
MINUTES OF AN ORGANIZATIONAL 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. May 5, 2025 AT 7:00 P.M., CLOSED SESSION 6:00 p.m.

Call to order

President Kristine Gericke called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board members present: Kristin Fitzgerald, Kristine Gericke, Melissa Kelley Black, Donna Wandke, Charles Cush, Joe Kozminski (arrived at 6:03pm), and Amanda McMillen (arrived at 6:05pm).

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

Also present: Board Member Elect Holly Blastic and Board Member Elect Marc Willensky.

Closed Session

Charles Cush moved, seconded by Kristin Fitzgerald to go into Closed Session at 6:01 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 Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by the Act. 04/21/2025
3. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(2) Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives.
4. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the school board, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired.
5. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9) Student Disciplinary Cases.

A roll call vote was taken, those voting yes: Cush, Fitzgerald, Gericke, Kelley Black, and Wandke

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 7:19 pm. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: McMillen, Gericke, Fitzgerald, Kelley Black, Wandke, Cush, and Kozminski. 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, Donna Wandke, Amanda McMillen, Melissa Kelley Black, Joe Kozminski, and Charles Cush.

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:

Elmwood's second graders recently took the stage for a joyful concert titled *"Around the World,"* celebrating global music and culture. The students impressed the audience with their talent and enthusiasm. Special thanks to Mr. Byrnes and Ms. Rice for their dedication in preparing such a memorable performance!

Families, students, and staff came together at Jefferson Junior High for Bilingüepalooza, a joyful celebration of language, culture, and community. The event highlighted the power of bilingualism and connection. Thank you to everyone who helped make this Dual Language event unforgettable!

To gear up for MAP testing, Madison Junior High hosted a spirited "Glow Your Score" Pep Rally on April 25. Students and staff dressed in neon and participated in games centered around test-taking tips, building excitement and confidence ahead of the assessments!

Dr. Ryan Smith, Communication Arts teacher at Naperville North, has been awarded the prestigious Harlan R. Teller Dissertation Award by Northern Illinois University for his dissertation, *"After the Collapse: Herman Melville's and Friedrich Nietzsche's Existentialism."* This award recognizes the top English Department dissertation of the previous 2023-2024 academic year. Dr. Smith earned his PhD in May 2024. Congratulations Dr. Smith!

We are proud to recognize our outstanding students who have earned the **Seal of Biliteracy at Naperville North**, a prestigious honor awarded to those who have demonstrated proficiency in two or more languages. This accomplishment reflects not only linguistic skill but also dedication, perseverance, and a deep appreciation for cultural diversity.

Their achievement exemplifies our district's commitment to preparing global citizens who value and embrace the richness of multiple languages and cultures.

Please join us in celebrating their success and the bright futures that lie ahead!

Naperville Central recently welcomed representatives from the College of DuPage for a dynamic Takeover Day. Students explored future opportunities through one-on-one conversations about scholarships, programs, and career pathways. Thank you to COD and all the incredible reps for supporting our students' post-secondary planning!

Twenty-six seniors from Naperville Central and Naperville North signed their commitment to pursue careers in education during last week's Future Educator Signing Day. Their passion, drive, and dedication to service reflect the very best of #Elevate203. We're proud to celebrate their inspiring next step!

Naperville 203 is celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week by honoring the incredible educators who inspire, support, and uplift students every day. Schools across the district are showing their gratitude with thoughtful messages, treats, and heartfelt thank-yous. Thank you, teachers, for everything you do!

Public Comment:

President Gericke gave the parameters for public comment.

Meredith Goodwin representing Defense of Democracy, will have a K in the Fall. Goal of keeping extremism out of schools. Publicly saying thank you to teachers in our district. Thanked teachers for continuing to have welcome classrooms for all students. Thank you for staying strong in this environment.

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.

President Gericke reminded the Board and Community of the board agreements. She 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 4:01 pm, Thursday, May 1, 2025. No emails bounced back.

