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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 60540
May 19, 2025 AT 7:00 P.M., CLOSED SESSION 5:00 p.m.

Call to order

President Charles Cush called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

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

Administrators present were:

Dan Bridges, Superintendent,

Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer,

Dr. Mark Cohen, Deputy Superintendent/High Schools,

Dr. Meredith Haugens, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources,

Lisa Xagas, Assistant Superintendent for Strategy and Engagement

Others present: Joseph Perkowski, Attorney

Closed Session

Kristine Gericke moved, seconded by Amanda McMillen to go into Closed Session at 5:01 pm for consideration of:

1. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) Discussion of minutes lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for purposes of school board approval of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by the Act. 05/05/2025.
2. 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.
3. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(11) Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the school board has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal or when the school board finds an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting.
4. 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.
5. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9) Student Disciplinary Cases

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

The Board of Education entered closed session at 5:02 pm

Meeting Opening

Amanda McMillen made a motion, seconded by Joe Kozminski to return to Open Session at 7:01 pm. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: McMillen, Gericke, Blastic, Kelley Black, Willensky, Cush, and Kozminski. Those voting 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, Joe Kozminski, Amanda McMillen, Melissa Kelley Black, Holly Blastic, and Marc Willensky.

Student Ambassadors present: Lux Akinde and Kimani Smith.

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 Elmwood Elementary School Students.

Good News

Ranch View Elementary hosted its first-ever Multicultural Night on Friday, April 25, welcoming over 1,000 attendees for an evening filled with family, culture, and connection. Families shared their cultural stories, students enjoyed vibrant performances, and guests received passports to "travel the world," collecting stamps as they explored different cultures.

Special thanks to Mrs. Mishal Bahadory and the dedicated committee members, including enthusiastic family volunteers, for making this incredible night possible.

A heartfelt thank you to the MJHS Home and School for going above and beyond during Teacher Appreciation Week! Daily treats and surprises brought smiles to the faces of staff throughout the week, making this year's celebration truly special. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to supporting our teachers!

Lincoln's 6th grade PI WordMasters Team has earned 1st Place in the Nation in the prestigious WordMasters Challenge™. This competition encourages critical thinking by challenging students to master complex vocabulary and complete analogies that express various kinds of logical relationships. Throughout the school year, students participated in three challenge meets, building on their knowledge with each round and competing against schools nationwide.

Congratulations to all our 6th grade PI students for earning this incredible honor!

Student business teams from NCHS and NNHS took the stage for Naperville 203's Business INCubatoredu Pitch Night, showcasing their innovative ideas to take their businesses to the next level. Six finalist teams, including two Wild Card teams voted in by the audience, competed for additional funding:

First Place: Roam Travel

Second Place: Claspify

Third Place: Bambooty

Congratulations to all the students, mentors, and volunteers who made this event a success!

Student Ambassador Reports

Lux Akinde-NNHS

- First, here's some good news from sports. Boys gymnastics got 5th in state and Stas Kalabayda was 2nd overall in state. Badminton had a good season too, getting 9th in state, last but definitely not least our boys and girls water polo won their sectionals and are headed to state this weekend.
- On April 28th our school held the Freshman Jamboree to invite incoming Freshman to check out different clubs and activities we offer at school. There was an amazing turnout and many clubs got applications from Freshman, I was there to represent the Black Student Leadership Association and we had a lot of students of color sign up and I'm so excited for next year.
- Prom was on May 3rd the theme was The Great Gatsby, and students loved it.
- We also just had graduation on May 18th which was really bittersweet but congratulations to the class of 2025.
- The blood drive "A pint for Kim" came to North and was able to obtain a new record of 20 pints this year.

Kimani Smith-NCHS

- I'm Kimani Smith I'm a senior at Naperville Central, I've been representing us for the past two years as we wrap up April and basically wrap up May as well.
- I want to take a moment to reflect on all the amazing things that have happened at Naperville Central this past month from performances and athletics to school spirit and academic milestones.
- It's been a month full of energy, talent, and celebration.
- Our school spirit was on full display at prom this year held at the Matrix Club on April 26th.
- The new rowdies for the 2026 school year have been selected. They had their debut in the hallways today with their speakers.
- Our theater absolutely crushed it with their spring musical Grease from May 1st to May 4th. The tech crew and the performers did amazing.
- Our band, orchestra, and choir concerts performed on May 12th, 13th, and 14th and they truly left memorable and talented performances.
- In athletics, our girls track and field team has several senior athletes making their way to state with a few underclassmen joining them as well.
- Boys volleyball also had a great run highlighted by a solid 2 victories against Waubonsie Valley on May 2nd showing the kind of teamwork and focus that defines Red Hawk sports.
- Our senior awards were held on May 6th.
- Congratulations to our seniors who are future educators, Illinois Global Scholar Award winners, seven semester 4.0 students.
- We had our commemorative ceremony for our seniors where CJ Getting gave an inspirational yet relatable opening speech and senior Kimani Smith followed him commemorating the class of 2025, it's on YouTube if anyone wants to see me speak. We moved on to our commencement ceremony where seniors Nina Ralph and Henry Alman gave speeches that I may or may not have shed a tear to.

