MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, NAPERVILLE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 203, DUPAGE AND WILL COUNTIES, ILLINOIS, HELD AT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION CENTER, 203 WEST HILLSIDE ROAD, NAPERVILLE, IL. June 2, 2025 AT 7:00 P.M., CLOSED SESSION 6:00 p.m.

Call to order

President Charles Cush called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board members present: Charles Cush, Kristine Gericke, Melissa Kelley Black, Holly Blastic, Joe Kozminski, Amanda McMillen, and Marc Willensky.

Administrators present were:

Dan Bridges, Superintendent,

Dr. Mark Cohen, Deputy Superintendent High Schools

Dr. Meredith Haugens, Assistant Superintendent for Resources Officer,

Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer/CSBO

Lisa Xagas, Assistant Superintendent for Strategy and Engagement

Closed Session

Kristine Gericke moved, seconded by Amanda McMillen to go into Closed Session at 6:00 p.m. for consideration of:

- 1. Pursuant to 5 ILCS120/2(c)(1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees or legal counsel, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or legal counsel to determine its validity.
- 2. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives.

A roll call vote was taken, those voting yes: Blastic, Cush, Gericke, Kozminski, McMillen, Willensky, and Kelley Black. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

The Board of Education entered closed session at 6:01 p.m.

Meeting Opening

Joe Kozminski made a motion, seconded by Amanda McMillen to return to Open Session at 7:11 pm. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: McMillen, Gericke, Blastic, Kelley Black, Willensky, Cush, and Kozminski. No: None. The motion carried

Welcome and Mission

Charles Cush welcomed all and read Naperville Community Unit School District 203's Mission Statement.

Roll Call

Board members present: Charles Cush, Kristine Gericke, Amanda McMillen, Melissa Kelley Black, Joe Kozminski, Holly Blastic, and Marc Willensky.

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by the Board of Education

Administrators present: Dan Bridges, Superintendent, Allison Boutet, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services, Mark Cohen, Deputy Superintendent/High Schools, Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer/CSBO, Chuck Freundt, Assistant Superintendent for Leadership and School Services, Meredith Haugens, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Rakeda Leaks, Executive Director for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, Katie Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, Melissa McHenry, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Patrick Nolten, Assistant

Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability, Jayne Willard, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, and Lisa Xagas, Assistant Superintendent for Strategy and Engagement.

Recognition:

Good News:

Our Dual Language 6th graders were fully engaged in book clubs this spring—sharing deep discussions, sharpening their critical thinking, and enjoying plenty of laughter along the way. There's nothing better than watching students connect over stories and grow together as readers and thinkers.

On May 8, Madison Junior High hosted a vibrant community celebration for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Attendees enjoyed crafts, food, music performances by Miss Katie and Opus Chamber students, and a special appearance by author Rich Lo.

This all-ages event highlighted the importance of literacy, the arts, and the diverse cultural contributions of the AAPI community. Thank you to all who made it a success!

At this year's **Naperville State of the City Address**, our student interns proudly highlighted how the Career Internship Program has shaped their skills, confidence, and future goals. With enrollment growing from 40 to 90 students, it's clear this program is creating meaningful opportunities and making a real impact!

What an amazing year it's been at Naperville 203!

Thank you to our incredible teachers, staff, and community. Your dedication, creativity, and support have helped make our schools places where students grow, thrive, and reach their full potential. We couldn't have done it without you. Enjoy a well-deserved summer break—we'll see our students back in class on August 14!

Public Comment:

online harassment.

President Cush gave the parameters for public comment.