Action by Consent:

1. Adoption of Personnel Report

	Effective Date	Location	Position
RESIGNATION-ADMINISTRATION			
Kimberly Rutan	6/30/2025	Ellsworth	Principal
APPOINTMENT-ADMINISTRATION			
Jill Loewe	7/1/2025	Washington	Assistant Principal
Mike Curley	8/4/2025	NNHS	Dean
Robyn Rippel	4/8/2025	Highlands	Interim Assistant Principal
RETIREMENT-CERTIFIED			
Judith Dore	5/27/2025	KJHS	World Language-Spanish
RESIGNATION-CERTIFIED			
Noelle Tragasz	8/10/2025	NNHS	Business Teacher
APPOINTMENT-CERTIFIED FULL-TIME			

Kevin Walsh	8/11/2025	MJHS/KJHS	PE/Health Teacher
Tyler Lange	8/11/2025	WJHS	Band Teacher
Jennifer McKnight	8/11/2025	LJHS	EL/Math Teacher
Allison Case	8/11/2025	Steeple Run	4th Grade Teacher
Stephanie Buerger	8/11/2025	Naper	Learning Support Coach
Kaitlyn McMullen	8/11/2025	JJHS/MJHS/ Ranch View	Occupational Therapist
Julie Pavon	8/11/2025	Ranch View	School Psychologist
Amanda Pineda	0811/2025	River Woods/ Scott	Occupational Therapist
Lauren Duncan	0811/2025	Kingsley	School Social Worker
Jordan Wiles	8/11/2025	Meadow Glens	School Psychologist
Jaime Lenhart	8/11/2025	Mill St/ Beebe	School Social Worker
Kaitlyn Villasenor	8/11/2025	Beebe/ Ellsworth	Occupational Therapist
APPOINTMENT-CERTIFIED PART-TIME			
Michael Tuskey	8/11/2025	LJHS	WL-Spanish Teacher
Devyn Courtney	8/11/2025	ARECC	School Psychologist
REVISED CONTRACT-CERTIFIED PART-TIME			
Kathleen Downs	8/11/2025	MJHS	School Psychologist
RE-EMPLOYMENT-CERTIFIED FULL-TIME			
Alexis Hilgert	8/11/2025	NNHS	PE/Wellness Teacher
Michael Jeszke	8/11/2025	NNHS	Band Teacher
Jackie Hampton	8/11/2025	NCHS	Math/Academic Support Teacher
LEAVE OF ABSENCE-CERTIFIED			
Lauren Guerrero	SY 2025/2026	Naper	2nd Grade
EXTEND LEAVE OF ABSENCE- CERTIFIED			
Megan Lynch	8/11/25 - 12/19/25	NCHS	Mathematics
RETIREMENT-NON-UNION CLASSIFIED			
Cheri Feightner	8/5/2025	PSAC	Human Resources Generalist
RESIGNATION-CLASSIFIED			
Amelia Galindo Abarca	6/30/2025	Mill St	Executive Secretary
Brenden Woldman	5/23/2025	Prairie	Special Education Paraprofessional
Parker Gaglia	8/4/2025	NNHS	LRC Assistant
EMPLOYMENT-CLASSIFIED FULL-TIME			
Sincere Turnage	4/28/2025	NCHS	Campus Supervisor

Sharine Pilcher	5/5/2025	Elmwood	Custodian
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A Board member had questions about positions.

President Gericke stated these are Closed Session questions.

Hold for a future item on an agenda.

Please email the questions that you do not believe have been addressed.

Can these go on old or new business on a future agenda?

Kristin Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the Personnel memo as presented, seconded by Amanda McMillen. Those voting yes: Kozminski, Kelley Black, McMillen, Wandke, Gericke, Fitzgerald, and Cush. No: None. The motion carried.

2. Open Session Minutes April 21, 2025

Board member wanted CLIC-minutes to reflect that there is a document for who we are supposed to use as our attorney. Can the minutes reflect that what was said was true?

