

**Board of Education  
Worth School District 127  
Worth Elementary**

**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting  
February 8, 2023**

**Administrators:**

Dr. Mark Fleming, Superintendent  
Cindy Dykas, Assistant Superintendent, Business Manager/CSBO  
Linda Esposito, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Dr. Sinead Chambers, Director of Special Education  
Jason Tooth, Worth Junior High Principal  
Melissa Wills, Assistant Principal, WJH  
Maureen Eichstaedt, Principal, Worth Elementary  
Elizabeth D'Andrea, Assistant Principal, Worth Elementary  
Ashley Toms, Principal, Worthwoods  
Robert Jeffers, Director of Technology  
David Dvorchak, Director of Facilities and Grounds

**Board Recording Secretary**

Jill Moore

**Others Present**

Bethanne Lode - Marrs-Meyer Auxiliary  
Lea Morsovillo - Marrs-Meyer Auxiliary  
Elizabeth Hennessy - Raymond James  
Robert O'Shaughnessy - Worth Park District  
Melissa Nagel - Worth Park District  
Jeff Pagano, WW  
JoAnne Albrecht - WEA/WJH  
Michelle Okrzesik - WE  
Kristian Cozzolino - WE  
Lisa Strzempa - WE  
Mary Zirngibl - WE  
Alyssa Zirngible - WE  
Heather Kozik - WJH  
Liz Bandola - WJH/WE  
Kathryn DeRuiter - WJH  
Megan Dresden

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Drew Sernus, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, David Blanks, Missy Sinclair

Michelle Egan was not present at the time of roll call at 6:00 p.m. She entered closed session at 6:28 p.m.

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President, Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance

**2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**A. MARR-MEYER AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT #991 - WORTH**

Dr. Fleming opened by introducing Bethanne Lode and Lea Morsovillo from the Marrs-Meyer Auxiliary to share some exciting news for the district. They stated that Officer Cozzi came to them with some needs and donated a \$4,000 check that will help children in the school district. They stated that they are so happy to see staff posting pictures of the items that were purchased with the gift cards that were donated in December. They stated they love hearing from staff and the community and that the American Legion is open to the public and to stop by anytime on Fridays or Saturdays as there is always something going on. Dr. Fleming extended his appreciation and on behalf of everyone at the district they are extremely grateful for their donations.

### B. 2023/2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Dr. Fleming stated he wanted to highlight the 2023/2024 draft school calendar that the Board will be taking action on this evening. We are kind of making history as we've added early dismissal days which allows students to go home early and staff will state to work on professional development, school improvement plans and MTSS planning. Worth Junior High will dismiss at 1:20 and Worth Elementary and Worthwoods will dismiss at 1:30 p.m. The calendar follows the same winter and spring break as District 218 and 230. Teacher Institute will take place on March 19 due to it being an election day and our district is a polling facility. Early dismissal days are in the following months:

- October 6
- October 31
- December 8
- December 22 - This day is not for school improvement and is in the WEA contract where students and staff go home early.
- February
- February
- April 25
- May 24

### C. KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Dr. Fleming stated that if anyone knows any families that have children starting kindergarten and are interested in our program. to please contact Christine Morrone. She can get them registered as soon as possible and we can plan appropriately for numbers in the fall.

### D. FINANCE STRATEGIES FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF BUILDING ADDITIONS/FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN

Dr. Fleming shared the PowerPoint presentation that was shown at the Committee of the Whole Meeting and wanted to briefly touch on some of those highlights. Reflecting on the years of hard work starting back in 2012. Dr. Fleming shared the the renovation of Worthwoods that opened in the summer of 2020; the additions to Worth Elementary that included a new music room, art room, stem lab and library, multipurpose room, breakout rooms, classrooms. Dr. Fleming stated that if this should move forward now or tabled for later, he'd like them to consider the parity of the district with Worth Elementary having the art classroom, stem lab, music room and multipurpose room, do we want that for Worthwoods what would the timing be. The Worth Junior is in need of a conference room, more space with more breakout rooms. We also discussed expanding learning opportunities for full day kindergarten and it was eye opening when I received the survey results from Vanessa Kinder that out of the 53 districts in South Cook County (47 responded); 44 of those districts have all-day kindergarten and three do not. Worth School District was one of the three.

We discussed the possibility of breaking ground in the spring of 2024 with a completion day of July 2025; discussed the reason for extending the debt for brick and mortar that lasts for years to come and not be used for operational costs; the costs for adding additional staff; adding a marquee to Worth Junior High.

Dr. Fleming introduced Elizabeth Hennessy to share a PowerPoint Presentation to propose another option based on some questions and concerns that Board addressed at the Committee of the whole Meeting on January 25.

