



Board Briefs

[Para español, por favor haga click aquí](#)

[May 13, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting](#)

[Board Meeting Videos](#)

Approval of Agenda

The Board approved the May 13 agenda as presented.

Recognition

Student Artists

On behalf of the Board, President Anne Neumann, and on behalf of the district, Superintendent Dr. Chala Holland recognized and thanked the talented student artists who loaned their awe-inspiring work to the Administration Building and Board Room for display this year. The artists who had their work featured this year are:

Deerfield High School

Sayaka Tozaki
Nolan Fettner
Violet Krol
Jonathan Heid
Natalia West
Emma Spiegel
Sofia Bellegamba
Tatevik Asatryan
Gale Harvey
Rhett Frese

Highland Park High School

Kira Feinberg
Getse Gaytan
Scarlett Kischer
Alexi De La Cruz-Ramirez
Ariel Buckmaster

Odaliz Servin Duran
Charles Kellogg
Patrick Williams
Cecilia Gabriel
Keya Fowler

Outgoing Board Liaisons

Board President Anne Neumann and Dr. Holland thanked the two students who served as student liaisons to the Board during the 2024-2025 school year: Lila Peck, Deerfield High School and Miles Walker, Highland Park High School. Dr. Holland also thanked them for participating in the Superintendent's Advisory Council, where their insights and perspectives supported her leadership. Both are graduating seniors. Neumann pointed out that they will be wearing purple cords at graduation as a symbol of their service.

College Bound Opportunities

The Board welcomed College Bound Opportunities Director of College Persistence Alissa Hapern to recognize the names and post-secondary plans of the five graduating seniors who participated in the CBO program during their high school experience at Deerfield and Highland Park High Schools. CBO currently supports 71 students attending DHS, HPHS, and other Lake County high schools.

From DHS: Yaretzy Mazariegos -- Wellesley College
From HPHS: Alejandra Vazquez-Ortiz -- Augustana College
Chelsea Cruz -- Augustana College
J'Lynn Vargas -- Illinois State University
Jocelyn Melchor -- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Jocelyn Ortiz -- Augustana College
Johan Garcia-Hernandez -- Illinois State University
Nicole Cruz -- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Robby Mendoza -- Beloit College
Sara Gonzalez-Heredia -- Illinois State University

Retiring Staff

The Board honored 16 staff members across multiple departments for their service as well as their positive impact on students and their learning experiences within DHS and HPHS. Thirteen retirees have each served the students of District 113 for 20+ years, and in all, they represent a combined total of 394.4 years of service to District 113.

Action

Appointment of Student Liaisons to the Board

Per Policy 2-40 Board Member Qualifications, the Board appointed Ethan Polonsky, DHS; and Sophie Moncivaiz, HPHS, to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board for the 2025-2026 school year.

Approval of Multi-Year Contract for Executive Director of Facilities Management

The Board approved as presented a three-year contract with Jose Medina to serve as the Executive Director for Facilities Management effective July 1.

Approval of Multi-Year Contract for Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

The Board approved as presented a three-year contract with Dr. Karen Ritter to serve as the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment effective July 1.

Approval of Multi-Year Contract for Assistant Superintendent of Student Services

The Board approved as presented a three-year contract with Dr. Tanya Karner to serve as the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services effective July 1.

Dr. Holland spoke about the extensive hiring process for these positions, which brought a minimum of three rounds of interviews and a wide range of stakeholders together over a period of many months. She congratulated each of the newly appointed D113 administrators at the conclusion of the comprehensive hiring process, marking it as a moment of celebration. [A detailed announcement](#) about the three administrator positions was sent immediately following the Board's action.

Board Reports

President

Board President Anne Neumann shared the updated Board Committees and their assignments for 2025-2026.

Finance/Facilities

Chair: Greg Nieder

Board Member #1: Rick Heineman

Board Member #2: Alex Brunk

Policy

Chair: Board VP - Jaime Barraza

Board Member #1: Board President - Anne Neumann

Board Member #2: Alex Brunk

Education

Chair: Dr. Jody Elliott-Schrimmer
Board Member #1: Jaime Barraza
Board Member #2: Greg Nieder

TIF Liaison: Rick Heineman
True North Representative: Jenny Lupa
ED-RED Representative: Rick Heineman

The Illinois Association of School Boards' (IASB) call for resolutions is now open and due by June 25 in preparation for the Joint Annual Conference in November. Those resolutions that are approved by the delegate assembly in November become IASB position statements that provide the associate with direction on positions and/or actions on a particular issue. Neumann asked for any proposed resolutions by June 4 in advance of discussion at the June 10 meeting.

She then proceeded with her report, acknowledging Staff Appreciation Week (May 5-9) and National School Nurse Day on May 7. She thanked all staff for their dedication, in all they do in the classroom and beyond. The Board encourages our entire community to show appreciation not just in May but year-round. Every interaction is an opportunity to thank them for their passion, professionalism, and commitment to student success.

