

MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie Avenue, Flossmoor, Illinois  
September 17, 2024

Mr. Legardy called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The following Board members were present for all or part of the meeting:

Mr. Anderson                      Mr. Riedel  
Mrs. Hoereth                      Ms. Turnquest  
Ms. Jackson  
Mr. Legardy

Mr. Pauling and student board Representative Gabriel McKinney were absent.

The presence of a quorum was noted and the meeting declared duly convened. Principal Alexander, Chief School Business Official Cook, Communications and Community Engagement Director Erdey and Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development Director Hester were in attendance. Operations and Maintenance Director Patterson was also in attendance. Superintendent Wakeley was absent.

Representatives of the Homewood-Flossmoor Chronicle, HFEO and League of Women Voters were present, as well as, members of the public.

Mr. Legardy noted that Mr. Pauling was not in attendance this evening due to a work commitment.

Public Hearing on the Tentative 2024-2025 Budget. A public hearing on the Tentative 2024-2025 Budget was conducted with the opportunity for the public to ask questions or make comments. Dr. Cook explained that highlights of the tentative budget were discussed at the August 8th Finance Committee meeting and summarized at the August 20th, regular Board meeting. He gave an overview of the key points of the tentative budget. Projected revenue is approximately \$72 million, with projected expenditures nearing \$70 million, resulting in a projected surplus of \$2 million. This surplus may potentially be allocated for capital expenditures and/or other one-time expenses. Monthly reserves are projected at 7.9 months at the end of this year. He noted 6 months of reserves is the district's comfort level. Dr. Cook added that the budget must be adopted by September 30, 2024, and filed with the Cook County Clerk's office within 30 days of its adoption. Mr. Legardy noted for the record that there were no comments received from the members of the public.

Adjournment of the Public Hearing on the Tentative 2024-2025 Budget. Mr. Anderson moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the public hearing on the Tentative 2024-2025 Budget be adjourned. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Comments. Pastor Doyle of Positive Vision Communications introduced himself and addressed the board regarding African American mental health, particularly in young males. He noted that September is National Suicide Prevention Month. He referenced the book *Black Pain*, that he previously spoke on at the August board meeting and provided a copy to the board this evening. The book focuses on black mental health. He stressed the importance of focusing on the issue of African American mental health, as he is seeing the effects in the community, as well as, throughout the country. He also referenced an article on page 58 of *Chicago Magazine* that recently listed best high schools in Chicago and noted that HF was not on that list. Pastor Doyle stated that education is different now. He also spoke about his parents who were married in 1965 and lived in Homewood. He thanked Dr. Alexander, with whom he will continue conversations with and also thanked the board for their time.

Ms. Meghan Hoyt, HF parent, stated that she is in attendance on behalf of seven theater students who auditioned and were selected to participate in the All State production at the Illinois High School Theater Festival. She added that the theater parents of these students sent a request to Dr. Alexander to have the costs of the students, \$600.00 each, paid for by the district for a total of \$4200.00. She added that Dr. Alexander responded to her denying their request and explained why the students are ineligible for reimbursement and why the district would not cover their expenses. Mrs. Hoyt requested that the board please reconsider their request and that there should never be a question of covering the cost of any student competing at the state competition level. She reviewed some of the recent awards given to staff and students in the past year. She added that theater students are working just as hard as

other students/teams competing in state competitions. Mrs. Hoyt stated that at the core of this is equity and asked why theater students are being treated differently. Mr. Legardy asked Dr. Alexander to meet with the parents to provide further review of their request and report back to the board with more information.

Ms. Lindsey Sorrell, HF parent, shared her thoughts on HF's Special Education program. She expressed that she feels the program does not provide enough support to help students to get involved in general education opportunities. She added that she does not see ways for special education students to get involved in tutoring opportunities so that they can improve their math and reading skills. She does not believe that reading and math scores are what they should be. Ms. Sorrell also expressed that her son will be graduating in December and is in the Anchor program. Ms. Sorrell stated that Anchor does not have enough supports for these students and she feels they are isolated and not receiving any enrichment. She added that her son gets out of school at 2:00 p.m. every day and does not have the chance to participate in some of the fun activities like other students. She noted that students are not learning cursive and her son cannot sign his name because he was never taught cursive. She commended that HF has been an amazing school to her family and the events that the school hosts for children is great, but she would like to see reading scores go up, more resources available for supporting students in the Special Education program and more financial support be given to the Anchor program.