Community members and staff shared impassioned and polarized views regarding the district's policy on transgender student inclusion, particularly in athletics and gender-specific spaces. Many speakers voiced strong support for the district's efforts to uphold the rights, dignity, and safety of LGBTQIA+ students. They commended District 203 for following Illinois law and state guidance, emphasizing that affirming transgender students reduces mental health risks, including depression and suicide. Personal stories, legal references, and appeals to empathy were frequently shared in support of maintaining inclusive practices. Multiple individuals condemned the group Awake Illinois, labeling it a hate group and accusing it of doxing, targeting a minor, and inciting harassment and threats. Concerns were raised about the harmful impact of adults using children as political pawns and the dangers of

Others expressed concern about fairness and safety, particularly regarding the participation of transgender girls in girls' sports. They argued that biological differences create an uneven playing field and could undermine Title IX protections for cisgender female athletes. Several cited legal liability, competitive imbalance, and privacy concerns in locker rooms and restrooms. Some urged the board to adopt policies that limit participation based on biological sex, framing it as a matter of common sense, safety, and respect for female athletes.

Despite differing perspectives, many speakers agreed that the discourse surrounding the issue has become increasingly hostile. Several individuals expressed frustration over the repeated targeting of a specific transgender student and the use of inflammatory rhetoric, warning that it fosters a toxic environment in schools. Calls were made for respectful dialogue, lawful decision-making, and a continued focus on student well-being.

The board acknowledged the intensity of the discussion and reiterated its commitment to civil discourse, reminding participants that personal attacks and naming individuals are not permitted during public comment.

President Cush reminded the Board and Community that because questions raised during Public Comment address District Operational matters board has designated our Superintendent as the spokesperson for the District. As our designate to respond to Public Comment, he will apprise the Board accordingly.

President Cush reminded the Board and Community of the board agreements. He noted that it is each Board member's responsibility to prepare for each meeting and to effectively express our concerns either to the Superintendent or the Board President in a timely manner. Board members have also agreed that avoiding surprises is paramount in displaying respect to all District Administration. The Board has tasked itself to send questions in advance of each meeting to the Superintendent to allow the provision of the best possible response for the community. It also allows for efficiency during the community's meeting. Those same questions as well as new ones may be asked in Open Session. For transparency, please note if any questions were asked earlier. Mr. Bridges did you receive questions from Board members? Superintendent Bridges responded that he received questions from all seven Board members. Mrs. Patton confirmed that emails with a link for the Board agenda were sent and delivery confirmed at 3:31 pm, Thursday, May 29, 2025. No emails bounced back.

Action by Consent:

1. Adoption of Personnel Report

	Effective Date	Location	Position
RESIGNATION-ADMINISTRATION			
Sarah Payne	6/30/2025	Meadow Glens	Assistant Principal
REASSIGNMENT- ADMINISTRATION			
Adam Ubben	7/28/2025	Mill Street	Assistant Principal
APPOINTMENT-ADMINISTRATION			
Marybeth Peterson	7/1/2025	Beebe	Principal
Britta Waszak	7/1/2025	Ellsworth	Principal
RESIGNATION-CERTIFIED			
Dana South	8/6/2025	Connections	Learning Behavior Specialist
Miranda Shaw	8/10/2025	LJHS	School Psychologist
Stefany Solaja	8/10/2025	Madison JHS	School Counselor
Tess Tazioli	8/10/2025	NNHS	Music-vocal
Rachel Wick	8/10/2025	NCHS	School Psychologist
Andria Baumgartner	8/10/2025	Elmwood	Speech Language Pathologist
APPOINTMENT-CERTIFIED FULL- TIME			
Lydia Florez	8/11/2025	Jefferson JHS	DL Spanish LBS

