

Board of Education
Worth School District 127

Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting

April 10, 2024 - 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Rosemary Lucas Administration Building
11218 S. Ridgeland Ave, Worth, Illinois

Administrators:

Dr. Mark Fleming, Superintendent
Cindy Dykas, Assistant Superintendent, Business Manager/CSBO
Linda Esposito, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Dr. Sinead Chambers, Director of Student Services
Jason Tooth, Worth Junior High Principal
Ashley Toms Bonnstetter, Principal, Worthwoods Elementary
Elizabeth D'Andrea, Assistant Principal, Worth Elementary
Robert Jeffers, Director of Technology
David Dvorchak, Director of Facilities and Grounds

Board Recording Secretary

Jill Moore

Others Present

Janis Heigl, Consultant
Lori Fenn, Consultant
Stefane Beddard, Consultant
Ginny McClure, WE
Kaitlyn Ebert, WE
Shannon Fisher, WE
Leslie Zator, WW
Deb Burghgraef, WW
Sandy Jager, WJH
JoAnne Albrecht, WJH
Mary Zirngibl, WE
Jeff Pagano, WW
Michelle Okrzesik, WE
Megan Dresden

1. MEETING OPENING

A. CALL TO ORDER

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Drew Sernus, Danette Keeler, Meghan Sisk, Vince Flores, Michelle Egan, David Blanks

Absent: Missy Sinclair

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President, Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance

2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr Fleming stated that online registration opened on Monday April 8, for the new school year and we currently have 170 families that have registered. There will be a Parent Help Night on Monday, April 15, from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. at Worth Junior High for parents/guardians that need assistance with online registering. A translator will be made available for those that will need assistance. Dr. Fleming feels that part of the quick response is because we are waiving fees, excluding band and graduation fees, for all families. The reason we are waiving fees for the next school year is because we currently have approximately 70% of families that meet the threshold to not pay them and that number continues to rise and the district also received the property tax relief grant. There is word on social media that property taxes will go up and that is why fees have been waived; Dr. Fleming stated that is far from being true and it's false information.

A. DECLAMATION TEAM UPDATE

Dr. Fleming introduced Mr. Tooth to give an update on the Declamation Team. Mr. Tooth stated that the Declamation team did a phenomenal job and students worked really hard. Students worked on a number of pieces including some poetry, some comedic sketch, and passionate speeches. Mr. Tooth stated that 9 out of the 11 students moved on to the finals and overall our school earned second place.

B. BAND DIVISION ONE

Mr. Tooth stated that the band competed and it's an intense event and they also did a phenomenal job and earned a Division One Rating, which is the highest rating they could earn. They will be performing again next Thursday, April 18 at the Eisenhower Cooperatives at Shepard.

Mr. Tooth also shared that the Math Team will compete tomorrow, April 11th and we wish them and their coaches all the best in their competition.

C. WORTHWOODS/WORTH JUNIOR HIGH CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Dr. Fleming stated that construction has begun at Worthwoods and Worth Junior High and they are pouring concrete for the foundation. Dr. Fleming spoke to the architect regarding Option One and it looks like it will be over \$350K and more like \$500-\$600K. That would give us a savings of \$300-\$400K if we did not want to do the underwater storm trap. Dr. Fleming stated that he's had conversations with Officer Cozzi for the possibility of proposing a future car lane at Worthwoods in utilizing the gravel road in between the school and homes. That would eliminate some of the traffic there and they are open to that. Dr. Fleming will give everyone an update once we have some solid numbers. Dr. Fleming stated that we have not heard back from Metropolitan Waste Reclamation District (MWRD).

D. FOIA REQUESTS

Dr. Fleming stated that the district has received one FOIA request since the last Board Meeting and the district has responded in a timely manner.