Dr. Alexander shared that Back to School Night was well attended with more than 1,000 parents who walked their children's schedules. Last week the first virtual HFPA meeting was held with 50 members in attendance. The meeting included Department Lead updates as well as safety information. Homecoming Week is this week with the Powder Puff game going on right now. In addition, 1200 tickets to the dance have been sold. The first two days of this week include ACT training with Department Leaders and specialized teachers to embed ACT strategies into classrooms. He stated that the week is going very well and he is looking forward to the Homecoming football game and dance culminating the week.

Dr. Hester reported that staff participated in a required Institute Day on September 6 where they did a deep dive into the College, Career and Life Readiness, a goal of the Strategic Plan. The College, Career and Life Readiness standards were defined and overarching data was shared. Staff members worked together in their departments on how they contribute to achieving the strategic plan goals for this year. Departments also worked on Standards Based Learning with deep engagement based on the needs of their department.

Mrs. Erdey commented that two alumni, Jack Klauber HF class of 2006, CEO and Founder of Everyday Dose and Dave Wasserman, HF class of 2000, Executive Sous Chef at the Hyatt Regency Chicago returned to HF. Mr. Klauber spoke with students about creativity and entrepreneurship and Chef Wasserman joined students and provided a demonstration in the newly renovated kitchens and shared his tips for getting into the professional culinary industry.

Mr. Anderson wished everyone Happy Homecoming week. He wished everyone a great week and looks forward to seeing everyone at the football game. He shared that the League of Women Voters is hosting a seminar on what it takes to run for a school board on Thursday evening at the Homewood Library. He commented on another recent school shooting and asked everyone to get involved and support candidates who align with their views. He shared [www.gunsensevoter.org](http://www.gunsensevoter.org) is a great resource to learn more about gun control. Mr. Anderson has heard good things about the administration regarding the implementation of the cell phone policy and he would like to see more done to get phones out of students' hands throughout the entire school day. He would like to engage with the community regarding cell phones and get data into the hands of parents and encourage them to trust the science. He noted that teachers are currently working without a contract and later this evening the board will vote on the teachers' contract. He expressed that he values the importance of paying teachers a respectful wage in order to recruit and retain exceptional staff members. He stressed that he takes his role as a fiduciary very seriously and is never happy when a decision is made to spend more on operating expenditures. He added that nearly every cost in the budget has increased since last year except for transportation. Mr. Anderson stated that the district needs to be mindful of when expenses are greater than the money brought in, especially with limitations on how much the school district is able to levy. Mr. Anderson noted that paying a competitive wage can be very tricky and they must remain vigilant moving forward as they vote on this contract tonight.

Ms. Jackson stated that she echoes Mr. Anderson's comments on gun safety and her top priority remains on the safety of our students and staff. She added that it is important to remind everyone to align with a legislator who shares their views on gun safety. As a school district, Ms. Jackson stated that she is confident that they are diligent about the safety of our students and staff in the building but there is always a need to take a more critical eye.

Mr. Legardy stated that he echoes the thoughts shared by Mr. Anderson and Ms. Jackson on gun safety. He noted that HF administration takes the safety of students and staff very seriously and he does not want anyone to take it for granted. He added that in light of recent threats and acts of violence in the news, that schools need to

continue to be vigilant and remain defensive at all times. He stated that whatever needs to be done to fortify their position on safety, they will do it.

Committee Reports. Mrs. Hoereth stated the Planning Committee met on September 10, 2024. She shared that the committee had great conversation and discussions. The top items of discussion included the weighted GPA that they have been discussing for some time now, the Strategic Plan, English pathways starting next year as well as earned honor opportunities also starting next year. Mrs. Hoereth expressed that it is exciting to see initiatives presented in the Planning Committee and how they align with the Strategic Plan. She stated that she likes that the Strategic Plan is being used to guide the work that is being done. The committee will meet again in October to discuss additional topics that were not discussed in September due to time constraints.