- At its meeting on January 25, the Board discussed funding the projects without increasing debt service property taxes beyond the current payment schedule.
- the District also discussed paying back the debt sooner than 20 years.
- The District also would like to make sure its current financial health is maintained in case of revenue shortfalls or additional capital needs in the future.
- The District does continue to receive Evidence Based Funding payments which could help offset an tax increase from bonds in the future.

Mrs. Hennessy stated the following:

- For tax payers, it would not be an increase it would just be an extension paying the exact same amount that they have paid for.

Mrs. Hennessy took time for questions and answers from the Board of Education.

### Proposed Capital Projects:

Worthwoods Elementary School - Estimated Construction Costs: \$6.2 - \$8.3MM

Worth Junior High - Estimated Construction Costs: \$2.7 - \$3.6MM

Total Estimated Costs: \$9 - \$12MM

### Draft Timeline:

February 8, 2023 Board Meeting: Discuss financing plan and timeline

March 8, 2023 Board Meeting: Approve resolution of intent to issue working cash fund bonds

March 13, 2023 Publish Notice of Intent in local newspaper beginning 30-day petition period and Notice of public Hearing

April 12, 2023 Board Meeting: Hold public hearing on the issuance of working cash fund bonds

May 10, 2023 Board Meeting: Approve parameters resolution on the issuance of bonds subject to final approval of Board President and Superintendent and CSBO

May - September 2023: Issue bonds assuming stable market conditions and capital spending schedule is finalized  
On or about September 15, 2023: Close bond issue, receive bond proceeds

#### E. FOIA REQUESTS

Dr. Fleming stated that since the last Board Meeting the district has received two FOIA requests and they have been responded to in a timely manner.

### 3. BUSINESS MANAGER

#### A. FOOD SERVICE RFP

1. First bid document in 2014
  - Five year re-bid required in 2019
  - State gave us a one-year exemption to 2020
2. Started new 5 year bid in December 2019
  - Released the bid in February 2020
- Withdrew bid document in April 2020 due to COVID
3. ISBE granted one year extensions
  - First extension granted 2020-2021 – Worth accepted
  - Another extension for 2021-2022 – Worth accepted
  - Another extension for 2022-2023 – Worth accepted
  - Another extension for 2023-2024 – Worth rejected
4. The General Assembly passed legislation to allow an RFP OR a Bid
  - RFP = Request for Proposal
  - Price is not the only factor, as it is in the Bid Process
  - Price is 35% of the total requirement, with 65% other criteria including quality of food
5. RFP for Food Service Management Company using template from ISBE, Child Nutrition Program
  - 116 page document was sent to ISBE (Nutrition Dept) on 2-2-23
  - They require a 30 day review period before release
  - Plan to release on 3-6-23
  - Required to post for 45 days before deadline
  - Will review at the end of April, and bring the recommendation to the board in May

#### Milk Renewal with CloverLeaf

1. Bid/RFP not required because annual spend is well under \$150,000 threshold
2. Costs for 2023-2024 are increasing, as every grocery expense has increased
3. Each half pint will be about \$.30 each
4. All our milk expenses are covered with our per meal reimbursement from the National School Lunch Program

#### B. Student Fees

1. All regular fees remain the same
2. Optional Fees increasing:
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade graduation fee is \$80 (was between \$65 and 75 in past years)
    - Graduation fee includes:
      - For 2022-2023, graduation fee notice is being sent to families next week
      - For 2023-2024, will assess graduation fee at time of registration
        - This will take the problem of money being collected at the building out of the equation
  - Gym Suit fee increasing to \$20 (was \$15)
    - Optional fee, and can purchase only one piece if needed for \$10
  - Band fee
    - Grade 5 staying the same at \$30
    - Grades 6-8 increasing to \$50 (was \$30)
      - Includes a polo shirt, conference registration fees and bus costs for special events

#### School Maintenance Project Grant FY23

1. The board gave approval to move forward with the grant back in Sept 2022.

2. This grant was written for exterior door and frame replacement, under safety and security
3. The grant was approved in December 2022
4. We already received the \$50,000 check from the State of Illinois
5. Work will go to bid on Monday Feb 13<sup>th</sup>
6. Construction will occur over the summer. Since we already received the funding, we just submit reports as expenditures occur.

#### **South Suburban School Business Officials "Mini-Grant"**

1. Each year the SSSBO group offers our educators an opportunity to apply for a Mini Grant to further promote their educational initiatives in the classroom
2. This year the group will be awarding four grants of \$2,500 each, for a total of \$10,000 in grants
3. On behalf of Worth School District 127, Heather Kozik submitted a grant for the JH STEM Lab
4. Her application was selected yesterday as one of the four winners
5. Congratulations to Heather Kozik!

