

**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of
Hawthorn Community Consolidated District #73, Lake County, Illinois
841 W. End Ct, Vernon Hills IL 60061
6:00 p.m. on the 14th day of March 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

President Cleek called the Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken during the closed session portion prior to the meeting. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The following members attended: Joel Finfer, Karl Borchers, Michael Engle, Julie Clifford, George Fievet, Robin Cleek, and Wes Polen. Also in attendance were Asst. Supt. of Finance & Business Operations Dr. LeeAnn Taylor; Asst. Supt. of Teaching, Learning & Innovation Dr. Allison Stein; Asst. Supt. of Student Services Ms. Alicia Corrigan; Asst. Supt. for Human Resources Mr. Adam Palmer; and Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

RECOGNITION

Board member Karl Borchers spoke on behalf of the Recognition Committee to acknowledge the achievements of Detelina Andonova, Middle North's instructional assistant. Detelina was nominated for "going above and beyond the call of duty to support the students and families, especially with the Russian and Ukrainian families as she is able to communicate in their native language and make them feel welcomed and comfortable." Detelina was awarded a certificate of recognition.

Vice President Wes Polen also spoke on behalf of the Recognition Committee to acknowledge the achievements of Jennah Hirsch, Middle North's 7th-grade ELA teacher. Jennah was nominated for "continuously seeking ways to enhance her teaching and coaching and has formed incredible bonds with her students. Jennah's ability to give 110% to everything she does makes her an invaluable member of the Hawthorn team." Jennah was awarded a certificate of recognition.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Cleek announced that Dr. Hannigan and Ms. Samantha Cook were the keynote speakers at the IASB's Lake Division Conference on March 13. They delivered a presentation on generational communication, captivating and entertaining the audience throughout the night. President Cleek spoke on behalf of the board, extending heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Hannigan and Ms. Cook for their successful evening and expressed pride in seeing Hawthorn represented.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Cleek reminded the board members to file their Statement of Economic Interest by checking their inbox for instructions. She also sought out board speakers for the Middle North and Middle South promotions scheduled for May 30.

Additionally, President Cleek discussed incorporating educational segments on board governance in future board meetings or newsletters to enhance transparency and community understanding. This topic was brought up at a previous board meeting a few weeks ago. The discussion revolved around the question of whether to regularly educate the community on various aspects of board governance, with options considered ranging from including a portion in each board meeting to distributing educational material via newsletters. Conversations were had amongst the board members regarding the frequency of such educational initiatives—whether they should be provided somewhat regularly, very regularly, or not at all. It was acknowledged that implementing this would entail some additional workload. However, before proceeding, it was emphasized the importance of understanding the intended outcomes and establishing metrics to measure success. President Cleek expressed willingness to undertake the effort if there's interest, suggesting the possibility of providing answers to commonly asked questions on the board's website. The discussion concluded with the decision for President Cleek to collaborate with Dr. Hannigan and Ms. Cook to make use of the board page on the website and utilize data analytics to gather more information.

ED-RED REPORT

Mr. Joel Finfer provided an ED-RED Report focusing on critical topics, including Tax Increment Financing (TIF), legislative initiatives impacting school districts, and policies concerning school safety and resources. In regards to Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Mr. Finfer explained how it freezes the value of commercial properties for taxation purposes, with any increase in value not being taxed until the TIF district expires after 23 years. He also highlighted the loose definition of "blighted" conditions in Illinois, which can shift the tax burden from commercial property owners to individual taxpayers.

Regarding legislation concerning new arrivals, Mr. Finfer discussed House Bill 2822 and House Bill 3991, addressing the presence of new arrivals in school districts and proposing financial assistance to districts impacted by them, respectively. He emphasized the financial strain on districts accommodating these new arrivals.

He also addressed House Bill 4622, which proposes assessing the financial and infrastructural impact of new mandates on school districts, and House Bill 479, suggesting control over school polling places to ensure the safety of students and staff.