Consent Agenda. Mr. Legardy stated that our adopted rules of Parliamentary Procedures, Robert's Rules and Bylaws, provide for a consent agenda listing for approval of the Board by a single motion. Most of the items listed under the consent agenda have gone through board subcommittees' review and recommendation. Documentation concerning these items has been provided to all board members and the public in advance to assure an extensive and thorough review. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member. Mr. Legardy asked if any board member requested any item on the consent agenda be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion. No items were requested to be removed. Mr. Anderson moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda that included:

Special Board Meeting Minutes, August 27, 2024

Regular Board Meeting Minutes, August 20, 2024

2024-2025 Annual Tuition Rate, non-resident students at \$23,514.49 per year, or \$133.61 per day

Compensation Reports, Public Acts 97-0256 & 96-0434 Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefit

Report/Public Act 97-0609 IMRF Compensation Report

Extended Field Trip – Fencing Competition

Extended Field Trip – Great Lakes Field Hockey Showcase

Approval of Recommended PRESS Policy Updates

Policy 7:70 – Attendance and Truancy

Property/Equipment Disposal – Obsolete Chromebooks, Computers and Miscellaneous Technology

Approval of Expenditures, \$3,867,610.34

Approval of Imprest Fund, \$20,435.27

Retirement, Tiffany Mucha, effective 2027/2028 end of year

Extra Responsibility Contracts – Activity Assignments, \$37,498.82

Extra Responsibility Contracts – Athletic Contracts, \$13,453.94

Extra Responsibility Contracts – Auxiliary Contracts, \$112,691.84

Extra Responsibility Contracts – Cafeteria Supervision Contracts, \$206,600.21

Extra Responsibility Contracts – Sixth Assignment Contracts, \$86,769.46

Roll Call: Ayes – Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Old Business. None

New Business:

2024-2025 Budget Adoption. Mr. Anderson moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education adopt the Budget Resolution for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, as recommended by the Finance Committee, the Chief School Business Official and the Superintendent. Dr. Cook reiterated that the budget must be adopted by September 30 and must be filed by October 31 with the Cook County Clerk's Office. Roll Call: Ayes - Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Weighted GPA. Mrs. Hoereth moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve changing the

weighted grade scale, as presented, beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, as recommended by the Planning Committee, the Principal and the Superintendent. Mr. Legardy shared that this item was discussed at great length at the January Committee-of-the-Whole meeting and a rich discussion also took place at the September 10th Planning Committee regarding weighted GPA. Roll Call: Ayes - Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Class Rank. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education table this item for further discussion. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy. Nays – None. Motion carried.

English Curriculum. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Mrs. Hoereth, that the Board of Education approve the recommended curriculum for English 1, English 2, English 3 and English 4, and the implementation of Earned Honors starting with English 4, beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, as recommended by the Planning Committee, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and the Superintendent. Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Appoint Trustee of Schools. Ms. Turnquest moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution authorizing Lawrence Cook as Trustee of Schools for the Bloom Township Treasurer’s Office located at 3311 Chicago Road, South Chicago Heights, Illinois, as recommended by the Superintendent. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Ratification of Agreement with HFEO. Ms. Jackson moved, seconded by Mrs. Hoereth, that the Board of Education adopt the Agreement between the Board of Education, District 233, and the Homewood-Flossmoor Educational Organization (HFEO), an affiliate of the NEA-IEA, for the September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2027 school years, and authorize the President and Secretary to sign the official documents, as recommended by the Chief School Business Official and the Superintendent. Roll Call: Ayes – Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Memorandum of Agreement with HFCSO. Ms. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the Homewood-Flossmoor Classified Staff Organization (HFCSO), an affiliate of the NEA-IEA, dated September 10, 2024, and authorize the President to sign the official document, as recommended by the Chief School Business Official and the Superintendent. Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Adjournment. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education be adjourned at 8:07 p.m. Motion carried.

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President

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Vice-President/Secretary