Anna Loveless	8/11/2025	Madison JHS	Learning Behavior
			Specialist
Diego Barocio	8/11/2025	Maplebrook	PE Teacher
Lisa Bonistalli	8/11/2025	Beebe	Learning Behavior Specialist
Heather Bezanis	8/11/2025	Kingsley & Ranchview	Learning Behavior Specialist
Mary Burland	8/11/2025	Mill Street	Gifted/Honors Math & Project Idea
Ethan Bricker	8/11/2025	Scott	School Social Worker
Kaitlyn Mora	8/11/2025	Scott	Learning Behavior Specialist
Whitney Labriola	8/11/2025	NCHS	School Psychologist
Jamie Kelley	8/11/2025	Madison JHS	Math/Academic Support Teacher
REVISED CONTRACT-CERTIFIED FULL-TIME			
Anna Pakozdi	8/11/2025	Scott	EL Teacher
RE-EMPLOYMENT-CERTIFIED FULL-TIME			
Michael Sheldon	8/11/2025	NNHS	Learning Behavior Specialist
Alysa Hyland	8/11/2025	River Woods	Kindergarten Teacher
LEAVE OF ABSENCE-CERTIFIED			
Samantha Gillespie	2/13/26 - 3/27/26	NCHS	Social Science
RETIREMENT-CLASSIFIED			
Dan Seiders	6/30/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
Bernard Hennessy	6/1/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
RESIGNATION-CLASSIFIED			
Michelle Tardy	7/15/2025	NCHS	Campus Supervisor
Darla Lee	5/30/2025	Scott	Executive Secretary
Heather Bezanis	8/10/2025	Kingsley	Behavior Support Paraprofessional
EMPLOYMENT-CLASSIFIED FULL- TIME			
Ewa Mateja	5/22/2025	NCHS	Custodian
Alexandra Schwanebeck	6/23/2025	NNHS	Executive Secretary
Emily Kozlowski	8/5/2025	Prairie	Senior Secretary
Lourdes Sanchez	5/22/2025	Beebe	Custodian

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Personnel memo, Meal Prices, IASB School Board Policies Online Subscriptions and IASB Dues as presented, seconded by Kristine Gericke. Those voting yes: McMillen, Kozminski, Blastic, Cush, Gericke, Kelley Black, and Willensky. No: None. The motion carried.

2. Treasurer's Bond

Do we bid this out to get the best rate and terms?

Mr. Frances stated we not required to be bid. We use an insurance broker who works to get the best rates.

When I look at insurance, I bid it out to see what the best rates are. Should we bid these out? Helpful to have the information from the broker to fulfill the fiduciary duty. I have repeatedly asked for the copy of the agreement we are voting on. I have been taught to read contracts before I sign them. What do my fellow board members think about this? Is this a reasonable request to have the contract before we approve?

All we have is loaded in BoardDocs.

We are allowing the admin to fill out the paperwork? Can we make an agreement to see the contracts we are to agree on?

Correct me if I am wrong but all the documents we need are included in BoardDocs?

Superintendent Bridges stated that you have all that we have. All necessary forms are loaded in BoardDocs

It is the Supt responsibility to provide information. We as a Board decide a set criteria. Superintendent Bridges asked Mr. Frances to please explain what a treasury surety bond is. Mr. Frances explained that a Treasurer's Bond is an annual requirement for all Illinois school districts to protect against treasurer malfeasance. The bond amount is codified in law, and the necessary paperwork is submitted to the ROE by June 10th for the start of the fiscal year I understand that. I understand this is the paperwork we have to give to the ROE. Do we not sign anything else with the Insurance company?

Mr. Frances repeated that this is all the paperwork there is for this item.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Bond as presented, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: Cush, Kelley Black, Blastic, Willensky, Kozminski, McMillen, Gericke. No: None. The motion carried.

3. Beverage Contract-

Thanked Melanie and Chuck for making us know that this will support the CAP. Also thanked them for their work at the presentation of the CAP to the community. As we continue forward with contracts, we are looking through the lens of the CAP. Thanked the people who did the work on this. The sponsorship fee, vendor fee...how are these perks distributed?

Dr. Cohen responded that the Gatorade kits are used by the athletic department.

It goes to all students who participate in sports?

Dr. Cohen responded yes.

How did the different factors weigh in?

Dr. Cohen stated we worked with the High School administration. This is their recommendation. The lower price point is attractive as well as the option of Gatorade.

Is there a contract?

Dr. Cohen stated the agreement is in BoardDocs.

We have their proposal, not their actual contract.

Mr. Frances noted that we will get something to sign.

I will renew my request that we get the contract to renew before we vote.

Mr. Frances stated that we do not have the contract yet.

Why would that be?

