taught things like team building and learning about cultures worldwide. The art department helped prepare materials for the Tiny Art Show and the District’s Art Show.

PTO parents (Megan W., Karla T., Diana F., Sam R., and Amy O.) spoke on the importance of involvement in the school and different events. Mrs. O’Brien shared the joy of being on the PTO since her oldest was in Kinder (now a senior at WCCHS), being able to have her dad participate in Veteran’s Day, and her mom (retired teacher) volunteer to read in different classrooms. Board Member Sandra Garica thanked the PTO parents for all the time and dedication they provide each year.

A volunteer show board was also displayed so board members and administrators could see different pictures of various events.

#### Board Salutes

The Board Salutes will be a standing item on the agenda starting with the February 3, 2022, board meeting. The Board of Education would like to recognize individuals of the District 33 community - which includes all staff members, students, bus drivers, parents/guardians, and guardians - for actions that build a positive culture and climate in District 33. This “shout-out” will become part of the official Board minutes under Board Salutes on the bi-weekly agendas.

##### **Salute to: Senator Karina Villa**

**Submitted by:** The Board of Education and Administration

“On behalf of the Board and administration, we salute State Senator Karina Villa for her unwavering commitment to our schools. Over the past decade, Senator Villa has served in our community in numerous capacities, with our students and families always at the forefront of her mind. In 2018, while serving as our state representative, Senator Villa secured over a million dollars to renovate all of our playgrounds. To honor her contribution, we will be installing plaques at each playground recognizing the children and families of West Chicago. Most recently, Senator Villa was instrumental in acquiring \$925,000 in funding to restore McAuley School in order to increase access to educational programming for our families. McAuley School was formerly part of District 27 and the last fully functioning one-room schoolhouse in Illinois. In 1982, the school was added to the National Registry of Historic Places and annexed to West Chicago in 1992. It was then that District 33 acquired the land to be used for educational and community purposes. For many years, McAuley sat vacant while the district rented space throughout the community to provide educational programming to families in our early childhood program. Due to Senator Villa’s efforts, we are excited to announce the restoration timeline of McAuley School,

which will become an Early Childhood Family and Community Education Center. We are incredibly grateful for State Senator Villa's advocacy and proudly salute her tonight."

**Salute to: State Representative Maura Hirschauer**

**Submitted by:** The Board of Education and Administration Board  
Salutes State

"On behalf of the Board and administration, we salute State Representative Maura Hirschauer for her tremendous support in expanding extracurriculars, clubs, and sports activities for District 33 students. After-school programs are vital in supporting students' social, emotional, and academic development. Further, they reduce adverse behaviors, promote physical health, and provide children with a safe and supportive environment. Through State Representative Hirschauer's advocacy, District 33 received \$500,000 in financial support to expand its after-school programming with additional staffing for academic support, sports equipment such as basketball nets and soccer goals, and new uniforms. This has not only expanded programming but instilled pride in our students who participate in these programs. In addition, this funding has made it possible for the District to begin planning for a soccer and football field, which will further expand programming for its students. State Representative Maura Hirschauer, we thank you for your support of our school community."

**Salute to: Ms. Yunaisy Siverio, Paraprofessional, Gary School**

**Submitted by:** Lilla Brandt and Viannett Caballero, Teachers, Gary School

"We want to recognize Ms. Yunaisy Siverio's dedication to District 33 and Gary's students. As a paraprofessional, she consistently goes above and beyond to support students with their specific needs and build meaningful relationships with them that motivate them to do their best. In addition to her unwavering support for the students, she is a colleague everyone can count on. She always has something to give to others, whether it's a helping hand, a word of encouragement, or a joke to make you laugh. In Miss Brandt's fourth-grade classroom, the students greet her excitedly when she enters every single day. At any given time, Yuni supports up to five students with their classwork, helping them shine with their strengths and strategically supporting their areas for growth. As one fourth grader who has known her since Kindergarten says: "I learned to read from Miss Yuni. Reading is very important." She has a truly special ability to make a lasting impact on all of the students she works with. In Miss Caballero's classroom, the students look forward to seeing Miss Yuni and know they can ask for help with all kinds of tasks. Yuni has created a relationship with all students, but with one student in particular, she has a great bond, and this student looks for her when he struggles to get regulated. Miss Yuni is his comfort, and he always greets her with a big smile. Our classes are thankful for the endless amount of support she has provided academically and emotionally. She deserves to be recognized for her hard work and dedication to the students, staff, and families of Gary Elementary."