3. BUSINESS MANAGER

A. 2023-2024 AMENDED BUDGET

1. 2023-2024 Amended Budget

- a. Significant changes in the Budget require a formal Budget Amendment
- b. This is the presentation for the Tentative Amended Budget
- c. After this meeting, the Amended Budget will be on display for 30 days. The final adoption of the Amended Budget will take place at the June 5th regular meeting
- d. The primary reasons for creating an FY24 Amended Budget:
 - i. Increase in revenues by \$850,000 from August original budget, relating to:
 1. The award of the Property Tax Relief Grant (we actually see the extra \$1 million in funding this year in Evidence Based Funding receipts from ISBE),
 2. Additional \$275,000 in Federal revenues for grants (Title I, Title II, Title IV)
 3. \$75,000 in refund from prior year's reimbursements (free internet)
 4. Reduction of local revenue of half million \$ related to property taxes (PTRG)
 - ii. Increase in expenditures of nearly \$1.8 million:
 1. Decrease \$250,000 in Ed Fund for consultants, instructional materials/subscriptions
 2. Increase in \$650,000 for Construction costs from last fiscal year with late bills
 3. Reduction of \$150,000 for various reductions of items that won't be purchased this year
 4. Increase in \$600,000 in Debt Service Fund
 - a. New debt payment of \$400,000 in June for the 2023 bond issuance
 - b. \$200,000 cost of issuance for new bonds
 5. Increase in \$800,000 in Capital Projects fund for architect fees (design of project and start of construction administration)
 - a. Overall surplus that was originally projected in August to be \$9.2 million, but has now dropped to \$8.5 million
 - i. Large surplus due to proceeds from Bond sale, which closed in August 2023
 - b. Projected fund balance is now \$24.3 million, down from \$24.9 million
 - i. Again, large fund balance is a result of the bond proceeds.
 - ii. This will level to more normal figures next fiscal year when the bond proceeds are spent down as construction progress happens

B. SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT

- a. Our prior agreement with Alpha Transportation was for years FY22, FY23 and FY24, and the increases were only 3% in each of those 3 years, or 9% in total – our bid timing was perfect!
- b. Most districts paid 11-14% in FY22, 8-12% in FY23, and 6-8% in FY24, or 25-34% over the 3 years!
- c. Proposal for increases are 11% for FY25 and 7% for FY26. They offered one year as well, but it was 15% for FY25.

- d. Our 5-year average is much lower than most districts in our area.

Board Members discussed the possibility of getting a district bus along with the cost and challenges of doing so.

4. DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES

Dr. Chambers shared that April is Autism Awareness Month. Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability among young boys and girls in the United States. The struggles that come to parents is that there is no medical diagnosis for autism and it's very difficult for parents to accept. Most children start to exhibit symptoms at the age of three, however; most children are diagnosed by the age of five. In recent years, there are more Autism centers opening up locally to provide services for children. Some children become non-verbal and don't have the ability to speak at all; one third of children diagnosed with Autism go on to develop seizures and seizure disorder. Dr. Chambers stated that we currently have 25 students in Worth that have been diagnosed with Autism. Dr. Chambers shared a story of a child that was non-verbal and with therapy was able to eventually speak in sentences. Dr. Chambers stated that early diagnosis is important and that Autism research has come a long way.

5. DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

A. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION UPDATE

Gr. K-5 ELA Curriculum Review Committee

- Goal to evaluate, select, and support the implementation of an ELA curriculum resource that is rooted in evidence-based and research-supported educational approaches
- Led by Stefane Beddard - monthly meetings since October
- Book study, Shifting the Balance, to ensure we all had a shared understanding of current best practices, research, and instructional approaches
- Referenced the IL Comprehensive Literacy Plan to gain clarity and direction in prioritizing literacy initiatives
- Set priorities, established criteria, looked at resources, selected 2 to investigate: Great Minds - Wit & Wisdom and Amplify - CKLA (Core Knowledge Language Arts)
- Both were given the highest ratings from the curriculum review organizations EdReports, Knowledge Matters Campaign, and Curate.
- Our next meeting is April 17 and we hope to have a recommendation for the Board in June.

