

MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie Avenue, Flossmoor, Illinois

April 15, 2025

Mr. Pauling called the meeting to order at 7:03 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. Pauling
Mr. Legardy

The presence of a quorum was noted and the meeting declared duly convened. Superintendent Wakeley, Principal Alexander, Chief School Business Official Cook, Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development Director Hester, Communications and Community Engagement Director Erdey and Information Services Director Richardson were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting. Incoming Superintendent Norrell was also present. Interim Human Resources Directors Gay and Kilrea were absent. Student Board Representative Gabe McKinney was also absent.

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

Comments. Dr. Wakeley recognized the HF Special Olympics Basketball Team State Champion student athletes who were in attendance this evening. He added these student-athletes continue a strong tradition of HF State Champion Teams and congratulated them on their amazing accomplishment. Coaches Garland, Mucha and Veal were also in attendance and Coach Garland spoke on the pride they have for these students and the perseverance they demonstrated. He also extended a special thanks to Special Education Director Dave Dore and co-sponsor Katie Rice (both also in attendance) along with Coach Olumstad and Coach Nieckula who were not in attendance this evening. Dr. Wakeley added that the students will each get a state championship ring to commemorate their championship win. Mr. Pauling expressed his pride and appreciation to the students on their win and thanked them for their excellence in representing HF. A photo of the team and coaches was taken with the board.

Ms. Shelly Marks, Homewood District 153 Board President, thanked Ms. Turnquest, Mrs. Hoereth and Mr. Anderson for their service on the board. She addressed Ms. Turnquest stating, "Cynthia, every board needs that quiet thoughtful caring person and from my perspective you have filled that role gracefully although short; effective and meaningful. Thank you for stepping up." Ms. Marks then spoke to Mrs. Hoereth stating, "Michelle, I don't know how to thank you for graduating from 8th grade over to high school." She added that she loved the times that they were co-presidents and shared the work they did at the elementary level. Ms. Marks stated that she is so proud of Mrs. Hoereth for stepping up and being a board member when it was needed. She added, "thank you for all the work that you have done and she knows the board will miss you and the community will miss you." Speaking to Mr. Anderson she said, "Steve, you also graduated from 8th grade and came over here and came at a time of great discord and stepped up and you were determined to put things right." She added, "it is no wonder that HF is HF Community High School and you brought the community into this school board again and made sure that each day HF was getting better and better and you did that with your colleagues and brought that leadership when needed. I know it was frustrating in the beginning but look at what you did." She extended a warm welcome to the new board members in the audience. Ms. Marks added that the HF board has done wonderful things and the community appreciates the hard work that has been done.

Mr. Pauling stated that he is taking a presidential privilege in congratulating Ms. Marks who will be completing her tour of duty in three weeks. He noted that Ms. Marks has served the Homewood Community for 33 years as a member of the Homewood School District 153 Board of Education. He added that Shelly Marks has long been a champion for children in this community as well as a partner with HF. He extended his best wishes to Ms. Marks as she moves forward and thanked her for serving and for being here this evening.

Mr. Tristan Shaw, Flossmoor resident and Flossmoor Green Commission member, stated that the Green Commission is very excited about the new Science Building. He noted that the Commission would like an opportunity to plant five trees at the new building site. Mr. Pauling thanked Mr. Shaw for coming this evening and for their donation of the trees to the district. Dr. Wakeley and Dr. Norrell will be working with the Green Commission to get the five trees planted at the Science Building.

Mr. Troy O'Quin expressed his appreciation to the board and thanked the board members who will be coming off the board for their dedication and service to the community. He also extended his thanks to Shelly Marks who is stepping down after 33 years from Homewood 153's school board. He spoke on HF's Performing Arts and stated that HF has the most dynamic performing arts anywhere nothing short of Broadway quality. Mr. O'Quin stated that the students are amazing and he does not think the community understands the jewel that HF has with its theater program. He extended his gratitude to the board for allowing students to exercise their gifts.