- Thank you for helping make Central a very special place.
- Let's keep the momentum going and finish the school year in a strong way.
- Thank you so much for having me these past few years it's been amazing.

Public Comments

President Cush gave parameters for Public Comment.

A number of speakers voiced strong opposition to the current policy allowing transgender girls to compete in girls' athletics. They cited perceived unfair biological advantages, concerns for safety and privacy in locker rooms, and the belief that such participation undermines Title IX protections for girls. Several individuals spoke of potential legal and financial consequences, including civil rights complaints, lawsuits, and the risk of losing federal funding. Many referenced evidence to support their stance and argued that the policy was enacted without adequate public input or board approval. Many speakers praised District 203's commitment to inclusion and compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act and IHSA guidance. Supporters emphasized that being transgender is not a choice and that inclusive policies protect vulnerable students from harm. They condemned the public targeting and doxing of a minor and accused outside groups of using the situation to push a political agenda rooted in fear and misinformation. Advocates shared personal stories, affirmed the science of gender diversity, and underscored the importance of ensuring all students feel seen, respected, and safe in school communities.

President Cush 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.

Monthly Reports

- Treasury Report- The Board received the March Treasurer's Statement
- Investments- The Board received the March Investment Report
- Insurance-The Board received the March Insurance Report
- Budget-The Board Received the March Budget Report

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 4:00 pm, Thursday, May 15, 2025. No emails bounced back.

1. Bills and Claims from WARRANT NO. 1068068 THRU 1068526 AND WARRANT NO. 9000000114 TOTALING \$27,390,549.38 FOR THE PERIOD OF April 22, 2025 TO May 19, 2025. Charles thanked Marc Willensky for shadowing him and Michelle Swope for her help. Marc noted that it was a great experience and gives the Board a time to review the spending of the District. It is not an audit. I learned a lot. Thanked Michelle Swope. Pleasure working with her.

I was the Board of Education member who did not do Bills and Claims. I am hoping we can have some resolution on this matter. I have a fiduciary duty. According to our own Policy 2.20 I can face criminal charges if I don't follow the laws of the School Code. She read the school code on how School Districts are to keep their expenditures. Bills and Claims is the process that our district uses. The District does not use the budgeting requirements. Board members do not know the purpose and why and what department funds are spent from. I will state that I have asked for Bills and Claims to be presented in that format. It is my job to see where money is being spent. Why are we given less information?

When I have asked for the information from Superintendent Bridges, he has told me he is not under any obligation to give me that info unless directed by the Board. What policy states that? Difficult to perform if practices are not transparent. If I want this info in the accounting standards, why am I blocked from it especially if I can FOIA it? I should not be blocked from information. I am asking for transparency and will do what I can get it in that format.

We have gotten our attorney to provide a legal opinion and it is loaded in BoardDocs. He read a portion of the memo. Where have you received the legal advice that says you would be held liable. Further as a Board, this is the practice the board has chosen to follow. We can review this process. We will have an opportunity to do that at our Self Evaluation.

I actually quoted from the letter from the attorney. I did the due diligence of looking at the laws. I sent you this ahead of time so we could have a conversation. You spent money to have the attorney give an opinion and surprise me with it. I don't think that is the way a board collaborates.

2. Personnel Report

	Effective Date	Location	Position
REASSIGNMENT-ADMINISTRATION			
Lora Nowicki	7/1/2025	Highlands	Interim Principal
APPOINTMENT-ADMINISTRATION			
Tracey Ratner	7/1/2025	Scott	Principal
Erin Rae	7/28/2025	Mill	Assistant Principal
LEAVE OF ABSENCE-ADMINISTRATION			
Laura Noon	08/30/2025-6/30.2026	Highlands	Principal
RESIGNATION-CERTIFIED			
Matthew Cassaidy	5/27/2025	NCHS	General Technical Arts Teacher
Sarah Johnson	8/10/2025	Mill Street	LBS Teacher
Amanda Carnrike	8/10/2025	Ranch View	5th Grade Teacher
Lisa Liace	8/4/2025	Scott	School Psychologist
Stefanie Meerman	8/10/2025	JJHS	FACS Teacher
REASSIGNMENT-ADMINISTRATION TO CERTIFIED			
Megan Plackett	8/11/2025	NCHS	Comm Arts Teacher