Mr. Frances stated that we just let them know we would be recommending them and they will work to make sure the contract meets the terms proposed in the RFP.

I am not comfortable signing a contract without having a contract.

Superintendent Bridges added that the recommendation is to authorize the administration to execute the required documents in alignment to the proposal.

My opinion is that most contracts are shells. What is important are the scope of service that is outlined in the proposal. Trust the Administration to look at the clauses.

The proposal documents give a signed proposal on what the contract will be based on. It is worth a reminder to the community what our vote is authorizing. The Board of Education does not fill out the forms. We evaluate from the proposal. This is a governance issue. The contracts are meeting the legal requirements. Comfortable with the process.

What is the district getting and what are the terms? Comfortable with the process and trust Administration.

I go back to IL School Code-talks about the governance of the school board. We are responsible for the financial integrity of the district. It is our duty to vote on a contract. Our job to know what the terms and conditions are. I want to see the contract because I am on the hook for it.

We know dollars and key terms and duration. We have the gist of what the district is to contract with Pepsi. I rely on Administration to put the contract together. I need to be comfortable with the information we are provided in Board Docs. I am comfortable with the execution of the contract.

We have a very clear signed and notarized proposal and our task is to allow the Administration to draft the contract along with legal counsel. Comfortable with the practice and leaving the legalese to the district.

There are two issues at hand. Whose legal responsibility is it to approve the contracts. We cannot go over the school code. This is business and we don't just pass off this duty to administration. Is this best practice? It has been delegated to us. Would be a moot point if we were provided a contract.

Superintendent Bridges referred to Policy 4.60, Purchases and Contracts. Read what the role is. We are following State Law and Board Policy.

I suggest we move forward. If you are not comfortable you are welcome to vote in which ever direction you please.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Beverage Contract as presented, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: Gericke, Blastic, Kozminski, Cush, Willensky, McMillen. No: Kelley Black. The motion carried.

4. Meal Prices

5. Resolution Designating Interest Earnings

Is this interest we keep in the fund balances that we can allocate. How much is in the fund balances at the end of 2024?

Mr. Frances stated that it is posted annually. We keep a total of the fund balance not the interest. This allows any interest earned this year to be transferred to another fund that is in need. We don't keep track of the balance in terms of principal and interest.

Can you move the principal balance from one fund to another?

Mr. Frances noted yes, there are some limitations.

There is no difference in the principal and interest?

Mr. Frances responded this resolution is saying the interest is subject to be transferred.

The transfer we did last year. Do we have a timeframe that we have to move this?

Mr. Frances stated we do not. We pass this annually. Most school districts do this in this way.

There is no time limit when we have to move it? Where does it sit?

Mr. Frances noted most is allocated monthly. We have a process in the Business Office on how we allocate interest.

Is this is tied to tax levy money?

Mr. Frances remarked we base the allocation on the tax levy.

What is the process to determine how much each fund gets?

Mr. Frances responded it is based on the tax levy.

Joe Kozminski made a motion to approve the Resolution Designating Interest Earnings as presented, seconded by Amanda McMillen. Those voting yes: McMillen, Blastic, Gericke, Willensky, Kelley Black, Cush, and Kozminski. No: None. The motion carried.

6. Out of Country Field Trips

Superintendent Bridges noted that we received some incorrect information so we are going to ask that you table this and we will bring it back when we received the correct information.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to table the Out of Country Field Trips as presented, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: Kelley Black, Cush, Blastic, McMillen, Kozminski, Willensky, and Gericke. No: None. The motion carried.

- 7. IASB School Board Policies Online Subscription 2025-2026
- 8. IASB Dues 2025-2026

Board of Education Reports:

Board Member McMillen Provided an update on the state budget's impact on K-12 education. She noted an additional \$37 million for evidence-based funding but reductions to the property tax relief fund. Early childhood, MCATs, special education transportation, and vocational transportation funding were held flat. The teacher vacancy grant program saw a \$15 million decrease, while career and technical education increased by \$1.3 million and after-school programs by \$10 million. She reiterated the good news about the **dual credit program** moving through the legislature, awaiting the governor's signature.

