



## **Board Briefs**

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[April 22, 2025 Regular Action Meeting](#)

[Board Meeting Videos](#)

### **Approval of Agenda**

The Board approved the April 22 agenda as presented.

### **2023 Board Adjourns *Sine Die***

#### ***Recognition of Retiring Board Member***

The Board recognized retiring Board Member Jodi Shapira with a resolution expressing gratitude for all her hard work in her six years of service on the District 113 Board of Education.

#### ***Oath of Office***

Board President Anne Neumann administered the oath of office to re-elected members of the Board, Jaime Barraza, Rick Heineman, and Jenny Lupa, as well as newly elected member Alex Brunk.

### **Adjournment *Sine Die***

The 2023 Board adjourned *sine die*.

### **Organization of the 2025 Board**

The 2025 Board of Education began with its reorganization meeting.

### ***Appointment of Treasurer for One Year***

The Board appointed Assistant Superintendent for Finance Ali Mehanti to serve as Treasurer of the Board of Education for a one-year term.

### ***Determination of Date and Time of Regular Meetings***

In accordance with School Code and *Board Policy 2-210*, the Board approved as presented the schedule of regular meeting dates beginning July 2025 through June 2026. Meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. and be held at the Administration Building, 1040 Park Avenue West, Highland Park, unless otherwise indicated. All regular Board of Education meetings are recorded and posted on the district website: [www.dist113.org](http://www.dist113.org).

### ***Assignment of Board Members to Examine Bills and Salaries***

The Board approved as presented the proposed schedule for Board members to examine bills and salaries for the period beginning June 2025 through June 2026.

## **Board Reports**

### ***President***

Board President Anne Neumann asked Board members to submit by May 2 their top two choices for the committees on which they would like to serve. She reminded them the committee structure for next year is as follows:

- Finance/Facilities
- Policy
- Education
- TrueNorth Representative
- HR Liaison
- ED-RED Representative
- TIF Liaison

Moving on to her report:

Neumann attended Genocide Commemoration Day at both schools last Tuesday, noting that speakers Mr. Kimal and Mr. Reich shared stories that were breathtaking in their scope of both despair and hope/forgiveness. She said she also had the opportunity to sit next to and talk with Andrew Devedjian who started DHS's Genocide Commemoration Day in 2016 when he was a junior at DHS.

She and fellow Board member Rick Heineman joined Chief Communications Officer Karen Warner at the City of Highland Park neighborhood meetings that began Monday, and three additional meetings remain this spring.

With April 22 designated School Bus Driver Appreciation Day, she expressed gratitude to the dedicated District 113 drivers who are the first smile students see each morning and the last wave each evening.

She closed her remarks by thanking retiring Board member Jodi Shapira for her service to both District 113 for the last 6 years and service to District 109 immediately prior. She thanked Rick Heineman, Jaime Barraza, and Jenny Lupa for continuing to serve on the Board for a new 4-year term and welcomed Alex Brunk to the Board. Brunk joins the District 113 Board for a 2-year term following his 8 years on the District 112 Board.

### ***True North***

True North Liaison Jenny Lupa reported that at the April 9 Leadership Council meeting D113's Katerina Shutman, who participates in the TrueNorth vocational program, was celebrated as "a team player with excellent collaboration skills" at the Green Bay Animal Hospital in Wilmette.

Other topics included:

- Professional Learning and Coaching presented revised, data-driven processes with greater inter-district collaboration. As of March, 7,960 educators participated in TrueNorth sessions this school year, with 96% reporting a positive impact on their professional or student growth.

- TrueNorth Steering Committee shared updates to the Strategic Plan for the Induction Program, expanding its scope to include the entire staff lifecycle, from recruitment to departure.
- The Leadership Council reviewed preliminary tuition and service rates for FY26. The final budget draft will be publicly posted at the next meeting May 7.
- Updates were provided regarding the withdrawal intentions of Glenview D34 and Glenbrook D225. Superintendents will meet with TrueNorth Superintendent Dr. Kurt Schneider in late April to discuss the state of the cooperative and potential next steps.

