

District 172 Regular Meeting of The Board of Education

Thursday, June 20, 2024, Board Meeting

Sandridge Media Center, 2950 Glenwood-Dyer Road, Lynwood, Illinois 60411

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Called by President Jenkins Brown @ 7:18 pm

2. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Newton, Ms. Guthrie, Ms. Krueger, Mr. Colwell, Ms. Lee, President Jenkins-Brown

3. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all stakeholders.

4. Motion to Adjourn to Closed Session: Discussion on the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. (Approximately 30 minutes):

Member Grey motion this be moved between Agenda Number 14 and 15. During the roll call, Members Grey and Colwell voted "yes," while Ms. Newton, Ms. Guthrie, Ms. Krueger, and Pres Jenkins-Brown voted "no." The motion failed. The Board went into closed session at 7:24pm.

5. Principal's Report

Presenter: Ms. Polk

Dr. Nalls reported that the school has 472 students, with 77 enrolled in summer school. The summer program, using the iReady curriculum, includes reading and math interventions, SEL components, and hands-on activities like art and engineering. Next month, the board will review a revised student handbook addressing bullying and tardiness, with a new transportation system in place.

Recent events include successful eighth grade and kindergarten graduations and a PTA-hosted Family Day on June 1st. Willie P's Barbecue provided free catering for an end-of-year celebration. Dr. Nalls thanked the PTA and board members for their support and emphasized the importance of positive community engagement.

6. Curriculum Directors Report:

Dr. Nalls presented a report from the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. The district has applied for Title I, II, and IV grants for the 2025 school year, requiring the Consolidated District Plan, which needs board approval. The plan outlines resource allocation for improving educational outcomes, especially for special education and EL learners. The district has successfully progressed to level three in the approval process.

Dr. Nalls shared NWEA MAP assessment results,

showing growth in student performance across all grades. Significant improvements were noted, especially in math, with kindergarten through third grade outperforming higher grades in reading. The data will be used to guide instruction and identify learning gaps. Board Member Grey, Colwell and VP Guthrie discussed the importance of seeing detailed reports on individual teacher and classroom performance, standardized test score rankings, and tier-level student growth to better understand overall progress and areas needing more support.

The district aims to continue improving and maintaining its commendable school status, having previously been in the bottom 5% two years ago.

7. **Sandridge PTA:**

PTA President Cheryl Ward reported on the successful PTA Fun Fair held on June 1st, which saw about 170 children, including Sandridge students and their siblings, enjoying free food, game tickets, and attractions despite the rain. Over 25 volunteers, including parents, grandparents, staff, and board members, contributed to the event's success. High school students also volunteered for community service credit.

Ward introduced the newly elected PTA executive board for the 2024-2025 school year: Cheryl Ward as President, Anita Logan as Vice President, Grace Snelling as Treasurer, and LaTheresa Fenner as Secretary. She emphasized the importance of renewing PTA memberships annually and highlighted efforts to recruit more members at various school events.

The PTA is considering increasing dues from \$5 to \$7, with a decision to be made in the upcoming June meeting. The first PTA meeting for the new school year is scheduled for August 14th, where proposed activities will be presented. President Jenkins-Brown thanked volunteers Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Walker for their help at the Fun Fair.

8. **FOIA REQUESTS:**

Dr. Nalls reported on two FOIA requests from Opal Ray. The first request, received on May 26th and completed by June 4th, asked for emails referencing Opal Ray, administrative assistants, secretaries, Friday updates, the word "cabinet," terms related to felonies, budget cuts, demotions, administrative leave, and effectiveness. The second request, received on June 4th and completed by June 11th, was narrowed to a specific timeframe, from March 21st to June 4th, 2024, and November 1st, 2023, to the present. Both FOIA requests were satisfied, and

Presenter: Dr. Kim Nalls

all requested emails were provided.

9. **Superintendent's Report:**

Dr. Nalls reported on the financial adjustments required due to the elimination of ESSER funding by the state board of education. The district must encumber and spend these funds by September 2024. Efforts have been made to allocate the school year 2024 grant funds effectively on students, staff, equipment, books, renovation, and intervention activities. Dr. Nalls and Dr. Evans will present a balanced budget despite a one-time deficit covered by reserves.

