



**WEST CHICAGO ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT 33**

Kristina Davis Ed.S., Superintendent  
December 5, 2024, Board Briefs

Rita Balgeman, Board President  
Morgan Banasiak, Board Vice President  
Tom Doyle, Board Secretary  
Chad McLean, Board Treasurer

Sandra Garcia, Board Member  
Felicia Gills, Board Member  
Janette Hernandez, Board Member

The Board of Education's regular meeting was held at Leman Middle School on Thursday, December 5, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

**Board Members in Attendance**

Rita Balgeman, Tom Doyle, Chad McLean, Felicia Gills, and Sandra Garcia were present. Morgan Banasiak and Jannette Hernandez were absent.

**Additions/Changes to the Agenda**

Item XVI. Reason 2 - Student Discipline will be removed from the agenda.

**Public Hearing - Tax Levy**

The Board of Education held a public hearing on the 2024 tax levy. Mrs. Karen Apostoli, Executive Director of Business and Operations, reviewed the levy process, mentioning that at its November 21, 2024 meeting, the Board of Education approved the intent to levy taxes for the upcoming fiscal year. Notice of this public hearing was published in a local West Chicago newspaper on November 24, 2024, in accordance with State law, and also posted on the District 33 website. On December 19, 2024, the Board of Education will vote to approve an aggregate Tax Levy for the upcoming fiscal year. If any community member would like to make a public comment regarding the 2024 Property Tax levy, please do so now. No public comment was made. This concludes the Public Hearing on the 2024 Property Tax levy.

**Shared Agreements:**

1. *Make decisions according to what is best for ALL District 33 students.*
2. *Respect staff and other board members and their opinions.*
3. *Be willing to see things from the eyes of seven (7) people, not just one (1).*
4. *Allow everyone to complete their thoughts.*
5. *Commit to shared leadership.*
6. *Respect confidentiality.*
7. *Adhere to our belief in our students' full potential and successful future.*

### **Strategic Plan Goals**

*Goal #1 – Student Growth and Achievement*

*Goal #2 – Learning Culture of Equity, Engagement & Agency*

*Goal #3 – Professional Culture of Teamwork & Continuous Improvement*

*Goal #4 – Family Engagement & Community Partnerships*

*Goal #5 - Effective and Innovative Use of Resources*

### **Shared Agreements Reflection**

At the July 18, 2013, meeting, the Board of Education finalized their “shared agreements” and agreed to begin each regular board meeting by reflecting on one agreement. The Board revised the shared agreements on November 6, 2014. The agreement's purpose is to help maintain a positive environment in which to conduct board work.

Board member Felicia Gills shared her statement: “Simon Sinek said, ‘Our need to belong is not always rational, but it is a constant that exists across all people and all cultures.’”

The need to be loved and to belong is an irreducible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, and spiritually wired to love, be loved, and belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we are meant to. Some kids break. Fall apart, numb, ache, hurt, ache, or even get sick. Here at D33, we commit to ensuring that in our efforts to uphold and adhere to our belief in all students and their full potential and successful future, they know they belong. Families that move into our district and those born here will know and respond to a sense of belonging in all our schools.

We have made great achievements over the last decade in our bilingual programs and Middle School Clubs. Let's keep the momentum going and continue to build a great community with phenomenal family engagement with all.”

### **Recognition/Showcase/Presentation**

#### ***Pioneer Preschool Superintendent for the Day***

Preschoolers participated in Superintendent for the day for the first time with boundless energy and emerging leadership skills. On November 13, 2024, students Jahyr, Henry, Charlotte, and Maizy were superintendents for the Day at Pioneer Preschool. The students met with Mrs. Davis and observed several classrooms. Jahyr and Henry attended the board meeting and agreed with Mrs. Leah Nelson, Assistant Principal, that their peers follow the “we are safe, we are kind, and we work together” expectations. Superintendent Davis thanked the students and their parents and looks forward to seeing what great leaders they will become.

#### ***Showcase - Pioneer Preschool - Developmentally Appropriate Play***

Leah Nelson, Assistant Principal, presented a video examining student play on a regular school day. Appropriate self-directed play can be a powerful tool in teaching academic concepts in preschool. “When children engage in self-directed play, educators and parents see huge growth in the students' creativity and imagination and see explosions in language development,” said Principal Brenda Vishanoff. Growth is also seen in social-emotional skills, such as playing well with others and building relationships. Students are free to choose where to play and what to play. While playing, children learn

about emotions, problem-solving, strengthening friendships, sharing, taking turns, and being kind.

### Board Salutes

The Board Salutes will be a standing item on the agenda starting with the February 3, 2022, board meeting. The Board of Education would like to recognize individuals of the District 33 community - which includes all staff members, students, bus drivers, parents/guardians, and guardians - for actions that build a positive culture and climate in District 33. This “shout-out” will become part of the official Board minutes under Board Salutes on the bi-weekly agendas.

