

Board of Education
Worth School District 127
Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting
January 15, 2025
Dr. Rosemary Lucas Administration Building
11218 S. Ridgeland Ave, Worth, Illinois

Administrators:

Dr. Mark T. Fleming, Superintendent
Cindy Dykas, Assistant Superintendent, Business Manager/CSBO
Dr. Sinead Chambers, Director of Student Services
Dr. Maureen Eichstaedt, Assistant 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
Allyse Koehler, Assistant Principal, Worth Elementary & Worthwoods Elementary

Board Recording Secretary

Jill Moore

Others Present

Stefane Beddard, Consultant
Buthiana Shabaneh, Instructional Coach
Michelle Okrzesik, WE
Kathy Wanatowicz
Alyssa Boril, WJH
Bree Bosco, Instructional Coach
Shannon Fisher, WE
Leslie Zator, WW
Lisa Strzempa, WE
Mary Zirngibl, WE
Alyssa Zirngibl, WE
Jeff Pagano, WW
Leslie Blanks
Kaitlyn Blanks

1. MEETING OPENING

A. CALL TO ORDER

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

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

Michelle Egan arrived at 6:37 p.m.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President, Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance

2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. WORTHWOODS/WORTH JUNIOR HIGH CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Dr. Fleming stated that construction at both buildings is coming along well in spite of some very cold days. We anticipate an increase in production as we head into a bit warmer weather.

B. WORTH PARENT ORGANIZATION (WPO) - COOKIES AND CANVAS - JANUARY 28, 2025

Dr. Fleming stated that the Cookies and Canvas event is scheduled for January 28, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. at Worth Elementary in multipurpose room. Due to the increased number of students and families, registration is closed and we are very excited about this tremendous turnout.

C. FOIA REQUESTS

Dr. Fleming stated that the district has received two FOIA Requests and they have been responded to in a timely manner.

Dr. Fleming announced that the South Cook Division Meeting will be held on March 13, 2025, in Alsip at the Doubletree Hotel. The Board will be recognized and will receive the Board Governance Award at that meeting which will begin with dinner at 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Fleming announced that every Board Member received a copy of the upcoming Fishing Club schedule with the first one scheduled for March 29, 2025.

3. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS SERVICES

A. RECAPTURE LEVY

- a. The Property Tax Code (35 ILCS 200/18-233) states that the taxing district levy shall be increased by a prior year adjustment whenever an assessment decrease is granted due to the issuance of a certificate of error, tax payer refund, or Property Tax Appeal Board results in a refund.
- b. Cook County Treasurer certified the total refunds paid by the district in the past 12 months was \$140,682 (about \$2,000 more than the year prior), which, without this resolution, would automatically be added to our levy that was filed in December 2024.
- c. By filing this resolution, the refund total \$140,682 is abated and the Levy originally filed in December reduced by this amount, thus adjusting the final 2024 levy.
- d. A resolution must be passed each year with the new amount detailed.
- e. This resolution is a separate motion, Item B, later in the agenda.

B. PROPERTY TAX RELIEF GRANT - FY25 & FY26

- a. For Property Tax Years 2023 and 2024, the taxes haven been abated in the amount of \$1,054,641 each year. These savings are passed on to the community so the average homeowner gets approximately \$240 annual reduction from their tax bill.
- b. The District is then eligible for a grant in the amount of \$1,012,834 per year which will be received from Evidence Based Funding through ISBE
- c. The District is on the list of eligible districts for FY25, causing a "double benefit" in Tax Year 2024 (FY25)!
 - i. We will get the official word if we are awarded this consecutive year of PTRG by Tuesday, January 28th.
 - ii. If we receive the award, the next steps are filing tax abatements for Property Tax Years 2024 and 2025 in the amount of \$1,051,972
 - iii. The District is then eligible for a grant in the amount of \$1,009,766 per year which will be received from Evidence Based Funding through ISBE, starting this spring.
 - iv. The resolution to approve this grant will be in the February motions, then the paperwork will be filed with the Cook County Clerk and ISBE's State Funding and Forecasting Dept.
 - v. For one tax year (2024) the total tax abatement will be \$2,106,613

4. DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES

No Report

5. DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Linda Esposito shared that Stefane Beddard, our Consultant, was here at the meeting this evening and appreciated her attendance and hard work she is doing to support our teachers.

A. INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES

Meet the Coaches: Bree Bosco; Alyssa Boril; Buthiana Shabaneh; and Kathy Wanatowicz

Instructional coaching is a partnership between teachers and skilled educators (coaches) to improve teaching practices and student learning in both general and special education classrooms. Coaches work with teachers from preschool through 8th grade to enhance: Behavior Strategies; Instructional Methods; Data Analysis; Classroom Support. The vision of the instructional coaching program is to support teachers, provide opportunities to enhance reflection of instructional practices to foster student growth, develop trusting relationships with colleagues, and empower professional growth through collaboration. Coaching work includes: Weekly Professional Learning Communities for staff; Supporting Curriculum; Data Analysis; Instructional Rounds; MTSS Support (Tier 2 Intervention Progress Monitoring); Professional Development.

B. ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Michelle Okrzesik introduced herself as the Advanced Placement Program teacher with 30 years in the Worth School District. The goal for the year is to work with students, starting with fourth and fifth grade, and building a solid foundation. The first project, "Building a Solid Foundation," involves designing a house that can withstand hurricane winds and hail. The project includes building background knowledge, watching videos, and learning about different roof designs. Michelle emphasizes the importance of the engineering design process and having a growth mindset. Students design a house with a budget of \$4, spend three weeks building background knowledge, and then create their plans. The houses are tested by dumping dried beans on them and using a fan to simulate wind. Students discuss their success and make improvements based on the test results.

6. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no Citizens' Remarks.

7. 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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action (Consent): B. BOARD BILLS PAYABLE

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$384,139.49 (EDUCATIONAL); \$83,847.55 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); \$1,950.00 (DEBT SERVICE); \$32,785.04 (TRANSPORTATION); and \$558,211.20 (CAPITAL PROJECTS) for a total of \$1,060,933.28."

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, Vince Flores, 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 \$775,647.15, the Building Fund in the amount of \$53,978.14, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of 50,347.39."

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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action (Consent): D. DISMISSAL OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - GABRIELLA HASKINS - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 10, 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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action (Consent): E. EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED STAFF - GABRIELA BUDZ - PERMANENT SUBSTITUTE - EFFECTIVE JANUARY 6, 2025

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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action (Consent): F. EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED STAFF - EMMA SISK - 7TH GRADE SCIENCE TEACHER - WORTH JUNIOR HIGH - EFFECTIVE JANUARY 6, 2025

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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action (Consent): G. 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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action (Consent): H. SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF BOARD POLICY #116

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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action (Consent): I. FIRST READING OF BOARD POLICY #117

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, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

8. MOTIONS

Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the regular December 11, 2024 meeting."

Motion by Missy Sinclair, second by Drew Sernus.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

Action: B. RECAPTURE LEVY RESOLUTION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Resolution directing the Cook County Clerk to Abate the increase in the 2024 Real Estate Tax Levy Due to Section 18-233 of the Property Tax Code (35 ILCS 200/18-233)".

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Meghan Sisk.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Vince Flores, Missy Sinclair

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

Dr. Fleming made another announcement that the South Cook Division Meeting will be held on March 13, 2025, in Alsip at the Doubletree Hotel. The Board will be recognized and will receive the Board Governance Award at that meeting and will put further details in his weekly update.

Board Member stated she will not be present at the February 12, 2025 Board Meeting.

Board Member asked for clarification regarding the parent email and Dr. Fleming stated that Jill followed up with her and that he also had a phone conversation with her. Dr. Fleming told her that he would discuss her concerns with the administration team at their next meeting on February 6th and call her thereafter. Board Member acknowledged her concerns and stated he believes that parents would like to reinstate the honor roll assembly. Board Members agreed that parent involvement is important at their child's school and hopes there are some programs that can be reinstated.

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 6:52 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; and 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. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21)".

Motion by David Blanks, second by Missy Sinclair.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: B. RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education upon completion of it's discussions in closed session at 7:39 p.m. reconvene in public session."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

12. ADJOURNMENT

Recommended Motion (voice vote): "that the Board of Education motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m."

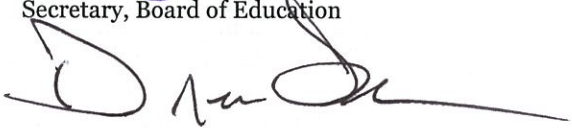
Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,



Meghan Sisk
Secretary, Board of Education



Drew Sernus
President, Board of Education