## **Administration Information Reports**

### ***Superintendent***

Superintendent Dr. Chala Holland provided the following updates in her report:

#### Input Needed for Final Strategic Plan Survey

The Strategic Planning Team has developed a draft comprehensive plan and is seeking stakeholder input during the final phase of refinement. [The survey](#) opens April 23 and closes April 30 at 5 p.m. Feedback will inform the final team meeting on May 6, with final presentation to the Board on May 27. Stakeholder input is greatly appreciated.

#### District 113 will launch its new website on May 1.

After the meeting, families, students, staff, and community members received [communication about the launch](#) which included the following points:

- Intermittent downtime is expected around the launch date
- Emergency notifications will not be affected by the launch
- Existing bookmarked links may no longer work due to URL changes

#### Hiring Updates on Track for Board Approval May 13

Final hiring decisions for the following district office roles are on track to be presented for approval at the May 13 Board meeting:

- Executive Director of Facilities Management
- Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
- Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

#### Genocide Commemoration Day Events

Dr. Holland attended events at both Highland Park and Deerfield High Schools featuring moving presentations. The day fostered reflection and emphasized the importance of empathy, advocacy, and standing against hate. Student engagement was noted as deeply respectful and impactful. Dr. Holland thanked the students and sponsors at DHS and HPHS who planned a very impactful day of learning.

#### Graduation Plans

Both schools have links on their homepages for information pertaining to the Class of 2025 events, including information about prom and graduation. Last year Ravinia announced that their renovation schedule will require an alternate venue for graduation for the Class of 2026. Venues are already being explored but at this time the focus remains on the Class of 2025 ceremonies.

- HPHS Graduation: Wednesday, May 28 at 5:00 p.m. at Ravinia Festival

- DHS Graduation: Thursday, May 29 at 5:00 p.m. at Ravinia Festival

#### Upcoming Board Meeting Reports

Informational reports will be shared at the next two Board meetings to provide updates regarding some of the efforts led by members of Cabinet.

- May 13: Reports from District Office/Cabinet members
- May 27: This meeting will be moved to the Highland Park High School Cafeteria to accommodate a larger crowd because this meeting will feature the Strategic Plan presentation. Community-wide communication about the meeting location change will be shared closer to the meeting date.

#### ***FOIA***

Dr. Holland reported the FOIA requests received since the last meeting and their disposition. The report is posted in BoardDocs online.

#### ***Excellence in Effort***

In her report, DHS Principal Dr. Kathryn Anderson shared the following:

- Heart of a Warrior - 12 students were honored for demonstrating the values of kindness, respect, inclusivity, personal growth, and perseverance. Thanks to Dr. Moore, Ms. Corelitz, and the staff committee for supporting this initiative.
- Brighten My Daisies - Students created and delivered floral arrangements to staff as part of an entrepreneurial initiative guided by Ms. Antonnucci. The project develops creativity, business skills, and logistical understanding through hands-on experience.
- NEST Annual Meeting will be hosted at DHS on May 16, led by retiring Dr. Jeff Hoyer. This year's focus is outdoor lab work and a tour of Somme Nature Preserve with expert Steven Packard.
- The Outdoor Classroom is officially certified as a Wildlife Habitat.
- Science Teacher Collaboration - DHS-HPHS science teachers planned unified, single-period courses and held a retreat April 7.
- World Languages - Spanish and ELL classes analyzed Dr. Dwyer's press release to build excitement for his visit.
- All students completed Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Language (AAPPL) testing; the first Class of 2028 student earned the Polish Seal of Biliteracy.

In her report, HPHS Principal Holly Fleischer highlighted the following:

- Genocide Commemoration Day - The school community came together to observe the day paying tribute to victims, survivors, rescuers, and upstanders. The event featured speakers Kizito D. Kalima, survivor of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide and founder of the *Peace Center for Forgiveness & Reconciliation*; and Dr. Raab who shared moving stories about his mother's survival of the Holocaust. Representative Bob Morgan joined Dr. Holland and Anne Neumann in attending. She thanked Lindsey Meyer, Joe Brysiewicz, and Education for Remembrance student leaders for organizing this meaningful event.
- Advanced Filmmaking - Students earned state and national recognition for their exceptional storytelling. These films, many of which were showcased at the *FOCUS* film festival, were described as creative, thought-provoking, and inspiring.