President's Report:

None.

Superintendent/Staff/School Reports:

Invited the presentation team forward. He introduced Lisa Xagas, Kelly Scotti and Heather Klespitz. He noted the NESPA members who are in attendance. This has come out the Morale Committee work.

Educational Support Professionals Systems of Support

ESPs' Vital Roles: They highlighted the diverse array of ESP positions essential to district functioning, including academic support paraprofessionals, accounts payable clerks, attendance specialists, classroom nurses, special education paraprofessionals, and technology support associates. The average cost to replace an employee can be up to 33% of their annual salary. This system aims to be responsive to feedback and improve recruitment, retention, productivity, and staff morale. Positive onboarding experiences lead to 30 times higher likelihood of strong workplace connection. The initiative directly addresses ESP morale survey data indicating a lack of professional development and promotion pathways as a threat to morale.

An ESP onboarding committee of 27 members (recognized in the audience) spent over 400 collective hours developing these systems since the 2023-2024 school year, identifying deficiencies and developing job-specific learning needs. All ESP job descriptions are also being updated. New ESPs get immediate access to virtual training and district info via a website and attend device deployment training. Those hired before August 1st will attend an in-person district orientation, others virtually. All receive an in-person building orientation.

A key element, where mentors (selected by site supervisors) will collaborate with new hires using a handbook and training. Mentors and mentees will engage in observations and reflections. The pilot program for mentorship is slated for the 2025-2026 school year, with an initial goal of one mentormentee team per site. Compensation for mentors will be determined in collaboration with NESPA leadership. Feedback from the pilot will guide expansion for 2026-2027.

Current practice includes countywide institute day and a half-day on-site training. New this year is a required biannual training on student behavior expectations. Challenges include inconsistent training content/access across roles and sites. Future goals include annual job-specific learning for each ESP role with consistent implementation.

The initial pilot program budget is \$15,000, covering mentor compensation and mentee wages. Other first-year expenses are covered by existing budgets.

This is believed to be the first comprehensive internal support system of its kind in the area, significantly benefiting ESPs, students, and the community.

Board Questions/Comments:

Thank you and commend you for your work on this program. Exciting to hear about the mentoring and job specific training. The salary cost of losing someone is significant. Heard feedback on this before getting on the Board of Education. Being able to start with tools for success is wonderful to see.

Really excited to see the rationale and the collaboration between labor and management. The ongoing conversations will be helpful and the advocacy is positive step. Excited to see this and appreciative of the work.

Thank you. Really good to see we are working together and supporting each other. This is great and the kids really win. Wise investment. How will we know a year from now, how this will work? Mrs. Xagas noted this began from NESPA Advocacy. It was a privilege to work with this group. We will collect feedback from mentors, mentees, and site supervisors, and absolute retention and recruitment would be key metrics. The pilot is limited to one per site to gather feedback and iron out issues before larger-scale expansion.

Happy to hear that everyone had an opportunity to participate. A pilot year will likely mean an expansion the following year. Is there a way to have a brief update during the school year? Mrs. Xagas stated yes, we can provide updates as we go.

Great job on the presentation. This will be helpful for all folks involved. Out of curiosity, the updating will be key with changes in jobs and policies. Do you have a process?

Mrs. Xagas noted that is why we are using a virtual site and it links to other departments. We will have to build into the system to make sure it is as up to date as possible.

Thank you for doing this work. Concerned with shortages and retention. We have read where some NESPA members have not felt supported. Thank you for helping systemically with that. Thinking that the gaining of skills will help members with career growth.

Mrs. Xagas responded that being a mentor is a way to show leadership. We do believe this is a step forward for job advancement.

Updating job descriptions is important. With the mentoring process, is that one per site. Are there requirements on who can be a mentor?

Mrs. Xagas noted that all of those details are not ironed out. We will continue to work with NESPA leadership. Will use a similar process to how NUEA does this.