Pastor Doyle Landry pointed out that Mr. Edwin Castro-White from Primerica, an insurance company for families, was in attendance with him this evening. He brought Mr. Castro-White along this evening so that one day in the future, he will remember this moment because it was Pastor Landry's mentors who did something similar for him when he was in his early 20's. He spoke on his continued focus on mental health, particularly African American mental health, and reminded everyone that May is Mental Health Awareness month. Pastor Landry stated that he attended the Village of Homewood meeting on Tuesday requesting that consideration be given to reducing the curfew to 8:00 p.m. He thanked the board for their service and wished them God's help moving into the next fiscal year which he stated will be unchartered territory. He concluded by presenting Dr. Alexander, whose birthday is April 23, with a birthday card. Pastor Landry expressed it is an odd year for him because he will not be receiving a birthday card from either of his parents.

Dr. Wakeley shared that he and his wife marveled at the talent and gifts our students have as they watched the musical *Between the Lines* on Saturday night. He noted the students' performances were like what you would see on Broadway. He added "you don't know whether you want to hug them as a parent or ask them for their autographs and you forget they are children up there performing." He expressed that the HF community embraces our fine arts and it is a privilege to be able to go and watch the show and have a small part in saying, "those are our kids."

Dr. Alexander thanked JR Willard Rose and Gail Smith for their efforts in making the musical such a success. He extended a special thanks to Assessments Coordinator Dave Kush for his efforts in administering the ACT online for the first time here at HF. Lastly, Dr. Alexander thanked the outgoing board members for their service and dedication to the HF community.

Dr. Hester stated that she wanted to take some time to thank the reading department, for organizing and hosting the Wild About Reading Book Fair taking place this evening in the library. Books and activities for Pre-K through high school are available at the book fair. She noted parents, grandparents and HF alumni are attending this fun event and she thanked Ms. Freeman, Reading Department Lead, for making this possible.

Mrs. Erdey reminded everyone that the annual communication survey is live and available online. Students, staff, families and community members are invited to share their thoughts on what, when and how HF communicates. Music-themed promotions across genres will be available in the coming days in an effort to get as many participants as possible to provide feedback. Mrs. Erdey added that this important survey's results are used to shape the strategic communications plan for HF.

Mr. Legardy thanked outgoing board members Steve Anderson, Cynthia Turnquest and Michelle Hoereth and shared how much of a pleasure it has been for him to serve next to them, and, to learn from them. He added that it has been a collaborative board with them on it. He remarked, "they have been stars and their roles leave big shoes to fill for our incoming board members and wherever service takes you next I wish you all the best."

Ms. Jackson stated she echoes what everyone said about HF's Fine Arts and shared how much she also enjoyed the recent theater production. She added that the Fine Arts program at HF is a gem. She expressed that she is also looking forward to the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Science Building on May 6 at 4:30 p.m. She added that the building is an amazing addition for our students. She also thanked the outgoing board members and said that there was a fracture on the board when they joined which has come together with their leadership. Ms. Jackson stated, "that it takes the talents of all to make board service successful." She noted that she has learned from each of them and also looks forward to learning from the incoming board members. Ms. Jackson remarked that she will sorely miss each one of the outgoing board members. She is confident that each of the new board members will do just fine and emphasized "we are a well-functioning board and it is our responsibility to make that happen." Ms. Jackson wished her outgoing colleagues all the best and added that she appreciates all of them.

Mrs. Hoereth stated that she also attended the musical this weekend and expressed that she is grateful that HF has the resources and courage to allow the students to shine. She added that there were very courageous moments in the musical that allowed students to be who they are and to be ok with it. Mrs. Hoereth expressed that the board's student representative, Gabe McKinney, who is not here tonight, gave an excellent performance. She added that it is her hope to hear the word fight in the district through its new leadership, new board and current staff and not to be afraid to stand up and fight the bullying that is occurring because our students are watching for their cue.

Mr. Riedel shared that it has been an absolute joy to work with his fellow outgoing board members and it has been his pleasure to be a part of this board. He added that this is a highly functional board and the three departing members have been a foundational piece of that strength. He congratulated District 153 Board President Shelly Marks for her commitment to the community and all of the work she has put in through her many years of service. He also remarked regarding HF's fine arts stating that it is second to none and that anything that happens in that department should be promoted. He extended kudos to everybody involved in the play and noted that the entire department is outstanding and that needs to be shouted from the roof tops.