He ended his report by emphasizing the necessity of understanding and navigating legislative and financial challenges to support educational objectives and ensure the safety and wellbeing of district stakeholders.

SEDOL REPORT

Mr. Michael Engle reported that the last executive board meeting took place on February 15, 2024 and the last governing board meeting was on March 6, 2024. PowerSchool has been selected as the new Student Information System for Sedol. The target implementation for PowerSchool is Fall of 2025. The board approved a real estate sale agreement between the Sedol Governing Board and the Board of Education of Mundelein School District 75 for the sale of South School in the amount of \$630,000. The vocational program currently housed in that building, which is part of Carl Sandburg Middle School, will be housed at Gages Lake School for the 2024-2025 school year. The Sedol administration updated the board on Strategic Planning, SES team updates and Sedol financial planning for the future. The SES team reported that they've met their six month goals. The board accepted Superintendent Donna's intent to retire on June 30, 2024, and the board approved the one year contracts for interim superintendents Dr. Judy Hackett and Dr. Tim Thomas, effective July 1, 2024, in the amount of \$1,450 per diem. Both have co-op experience and superintendent experiences. The next executive board meeting is on March 21 and the next governing board meeting is on June 5.

SITE & FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

No report at this time.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE REPORT

No report at this time.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

President Cleek along with the board members discussed the Potential Changes to Board Communication. This topic was raised by a community member a few weeks prior, prompting a board discussion. In the discussion about community requests for separate notifications on specific agenda topics, the concern was raised regarding the feasibility and desirability of highlighting certain topics from the regularly posted board agendas. The agendas are made available at least 48 hours in advance, and the public can access the documents to review upcoming discussions. The request came from community members who were interested in a particular topic being separately notified to the community. However, the board recognized the challenge in determining which topics should be highlighted, as interests and priorities vary widely among community members. The concern was that selecting specific topics for separate notification could be subjective and not reflect the broader community's interests. The consensus reached was to improve access to information by adding a link to the board documents in the district calendar for board meetings, ensuring that all community members have the opportunity to review agenda items in advance without the need for separate notifications on specific topics. This approach aims to maintain transparency and accessibility while respecting the diverse interests of the community.

Dr. Hannigan reviewed the Resolution of the Board of Education of Hawthorn D73 Regarding the Impact of Tax Increment Financing on School Districts emphasizing the district's support for economic development within the community, including initiatives like the Hawthorn Mall Agreement. This stance underscores Hawthorn District 73's commitment to collaborative growth with local authorities, aiming to benefit the district and community at large. While highlighting the importance of tax incentives in attracting businesses and fostering economic growth, Dr. Hannigan also stressed the necessity to balance these initiatives to protect the school district and taxpayers from potential negative impacts. The conversation about TIF reform, driven by advocacy from school boards as relayed by ED-RED, illustrates a proactive approach to ensuring that economic development does not compromise educational quality or financial stability within the district. The resolution will seek board approval at the upcoming board meeting.

Assistant Superintendent of Business & Finance, Dr. LeeAnn Taylor discussed the Middle North Domestic Water Heater Bid Results. She highlighted the replacement of the Middle North Domestic water heater as a key item on the summer project list. This initiative has been a topic of conversation in Site and Facilities Committee meetings over recent years, emphasizing its importance as part of ongoing infrastructure improvements. The bidding process resulted in two proposals, with Abitua Sewer, Water, and Plumbing submitting the winning bid at \$119,000, identified as the lowest bidder.

The bid from Abitua Sewer, Water, and Plumbing is presented for discussion, with plans to seek formal approval at the board meeting upcoming board meeting. This step forward in the project underscores the district's commitment to maintaining and improving its facilities to ensure a safe and functional learning environment for students and staff.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

In his report, Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan highlighted the district's response to the tornado in Mundelein, which significantly impacted the community, including the displacement of eleven Hawthorn families. Dr. Hannigan gave special recognition to Gaby Cervantes, D73 family liaison, for her exceptional efforts during this crisis. Ms. Cervantes was on-site immediately following the disaster, assisting first responders, translating for families, and coordinating essential services such as shelter and food. Her actions were praised by Hank from the Red Cross, who noted that in his 20 years of experience, he had never witnessed such outstanding support from a school district for affected families. This incident showcased the remarkable solidarity and generosity within the Hawthorn community, with local vendors and community members stepping up to provide meals and other resources to those affected. Dr. Hannigan expressed his deep gratitude towards Gaby Cervantes and the community for their tremendous support during this challenging time.

