

**Board of Education  
Worth School District 127  
Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting  
September 18, 2024  
Dr. Rosemary Lucas Administration Building  
11218 S. Ridgeland Ave, Worth, Illinois**

**Administrators:**

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

**Board Recording Secretary**

Jill Moore

**Others Present**

John Weidner, II  
Peter Leggett  
Ginny McClure, WEA  
Kelly Gansauer, WEA  
Shannon Fisher, WEA  
Leslie Zator, WEA  
Michelle Okrzesik, WEA  
Alyssa Zirngibl  
Mary Zirngibl  
Sherry Stewart  
Jeff Pagano, WW  
Lisa Strzempa, WE  
Elizabeth Bandola, WE

**1. MEETING OPENING**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL**

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

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President, Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance

**2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**A. WELCOME NEW STAFF FOR THE 2024/2025 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dr. Fleming welcomed new staff in attendance at the meeting this evening:

Sherry Stewart - 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher, Worth Junior High

Peter Leggett - Permanent Sub, Physical Education (2x week)

John Weidner - 3rd Grade, Worth Elementary Elementary

Board of Education welcomed all new staff members to the district.

**B. WORTH EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (WEA) NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

Dr. Fleming introduced the new Worth Education Association Members:

Co-Presidents: Shannon Fisher, Michelle Okrzesik

Vice President: Kelly Gansauer

Treasurer: Ginny McClure

Secretary: Leslie Zator

#### WEA Building Representatives:

Worth Junior High: Sara Catt

Worthwoods Elementary: Dawn Young

Worth Elementary: Lisa Strzempa

Co-President, Shannon Fisher shared some history over the years and how the association has grown and changed since being established in 1966.

#### Shared Vision Moving forward:

- Expansion of Buildings, learning spaces, and amenities that enhance student learning.
- Development of curriculum and resources that continue student achievement.
- Interventionists for all buildings, Coaches and an Advanced Placement Instructor.

#### C. CONSTRUCTION UPDATE AT WORTHWOODS/WORTH JUNIOR HIGH

Dr. Fleming shared a construction update at Worthwoods and Worth Junior High:

Worthwoods - The west addition now has concrete footings.

Worth Junior High - Has concrete slabs and they are preparing for steel to come in.

Both projects are currently a little behind, but with the current schedule, there's been extra time allotted. The construction schedule will be revised and both projects still have a completion date of August, 2025.

#### D. METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT (MWRD) UPDATE

Dr. Fleming stated that the underground water storage that we have to put in parking lot at Worthwoods, the district will have to pay to have a pump installed into that area to pump water out into the grass field. If we get a huge storm, the runoff from the rooftop of the building and parking lot will go into the underground water storage. We have to let that sit there until the rain is done and then the district would have to pay for it to be pumped out until MWRD comes through. Dr. Fleming expressed how this process has been frustrating and that we still do not have the appraisal. Dr. Fleming shared that he spoke with Mayor Werner and she was going to share this at the conference of mayors meeting to see if she could give the district an update.

#### E. RESOLUTION APPOINTING TRUSTEE OF SCHOOLS - (9. B.)

Dr. Fleming stated that, currently, School Township Treasurer's offices only exist in Cook County (no other county in Illinois). Over the years, many Towns have voted to abolish their School Township Treasurer's offices by public ballot. In many instances, there is very little oversight of Township Treasurer's Offices, and many have been abolished over the years after fraud and/or theft were discovered. Worth School District 127 feeds into the Worth Township School Treasurer's Office, which still exists.

In April 2024, there was a bill (HB305) proposed by a northern Cook County congresswoman who was connected in the past to the Northbrook Township School Treasurer's Office and instrumental in abolishing that office. Without HB305, exiting a Township Treasurer's office was nearly impossible. However, with the passage of HB305, school districts may now leave the township treasurer's office through an official procedure. However, many school districts that are part of a well-run treasurer's office will likely stay with their existing treasurer's office and now have a stronger voice as a member of the township treasurer's "Trustees of Schools." The "Trustees of Schools" used to be a three-person board of trustees elected by the local township. These trustees likely had little to no knowledge of how a school treasurer's office should be operated.

Worth School District 127, as a member district of the Worth Township School Treasurer's Office, must appoint an employee or board member to the Worth Township School Treasurer's Office Board of Trustees. As Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, Mrs. Cindy Dykas knows the office and is familiar with the staff. I recommend her as the district's representative to the newly formed Trustees of Schools board.

#### F. FOIA REQUESTS

Dr. Fleming stated that the district received six (6) FOIA Requests since the last Board Meeting and they were all responded to in a timely manner.