Presentation

**Summer 2025 Work**

George Demarakis from Arcan presented Summer Work 2025. This summer, Leman, Turner, and Pioneer will have work done in their parking lot areas.

Pioneer School will have inside work to update the cubbies so younger students can use them more easily. The front entrance will receive an upgrade along with the bus lane to help control traffic. Work will resume at McAuley School. In the fall, phase one was completed, which involved rehabilitating the existing roof and making the building watertight. They also remove all interior surfaces that require environmental demolition to allow for new construction. Phase two will take place this summer and will include working with historic preservation contractors to finish all exterior work, including siding, windows, roofing, fascia, railings, etc. Phase three will take place this fall and will include bringing all utilities (water, gas, sanitary, and electricity) to the site. Phase four will also take place in the fall. They will focus on a new parking lot and asphalt drive onto the property regarding surroundings, providing onsite lighting, and rehabilitating the first floor and basement. Work is expected to be completed in September and will be used for the Birth to Three program.

The Lemay Middle School Soccer/Football field will be renovated this summer. Work will include repairing the existing field and building a new field with a long jump pit, storage building, and perimeter fence. The new field will also include the Lemay logo and the proper markings for soccer and football games.

## Presentation

### **Department goals**

District administrators present their department plans and goals three times a year. Cathy Park, Director of Assessment and Accountability, led the presentation, which included information on the current District 33 scorecard for each Strategic Goal. The current Strategic Goal will expire in June 2026, and plans for the new Strategic Plan have begun. Each department has been working together to gather information.

Links are available on the district website for the summit designation, strategic plan, and goals updates.

Each department has created three goals and plans to align with the strategic goals. The teaching and learning plan on a page focuses on Goals 1 (Student Growth and Achievement) and Goal 2 (Learning Culture of Equity Engagement and Agency). Their goals will focus on student growth and achievement, a learning culture of equity, engagement, agency, and effective leaders. Student Services also falls under Goals 1 and 2. The special education staff are working to ensure all students meet rigorous academic goals and are constantly searching for new tools and strategies to meet our struggling students. Human Resources focuses on Goal 3 (Professional Culture of Teamwork and Continuous Improvement). The focus goals are collaborative Teachers, ambitious instruction, and effective leaders. Communications and Community Relations and Partnerships departments focus on Goal 4 (Family Engagement and Community Partnerships). Their goals and plans include building strong relationships with families and the community, a new district website, welcome folders to be given to new families, streamlined attendance codes, and much more. Business and Operations focuses on Goal 5 (Effective and Innovative Use of Resources). The business department goals provide a commitment to a more collaborative approach in the budget-building process and more transparency about the district's finances. Facilities and Grounds also focus on Goal 5. They will soon meet with the Facilities Committee to review the priority list for summer 2026 construction. School Safety is their top priority, and they have developed an in-house monthly safety

meeting and audit for each building. Technology will also focus on Goal 5. The Technology Steering Committee has finalized and published a District 33 Artificial Intelligence guideline, and staff training will begin soon. The Tech Titans club has been training to perform in-house repairs on student devices, exposing them to a possible career path in Information Technology.

Overall, the pulse survey results show improvements in several areas. Building principals will share their goals and plans at the February 20, 2025 board meeting.

**E.T.A.W.C. STATEMENT**

No E.T.A.W.C statement at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment at this time.

**APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Banasiak, second by Garcia, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Approve Current Expenditures

...approved the list of bills dated January 27, 2025, through February 6, 2025, in the amount of \$280,190.60;

Approve Imprest

...approved Imprest account from December 31, 2024, to January 31, 2025, in the amount of \$300;

Approve Personnel Items

...approve the personnel report as follows:

0 Administration:

2 Certified: Lucy Toledo, Dual Language Teacher at Gary, effective February 1, 2025; Tonya Bontrager, School Psychologist at Pioneer Preschool, effective 2025-2026 School Year;

2 Classified: Eva Barajas, Paraprofessional at Pioneer Preschool, effective February 1, 2025; Irma Gutierrez, Paraprofessional at Indian Knoll, effective February 1, 2025;

1 Resignations: Sherri Massa, Director of Student Services at ESC, effective June 30, 2025;

0 Retirements:

0 Leave:

On roll call, the following members voted aye: Banasiak, Garcia, Balgeman, Doyle, McLean, and Hernandez. Nays: None.

