
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, NAPERVILLE COMMUNITY UNIT
SCHOOL DISTRICT 203, DUPAGE AND WILL COUNTIES, ILLINOIS, HELD AT District
Administration Building, 203 West Hillside Road, Naperville, IL 60540
April 7, 2025, AT 7:00 pm. Closed Session at 6:00 pm

Call to order

President Kristine Gericke called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Board members present: Kristine Gericke, Kristin Fitzgerald, Melissa Kelley Black, Amanda McMillen, Joe Kozminski, Donna Wandke, and Charles Cush (arrived at 5:36p.m.).

Administrators present were:

Dan Bridges, Superintendent, (Exited at 6:27 pm and returned at 7:02 pm)

Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer, (entered at 7:02 pm)

Dr. Mark Cohen, Deputy Superintendent/High Schools, (entered at 7:02 pm)

Dr. Meredith Haugens, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, (entered at 7:02 pm)

Lisa Xagas, Assistant Superintendent for Strategy and Engagement (entered at 7:02 pm)

Others present: Dr. Arlena Bedard, IASB Field Services Director, Joe Perkoski, Robbins Schwartz both exited at 7:02 pm and did not return.

Closed Session

Donna Wandke moved, seconded by Joe Kozminski to go into Closed Session at 6:00 pm for consideration of:

- Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(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.
- Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(2) Collective negotiating matters between the school board and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.
- Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16) Self-evaluation, practices and procedures or professional ethics, when meeting with a representative of a statewide association of which the public body is a member.

Those voting yes: Cush, Fitzgerald, Gericke, Kelley Black, Kozminski, McMillen, and Wandke. Those voting no: None.

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

Meeting Opening

Charles Cush made a motion, seconded by Amanda McMillen to return to Open Session at 7:44 pm. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: McMillen, Gericke, Fitzgerald, Kelley Black, Wandke, Cush, and Kozminski. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

Welcome and Mission

Kristine Gericke welcomed all and read Naperville Community Unit School District 203's Mission Statement.

Roll Call

Board members present: Kristine Gericke, Kristin Fitzgerald, Charles Cush, Melissa Kelley Black, Joe Kozminski, Amanda McMillen, and Donna Wandke.

Student Ambassadors present: None.

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.

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by the Board of Education

Good News:

This year's musical at Madison Jr High was Mary Poppins Jr. All three shows were a huge success, especially our new tradition of inviting the future Madison 5th graders over for a performance. We are so proud of our entire cast and crew!

The Beebe 3rd-5th Grade Student Advisory Academy initiated a service project trip to the Feed My Starving Children Food Packing Event. The group of 25 students, Principals and Parents attended the event and worked together to pack 101 boxes of food to feed 60 kids a daily meal for a year! The Beebe team was very proud of their service and team work!

Our Steeple Run community came together for a night of culture and customs! Students performed traditional dances, played instruments, sang songs and dressed in beautiful costumes celebrating their heritage and family history! A special thank you to our music teacher, Vicki Derybowski, for coordinating this amazing event!

The Lincoln Lancer Boys Volleyball intramural program has truly served up joy and excitement at Lancers! This new opportunity has been met with enthusiasm across the board, and we're eager to see if it sets up for a permanent season at the junior high level. A huge shout-out to the Redhawk Varsity Team, who came to cheer on our 8th graders and help them spike their way to success at last week's home game!

Lincoln Jr High recently participated in the local MATHCOUNTS chapter competition in February 2025 at Waubensee Community College. The competition was comprised of 4, in person, live rounds. We had 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students compete with our HIGHEST average scores in Lincoln history! LJHS 8th grader Sakshi took 1st place!

Public Comment:

President Gericke gave the parameters.

Community member stated his thoughts are shared by dozens of other people. He stated that the Administration is only putting on Band Aids on the plan. He noted the District needs to collaborate with the community and have more minds in the room in order to get additional feedback. He is looking for opportunities to engage parents as this is a massive undertaking that affects everyone in the district.

President Gericke reminded the Board and Community that because questions raised during Public Comment address District Operational matters the 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.

Action by Consent:

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 3:30pm, Thursday, April 3, 2025. No emails bounced back.

