

Board of Education  
Worth School District 127  
Dr. Rosemary Lucas Administrative Center

Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting

**September 15, 2021**

**1. MEETING OPENING**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Drew Sernus, Meghan Sisk, Stephanie Peltzer, Michelle Egan, Dave Blanks, Vince Flores

Absent: Danette Keeler

**Administrators:**

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

**Others Present**

JoAnne Albrecht, WJH  
Mary Zirngibl, WE  
Jeff Pagano, WW  
Lisa Strzempa, WE  
Michele Routien, WJH  
Jill Moore, Board Recording Secretary  
Ghalia Allan  
Michelle Okrzack  
Lucia Bolcarova  
Astrit Lleshanaku  
Vahide Lleshanaku  
Agnieska Duda  
Jolanta Sikora  
Paul Rowell  
John Cerrone  
Jadwiga Hajnos

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**A. WORTH ELEMENTARY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATE**

Dr. Fleming opened by sharing that the renovations at Worth Elementary are on track and everything is going very well.

**B. OFF TO A GREAT START TO THE 2021 - 2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dr. Fleming shared a special thank you to all staff members for their hard work. We are all learning together and things change fast and the team has done an outstanding job. Dr. Fleming included enrollment numbers for Board Members to view.

**C. SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS, PARAPROFESSIONALS, NURSES AND SECRETARIES**

Dr. Fleming stated that as of right now, we are doing well with substitutes; however, there is a need for them. If you know anyone who is interested in being a substitute, even if someone is available for a day or half day, please spread the word.

**D. BUILDING UPDATE/REPORT - WW - PARTRIOOT DAY**

Dr. Fleming stated that ceremonies took place Friday, November 10 at Worthwoods. Worth Elementary and Worth Junior High did activities indoors due to construction.

**3. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE**

**A. BUSINESS MANAGER**

Mrs. Cindy Dykas shared the following:

- We discussed at the tentative budget presentation in August, the overall fund totals have planned a \$2.6 million deficit budget year.

- A few line items were slightly changed within the Education Fund; the overall deficit was increased by about \$60k from what was presented for the tentative budget.
  - Ed Fund: These changes include an increase of \$50k in Purchased Services for additional consulting funds in order to "address learning loss" per the requirements of the ESSER IIII funds. Expenditures in other areas were increased slightly as well.
- As I mentioned last meeting, FY21 ended with a net gain of \$570,000. In fact, in the past 6 years, we have had a cumulative net gain of just over \$6 million
- We have not officially ended a year with a net loss since 2009.
- Good News!
  - The District is estimating to end the 2021-2022 school year with a \$15.2M fund balance. This represents over 62% of annual expenditures. ISBE recommends a 25% benchmark to indicate healthy finances. The District's excellent fund balance health will allow the District the ability to continue to proactively renovate and maintain the District's 4 facilities each year with the need to issue additional debt in order to pay for the work.
  - This is significant and NOT common! The number one financial concern for communities should be how to maintain their investments in school buildings and how to pay for such a task.
- Public hearing to adopt the FY22 Budget will take place later in this meeting and a motion to officially adopt the budget.

#### Documents on the Consent Agenda:

- EIS Administrator and Teacher Salary & Benefits report and IMRF Compensation Report
  - Both reports will be posted on our website tomorrow, in accordance with the law

#### Items for Motions on the agenda:

- Managed Print Services – company recommended to supply toner, repair machines and supply replacement printers for a monthly fee
- Snow Plow Services for the 2021-2022 snow season – Beverly Snow & Ice is great and hasn't raised the price since we started with them 4 years ago

### **B. DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES**

Dr. Sinead Chambers stated that at a previous board meeting she informed the board that the special education office is undergoing a comprehensive review under the guidance of a company called LMT Consulting Services. This company's owner Lisa Harrod will be completing this review with assistance from her team members.

Mrs. Esposito and I met with Lisa and her district's Special Education Director, Erin Ruff, on September 2nd to discuss in greater detail the delivery of instruction in our two elementary and junior high schools. Lisa and Erin also took them to sit and review IEPs, which we submitted, at their request. I'm happy to report that Lisa stated there were no surprises, and that her team can definitely assist our district in our delivery of special education services.