Additionally, Dr. Hannigan announced that returning student registration for the next academic year would commence after spring break on April 4. He emphasized the importance of early registration, scheduled to conclude by May 1, highlighting that it facilitates academic planning and preparation, ensuring a seamless transition for students and staff into the new year. The district also offers a discount incentive to encourage families to complete the registration process by the specified deadline.

Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan concluded his report by viewing the next episode of 'Hawthorn's Superpowers.' The series aims to highlight each school building's distinctive strengths, emphasizing their unwavering commitment and collective efforts. Lincoln Early Learning Center showcased their unique superpowers.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 8.1 Board Meeting Minutes from February 22, 2024
- 8.2 Closed Session Minutes from February 22, 2024
- 8.3 Expenditure Report from March 14, 2024
- 8.4 Amazon Expense Report March 14, 2024
- 8.5 Mastercard Report January 22, 2024
- 8.6 Treasurer's Report January 2024
- 8.7 Personnel Report

8 New Hires:

14 Resignations:

6 Leaves of Absence:

8 New Hires: Miriam Aichler, Occupational Therapist, Lincoln; Marie Faye Delos Santos, LBS1 Teacher, MS; Yessica Ocampo Toledo, Interventionist, DL; Ashley Zarinana, Social Worker, DL; Deanna Cusumano, School Nurse, District; Guadalupe Ortiz, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, TL; Anitakumari Rathod, Lunches/Recess Supervisor, HSYL; FNU Shalini Shruti, Instructional Assistant, ES.

14 Resignations: Dena Mahrenholz, School Nurse, HSYL, 06/04/2024; Sydney McHenryh, Instructional Assistant, EN, 05/03/2024; Lyliana Chavez, Math Teacher, MN, 06/04/2024; Kaylana Crowley, 4th Grade Teacher, DL, 06/04/2024; Laura Easton, Occupational Therapist, District, 02/21/2024; Aimee Egger, 3rd Grade Teacher, ES, 06/04/2024; Julia Flannery, Social Worker, EN, 06/04/2024; Samantha Greenberg, 2nd Grade Teacher, TL, 06/04/2024; Sage Kugler, Art Teacher, TL, 06/04/2024; Sarah Merza, Teacher, HSYL, 06/04/2024; Andrew Meyers, Social Worker, Aspen, 06/04/2024; Eryn Minkow, LBS1 Teacher, MN, 06/04/2024; Kathleen Raupp, LOP Teacher, EN, 02/06/2024, Aisha Tanovic, 3rd Grade Teacher, ES, 06/04/2024.

6 Leaves of Absence: Carl Gruebele, Technology Support Specialist, District, 01/17/2024; Thiago Martins Amaral, Technology Support Specialist, District, 04/30/2024; Stephanie Arnopolin, STEM Teacher, MN, 02/20/2024; Jennette Tradwell, Interventionist, DL, 09/13/2024; Katelyn Tseitlin, Teacher, HSYL, 08/14/2024; Brittany Walsh, Math Teacher, MS, 02/20/2024.