1. Adoption of Personnel Report

	Effective Date	Location	Position
RESIGNATION-ADMINISTRATION			
Kim Jablonski	6/30/2025	Scott	Assistant Principal
APPOINTMENT-ADMINISTRATION			
Robert Ross	4/7/2025	Mill St.	Interim Assistant Principal
RESIGNATION-CERTIFIED			
Brendan Hendrick	8/10/2025	KJHS	School Psychologist
Olivia Barber	8/10/2025	Meadow Glens	School Psychologist
LEAVE OF ABSENCE-CERTIFIED			
Olivia Nenoff	11/3/25 - 12/19/25	Maplebrook	4th Grade Teacher
RESIGNATION-CLASSIFIED			
Tamara Sullivan	4/4/2025	PSAC	Senior Administrative Secretary
EMPLOYMENT-CLASSIFIED FULL-TIME			
Marquise Jenkins	3/25/2025	Meadow Glens	Special Education Paraprofessional
Daniel Zielinski	3/27/2025	District	Technology Support Associate
Karen Gannon	4/7/2025	Washington	Special Education Paraprofessional

2. DuPage West Cook Resolution

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: Kozminski, Kelley Black, McMillen, Wandke, Gericke, Fitzgerald, and Cush. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

Board of Education reports:

Board Member Kelley Black reported on her Ellsworth School visit. Discussion provided insight into the business of the school. Innovative room. Hands on learning. Indoor hydroponic garden where students re growing their own plants. Supervised 1st graders at lunch. Secret zookeeper. Enriching experience. She also attended the Home & School adult social. She also attended the NCHS Veterans Club Spaghetti dinner and the SUCCESS Black History dinner and movie night. Evening of celebration and connection. Welcoming space, strengthening community bonds.

Vice President Fitzgerald thanked the District Administrators, Superintendent Bridges, Dr. Nolten, and Mrs. Willard for participating in a small group discussion giving feedback on performance level descriptors. Significant time to review the descriptors. Continue to articulate those standards need to align with NAEP.

President's Report

None.

Superintendent Bridges

None.

Discussion without Action:

New Course Proposals

Superintendent Bridges stated that a robust course audit is reviewed annually.

Assistant Superintendent Willard and Assistant Principals Jeretina and Mocon gave the report on New Course proposals.

To align with Illinois Learning Standards, industry trends, student interests, and postsecondary readiness, our high schools engaged in a robust course audit and departmental visioning process. Led by principals, assistant principals, and department chairs, this work ensures offerings are rigorous, relevant, and responsive to a rapidly changing world.

- **Course Audit Process**

Evaluated current offerings to ensure alignment with college/career pathways, student interest, and long-term relevance. Adjustments ranged from minor revisions to full course redesigns.

- **Career Pathway Development**

- Launched **Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology & Trades (METT)** Pathway with Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses.
- Course sequence includes: Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, Civil Engineering & Architecture, and a Capstone.

- **CTE Enhancements**

Refined offerings based on student survey data and industry needs, supporting dual credit and work-based learning opportunities.

- **Social Studies Redesign**

- Created **five pathways** aligned to student interests and postsecondary goals.
- New course additions:
 - *Cultural Anthropology* (replaces World Cultures)
 - *Criminal Justice*
 - *Modern American History Through Media*
 - *Taking Action: Issues and Solutions* (revamps Peace and Conflict)

- **Redesigned PE 2 for Sophomores**

Offers three student-centered tracks:

- *Studio Wellness* (e.g., Yoga, Zumba, Stress Mgmt.)
- *Strength & Performance*

- *Competitive Team Sports*

Courses Proposed for Removal (2026–27)

To streamline offerings and better serve student needs:

- World Cultures
- Legal Issues in America
- Humanities II
- Peace and Conflict
- Painting 2

These changes reflect our commitment to providing students with meaningful, engaging, and future-ready learning experiences. This work builds on strong leadership, student voice, and collaboration with staff and industry partners.

Board Questions/Comments:

Thank you for your work and the ongoing process. Very excited about the PLTW offerings. Will there be opportunities for Dual Credit in some of the other offerings?