Motion carried: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

**DISCUSSION OF NEW / ONGOING BUSINESS WITH POSSIBLE ACTION**

Finance/Facilities

Karen Apostoli, Executive Director of Business and Operations, reported that the district has received \$44,696.79 in Private Facility Tuition; \$2,075.75 in State Free Lunch & Breakfast; \$172,137.06 in Transportation - Regular & Vocational; \$155,981.63 in Transportation - Special Education; \$101,704.00 in IDEA Flow Through; \$3,629.00 in IDEA PreK; \$169,477.64 in National School Lunch Program; \$63,842.98 in School Breakfast Program; \$47,818.00 in Stronger Connections; \$81,774.00 in Title I Low Income; \$16,606.00 in Title II

Teacher Quality; \$62,308.00 in Title III Lang Inst Prog-Limite Eng LIPLEP; \$31,141.00 in Title IV - 21st Century Comm Learning Centers; \$12,406.00 in Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrich; and \$958.00 Other Federal Programs since the last board meeting.

#### Staffing Proposal

The Board received information about adding five reading interventionists (one at each elementary school). The Board will review the information and vote at the February 20, 2025, board meeting.

#### Staff/Student iPads and Staff Laptops

The Board received the technology lifecycle replacement plan and recommendation to lease new iPads for students and teachers and replace all certified staff laptops with MacBooks. The Board will review the information and vote at the February 20, 2025, board meeting.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### Administrator Benefits

Motioned by McLean, seconded by Banasiak to approve the revised Administrator Benefits Package. The revised package reflects revisions on vacation days to become use it or lose it, vacation rollovers to be eliminated, retirement stipends, and insurance for retirees up to age 65. On roll call, the following members voted aye: McLean Banasiak, Garcia, Hernandez, Balgeman, and Doyle. Nays: None. Motion carried: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

#### Family Liaison Compensation

Motioned by Hernandez, seconded by Garcia to approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the Support Staff Association leadership, stating that newly employed Family Liaison and Family Engagement Specialist will be paid a starting salary of \$35 per hour. No current Family Liaison or Family Engagement Specialist will be paid less than \$35.50 per hour, effective January 1, 2025. On roll call, the following members voted aye: Hernandez, Garcia, McLean, Doyle, Banasiak, and Balgeman. Nays: None. Motion carried: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

#### New security camera software

Motioned by Banasiak, seconded by Garcia to approve upgrading the surveillance system software (IPVMS). On roll call, the following members voted aye: Banasiak, Garcia, Hernandez, McLean, Doyle, and Balgeman. Nays: None. Motion carried: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

#### Stipend/Extra Duty Compensation

Motioned by McLean, seconded by Garcia to approve an updated schedule for stipend and extra duty payments, which will be three times per year, with the exception of internal substituting, Beyond the Bell, and the Personal Care Differential Stipend for SSA members. Additionally, SSA members who complete extra duties/stipends for the ETAWC Appendix C will receive a \$100 bonus with each of the three(3) trimester payments. On roll call, the following members voted aye: McLean, Garcia, Hernandez, Banasiak, Doyle, and Balgeman. Nays: None. Motion carried: 6 ayes, 0 nays.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

#### Board Book Study

The Board of Education and District administrators discussed chapters 2 and 3 of their book study. Chapters 4 and 5 will be reviewed at the February 20, 2025 board meeting.



call, the following members voted aye: McLean, Banasiak, Balgeman, Doyle, Garcia, and Hernandez.

Nays: None. Motion carried: 5 ayes, 0 nays.

**ROLL CALL**

On roll call at 8:42 p.m., the following members were present: Balgeman, Banasiak, Doyle, McLean, Garcia, and Hernandez.

Absent: Gills

**ALSO PRESENT**

Kristina Davis, Superintendent, and Karen Apostoli, Director of Business and Operations.

**Out of Closed Session**

Motion by McLean, seconded by Banasiak, to reconvene to open session at 9:30 p.m. The President took a voice vote and declared the motion passed.

**ACTION ITEMS FOLLOWING  
CLOSED SESSION**

**Approve Closed Session Minutes**

Motion by McLean, seconded by Banasiak, to approve closed session minutes as read. The President took a voice vote and declared the motion passed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by McLean, seconded by Banasiak, to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 p.m. The President took a voice vote and declared the motion passed.

---

President, Rita Balgeman

---

Secretary, Tom Doyle