Reorganization based on budget forecasting includes the reassignment of clerical staff, elimination of one full-time clerical position, and adjustments to medical benefits and IMRF payments.

Additionally, the district will eliminate paying 100% of medical benefits for one clerical position's family and recommend further personnel dismissals in July to ensure a balanced budget. These cuts aim to avoid impacting students, keeping the teaching staff intact.

Member Grey inquired about a \$50,000 payback which **Dr. Nalls** reported that it is required due to an incomplete expenditure report for a school maintenance grant from 2021. **Dr. Nalls** discovered that \$62,000 of the grant was accounted for, reducing the payback amount to \$19,000. Efforts are ongoing to confirm if a project for rooftop units, managed by the late Mr. McClaverty, was started.

10. **Public Comments:**

During the public comment section of the board meeting, President Jenkins-Brown outlined the rules for public participation, including a five-minute speaking limit and a requirement to sign up before future meetings.

Anita Logan, PTA Vice President, expressed gratitude for the school year and emphasized the need for board members to prioritize student interests, separate personal from professional matters, and support PTA functions to enhance community involvement. She criticized a board member for habitual lateness and lack of support, urging for a more cohesive effort in the coming school year.

Jeff Walker supported the meeting's time limits to maintain order and efficiency. He pointed out that some board members repeatedly bring up resolved issues, such as nepotism, and suggested focusing on new problems. Walker advocated for constructive contributions to the board and

criticized those who introduce negativity. He emphasized the importance of investing in the school and community, expressing a desire for the school to become a model institution.

11. ACTION ITEMS CONSENT AGENDA

11.1. Approval of Minutes:

President Jenkins-Brown called for a motion to approve the minutes. **Member Grey** made the motion, and **Member Newton** seconded it. There was no further discussion, and a roll call vote was conducted by **Dr. Nalls**. All present members, voted "yes," resulting in unanimous approval of the minutes.

11.2. Approval of Payroll:

Pres Jenkins-Brown called for a motion to approve the payroll. **Member Newton** moved to approve, and **Member Krueger** seconded. **Member Gray** expressed her dissent, stating she has consistently requested a breakdown of each employee's pay without receiving it. The roll call vote was conducted by **Dr. Nalls**, resulting in a split decision: **Member Gray** and **Member Colwell** voted "no," while **Member Newton**, **VP Guthrie**, **Member Krueger**, and **President Jenkins-Brown** voted "yes." The motion to approve the payroll was passed.

11.3. Approval of Personnel:

Pres Jenkins-Brown requested a motion to approve personnel. **Member Newton** made the motion, seconded by **Member Krueger**. **Member Grey** raised concerns about training for Monica Cousins for McKinney-Vento registration, the provisional license for Corey Horton, omni-therapeutics contracts, clerical staff cross-training, and the cost breakdown for training. During the roll call, **Member Newton** and **VP Guthrie** voted "yes," while **Member Colwell** voted "no." **Member Grey** asked for further discussion on conflicts of interest, emphasizing the importance of transparency. **Dr. Nalls** explained the reporting of summer personnel for transparency. The roll call continued, with **Member Grey** and **Member Colwell** voting "no," while **Member Newton**, **VP Guthrie**, and **Member Krueger** voted "yes." **Pres Jenkins-Brown** recused herself due to her stepdaughter's employment in the district.

12. Motion to Approve Sandridge SD 172 Consolidated Plan:

Pres Jenkins-Brown requested a motion to approve the Sandridge consolidation plan. **Member Krueger** made the motion, seconded by **Member Newton**. During the roll call, **Member Grey** abstained, stating she had not seen the consolidation plan. **Member Newton**, **VP Guthrie**, **Member Krueger**, **Member Colwell**, and **Pres Jenkins-Brown** all voted "yes." The motion was carried.

13. **Motion To Obtain Authorization to Pay Summer Bills:**

Pres Jenkins-Brown requested a motion to obtain authorization to pay summer bills. **Member Grey** moved to table the motion and call for a meeting next month, seconded by **Member Colwell**. **Pres Jenkins-Brown** called for a discussion.