Mrs. Willard responded that is part of the process. We will write the course and see how we align with post-secondary partners.

The courses being removed and introduced are for the 2026-2027 school year?

Mrs. Willard noted yes, that was a typo on our part.

Excited to have staff members reach out to say how collaborative this process is.

Mrs. Willard thanked Steve and Kira, Jenny Donatelli, Megan Plackett Jill Hlavacek and department chairs on their work on this.

Did a good job of trends of reduced enrollment. How do you gauge what students are interested in?

Mr. Jeretina stated we did a collaboratively designed survey between NCHS and NNHS.

I appreciate that you get student voices. Are all these courses at both high schools?

Mr. Jeretina responded, yes.

Will these changes impact staffing?

Mr. Jeretina responded, no.

Mrs. Willard added that staffing will be enrollment based.

Thank you for PLTW and college credit. For the courses being discontinued, is there an effort to salvage some of the content?

Ms. Mocon, stated it depends on the course. For Social studies, we did look at the overlapping. We preserve the areas that students are interested in. Process looks different for each content area and the standards.

Sad to see Peace and Conflict go. Seems content is relevant. How do learning standards align with that and how that will be shared through other courses.

Mr. Jeretina remarked that the big piece that will live on and will exist in other courses is the taking informed action standard that is part of the social studies standards so that course really lives within that standard and is also going to be embedded in these new courses.

Mrs. Willard added that we really, we start that conversation in Elementary. It is a must with the learning standards. Passionate about the topic and woven through the curriculum.

Glad that it will be woven. Hear positive comments about the process. Help people feel heard.

Engaging students in relevant ways.

I like the Dual Credit. The quality of the classes is more and helps families. Like that you are working to offer the same things at both High Schools. How do I sign up for the studio wellness? Have to commend the process to give students habits they can carry on.

With CTE- state report card has categories for CTE. How are you addressing the graduating CTE concentrators with work based learning experiences being redacted?

Mrs. Willard stated we have been addressing it for the last two years. You have to have a work based component. PLTW-all have work based learning. Department chairs have been thinking outside of the box to get the work based learning.

Who redacts information on the School Report card?

Dr. Nolten stated information is redacted when it is less than 10 students.

Superintendent Bridges added we can look at that for the April 21 Board of Education meeting.

Glad we are meeting the needs of students. Added a lot of CTE classes. Thoughts about classes to address achievement gaps? How do we deal with those issues?

Mrs. Willard stated we do that through the MTSS process.

Do we ever add courses that address the declines in Math?

Mrs. Willard noted we do have interventions; TIER 2, SOAR/WIN-those don't come to the Board.

Is it ever addressed how courses are impacting scores?

Mrs. Willard stated that is done in School Improvement and SIP process.

Do we do anything with executive functioning courses. Do we have those?

Ms. Mocon noted that Academic Support was added a few years ago. Addressed in tandem with academic learning.

Can students take the course once or multiple times?

Ms. Mocon noted that is addressed based on student need. Can limit elective option depending on grade level.

Thank you and impressed with the evolution of courses.

Instructional Resources

Superintendent Bridges introduced Jayne Willard and Jenny Donatelli.

Over a decade has passed since our last districtwide literacy resource adoption in 2014. Since then, significant shifts in research, instructional best practices, and state guidance have reshaped how we understand and support literacy development. In response, we've undertaken a comprehensive, educator-led process to adopt new K–12 literacy resources that reflect these changes and align with our instructional goals.

- **Evolving Research:** Groundbreaking findings from the *Science of Reading* emphasize the importance of explicit, structured instruction in foundational skills, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- **State Guidance:** The *Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan* underscores equity, access, and research-aligned resources as key drivers of high-quality instruction.
- **Instructional Coherence:** Updated materials allow for consistency across grade levels, ensuring every student has access to rigorous, equitable literacy experiences.
- Formed **K–12 literacy curriculum teams** to evaluate current practices and identify resource needs.
- Developed **grade-band literacy commitments** based on research and professional learning.
- Used a **common rubric** to evaluate resources for alignment to best practices and student needs.
- **Field-tested** top options and incorporated teacher/student feedback.
- Prioritized resources that align with our **district vision**, instructional goals, and standards.