President Gericke reminded Board member that the minutes are a reflection of the conversation

We argue every time. If we revert to the facts, we don't have to have the same argument. We need to acknowledge that we do in fact have to use the Board Attorney that CLIC has in their document.

Donna Wandke made a motion to approve the April 21, 2025 Open Session minutes as presented, seconded by Amanda McMillen. Those voting yes: McMillen, Kozminski, Fitzgerald, Cush, Gericke, Kelley Black, and Wandke. No: None. The motion carried.

3. Closed Session Minutes April 21, 2025

4. Student Discipline as Discussed in Closed Session

Donna Wandke made a motion to approve the April 21, 2025 Closed Session minutes and Student Discipline as discussed in Closed Session as presented, seconded by Amanda McMillen. Those voting yes: Cush, Kelley Black, Fitzgerald, Wandke, Kozminski, McMillen, and Gericke. No: None. The motion carried.

Recognition: President Gericke gave some comments about Kristin Fitzgerald and Donna Wandke. She presented plaques and other gifts to Kristin and Donna.

Members of the Board expressed their gratitude to Kristin and Donna for their service. Superintendent Bridges thanked them both for their work over the past 12 years.

Kristin shared her thoughts about serving this district. This has been one of the biggest joys of her life. Proud to be a part of the work of the Board. We have worked to have fewer students feel invisible. Grateful to have been a small piece of the growth of the district. She thanked her fellow board members and the gifts that each bring to the table and to the district. Cherish each individual friendship. Will continue to support you from near and far. She told Dan and the Administrative team that she sees them and the hard work they are doing to make the District better. Grateful for knowledge, leadership. Believe you are the leaders for this time. You are supported by the community. Thanked students and staff-privileged to watch the magic that happens every day. Thanked the parents, community and community partners More to do and that can be daunting. Look forward to supporting you. Glad to return to my old field of public policy. Thank you for this special time. Kristin thanked her family and friends and Board members now and in the past for their support.

Donna also shared some parting thoughts. So many came here for the school district as did my family. I started as a Math teacher and athletic trainer. Thanked the community for trusting her to lead in this district. An honor to be a voice of the community and being a steward of tax dollars. Shared some new ideas, full day kindergarten and others came from the Administration. Credit goes to the staff and Administration. Better Board member because of the trust of staff and community who shared their thoughts with me. She shared special thoughts about each Board member and others including her family who have supported her work as a Board of Education member.

Adjournment:

Adjourn Sine Die (A Latin expression meaning “indefinitely, or without a date set for a future meeting.”)

Kristine Fitzgerald made a motion to adjourn sine die at 8:05p.m. Donna Wandke seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: Cush, McMillen, Kozminski, Kelley Black, Fitzgerald, Wandke, and Gericke. No: None. Motion carried.

Superintendent Bridges noted that this Board has recessed. He invited all to Rooms D and E for a reception to honor Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Wandke.

Meeting Opening

Welcome and Mission:

Following a brief recess, Board President Pro Tem Kristine Gericke called the meeting back to order.

Review Election Results-Information Only:

April 1, 2025 Election

Superintendent Bridges noted that the results from the April 1, 2025 election are in BoardDocs and asked if there were any questions.

Seating of Re-Elected and Newly Elected Board of Education Members:

The Counties of DuPage and Will have certified the results of the election and declared that the official winners are incumbent Board members, Charles Cush and Amanda McMillen. Additionally, Holly Blastic and Marc Willensky were also declared a winner.

Oath of Office:

Mrs. Gericke invited the all newly re-elected Board members and the two new Board members to stand and read the Oath of Office together.

Mrs. Gericke welcomed all new board members and invited Mr. Cush, Ms. McMillen, Ms. Blastic, and Mr. Willensky to introduce their guests for the evening. All thanked the community and introduced their family members who are here.

Superintendent Bridges shared appreciation to the families of the Board members.

Roll Call:

A roll call was taken at 8:35 pm.