Ms. Turnquest thanked Shelly Marks for her service. She noted that Ms. Marks was one of the first to show her enthusiasm for Ms. Turnquest throwing her hat into the board arena. She also shared that the divisiveness of the political world is what she faces in her work on a daily basis but when she comes to the board table its work makes her whole. She expressed that there is nothing that HF is not able to accomplish. She also thanked Pat Gnaster and Suzette Diaz for holding board service together.

Mr. Anderson stated that his son participated in the Special Olympics Unified program and added that it is wonderful to see some of the students that his son participated with here tonight. He again encouraged the community to make a difference with common sense gun enforcement. He commented that in the tough days, he leaned heavily on Michelle Hoereth and Shelly Marks as the School Board Presidents trio for the partner districts. He shared that while they don't always agree, they respect each other, and they get a lot of hard work done. He added that Shelly Marks is the reason he has served on the board. Mr. Anderson thanked her for attending this evening and added that she means the world to the HF community.

Mr. Pauling offered his appreciation to the three outgoing board members as well as to all his board colleagues. Mr. Pauling shared that he is very proud of the work that the board does and he knows that will continue and it is in good hands. He looks forward to seeing everyone on May 6th when the board will officially bid them farewell. He added that his colleagues have become so adept at stepping out as self and stepping into what is a very serious responsibility as a board member. He stated that it is not always easy but they all have managed to do it so well all the time. He stated that it will be bittersweet when they are released officially.

Committee Reports. Mr. Legardy provided an update on the Planning Committee that met on March 19, 2025. He noted that last month low enrollment courses were removed from the board agenda for further review by the Planning Committee. He added that in the future, low enrollment courses will also be reviewed at the Personnel Committee and Finance Committee meetings. He commended the English Department for their thoughtful and strategic work. He added that a lot of their work has been spearheaded by Dr. Hester and thanked her as well. He expressed a concern at the meeting and discussion around a junior course took place. He noted that the enrollment for that course is falling in the low enrollment section. He acknowledged that there was a lot of energy put in that course and referred to Dr. Alexander who wanted to give it time to build. Lastly, Dr. Norrell proposed a new PLC structure promoting a stronger collaborative arrangement. The timeline was proposed to the committee and aligns with the district's strategic goals and it will create a more meaningful use of staff's professional learning time. He extended his appreciation to the leadership involved in this and the amount time that has been put in. He noted that board action will be taken on low enrollment courses and instructional resources this evening.

Mr. Anderson reported that the Finance Committee met on April 8, 2025. He noted that this is his final Finance Committee report. He has been serving on the Finance Committee for several years and noted Mr. Pauling and Ms. Jackson have been great committee colleagues. He also noted that he appreciates the great support he has received from Township Treasurer Robert Grossi and Dr. Lawrence Cook. He stated he is very sad that Dr. Cook will be retiring next year and added that his time is appreciated. The April 8 meeting was over two hours. In addition to the items on tonight's agenda for approval, Dr. Cook reviewed the budget process that has the same historical framework. Dr. Cook has been working with departments for needs and he will be meeting with Dr. Norrell to get her input. The purchasing or leasing a new shuttle bus was also discussed with a recommendation to lease and they are currently waiting to see if there is a possibility to purchase the bus at the end of the 5-year lease. During the meeting, Dr. Norrell shared her design of PLCs with the committee and he appreciated that it was brought before the Finance Committee. An update on capital projects was given by DLA Architect Ryan Kelley. He noted that the culinary project has been completed and today is the date for the completion of the final punch list of items for the Science Building. Paving of the parking lots will start this weekend. The possibility of creating a recording studio and finding space for it was also discussed, as well as possible funding from Ms. Wallace, the mother of Juice WRLD. Moving forward the committee will continue to discuss the results of the traffic study and re-routing bus routes along with safety fencing. Brian Tyrrell from Alliant gave a great presentation of pros and cons of insurance cooperatives and the committee agreed that it is well worth keeping the district's self-insured status intact. He added that the savings provided to the district over the years has been insurmountable. In addition, Athletico provided a

presentation highlighting their services and justified the 5% ask for their contract which is on tonight's agenda. The bidding process for custodial services was also discussed with a bid opening on April 24. Mr. Richardson and team provided a technology budget with a small increase over last year. Mr. Anderson added that the team did a great job focusing on asks and keeping the committee pointed on what are the most important needs requested by the departments. The technology budget is on the agenda this evening. He stated that the transfer of funds, which historically has been done, is also on tonight's agenda for approval. Mr. Anderson stated that at the end of the meeting, the committee moved to executive session to discuss collective bargaining which was the last item on the Finance Committee's agenda.