#### G. SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE RECOGNITION AWARD

*Dr. Fleming discussed the School Board Governance Recognition right after the introductions of the new WEA Members (2.B).*

Dr. Fleming shared that the Board of Education has received the School Board Governance Recognition Award. Dr. Fleming stated that our district is one of 46 different Illinois Association of School Boards for 2024 receiving this designation. The recognition is designed to acknowledge those school boards that have engaged in activities and

model behaviors that lead to excellence of local school governance in support of following public education. We commend you for your hard work and dedication as a school board. Details regarding the delivery of the plaque are forthcoming and the Board will receive recognition for this award at the spring South Cook Divisional Meeting.

*The Board of Education took a brief recess to meet new staff.*

### **3. BUSINESS MANAGER**

No Report.

### **4. DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES**

No Report.

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

No Report.

### **6. BUDGET PRESENTATION 2024/2025**

Dr. Fleming shared the final budget items and stated that the following was discussed at the detailed tentative budget presentation at the August 14, 2024 Board Meeting:

- The overall fund totals had planned a \$11 million net loss for the budget year.
- This large loss is directly attributable to the ongoing construction project.
- In FY24, the district recognized a net gain of nearly \$10 million due to the bond sale proceeds. The two-year combined loss is just \$1 million.
- A few line items were slightly changed within the final budget; the overall net loss was reduced by \$100,000 from what was presented for the tentative budget.
- Lastly, as required, fund balances are required to be disclosed during the budget meeting where the public hearing is held. These fund balances are listed each month in Board Docs for the public to view.

#### **Action, Public Hearing: A. CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY25 BUDGET**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed budget for 2024-2025, which has been on file in accordance with the requirements of the School Code of Illinois."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

- Dr. Fleming stated that the tentative budget was presented at the August 14th Board Meeting.
- After the tentative budget is presented, the law requires the District to provide notice to the public. We complied with the law by posting the budget notice in the newspaper on Friday, Aug. 16<sup>th</sup> (at least 30 days prior to this hearing).
- We then had the budget on display for more than 30 days, as required by law.
- If anyone comes to inspect the budget, they are required to sign in.
- No one came to inspect the budget.

The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public the opportunity to provide comment or ask questions. The Public Hearing on the FY25 Budget was started and hearing no comments, Dr. Fleming recommended the Public Hearing be closed.

#### **Action, Public Hearing: B. CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY25 BUDGET**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education close the public hearing and return to regular session."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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

There were no Citizens' Remarks.

## **8. 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 presented."

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$239,704.68 (EDUCATIONAL); \$227,270.49 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); \$6,098.64 (TRANSPORTATION); and \$1,519,328.68 (CAPITAL PROJECTS) for a total of \$1,992,402.49."

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### 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 \$425,607.13, the Building Fund in the amount of \$56,489.46, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of \$36,692.53."

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### Action (Consent): D. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - AYAH ALFAWAQA - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE AUGUST 23, 2024

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### Action (Consent): E. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - KELLY COSTELLO - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### Action (Consent): F. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - KRISTINA BRENNER - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 4, 2024

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): G. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - ALFRED OGDEN - PART-TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): H. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - ARACELI MAGANA-GUERRERO - PART-TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): I. EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED STAFF - KUJTESA GASHI - PERMANENT SUBSTITUTE - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): J. EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED STAFF - PETER LEGGETT - PERMANENT SUBSTITUTE - EFFECTIVE AUGUST 21, 2024

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): K. CALL LIST OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): L. 2024-2025 COMPENSATION FOR IMRF EMPLOYEES

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): M. FY 2024 EIS ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER SALARY AND BENEFITS REPORT

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): N. SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF BOARD POLICY #115

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**9. MOTIONS**

Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the August 14, 2024 regular meeting."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: B. RESOLUTION APPOINTING TRUSTEE OF SCHOOLS

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Resolution Appointing Cindy Dykas as Trustee of Schools for Worth School District Number #127, to serve with the Worth Township Trustees of Schools."

Motion by Missy Sinclair, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: C. ADOPTION OF FY25 BUDGET

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the 2024-2025 Budget according to the Resolution for Worth School District 127."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Danette Keeler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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

Dr. Fleming stated that all Board Members will need to inform Jill Moore if they would like to attend the South Cook Divisional Meeting that will be held on October 3, 2024 at Tinley Park High School.

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

There were no Citizens' Remarks.

**12. CLOSED SESSION**

Action: A. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session at 6:58 p.m. to discuss security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property."

Motion by Drew Sernus, second by Danette Keeler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, 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 7:25 p.m."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

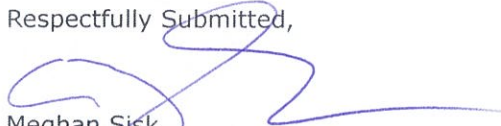
**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Recommended Motion (voice vote): "that the Board of Education motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m."

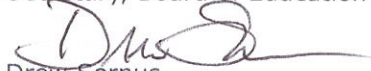
Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,



Meghan Sisk  
Secretary, Board of Education



Drew Sernus  
President, Board of Education