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

Election of President:

Superintendent Bridges noted that Districts set their own policy. He reviewed Policy 2.104, Internal Organization. President Gericke will receive nominations.

Kristine Gericke asked for nominations for the President of the Board of Education. Gericke nominated Charles Cush for President. She shared his strengths. President Gericke thanked her Board colleagues and the Superintendent and staff. Ms. McMillen seconded with much encouragement for Mr. Cush.

Kelley Black nominated Marc Willensky for President. She shared his strengths. Stakeholders are ready for a change. Marc's commitment to foster collaboration and transparency. She quoted Illinois School Code multiple times. Unique position of being a new member of our Board. Marc does not know I am doing this. Think we need some change. Nice to have some leadership that has more backing of staff and community.

Mr. Willensky declined the nomination.

A roll call vote was taken. Those voting for Mr. Cush for President: Cush, McMillen, Blastic, Willensky, Kozminski, and Gericke. Those voting no: None. Abstain: Kelley Black. Mr. Cush was declared President of the Board of Education.

Election of Vice President:

President Cush asked for nominations for Vice President. Kelley Black nominated Marc Willensky. She spoke again of his strengths. Cush nominated Kristine Gericke as Vice President. Cush spoke of her leadership and strengths. There were no other nominations.

Mr. Willensky declined the nomination.

A roll call vote was taken. Those voting for Ms. Gericke for Vice President: McMillen, Kozminski, Willensky, Cush, Gericke, and Blastic. Those voting no: None. Abstain: Kelley Black. Ms. Gericke was declared Vice President of the Board of Education.

Public Comment:
None.

Consent Agenda:

1. Appointment/Salary of Secretary

What is the salary of the secretary?

Superintendent Bridges shared the salary of the secretary is currently \$5000 and it is paid as a stipend on top of Mrs. Patton's salary as Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and the Board.

Why is her salary under the Board of Education as she is Superintendent Bridges' assistant?

Mr. Frances shared that she is also the Board of Education secretary

Under the new budget it says salaries are \$164, 098.00 and these are volunteer positions so I am unclear as to whose salary that's made up of.

Mr. Frances stated that it is Mrs. Patton's salary and that the Board picks up the NUEA release of their President. It is an accounting entry. They could be moved but it would have no impact on the budget.

I know the public sees this and they would think we are paid.

There was discussion of other expenses like legal fees paid by the Board of Education.

President Cush called a Point of Order as the topic for discussion is the salary of the Board of Education Secretary.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Appointment of the Secretary as presented seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: Gericke, Kozminski, McMillen, Willensky, Kelley Black, Blastic, and Cush. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

2. Lease Agreement

When were we notified of this need? I keep saying we need a facilities assessment. Why is this under the consent agenda? I understand the need but I am concerned about the untimeliness of this lease. This limits us in meaningful oversight. We need adequate time to review these items. Superintendent Bridges has yet to give the Board of Education facilities update. I urge we table this agenda item. Appreciate the administration addressing our immediate needs.

Superintendent Bridges noted that on October 21, 2024, the Board approved a facilities plan and it will be shared in the fall.

We have not been made aware of this need. I am asking that we have more time to review.

Superintendent Bridges, can you put some context around this?

Superintendent Bridges stated, we have shared with the Board that we have needs at the transportation facility now. This is a temporary location across the street.

Facility is across the street. Does this include all build out?

Superintendent Bridges stated there is minimal work needed.

Mr. Frances added there is no build out needed.

It says there will be a shuttle?

Superintendent Bridges stated that will be for drivers who need assistance crossing the street.

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

Board of Education Reports:

Board member McMillen reported that last weekend went back to rural Ohio-Heard about how amazing the SPED dept is and how they would like to work here.

Board member Kozminski reported on the Diversity Committee meeting last week. Heard about a number of events going on in the community and the Panorama Survey.

President's Report:

None.

Superintendent/Staff/School Reports:

None.