Karl Borchers requested to remove section **8.1 Board Meeting Minutes from February 22, 2024** and **8.2 Closed Session Minutes from February 22, 2024** from the consent agenda.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Wes Polen moved that the Board of Education approve 8.1 Board Meeting Minutes from February 22, 2024 as presented; seconded by George Fievet.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 5 ayes; 2 abstain

RECOMMENDED MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve 8.2 Closed Session Minutes from February 22, 2024 as presented; seconded by Julie Clifford.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 4 ayes; 3 abstain

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Michael Engle moved that the Board of Education approve the remaining Consent Agenda items as presented; seconded by Karl Borchers.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 naves

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Adam Palmer reviewed the 2024-2025 Staffing Plan, emphasizing additions including three learning behavior specialists, 1.5 speech language pathologists, a social worker, and others to support special education and maintain lower class sizes, particularly in early grades. This plan aims to enhance the district's special education offerings and reduce reliance on external cooperatives, highlighting a commitment to focused educational support and improved student services.

The next action item was addressed by Dr. Hannigan. With Dr. Taylor transitioning to Frankfort, Illinois, the search for a new Chief School Business Official (CSBO) commenced, leading to the posting of the position across various platforms on January 26. Out of 13 applicants, a pool of candidates was selected for interviews conducted on March 8 by two teams comprising business team members, human resources team members, and district administrators. Following thorough evaluations, Jennifer Akin emerged as the recommended candidate for the CSBO position, with her appointment up for board consideration.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Business Operations Dr. Taylor reviewed the next few action items related to the business department. Dr. Taylor announced that the Food Service Evaluation Committee recommends continuing the partnership with Quest as the district's food service management company for the 2024-2025 school year and beyond. This recommendation comes with the understanding that the contract will be reviewed and brought back to the board annually for approval.

She also reviewed the action item regarding student meal prices for the 2024-2025 school year, requesting board approval for a school lunch price of \$3.50 and a breakfast price of \$1.50. This proposal was initially introduced in February and is now up for official approval.

Dr. Taylor discussed the Annual District Consolidated Plan, emphasizing its importance in streamlining the process for federal grant applications. This plan, required annually by ISBE, is crucial for organizing grant spending across the district. Dr. Taylor expressed gratitude towards colleagues and grant specialists for their collaborative effort in completing this plan each year. The consolidation aids in planning, questioning, and meeting the requirements of federal grants effectively. The board's approval of this plan will help continue this organized approach to grant management.

Lastly, Dr. Taylor reviewed the request for the board to take action on disposing of technology items that have reached the end of their life cycle. Details of the items proposed for disposal were included in the board packet, with the recommendation for the board to approve their disposal during the evening's meeting.

President Cleek reviewed the Notice of Remedial Warning and indicated that the action item had been discussed during the closed session portion of the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

24-25 Staffing Plan

MOTION: Karl Borchers moved that the Board of Education approve the 24-25 Staffing Plan; Wes Polen seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 naves

Approval of FY25 Asst Superintendent/CSBO Contract

MOTION: Wes Polen moved that the Board of Education approve the FY25 Asst Superintendent/CSBO Contract; Michael Engle seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Food Service Contract Award

MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve the Food Service Contract Award; Julie Clifford seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Student Meal Prices SY24-25

MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve the Student Meal Prices SY24-25; Wes Polen seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Annual District Consolidated Plan

MOTION: Michael Engle moved that the Board of Education approve the Annual District Consolidated Plan; George Fievet seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Disposal of Technology Surplus

MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve the Disposal of Technology Surplus ; Wes Polen seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Notice of Remedial Warning

MOTION: Karl Borchers moved that the Board of Education approve the Notice of Remedial Warning to tenured teacher Mallory Ege; Joel Finfer seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Joel Finfer, Wes Polen, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and George Fievet.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Enrollment - Uploaded
 2. FOIA Log, Dr. Hannigan reported that the District has received two FOIA requests since the last board meeting and has been responded to as identified in Section 10.2 of the Board agenda.
 3. Media Clips- Uploaded
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TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

No future topics at this time.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) President Cleek *read the motion(s) to adjourn to CLOSED SESSION for the purposes of:*

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

With no further business to discuss, George Fievet made a motion to adjourn to Closed Session, seconded by Julie Clifford. The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m. **All in favor? Yes.**

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Flores

Robin Cleek, President

George Fievet, Secretary

Date Minutes Approved: _____