APPOINTMENT-CERTIFIED FULL-TIME			
Deyanira Magana	8/11/2025	Mill Street	4th Grade Dual Language Teacher
Lila Engelbrecht	8/11/2025	Naper	3rd Grade Teacher
Anne Tassi	8/11/2025	Meadow Glens	Learning Behavior Specialist
Jordan McKenna	08/11/2025-12/19/2025	Maplebrook	4th Grade Teacher
Lacy Bundren	8/11/2025	Kingsley	Learning Behavior Specialist
Bryan Morefield	8/11/2025	Lincoln JHS	PE Teacher
Jacob Rojo	8/11/2025	Lincoln JHS	PE Teacher
Argiro Vranas	8/11/2025	Madison JHS	EL Teacher
Katherine Cochran	8/11/2025	Scott	Speech Language Pathologist
Melanie Phipps	8/11/2025	Kingsley	Kindergarten Teacher
Alexis Banovetz	8/11/2025	Meadow Glens	4th Grade Teacher
Olivia Frye	8/11/2025	Naper	1st Grade Teacher
Paige Sawatzky	8/11/2025	Highlands	5th Grade Teacher
Katherine Bradley	8/11/2025	Elmwood	3rd Grade Teacher
Samantha Rochowicz	8/11/2025	Kennedy JHS	Learning Behavior Specialist
Catherine Reid	8/11/2025	NCHS	WCL-Spanish Teacher
RE-EMPLOYMENT-CERTIFIED FULL-TIME			
Megan Drake	8/11/2025	Ellsworth	2nd Grade Teacher
Marissa Velez	8/11/2025	Beebe	2nd Grade Teacher
Janet Chang	8/11/2025	Kingsley	EL Teacher
Amy Smith	8/11/2025	NNHS	EL Teacher
Lauren Anthony	8/11/2025	NNHS	Speech Language Pathologist
Tanner Mateus	8/11/2025	NNHS	Science Teacher
Emily Cooke	8/11/2025	Mill St	Learning Behavior Specialist
Jillian Balaskas	8/11/2025	Mill St	5th Grade Teacher
RE-EMPLOYMENT-CERTIFIED PART-TIME			
Elaine Jackson	8/11/2025	JJHS & WJHS	Art Teacher
RETIREMENT-CLASSIFIED			
Anthony Lavarda	10/31/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
Donald French	5/28/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
Robert Levinson	12/31/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
Donna Pellegrino	6/1/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
RESIGNATION-CLASSIFIED			
Julie Jones	5/27/2025	NNHS	LRC Assistant
Nadene Nastat	5/16/2025	NNHS	Department Secretary

Samantha Gehrs	8/12/2025	Kingsley	Special Education Paraprofessional
Jana Dawson	5/28/2025	Kingsley	Special Education Paraprofessional
Maria Aguilera Guerrero	5/16/2025	Elmwood	Dual Language Paraprofessional
Maria Franco	5/16/2025	Ann Reid	Special Education Paraprofessional
Georgina Petrik	8/12/2025	River Woods	Special Education Paraprofessional
Larry Gadola	5/28/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
Jim Kuntzi	5/23/2025	NNHS	Special Education Paraprofessional
EMPLOYMENT- CLASSIFIED FULL- TIME			
Arben Mizaku	5/12/2025	Steeple Run/Highlands	Custodian
David Atkins	5/12/2025	Transportation	Bus Driver
LEAVE OF ABSENCE- CLASSIFIED			
Jeff O'Connor	3/6/2025- 3/6/2026	Transportation	Bus Driver

3. Board meeting Minutes: 05/05/2025

4. Closed Session Minutes: 05/05/2025

5. Waste/Recycling Bids

The recycling part of this bid, will this expand recycling opportunities? Does this include the CAP?

Mrs. Brown responded if the contract is awarded, we will sit down with the vendor to make sure they are going to be able to roll that out to the schools.

The recommended bid was not the lowest.

Mrs. Brown noted in the scope of review they were close. Groot accounted for everything we asked for the other did not understand what we were asking for and that made them no longer the lowest bidder.