Discussion without Action:

Superintendent Bridges invited Chief Finance Officer/CSBO Michael Frances to present the 2025-2026 tentative budget. Superintendent Bridges reminded that this is the first of four meetings to discuss the tentative budget. We will build a public document with the questions from the Board of Education that the Chief Financial Officer answers. This document will be posted in BoardDocs. This budget reflects the needs of our students and staff. Please send questions to Superintendent Bridges and they will be posted in BoardDocs.

2025-2026 Tentative Budget Presentation:

- The District 203 budget is a critical financial tool that serves multiple purposes: meeting legal obligations, guiding fiscal decisions, supporting long-term strategic planning, and providing transparency and accountability. It reflects the District's goals and priorities and is continuously monitored, analyzed, and adjusted throughout the year.
- The budget is a legal requirement and strategic financial roadmap.
- It informs the 5-year financial forecast and is reviewed by auditors for end-of-year variance analysis.
- Developed using known data and informed estimates, particularly regarding uncertain revenue sources like state and federal funding.
- The planning cycle begins in fall, with updates to enrollment and financial forecasts, and continues into spring with department-level budget development and staffing projections.
- The District follows a timeline to adopt the budget ahead of the statutory deadline (September 30).
- The tentative budget will be reviewed with the Citizens Finance Advisors Committee and finalized for approval in June.

- Projected total revenue for FY26: **\$355.5 million**, a **3.3% increase** from FY25.
- Local property taxes are the primary source, accounting for **over 85%** of revenue. A **\$11.3 million** increase is projected due to CPI adjustments and new construction.
- State and federal contributions remain limited at **8.3%**. Evidence-Based Funding increases have minimal impact, while other federal revenue is projected to decline.
- Investment income is expected to rise due to favorable short-term interest rates.
- Total projected expenditures for FY26: **\$379.5 million**, a **6.5% increase** from FY25.
- **Personnel costs (salaries and benefits)** remain the largest expense, comprising **over 75%** of the budget and increasing by **6.5%**.
- Capital Projects Fund includes over **\$22 million** for approved construction projects (Ranch View, Connections, and Naperville North), contributing significantly to the overall expenditure increase.
- Projected deficit: **\$24 million**, largely due to one-time capital expenditures.
- Adjusted for capital projects, the structural deficit is considerably smaller.
- Fund balance disclosures, required by Public Act 102-0895, show the District's financial health and reserves.
- This tentative budget is a forward-looking plan balancing strategic investment in infrastructure and instructional initiatives with conservative revenue estimates and responsible fiscal stewardship.

Board of Education Questions/Comments:
I will send my questions a head of time.

2025-2026 Board Meeting Calendar

Superintendent Bridges walked through the proposed dates on the draft Board meeting calendar. Basic operating procedure is to meet on the first and third meeting when possible. Noted that in September we will meet on the second and fourth Mondays. This does not reflect a Board of Education Self Evaluation. You will likely be asked about dates in the summer. Please review your calendars and send any thoughts to Charles or Kristine.

Board of Education Questions/Comments:
None.

Discussion with Action:

Establish Date for Public Hearing and Direct FY26 Tentative Budget to be put on Public Display:

Superintendent Bridges reported that the Board is required to adopt a budget by September 30, 2025. The Board is also required to set the date of public hearing on the budget and to set the date to display the budget on May 9, 2025 and set date of public hearing.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the resolution to establish date for Public Hearing and Direct FY26 Tentative Budget to be put on Public Display, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: Blastic, Willensky, Kelley Black, Kozminski, McMillen, Gericke, and Cush No: None. Motion carried.

New Business
None

Old Business
None

Upcoming Events

Commencement on May 18.

Mrs. Patton will email assignments and if you need regalia.

May 19 next meeting.

Adjournment

Melissa Kelley Black moved seconded by Amanda McMillen to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 p.m. Those voting yes: Kelley Black, Willensky, Gericke, Cush, McMillen, Kozminski, and Blastic. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

Approved: May 19, 2025

Charles Cush, President
Board of Education

Susan S. Patton, Secretary
Board of Education