**Salute to:** Emily Prowell, Teacher, Pioneer Preschool

**Submitted by:** JoBeth Wilson, Social Worker, Pioneer Preschool

“Emily has jumped into our preschool program as a first-year self-contained teacher. Her positive attitude and effortless flexibility have been so amazing to watch and see how much progress our students are making. She takes on new challenges with the confidence most veteran teachers strive for. She works collaboratively with her team, where everyone feels confident in their role within the class. She's a delight to work with and is going to be a leader in our program!”

### Presentation - Literacy Pilot Update

Lea DeLuca, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, provided the Board with an update on the piloting of Amplify. All of the schools have teachers who volunteered to pilot the program. Indian Knoll has a complete school piloting and Currier school with all except for 3 teachers. A timeline and next steps were also provided. A final recommendation will be brought to the Board in early February.

### E.T.A.W.C. Statement

No E.T.A.W.C. statement at this time.

### Public Comment

No public statement at this time.

### Superintendent News: Pioneer Preschool

The Superintendent News is to update the board and community on some of the many programs and activities occurring in the schools and the departments determined to help us accomplish the goals of the District Strategic Plan.

### Goal #3: Professional Culture of Teamwork & Continuous Improvement

- Preschool is focusing on increasing collaboration and teamwork among the staff.
- Their full-day, half-day, and self-contained teachers can plan together, visit each other's classrooms in learning walks, and collaborate in PLCs.
- Preschool now has office space for all SSTs to have job-like offices as well as collaboration spaces.
- Knowing that the paraprofessionals take the 5 Essentials Survey and their experience can be different than the certified staff, we have created specific ways to engage them in discussion on how to improve specific areas of the 5 Essentials survey.

## **Consent Agenda**

The Board of Education conducted the following business on a consent agenda as follows:

- Approved the list of bills dated November 25, 2024, through December 5, 2024, in the amount of \$970,587.91;
- Approved the personnel report;
  - 0 Administration:
  - 0 Certified:
  - 3 Classified: Julissa Bustamante, Family Liaison at Pioneer Preschool, effective December 4, 2024; Viviana Armas, Lunch Supervisor at Pioneer Preschool, effective December 2, 2024; Mia Smith, Paraprofessional at Wegner, effective December 4, 2024;
  - 1 Resignations: Rocio Recendez, Clerical Aide at Wegner, effective November 30, 2024;
  - 2 Retirement: Eric Godoy, Orchestra Teacher at LMS, effective June 12, 2025; Gina Steinbrecher, Assistant Director of Communication and Community Relations at ESC, effective February 28, 2025;
  - 1 Leave: Audrina Hernandez, at Gary, effective December 2, 2024-January 6, 2024.

## **Discussion of New /Ongoing Business with Possible Action**

- *Collective Liability Insurance Cooperative (CLIC)* - The Board of Education received information to confirm the intent to renew the contract with Collective Liability Insurance Cooperative (CLIC) for the 2025-26 school year, which begins July 1, 2025. The board will review the information and vote at the December 19, 2024, board meeting.
- *Director/Assistant Director of Marketing, Communications, and Public Relations Job Description* - The Board of Education received information about the current administrator retiring at the end of February and the job posting criteria and title revisions. The Board will vote at the December 19, 2024 board meeting.
- *Finance/Facilities*—Karen Apostoli, Executive Director of Business and Operations, stated that the district has received \$108,379.00 in the Early Childhood Block Grant, \$16,853.00 in Other State Programs, \$244,592.65 in the National School Lunch Program, \$100,260.19 in School Breakfast Program, \$11,401.00 in Federal Special Education PreK IDEA Flow Through, and \$5,942.00 in Title II-Teacher Quality since the last board meeting.
- *Board Listening Posts* - Kristina Davis, Superintendent, continued the discussion of the listening posts that will start in January. The Board will vote on amending the locations for the Board of Education meetings at the December 19, 2024, board meeting.
- *Recap of the Joint Annual Conference* - Kristina Davis led the discussion on recapping the different sessions board members and administrators attended during the Joint Annual Conference.

## **Action Items**

- *Birth to 3 Family Liaison Job Description* - The Board voted to approve the new job title and description for the Birth to 3 Family Liaison.

- *Data Backup System* - The Board voted to approve the purchase of a complete backup solution provided by Abtech Technologies/Dell.
- *December 2024 Levy* - The Board of Education will vote on the 2024 Levy at the December 19, 2024, board meeting.
- *Property Tax Abatement* - The Board of Education will vote on the property tax abatement at the December 19, 2024, board meeting.

### **Information Items**

The Board of Education received/reviewed/discussed the following informational items:

- Parent Participation in the parent/teacher conferences.
- Wegner Principal Search.
- Most current postings of available job positions are in School District 33.
- No suggested items at this time.
- No Board outreach at this time.
- No parking lot at this time.

### **Report of District Committee Meetings.**

- SASSED Board of Control
- No open comments at this time.

### **Upcoming Meetings/Events**

The Board of Education members reviewed upcoming meetings and events.

### **Adjournment**

The above review of action taken by the Board of Education at their regular meeting is provided in an attempt to keep you informed. If you have any questions regarding any of the information provided or wish to discuss any of the items, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Respectfully,

**Kristina Davis, Ed. S.**

Kristina Davis,  
Superintendent of Schools

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