- Simon Finkel and Cameron Janitschke:
  - *Nominated* for a NATAS Emmy for their short film “EX1L3D”
  - *3rd Place* at the Screen Test Local Film Festival for “EX1L3D”
- Rodrigo Sanchez:
  - *Nominated* in the Public Service Announcement category for “¡Tenemos Una Voz!”
- Cameron Janitschke & Duncan Drake:
  - *10th Place* in the IHSA State Finals “Electric 18” Short Film Competition for “Unscripted”
- *Introduction to Business - Since January, students have operated six student-run businesses. Roles included CEOs and managers overseeing product development, pricing, marketing, and sales. The initiative fostered real-world entrepreneurial skills—with some enthusiastic hallway marketing.*
- *Introduction to Engineering Design - Students are completing a Shark Tank project involving brainstorming, prototyping, 3D printing and will present to a panel of “Sharks”*
- *Civil Engineering and Architecture - Students are designing libraries using Revit; incorporating professional concepts like load calculation and fire code research; and preparing for a Chicago Architecture Center River Cruise to connect theory to real-world architecture.*
- *INCubator Program - Students are preparing for HPHS Competition Pitch Night in May, with two standout teams so far, Court Control and Bite Blocker, additional teams will be added.*
- *Creative Cuisine - Students launched their Healthy Eating Unit, cooking nutritious meals and snacks. The unit will end with a Healthy Food Truck Project, where students will design menus and recipes and promote healthy living through hands-on culinary creativity*

### ***Professional Learning, Growth, and Development Plan***

In this report Dr. Chala Holland emphasized and framed the importance of staff professional development in District 113's ongoing efforts to support student growth and success. The report also provided an overview of professional learning and growth priorities for D113. These efforts focus on inclusive school communities and the work underway in the areas of access, belonging and achievement.

### ***Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Report***

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Dr. Dallacqua, provided an overview of Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in District 113 and the MTSS Committee's work to review the current framework as well as recommendations going forward.

### ***Career Education Pathways Report***

Dr. Dallacqua provided an overview of current Career Education Pathway efforts with the Career Pathways Committee and future considerations. Dr. Dallacqua discussed the expansions of pathway endorsements by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the tremendous opportunities the pathways provide to students to explore potential career options, participate in internships, and earn credits and certifications before graduation.

## **Discussion**

### ***DHS Warrior Gym Scoreboard Package Proposal***

The Board reviewed a proposal to upgrade the sound system and video board in the Deerfield High School Warrior Gym. The total estimated cost of the project is \$167,619.00. To support this initiative, the Deerfield High School Booster Club has generously offered to contribute \$83,809.50 to the project. The item will come back for action at the May 13 meeting.

### ***Legal Services Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Engagements***

Following the issuance of a legal services RFQ in February, a panel comprised of Board and Cabinet members reviewed the submissions, ultimately recommending the engagement of Franczek; Engler, Callaway, Baasten & Srage; and Kriha Boucek for legal services. Other legal firms with cases currently underway will complete the work on those cases. The letters of engagement will come back for action at the May 13 meeting.

### ***Consolidated District Plan 2025-2026***

As required by law for the district to be eligible to access federal and state grant fund applications, the Board must approve the 2025-26 Consolidated District Plan before the plan is submitted to the Illinois State Board of Education. The item will come back for approval at the May 13 meeting for Board action. The Consolidated District Plan relates to grants only and has nothing to do with consolidation of schools or services.

## **Action**

### ***Approval of 2026-2027 School Calendar***

The Board voted to approve as presented the proposed 2026-27 school calendar.

### ***Acceptance of 2023-2024 Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting award from the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) International***

District 113 has received ASBO's Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. This award represents a significant achievement and reflects the district's commitment to transparency and high-quality financial reporting. This is the 33rd consecutive year that the district has received this award.

## **Consent Agenda**

The Board approved [the consent agenda](#) as amended. The consent agenda includes personnel, stipends and board bills.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

## **Upcoming Meetings**

### ***May 13, 2025***

Committee of the Whole Meeting  
6:00 p.m. Closed, 7:00 p.m. Open  
Administration Building

### ***May 27, 2025***

Regular Action Meeting

6:00 p.m. Closed, 7:00 p.m. Open

**Highland Park High School Cafeteria\* - Note location change**