Professional Learning Foundation

Our educators have engaged in deep, multi-year professional learning with national literacy leaders including:

- **Dr. Julia Lindsey, Jan Burkins & Kari Yates, Jennifer Serravallo, Dr. Doug Fisher, and Dr. Nancy Frey**
- Topics included foundational reading, comprehension, vocabulary, writing instruction, and literacy integration across disciplines.

Recommended Resources

- **K–5: HMH Into Reading**
Aligned to Science of Reading; supports foundational skills, vocabulary, content knowledge, and writing.
- **6–8: CommonLit 360**
Provides culturally relevant texts, rigorous reading/writing tasks, and vocabulary integration.
- **6–12: NoRedInk**
Scaffolded grammar and writing support with real-time feedback and personalized learning paths.

This adoption is an investment in instructional quality, educator capacity, and student success. It builds on years of research, collaboration, and reflection—ensuring every student has access to high-quality, engaging, and equitable literacy instruction.

Board Questions/Comments:

You have put together a solid team of internal experts. Submitted questions around how we are supporting students with dyslexia?

Mrs. Willard responded that HMH is used in Barrington and we reached out to them. They presented to us and gave a lot of information about how it supports students with dyslexia.

DW-this benefits all students not just those with dyslexia.

Mrs. Willard responded that the education that our educators get is very good for all of our learners. These resources will benefit all learners.

Are there areas in dyslexia that are missing?

Mrs. Willard stated we don't have that since we have not rolled it out district wide. Where it is being used, we are getting great feedback.

What are the downsides? What are the areas they are not as strong in and what will you do to supplement?

Mrs. Willard stated we use standards based and standards driven. Once we implement, our curriculum team will gather information from teachers. It is part of the implementation phase.

What student data was used to select the reading curriculum?

Mrs. Willard noted we look at the standards and ask if it aligns with the state standards and are there scaffolds. It also has to be available in Spanish.

How will we measure needs are being met?

Mrs. Willard remarked we utilize the SIP process, MAP, classroom assessments and IAR.

Will you present that data?

Mrs. Willard responded that Dr. Nolten does an annual data review in addition to the SIP plans that are brought before the Board.

Do we have a literacy goal we are trying to reach?

Mrs. Willard stated they are in the SIP plans. The goals are by school.

Do we have district goals?

Dr. Nolten walked through the data collection process. It is about individual schools now. There used to be an emphasis on districtwide performance but that is about it. It is really about individual schools. There is not a summative status for the whole district.

Nice to be able to tell parents we are on pace to reach the district goals. Performance is different than growth. Consistent across the district.

Mrs. Willard responded that ISBE is so school based and that is how we get our designations. Jenny and I sat on the Literacy Plan review. Looking at the indicators is important because we have to make sure they are appropriate moving forward.

There is a lack of other stakeholders having a conversation. If we set a standard and do not have input from stakeholders, how will we know if we have reached success?

We look at it from a school perspective. A district goal is fine but it comes down to individual students at individual schools.

Each school may have different goals.

Superintendent Bridges stated these are all presented in the School Improvement Plans each fall to the Board.

We should have a consistent goal to see if we are reaching it. Would help parents with transparency. How do we know if it is working if we don't have the same goal?

Superintendent Bridges stated that parents should start with the teacher if they have questions and concerns about transparency. They should start at the school level.

Every school has its own needs it addresses in SIP. This is an equitable approach to address the needs of the district as a whole. In doing it that way, we are raising the district as a whole.

The model we are looking at is school based. The IL Report Card is school centered. IAR is school based. Variety of benchmarks. It all works together.

The report card is not by school, it is by district. Would be helpful if it coincides with the district. Would be nice if we set goals that coincide with the report card. Need a common destination.

Dr. Nolten stated we look at the data by school level. We like to look at it by the school level. Hard to fit a one size fits all. We like to spend time looking at data at the school level. Hope it that will show growth by the district.

I question the approach if growth is going down.

November 4 meeting has all the data presented.

We need to make a distinction between growth and achievement. District achievement has increased on level. We have many areas where we have district level goals. The granularity of the school based goals is important. What is the process where we set aggressive benchmarks?