Is there one per site or how will you handle if there are more who could benefit from a mentor? Mrs. Xagas noted we want to iron out some of the issues before we roll it out in a large scale.

Is one of the considerations balancing out the roles?

Mrs. Xagas stated we are also focusing on the SPED Assistants and BSP as those areas have a high level of turnover.

Excited to see this program and the way to move ahead. Is there a way to measure a level of belonging?

Mrs. Xagas responded we will ask around about that piece. Some roles exist in isolation like a financial secretary.

Phenomenal program. We should be thinking about how we make it bigger faster. The concept will work.

Mrs. Xagas remarked we have some other working groups who are interested in this process.

If someone has a mentor from another building, would it make sense to have someone within the building who may have other experiences?

Mrs. Xagas responded that we will rely on the site supervisor to make those connections. Keep the avenues open.

Discussion without Action: 2025-2026 Budget Workshop

Superintendent Bridges reminded the Board and the community that this is a year round process. May and June are really crunch time. Questions are up to date in BoardDocs.

Mr. Frances added that he included the state budget form because the state released it earlier than usual.

Superintendent Bridges stated that this form was available this year, where is other years, we have had to request it.

Board of Education Questions/Comments:

Thank you for that form. Asked that we have the budget in the accounting codes. She read the School Code for developing a budget. We should look at the law and not just our practices.

Mr. Frances stated the forms included in this agenda item is the only form the State Board of Education requires.

The board is tasked with making sure the district follows these laws and that the district does not appear to be in compliance regarding the detailed coding of bills and claims.

Mr. Frances stated we have over 4,000 account numbers and use the required accounting codes. Mr. Frances asked Mr. Cush if we are discussing the budget or Bills and Claims?

We are discussing the budget.

Superintendent Bridges refuted the claim of non-compliance, stating that the district's fiscal and business management Policy 4.10 is aligned to Illinois school code and state laws. The question being asked is not for staff but is a question for the Board if you would like to change your policy.

I do my due diligence; I am not making this up.

What are you suggesting? Are you saying that what is happening in the district is not in alignment with the School Code?

Yes. Bills and Claims is part of the budgeting process.

Who are you saying is not in compliance?

I am not wanting to point fingers. I have asked for information and it seems reasonable that we would want to know where the money is going. One of the concerns in the Finance committee is that we may not have enough money moving forward.

Are we talking about the budget or are we talking about something else?

Yes, we are talking about the budget because these are budgetary concerns. I believe you were at the finance committee where we talked about this. I have the meeting recorded.

Superintendent Bridges called the accusation of non-compliance false and wholly incorrect. He asked Mr. Frances to share the District's Financial ratings. He also stated he will be following up on the statement of recording.

The budget is a culmination of the work over the past year. We actually see this budget when we do Bills and Claims. Nothing has ever been said that we are out of compliance. Very frustrated that we are having another conversation about nonexistent noncompliance. I am appreciative of the work of the Business Office because you are helping us serve our students.

I am not saying we are out of compliance of the audit.

I am ruling on the point of order. We are discussing the budget.

Superintendent Bridges reminded the Board and community of the Public Hearing to be held on June 16 where there will be additional opportunities for questions.

Discussion with Action:

Consideration of Board of Education Expenses

Superintendent Bridges noted expenses for board travel, meals, lodging, and training for new board members, as required by policy 2125, were presented for approval by roll call vote.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Board of Education Expenses as presented, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: McMillen, Blastic, Willensky, Gericke, Cush, Kozminski, and Kelley Black. No: None. Motion carried.

New Business None

Old Business None

Upcoming Events

June 16, 2025 next meeting will be held at the District Administration Building. June 25, 2025 the Board of Education will conduct an annual Self Evaluation.

Adjournment

Joe Kozminski moved seconded by Amanda McMillen to adjourn the meeting at 10:18 p.m. Those voting yes: Gericke, Kozminski, McMillen, Willensky, Kelley Black, Blastic, and Cush. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

Approved: June 16, 2025	
Charles Cush, President Board of Education	Susan S. Patton, Secretary Board of Education