Joe Kozminski made a motion to approve the Waste/Recycling Bid as presented seconded by Kristine Gericke. Those voting yes: McMillen, Blastic, Gericke, Willensky, Kelley Black, Cush, and Kozminski. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

6. Asphalt Work

7. MOU with NTA

Charles Cush made a motion to approve WARRANT NO. 1068068 THRU 1068526 AND WARRANT NO. 9000000114 TOTALING \$27,390,549.38 FOR THE PERIOD OF April 22, 2025 TO May 19, 2025 and items 7.02, 7.03, 7.04, 7.06, and 7.07 on the Consent agenda seconded by Amanda McMillen. Those voting yes: Kozminski, Kelley Black, McMillen, Willensky, Gericke, Blastic, and Cush. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

Communications

Written Communications

Freedom of Information Requests:

YamiFresh Freedom of Information Act Request-Business Office Information
Sounds Good Pro Freedom of Information Act Request-Human Resources Information
Lynch Freedom of Information Act Request-Business Office Information
Recyclingit Freedom of Information Act Request-Business Office Information
Academy Research Freedom of Information Act Request-Human Resources Information
Smart Procure Freedom of Information Act Request-Business Office Information
Waste Management Freedom of Information Act Request-Business Office Information

It is practice that we receive what has been requested and this time we did not.

There was discussion that there has been no change in practice and that both requests and responses have been posted.

I will go check and if I am wrong, then I am wrong.

Board of Education Reports:

Board member McMillen reported on the Legislative Education Network of DuPage County (LEND), highlighting their work on a balanced budget, dual credit legislation, foreign language requirements, and FOIA/OMA relief for school districts receiving AI-generated requests

Board member Kozminski attended the Workforce Innovation Meeting and the Business Incubator Pitch Night, noting it was the largest ever with 98 groups. He also visited Lincoln, praising the new PLTW and FACS rooms.

Vice President Gericke mentioned she would begin working on assignments for next year's adopted schools and committees. Please send her your availability and the schools your children attend.

Presidents Report

Graduation was a wonderful event and one of the favorite parts of our work.

President Cush attended a Citizens Finance Committee meeting, noting a positive discussion about district finances and alignment with community leaders. This is a wonderful process to get their feedback.

He reminded Board members of the board's upcoming annual self-evaluation in mid-June with an IASB representative, where they will review processes and board agreements to ensure effective operation.

Superintendents Report

No report.

Discussion without Action:

2025-2026 Budget Workshop

Superintendent Bridges reminded the Board and community that the tentative budget was placed on public display on May 9th, and the Citizens Finance Advisors met, showing general support for the district's direction. This was the second of four opportunities for board questions, with a workshop scheduled for June 2nd and a public hearing for June 16th

Mr. Frances had no new information to add.

Board Questions/Comments:

Is it possible to get the worksheet that is used the state earlier? This will help with budget questions.

Mr. Frances stated the state budget form just became available. It is a different format that our internal budget though our underlying coding is consistent with state requirements. I had to request that it get done early. We just downloaded it. It will be presented to the Board the night we approve the budget.

Superintendent Bridges added that to provide it earlier would be changing the work load for staff. One Board member doesn't task the staff, so if the Board as a whole would like to task Mr. Frances and his team to get that ready for June 2 instead of June 16, I'd like to get that direction from the whole Board.

What is the value to you to have the worksheet?

It gives more specific information. It is recommended that we review that form each month.

Mr. Frances, with the budget you provide, you use internal codes?

Mr. Frances responded yes. We use the same accounting code that ISBE uses.

In the budget workbook, those are the same revenue and expense codes?

Mr. Frances remarked we are working on being more accurate with where the function they are being paid for is. The revenue and expenditure codes on the state form are no more detailed than what is in the document you have. The state document is the same document that is used by every district in the state. We have over 4000 account numbers that are based on the state's accounting codes.

This is not my choice; it is what is advised of Boards from all the conferences and webinars that I have attended.

We have two more looks at this so continue to review and send questions.

Board Meeting Schedule

Board Questions/Comments:

None.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 Board Meeting Schedule as presented, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: McMillen, Blastic, Willensky, Gericke, Cush, Kozminski, Kelley Black. No: None. The motion carried.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

None.

Upcoming Events

- **Next Board of Education meeting on Monday, June 2, 2025 to be held at PSAC.**
- **Working on drafting the Board of Education planning calendar.**
- **No school on Monday May 26.**
- **Last day of school on May 27.**

Adjournment:

Kristine Gericke moved, seconded by Amanda McMillen to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 pm. A roll call vote was taken. 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 Patton, Secretary, Board of
Education