#### **4. DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

##### **A. WORTH JUNIOR HIGH STEM LAB**

Heather Kozik opened by sharing projects per grade broken down by 6th, 7th and 8th grade that covered TinkerCad and 3D printing projects. Mrs. Kozik shared some brief videos of students putting robots down the halls.

##### **B. REVISIONS TO PARENT STUDENT HANDBOOK**

When we overhauled and created the P/S Handbook for school year 2022-2023, we followed the Illinois Principals Association Model Student Handbook. The procedures in this handbook are attorney drafted and fully aligned with PRESS, the Illinois Association of School Board's school district policy service as well as state, federal, and case law that change on a frequent basis.

I met with the P/S Handbook last week to review the handbook update recommendations. We recommend that you approve the three updates I have shared with you regarding:

- Fees, Fines, and Charges; Waiver of Student Fees
- Accelerated Placement
- Student Absences

The text that is in red and stricken through is what has been deleted. The text that is in blue is new wording.

Dr. Fleming stated that the Parent/Student Handbook was completely updated and the Board took action in June of 2022.

Mrs. Esposito took time for questions and answers regarding Accelerated Placement Program and stated that it is open to all students and not just gifted students.

#### **5. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Mrs. Dresden: Student Fees/Graduation Costs/Board Bills Payable Clarification/Questions regarding snow removal

Mr. O'Shaughnessy/Mrs. Nagel - Worth Park District: Worth Park District Referendum - April 4 Ballot

#### **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

##### **Action (Consent): A. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

##### **Action (Consent): B. BOARD BILLS PAYABLE**

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$515,411.16 (EDUCATIONAL); \$208,319.58 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); and \$14,472.99 (TRANSPORTATION) for a total of \$738,203.73."

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

##### **Action (Consent): C. PAYROLL SUMMARY**

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Payroll Summary for the Education Fund in the amount of \$727,271.52, the Building Fund in the amount of \$46,630.08, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of \$46,361.10."

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Action (Consent): D. RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - ENAS JARRAR - PART TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 8, 2023

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Action (Consent): E. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - ANGELICA VELASQUEZ - PART-TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 29, 2022

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Action (Consent): F. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - HEATHER KUNZ - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 2023

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Action (Consent): G. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - SENDY MALDONADO - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 2023

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Action (Consent): H. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - GABRIELLA HASKINS - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 2023

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

"Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Action (Consent): I. PRESS PLUS POLICY #110 - SECOND READ & ADOPTION

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

## **7. MOTIONS**

Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 11, 2023 regular meeting."

Motion by David Blanks, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Missy Sinclair

Abstain: Vince Flores

Action: B. CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 11, 2023 closed session meeting."

Motion by David Blanks, second by Meghan Sisk.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Missy Sinclair

Abstain: Vince Flores

Action: C. FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 25, 2023 Finance Committee of the Whole meeting."

Motion by David Blanks, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

**Action: D. CLOVER LEAF MILK CONTRACT**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the contract with CloverLeaf Farms Distributors for milk delivery for the 2023/2024 school year."

Motion by Missy Sinclair, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

**Action: E. 2023/2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the calendar for the 2023/2024 school year".

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

**Action: F. STUDENT FEES**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the student fees for the 2023/2024 school year".

This motion was tabled and a vote was not taken. The Board directed the Superintendent to bring the motion back at the next meeting with more details.

Motion by Drew Sernus, second by Vince Flores.

**Action: G. PARENT STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023/2024**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Parent Student Handbook for the 2023/2024 School Year."

Motion by Missy Sinclair, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

**8. BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTION AND/OR REPORTS/REQUESTS**

Board Members engaged in conversation and shared different scenarios regarding the budget, evidence based funding, referendums, timelines and schedules, and that this new scenario that Mrs. Hennessy shared this evening will not raise taxes in Worth.

Board Members discussed information regarding the upcoming Worth Park District Referendum on April 14, 2023. Board Member shared that there is a Worth Park District Meeting on March 9, 2023 and he is encouraging everyone to attend. They will talk about the upcoming referendum and share the new projects that they want to do.

**9. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no citizens' remarks.

**10. CLOSED SESSION**

**Action: A. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session at 6:04 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees; collective negotiation matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; 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 as mandated by Section 2.06; and 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 probably or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recording and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting."

Motion by David Blanks, second by Meghan Sisk.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

**Action: B. RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education upon completion of it's discussions in closed session reconvene in public session at 6:47 p.m."

Motion by David Blanks, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Recommended Motion (voice vote): "that the Board of Education motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m."

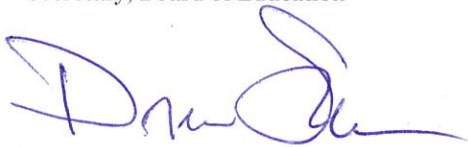
Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,



Meghan Sisk  
Secretary, Board of Education



Drew Sernus  
President, Board of Education