Dr. Nolten responded that we look at successes we have had and building upon those. There are needs in certain groups and try to set an attainable goal.

What are our goals and what do we do year after year?

Achievement gaps, we are setting goals and we are achieving them. We have set aggressive goals. We do see some issues at the HS level.

Policy Review: Policy 7.180 Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Superintendent Bridges stated he this is the same introduction for the three following. Annually, these committees meet to review these three specific policies. Dr. Cohen led that work. Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mr. Cush were the Board of Education liaisons.

Dr. Cohen noted the only suggested change is a language change from PRESS. Committee made no recommended changes.

Board Questions/Comments:

Someone recommended having students who have been involved in infractions of these policies on these committees.

Superintendent Bridges stated we have strived to do so. Some years we have more success than other years. We will look at it going forward.

How are parents and students selected?

Dr. Cohen stated we rely on Principals to choose a wide demographic of parents and grade levels.

Is there a way that parents can ask to be on this?

Superintendent Bridges noted that has happened in the past. We can look at it going forward.

Policy Review: Policy 7.190 Student Discipline

Dr. Cohen stated there are no recommended changes. Lively discussion was held in the meeting.

Board Questions/Comments:

The process was great to draw the students out and share their voice.

A good job was done with the data. It gave a better understanding of the infractions. Provided a lot of depth.

When you talked about the seniors, how many senior ditch days do we have?

Dr. Cohen stated we have zero.

Policy Review: Policy 7.240 Co-Curricular Code of Participation

Dr. Cohen noted that this policy was changed significantly last year. Behavior has not changed but the additions last year increased the levels. Want to see more proactive information sharing of this policy. Change was the timing of the sharing.

Board Questions/Comments:

There is still a ways to go to help parents understand the co-curricular codes.

Discussed some changes to the process. Can you talk about it?

Dr. Cohen noted we will work with the AD and Activity directors so the message is consistent.

Expectation is high whether on school grounds or not.

Speaking to the number of times the committee gets together.

Dr. Cohen remarked that we hesitate to take students out of class more frequently.

Superintendent Bridges added that last year there was discussion around having this committee meet more frequently. Looking at the efficacy of the application of the policies. Moved the meeting to during the day and had better attendance than when it was in the evening.

We do this at the end of the year. Seems counter intuitive to do it at the end of the year. Seems like we could do it at the beginning of the year.

Superintendent Bridges stated we do it now because of the publication of the student handbook. Wouldn't want to have to change the policy after it is published.

Does each person who does the presentation have a set presentation?

Dr. Cohen stated what is shared is the code and that Counsel made the recommendation...

Innovative School Experience:

Superintendent Bridges stated there is a considerable amount of information included in BoardDocs. All that has been previously shared has been reloaded so it is all in the same place. He walked through the documents. No action this evening. Will be updating you on our ongoing work. Will share key information including the process.

Questions are current to this meeting. FAQ's are also updated. April 21 would like to come back with a recommendation for action for next steps. We will add engagement opportunities.

Board Questions/Comments:

Looking for action even though stakeholders still have so many questions? What is the hurry?

We have taken a hit with this. Concerned this is still displaying we are going to vote on something without buy in from community and staff. Whose timeline are we accommodating? I am alarmed we are calling for action when we have no new information.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Upcoming Events

Superintendent Bridges noted the following upcoming events:

- **NEF Building a Passion Breakfast on April 16, 2025-Matrix Club**
- **Next Board of Education meeting on April 21**
- **Graduations-are being held at the same time on May 18, 2025 at 2:00pm.**

Why is that? People like to go to each other's graduations.

Superintendent Bridges stated that historically they have been at the same time. There was no incident last year where a Board member could not attend both. Schools asked to limit the number of Board members.

Do we have stakeholder feedback?

Superintendent Bridges noted we could ask the schools, they set the schedule

Adjournment

Charles Cush moved, seconded by Joe Kozminski to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: Gericke, Fitzgerald, Kozminski, Cush, Wandke, McMillen, and Kelley Black. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

Approved: April 21, 2025

Kristine Gericke, President, Board of
Education

Susan Patton, Secretary, Board of
Education