Gr. 6-8 Math Curriculum Review

- Goal to evaluate, select, and support the implementation of a 6-8 Math curriculum that is rooted in evidence-based and research-supported educational approaches.
- Firmly rooted in mathematical rigor, and has a balance of conceptual development, procedural fluency, and real-world application.
- Led by Janis Heigl and Amanda Greene - Started meeting in March
- Set priorities, established criteria, looked at resources, selected 3 to investigate
- Reference EdReports to see which resources meet their Gateway Criteria: Illustrative Math, Carnegie Learning MS Math Solution, and MidSchoolMath.
- Math teachers will do a strand analysis with each resource

The Art of Education University

- Currently exploring this curriculum resource for our Art teachers
- Offers K-12 visual arts curriculum
 - Standards-aligned curriculum materials
 - Standards-aligned lesson plans
 - Videos
 - Assessments
- Professional development - live or on-demand video tutorials
 - Flexible PD based on need and teacher interest
 - Explore topics that spark their interest or curiosity
 - Includes topics such as classroom management, differentiation, organization

Gr. 6-8 SS DBQ Project

- DBQ - Document Based Questions
 - Teaches students how to construct evidence-based responses using their own content knowledge combined with support from several provided resources.
 - The goal is for students to be less concerned with the recall of facts and more engaged in deeper historical inquiry.

- Teachers are using the DBQ Project's 6-Step Method helping them structure lessons to engage students in critical thinking, deep analysis of primary and secondary sources, and evidence-based writing techniques.
"A good way to give all students a taste of a pre-A.P. track by using many of the same skills for document analysis and historical writing." "It is also a great way to practice C.E.R. for our kiddos as they become better equipped writers."

Instructional Coaching

- New coaches have received 1/2 day professional learning every other month led by Stefane Beddard
- Book study, The Impact Cycle, Jim Knight - What instructional coaches should do to foster powerful improvements in teaching
 - Approaches to Coaching, PEERs Goals
 - Coaching Cycle - Identify, Learn, Improve
- District mission, vision, and goals for the instructional coaching program
- Becoming more familiar with district data analysis - FastBridge and IAR
- Jim Knight's on-demand course Instructional Coaching: The First 90 Days

MTSS

Led by IL MTSS Coach Kari Harris, each School Leadership Team recently took a survey, SAM-I (Self-Assessment of MTSS - IL)

- The purpose of the survey was to gather teacher perceptions on our MTSS program with the goal of understanding what's next and where to focus improvement efforts.
- The survey focused on the essential actions and activities for MTSS fidelity of implementation
 - Developing **Leadership** for implementation
 - Building the **Capacity and Infrastructure** necessary to support implementation
 - Building **Communication and Collaboration** structures
 - The use of **Data-Based Problem-Solving** to make educational decisions
 - Implementing a three-**Tiered Intervention**/instruction model
 - **Data-Evaluation** - staff need to understand and have access to data sources

3-step process:

- Step 1: Each SLT member took the survey independently.
- Step 2: Kari guided us through each question to find a consensus score.
- Step 3: Kari presented the principals with a slide deck of the results and met with the teams to interpret the results.
 - At our next Institute Day, we are going to discuss the overall results as a district, then the principals will meet with their SLT's to create an action plan that can be integrated into their school improvement plan.

ED Camp:

- June 10-21 @ Worth Elementary
- 43 staff members have signed up to participate
- Utilize instructional coaches and AP teacher in the capacity of their new roles
- Student registration opened April 8 and will close May 10. In 3 days, we have had 121 students sign up.
- Continue this year's school improvement goals focusing on
 - Assessment, intervention, small group work, progress monitoring, and supporting ML student (ALL students) with best practices
 - Math - focus on story problems
 - ELA - focus on phonics and fluency

B. INTERVENTION WINTER BENCHMARK REPORT

Mrs. Esposito introduced the Interventionist Team to give an update on students' progress. Staff members included: Leslie Zator, Shannon Fisher, Kaitlyn Ebert, Ginny McClure, Deb Burghgraef, and Sandy Jager. The team thanked the Board of Education, Administrators, and Consultants for all their support. The team shared a PowerPoint presentation and highlighted the following:

What do these Assessments Measure:

Reading:

- Early Reading K-1
 - Early readiness skills -alphabetic principle, fluency, PA
- Areading 2-8 (Computer Adaptive Test)
 - Phonics, Vocabulary, Comprehension
 - Orthography, Morphology, Vocabulary, Comprehension
- Auto Reading 4-8

- Encoding, vocabulary
- Decoding, morphology
- CBM 1-8
 - Fluency, print concepts, phonics

Math:

- Early Math K-1
 - Numeracy, Cardinality, Sequencing, Subitizing
- Amath 2-8 (CAT)
 - Based on recommendations from CCSS and National Math Panel
 - Follows CCSS
- CBM Math Automaticity 2-8
 - Fluency of basic facts and operations
 - Timed

Fall to Winter FastBridge Data 2023-2024.

• InResolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): B. BOARD BILLS PAYABLE

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$154,182.09 (EDUCATIONAL); \$93,608.16 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); \$51,760.39 (TRANSPORTATION); and (CAPITAL PROJECTS) \$704,138.94 for a total of \$1,003,689.58."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, 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 \$741,590.19, the Building Fund in the amount of \$53,454.93, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of \$45,769.47."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): D. RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - STEPHEN NEUHAUS - PART-TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2024.

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): E. RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - MARY FLORES - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE APRIL 30, 2024.

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): F. RESIGNATION OF CERTIFIED STAFF - RETIREMENT - JILL ENGEL - WORTH JUNIOR HIGH - EFFECTIVE MAY 29, 2024.

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): G. RESIGNATION OF CERTIFIED STAFF - RETIREMENT - ANDIE BERTHOLD - WORTH ELEMENTARY - EFFECTIVE MAY 29, 2024.

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): H. RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - ANASTASIA JONAS - PERMANENT SUBSTITUTE - EFFECTIVE MAY 29, 2024.

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): I. RESIGNATION OF CERTIFIED STAFF - ALVIA ALDAPE - SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER - EFFECTIVE FOR THE 2024/2025 SCHOOL YEAR

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): J. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - NERMINE KULAFOVSKI - STUDENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT - ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER - EFFECTIVE APRIL 15, 2024.

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): K. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - AMY IBELL - PARAPROFESSIONAL - EFFECTIVE FOR THE 2024/2025 SCHOOL YEAR

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

8. MOTIONS

Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the March 13, 2024 regular meeting."

Motion by David Blanks, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Abstain: Danette Keeler

Action: B. CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the March 13, 2024 closed session meeting."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Abstain: Danette Keeler

Action: C. SPECIAL BOARD MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the April 3, 2024 Special Board Meeting."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Danette Keeler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: D. SPECIAL CLOSED SESSION MINUTES #1

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the April 3, 2024 Special Closed session #1 meeting."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: E. SPECIAL CLOSED SESSION MINUTES #2

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the April 3, 2024 Special Closed session #2 meeting."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: F. APPROVAL OF LEASE AGREEMENT WITH R.I.S.E.

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the resolution authorizing a lease with the Governing Board of South Cook Intermediate Service Center for the 2024-2025 School Year."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Meghan Sisk.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: G. APPROVAL OF LEASE AGREEMENT WITH EISENHOWER COOPERATIVE

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the resolution authorizing a lease with the Eisenhower Cooperative for the 2024-2025 School Year."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Danette Keeler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: H. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH ALPHA BUS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2024-25 AND 2025-26

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the contract with Alpha School Bus Company, Inc. for special education transportation in the 2024 -2025 and 2025 - 2026 school years."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: I. APPROVAL OF SSBC REPRESENTATIVE

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education appoint Cynthia Dykas, Representative, and, as Alternate Representative, Dr. Mark T. Fleming, to represent Worth School District 127 in the South Suburban Benefit Cooperative Board of Directors for fiscal year 2024-2025".

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

9. BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTION AND/OR REPORTS/REQUESTS

- Board Member stated that she will be unable to attend the May 8, 2024 Board of Education Meeting.
- Board Member thanked and applauded the Intervention team for all their efforts and hard work in working with our students.

10. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA ITEMS

There were no Citizens' Remarks

11. CLOSED SESSION

Action: A. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session at 7:35 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

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 8:09 p.m."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

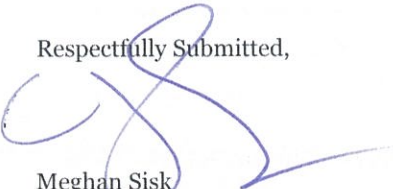
12. ADJOURNMENT

Recommended Motion (voice vote): "that the Board of Education motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m."


Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,



Meghan Sisk
Secretary, Board of Education



Drew Sernus
President, Board of Education