Lisa plans to schedule interviews with our building principals on September 20th and return on October 18th to observe in all of our schools.

We welcomed 20 new students into our district this year with active IEPs. We have also welcomed some returning students to our K, first-grade, and some higher grades whom our staff has noticed are displaying extreme social-emotional and academic concerns, possibly due to current circumstances in our society. Our team is working extremely hard to identify each student and make recommendations case by case to the student services office.

In talking with several directors in other neighboring districts, it seems we are not alone. School Psychologists are in high demand to evaluate to identify the needs of these students. Our staff relies on these evaluations to provide students with the services and support needed to progress academically and socially-emotionally.

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

Mrs. Esposito opened by stating that in a few minutes, she will conduct a public hearing on the proposal for an eLearning Program recommended for implementation district-wide. If adopted, this plan will allow the school district to use 5 eLearning days in place of 5 emergency days (such as snow days). As such, emergency days will not have to be added to the calendar at the end of the school year.

You may recall that at the August School Board meeting I shared that the district's eLearning plan had been written and verified by the Regional Office of Education and that a public hearing would be held at the September 15 Board meeting. The School Board would then vote on adopting the plan, and the plan would be submitted to ISBE. The plan will remain in effect for 3 years.

#### New Curriculum Tab

With help from our fabulous Tech Department, I have started work on a Curriculum tab to be added to the School District website. The Curriculum tab went live today. The only thing you will currently find on the tab is the aforementioned eLearning Plan. If you will graciously allow me to add a disclaimer that "This site is currently under construction", I will start adding items under this tab. I am ready to add "Curriculum Resources" which will list all of our subject areas and the textbooks and/or resources used to deliver instruction. As time goes on, I will list units of instruction by grade level and content area. Other items included under this tab will be a list of assessments and links to IL Learning Standards, and more.

### **4. BUDGET 2021-2022**

#### **Action: A. CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY22 BUDGET**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed budget for 2020-2021, which has been on file in accordance with the requirements of the School Code of Illinois."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

There were no public comments regarding the FY22 Budget.

#### **Action: B. CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY22 BUDGET**

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

Motion by Stephanie Peltzer, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

## **5. E-LEARNING PLAN**

### **Action: A. CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY22 E-LEARNING PLAN**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education conduct a public hearing regarding the FY22 E-Learning Plan."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **Proposal for an eLearning Program Recommended for implementation district-wide**

- According to ISBE, before adoption, the School Board must hold a public hearing for the initial proposal of the e-Learning Program by:
  - Publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the school district at least 10 days prior to the hearing. The notice of public hearing was published in the newspaper on August 12, 2021.
  - Written or electronic notice designed to reach the parents or guardians of all students enrolled in the district. The plan is posted on the school district website. Upon adoption of the plan, a School Messenger email with a link to the plan will be sent to all parents. The School Messenger email is scheduled to go out on September 16, 2021.
  - Written or electronic notice designed to reach any exclusive collective bargaining representative of school district employees and all those employees not in a collective bargaining unit. The plan is posted on the school district website. Upon adoption of the plan, a School Messenger email with a link to the plan will be sent to all staff members. The School Messenger email is scheduled to go out on September 16, 2021.
- The School Board's approval of the district's initial eLearning program shall be for a period of 3 years.
  - Date of Public Hearing: September 15, 2021
  - Date of Board Meeting: September 15, 2021

Public question from Mrs. Sikora: How will Chromebooks be distributed to students on a snow day. Mrs. Esposito stated they will send chromebooks home the day before in anticipation of a snow day.