Consent Agenda. Mr. Pauling 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 subcommittee 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. Pauling asked if any board member requested any item on the consent agenda be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion. Ms. Jackson requested that agenda item 4.6 Low Enrollment Courses – General Education Courses at 14 students or below be removed from the consent agenda. Ms. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Anderson, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda that included:

Special Meeting of the Board Minutes, March 27, 2025

Regular Board Meeting Minutes, March 18, 2025

Approval of English Instructional Resources

Technology Requests 2025-2026

Athletico Contract Renewal

Approval of Expenditures, \$1,836,361.49

Approval of Imprest Fund, \$58,596.05

Ratification of March, 2025, Payroll, \$3,051,696.23

Retirement, James Schmidt, Assistant Principal, effective June 30, 2029

Resignation, Anna Santacaterina, School Psychologist, effective June 3, 2025

2025-2026 Administrator Compensation

2025-2026 Department Lead/Coordinator Contracts

2025-2026 Administrative Support Staff Contracts

2025-2026 Administrator Contract, Catherine Ross-Cook, Assistant Director for Curriculum & Instructional Equity, \$131,318.00

2025-2026 Administrator Contract, Jalitza Martinez, Assistant Superintendent of Staff Services, \$190,000

2025-2026 Administrator Contract, Lisa Dallacqua, Director of Career Pathways & Workforce Development, \$150,000

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

Before moving onto tonight's business, Mr. Pauling recognized and welcomed Ms. Jalitza Martinez newly appointed Assistant Superintendent for Staff Services and Dr. Lisa Dallacqua named as HF's new Director of CTE, Career Pathways and Workforce. He expressed his appreciation to Dr. Norrell for bringing these quality candidates to the district. He wished Ms. Martinez, Dr. Dallacqua and Dr. Norrell much success as they begin their new positions at HF as of July 1st. He also thanked them, along with their family members who were also present, for attending this evening.

Low Enrollment Courses – General Education Courses at 14 students or below. Mr. Anderson moved, seconded by Mr. Legardy, that the board approve low enrollment courses – general education courses at 14 students or below as presented. Ms. Jackson explained that she would like the cost associated with running these low enrollment classes and that was her request for pulling this item off the consent agenda. Mr. Pauling noted that in full transparency, this item will be reviewed by the Personnel Committee, Planning Committee and the Finance Committee before bringing it to the board for approval next year. Dr. Alexander stated that the enrollment numbers can change moving forward. Mr. Riedel requested that the board be informed in August and October regarding the enrollment in these low

enrollment courses to see how they are moving over time. Roll Call: Ayes – Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Integrated Math Presentation. Dr. Hester stated that recently Mr. White, Math Department Lead and colleagues presented on Integrated Math to the entire staff on Institute Day and the message to his colleagues needed to be heard by the board. She added that so much work has been done to this point under Mr. White’s leadership. She shared that Integrated Math is the foundation for standards based instruction in our math program and complimented the teachers who are implementing this for students. Dr. Hester introduced Mr. Rob White and teachers Ashley Alex and Tiffany White. Mr. White extended his appreciation for the trust, time and resources provided by the board which has allowed the math department to make important strides. A group of teachers meets four times per week to discuss math instruction, what students should know and getting clear about what students can and cannot yet do. He commented that proficiency scales define what is taught and assessed. They are used to plan learning activities and provide feedback on learning. Proficiency scale data is used to discuss next steps. He also stated that earned honors credit is available for students who achieve at advanced levels. Ms. Alex shared how teachers are being innovative in this work. She spoke on how they report mastery on the proficiency scales to help teachers and students understand what they can do and what they cannot do yet. A gradebook shift to naming the skills instead of simply chapters helps students, families and teacher teams understand how students are doing and what they need to work on. After each assessment, teachers have built-in time to address mistakes and challenge students. Ms. White spoke on how the work of Just In Time teachers support learning in classrooms. While the class teacher works with students the Just In Time teacher supports other students with push in and pull out services, asking probing questions, clarifying concepts, guiding students during practice, providing feedback and encouraging mathematical discussions. Just In Time teachers also provide extension activities for students who are mastering the skills. Mr. White noted that feedback from teachers and students has been very positive. He added that although the work has been challenging, the results are seen in how students are learning and how they view themselves as mathematicians. Mr. Legardy thanked them and added that they have re-imagined the learning environment. Mr. Legardy also thanked Dr. Wakeley who was looking closely at the achievement gap in 2021 during the pandemic. Mr. Anderson also expressed his thanks to them for presenting this evening and asked them to let the board know what needs or supports they may need as they continue to move forward with this integration. Mrs. Hoereth stated that in addition to herself, the entire board appreciates their quality of examples and what success looks like in real time. She added that the board will also be interested in those quantitative points. She commented that this conversation needs to be happening in our feeder districts. Ms. Turnquest also expressed her appreciation to Mr. White, Ms. Alex and Ms. White and added that this will follow students beyond the math classroom and noted that if students are successful in math, they will be successful in other areas as well.