Dr. Nalls explained the necessity of authorizing the payment of summer bills before the fiscal year ends on June 30, 2024, to avoid penalties and interest. She highlighted policy 4:50 on payment procedures and emphasized that the request was to cover standard operational bills, not new expenses.

Following the discussion, **Pres Jenkins-Brown** called for a roll call vote. **Member Grey** voted "no," while **Member Newton, VP Guthrie, Member Krueger, Member Colwell,** and **Pres Jenkins-Brown** voted "yes." The motion carried.

14. **Motion to Approve Bills totaling 377,436.04:**

Pres Jenkins-Brown requested a motion to approve bills totaling \$377,436.04. **Member Newton** moved to approve the bills, seconded by **Member Krueger**. **Pres Jenkins-Brown** asked for any discussion.

Member Grey expressed concerns about not having time to review the invoices and requested that they be sent for review.

Dr. Nalls clarified that the board members have access to detailed voucher listings in their board books, which include vendor names, purchase orders, invoice dates, accounts, and amounts. She explained the impracticality of scanning hundreds of pages of invoices and offered to meet board members at any time, including weekends, to review the details.

Following the discussion, **Pres Jenkins-Brown** called for a roll call vote. **Member Grey** voted "no," while **Ms. Newton, VP Guthrie, Member Krueger, Member Colwell,** and **Pres Jenkins-Brown** voted "yes." The motion carried.

15. **Motion to Terminate Support Staff Employee XOX359:**

Pres Jenkins-Brown requested a motion to approve the termination of Opal Ray. **Member Grey** moved to postpone the decision indefinitely, seconded by **Member Colwell**. During the roll call, the motion to postpone failed with **Members Grey** and **Colwell** voting "yes," and the others voting "no."

Following this, **Ms. Newton** moved to terminate Opal Ray, seconded by **Member Krueger**. The motion to terminate was approved with **Members Newton, Guthrie,**

Krueger, and **Pres Jenkins-Brown** voting "yes," and **Members Grey** and **Colwell** voting "no."

16. Motion to Approve Press Plus Policies Issue 114

No substantive Changes:

Pres Jenkins-Brown requested a motion to approve Press Plus Policies, Issue 114, with no substantive changes. **Member Newton** moved to approve, and the motion passed unanimously in the roll call vote.

17. Motion to Approve Amended SY 25 Calendar:

Next, **Pres Jenkins-Brown** requested a motion to approve the amended 2005 school year calendar. **Dr. Nalls** explained the amendment to change the first day of student attendance to August 12th, aligning with new teacher orientation days. **Member Grey** inquired about teacher feedback, and **Dr. Nalls** confirmed the recommendation came from teachers on the committee. The motion passed unanimously in the roll call vote.

18. Motion to Approve Joint Conference Registration and Hotel Accommodations for Superintendent, Administrators and Board members: November 22-24, 2024:

Member Newton moved to approve the conference registration, seconded by **Member Krueger**. **Member Grey** inquired about the attendees, specifying the need-to-know which administrators would attend. **Dr. Nalls** explained the joint conference involves the Illinois Association of School Boards, School Administrators, and School Business Officials, and that attendance would be based on a rotational basis within the administrative team.

Following this, the motion passed unanimously in the roll call vote.

19. Motion To Approve United Services Contract 2024-2025:

Pres Jenkins-Brown then requested a motion to approve the United Services Contract for 2024-25. The motion was made by **Member Krueger**, seconded by **Member Newton**, and passed unanimously in the roll call vote.

20. New Business:

Pres Jenkins-Brown opened the floor for new business. **Member Grey** moved to place an employee under investigation on paid administrative leave, stating that it is necessary for the investigation. **Pres Jenkins-Brown** accepted the motion and called for discussion, followed by a roll call vote. **Members Grey** and **Colwell** voted "yes," while **Ms. Newton**, **Ms. Guthrie**, **Ms. Krueger**, and **Pres Jenkins-Brown** voted "no." The motion failed.

21. Old Business:

No Old Business was motioned.

22. **Motion to Adjourn**

The motion to adjourn the meeting was motioned by **Member Newton**, second by **Member Krueger**. Meeting was adjourned at 8:56pm