### **Action: B. CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY22 E-LEARNING PLAN**

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

Motion by Vince Flores, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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

The following parents were present for citizens' remarks:

Paul Rowell - Worth Resident

Topic: Masks/Government Mandates/Critical Race Theory/Border Crisis/Afghanistan/Federal Deficit

Jolanta Sikora - Worth Resident

Topic: Mask Mandate/ISBE

Ghalia Allan

Topic: Masks during gym class

Jadwiga Hajnos - Worth Resident

Topic: Accuracy of Covid tests/Information regarding District 117 & 186/Covid Vaccines

Martha Zubaty

Topic: Traffic on Oketo/Safety Issue

Astrit Lleshanaku - Worth Resident

Topic: Religious Beliefs/Medication Exemptions/Violation of Constitution

Lucia Bolcarova - Worth Resident

Topic: Full day kindergarten/Masks/Possible vaccinations for students

## **7. CLOSED SESSION**

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

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session at 6:28 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees and 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; the collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; and student disciplinary cases."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **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 7:15 p.m."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

## **8. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **Action (Consent): A. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS LISTED IN 8. B. - 8. K.**

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

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$273,076.77 (EDUCATIONAL); \$1,313,835.90 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); for a total of \$1,586,912.67."

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **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 \$390,749.82, the Building Fund in the amount of \$44,955.87, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of \$37,869.53."

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **Action (Consent): D. 2021-2022 COMPENSATION FOR IMRF EMPLOYEES**

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **Action (Consent): E. FIS ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER SALARY AND BENEFITS REPORT - SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022**

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **Action (Consent): F. RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - KRISTEN PALAGGIO - WORTH JUNIOR HIGH - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2021**

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **Action (Consent): G. RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - NAJAT MANSOUR - LUNCHROOM SUPERVISOR - EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2021**

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

### **Action (Consent): H. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - AMY PICKERT - SPECIAL EDUCATION SECRETARY - ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER - EFFECTIVE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR**

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action (Consent): I. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - MARIAM ABUSAFI - WORTH JUNIOR HIGH - LUNCHROOM SUPERVISOR - SEPTEMBER 2021**

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action (Consent): J. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - JANICE CORONADO - WORTHWOODS - LUNCHROOM SUPERVISOR - SEPTEMBER 2021**

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

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**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 outlined below."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**9. MOTIONS****Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the August 11, 2021 regular meeting."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Stephanie Peltzer.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: B. CLOSED SESSION MINUTES**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the August 11, 2021 closed session minutes."

Motion by Stephanie Peltzer, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: C. ADOPTION OF FY21 BUDGET**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the 2021-2022 Budget according to the Resolution for Worth School District 127."

Motion by Stephanie Peltzer, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: D. APPROVAL OF PRINT MANAGEMENT CONTRACT**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Print Management Contract with Next Day Plus for a price not to exceed \$15,000, which includes all toner, supplies, maintenance and replacement printers for our entire laser jet fleet of 97 printers".

Motion by Vince Flores, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: E. APPROVAL TO BID FOR PHASE III 2021 WORK AT WORTH ELEMENTARY, AS DESIGNED BY DLA, LTD.**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education authorize the creation of bid specifications and release bid documents for Phase III summer 2021 projects."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: F. APPROVAL TO BID FOR 2022 RENOVATION AT THE DR. ROSEMARY LUCAS BUILDING, AS DESIGNED BY DLA, LTD.**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education authorize the creation of bid specifications and release bid documents for summer 2022 projects."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Stephanie Peltzer.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: G. APPROVAL OF R & G CONSULTANTS CONTRACT RENEWAL**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve R & G Consultants renewal beginning on October 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by Meghan Sisk.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: H. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR SNOW PLOW SERVICES**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the contract with Beverly Snow & Ice, Inc. for unlimited snow plowing for the 2021-2022 school year, at a cost not to exceed \$8,185."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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

Board Member commented that she was very grateful to be able to attend the volleyball game and it was exciting to see school spirit at the game.

Board Member discussed the upcoming South Cook Division Meeting that will be held on October 27, 2021 at the DoubleTree hotel at 6:00 p.m. Dr. Fleming stated that if there are any Board Members that would like to attend, please let Jill Moore know and she will register you.

**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 7:43 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees and 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; the collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; and student disciplinary cases.

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education upon completion of its discussions in closed session reconvene in public session at 9:30 p.m."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Recommended Motion (voice vote): "that the Board of Education motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m."

Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Meghan Sisk  
Secretary, Board of Education

  
Drew Sernus  
President, Board of Education