New Business:

Report from the Parent-Teacher Discipline Committee. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education acknowledge the receipt of the report from the 2024-2025 Parent-Teacher Discipline Committee and convey appreciation to the members for their willingness to devote the time and thought to the continued improvement of our district; and now in accordance with Policy 2:150, we dissolve this committee and acknowledge that the report was referred back to the Associate Principal and Principal for review and recommendations. Dr. Alexander stated that this committee convenes annually in accordance with School Code and board policy. The committee has completed their work and the committee is dissolved in accordance with Policy 2:150. Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

2025-2026 Parent-Student Handbook. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education approve the revisions to the 2025-2026 Parent-Student Handbook as detailed on the 2025-2026 Parent-Student Handbook Changes, as recommended by the Parent-Teacher Discipline Committee, Associate Principal, Principal and the Superintendent. Dr. Alexander explained that staff and parents volunteered their time and reviewed the current handbook and recommended slight changes to some of the verbiage that will be applied in the 2025-2026 handbook. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Resolution for Transfer of Funds. Mr. Anderson moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution authorizing the transfer of funds in the amount of twelve million dollars (\$12,000,000) from the Education Fund to the Capital Projects Fund, as recommended by the Chief School Business Official, the Finance

Committee, and the Superintendent. Dr. Cook stated the district has historically transferred funds to the Capital Projects Fund (Fund 60) to support facility improvements and infrastructure needs. He explained that Fund 60 does not receive direct revenue and can only be funded through internal transfers and funds transferred into Fund 60 can only be used for capital improvements and may not be redirected to other accounts. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Memorandum of Understanding with HFEO. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Mr. Anderson, that the Board of Education approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Homewood-Flossmoor Educational Organization (HFEO), an affiliate of the NEA-IEA, dated April 15, 2025, and authorize the President to sign the official document, as recommended by the Interim Director of Human Resources and the Superintendent. Dr. Cook mentioned the MOU addresses adding stipends for the new Collaborative Team Lead positions. Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Ratification of Agreement with HFSSA. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Ms. Turnquest, that the Board of Education adopt the Agreement between the Board of Education of District 233 and the Homewood-Flossmoor Support Staff Association (HFSSA) for the term of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028, and authorize the Board President and Secretary to execute the official documents, as recommended by the Superintendent. Mr. Pauling stated negotiations for this group have been completed. Dr. Cook noted that this group is the non-IEA NEA support staff group that includes 18 support staff members. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Possible Action Concerning Instructional Assistant's Employment for 2025-2026 School Year. Ms. Jackson moved, seconded by Mrs. Hoereth, that the Board of Education non-renew and dismiss from employment instructional assistant Michelle McDavid, effective June 1, 2025, as recommended by the administration. Roll Call: Ayes – Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Executive Session. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education enter into Executive Session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c) of the Open Meetings Act at 9:00 p.m. to consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the School District. Mr. Pauling noted that no further action will be taken when the board returns to open session. Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Open Session. Mrs. Hoereth moved, seconded by Ms. Turnquest, that the Board of Education return to open session at 9:25 p.m. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Legardy, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Turnquest, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hoereth, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Adjournment. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Ms. Turnquest, that the Board of Education be adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

President

Vice-President/Secretary