True North

True North Representative Jenny Lupa reported that the TrueNorth Leadership Council met on May 7, and at that meeting, 3 TrueNorth students were recognized for their prize-winning essays and retirees were honored for their years of service.

TrueNorth Family University provided information about the upcoming June 2 launch and offerings that will be available to all families. Member districts are encouraged to host events, facilitate presentations, and promote participation in learning.

For finances, FY25 rates have been reconciled, resulting in refunds that will be issued to applicable member districts when final bills are issued, and the FY26 budget has been posted for inspection. Looking ahead to the next meeting June 11, a plan will be presented outlining future needs in light of two member districts' pending petitions to withdraw from the co-op.

Administration Information Reports

Superintendent

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

Superintendent's Remarks

Dr. Holland remarked on the daily events hosted by administration and the PTOs at each school to celebrate staff for their hard work in honor of Staff Appreciation Week. She thanked D113 staff for all that they do in the service of students and their families.

Along with HPHS Principal Holly Fleischer and DHS Principal Dr. Kathryn Anderson, Dr. Holland attended the Educator of the Year Ceremony hosted by the Lake County Regional Office of Education. Two D113 mental health professionals, Ms. Amy Hindson and Dr. Agata Watson, were both recognized during the ceremony. As the year draws to a close, Dr. Holland encouraged students to finish the year strong and to make smart choices through the last days of school. She hoped that all would enjoy these last few weeks and reminded students that as staff cheer students to the finish line, they are also available for support.

In closing, Dr. Holland congratulated Grand Times on its 25th anniversary. The intergenerational volunteer program was founded in 1999 by then D113 Assistant Superintendent Susan Benjamin, bringing the contributions of senior citizens into the schools. Dr. Holland thanked current Executive Director Lynne Samuels for her work in continuing the legacy of founders Jerry Witkowsky and Louise Kenny in connecting faculty and students with the wisdom and knowledge of talented senior citizen community members.

FOIA

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

Cell Phone Review and Recommendation

Executive Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Mirah Anti provided a report on the year-long review of the district's cell phone policy and procedures. The review included collecting input from students, staff and parents/caregivers. At the conclusion of the report, Anti said the recommendation is to move toward a "no cell, bell to bell" model, restricting cell phone usage during instructional time. More information will be shared with students, families and staff as details are finalized.

Communications Update

Chief Communications Officer Karen Warner provided an overview of all the work the Communications Department leads and oversees for the district. She also reported on the outcomes of key initiatives in the 2024-2025 school year, including the new website launch, email and emergency communications software updates, among other items.

Technology Update

Chief Information Officer Ron Kasbohm provided a report on all of the essential aspects of information technology that the Technology Department supports. Kasbohm shared details about the breadth of the district's technology infrastructure as well as important cybersecurity and AI initiatives.

Second Semester Security Update and Feedback

Chief Operations Officer Briah Ahmer, along with Director of Security Lane Linder and Mirah Anti, provided an update on security enhancements added during second semester, notably the K9 teams at both schools, the randomized use of weapons detection systems at all school main entrances, and the launch of a Security Advisory Committee. Dr. Holland said that the district continues to assess the impact of these enhancements and will bring back more detailed information to the Board during the first semester of the 2025-2026 school year.

School Reports

Student Liaison Reports

DHS Liaison Lila Peck shared that Drama 3 & 4 classes had successful runs of their productions, putting on shows in the Studio Theater, with period 2 performing *The Guy Who Didn't Like Musicals* and period 5 performing *Rumors*. On May 2, the annual Jam for Justice was held in the courtyard with many students performing. She looked forward to Honors Night May 12 when students will be recognized for their achievements across many different academic, athletic, and fine arts categories.

HPHS Liaison Miles Walker reported that on May 2 HPHS hosted "Jazz Nite" with lots of fun and good music that included HPHS musicians as well as the Northwood and Edgewood Jazz Bands from North Shore School District 112. He congratulated the HP Math Team for placing 5th overall out of 65 schools at the Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics. He closed by congratulating the HPHS student athletes who were honored May 9 and will be continuing their athletic careers at the collegiate level next year.

Discussion

2025-2026 School District Treasurer's Bond

In accordance with Illinois School Code, the Board conducted its annual review of the school district's treasurer bond that will be secured on behalf of the District Treasurer, Ali Mehanti, Assistant Superintendent for Finance/Chief School Business Official (CSBO). The item will come back for action at the May 27 meeting.

2025-2026 Special Issue Surety Bond Decrease Rider

In accordance with state bonding requirements, the Board reviewed a special issue surety bond decrease rider to reflect the currently unspent balance of 2022A alternate revenue bonds and the accompanying penalty rider. As of FY25, the unspent balance has decreased to \$6 million,

requiring the penalty rider to be adjusted to reflect 10% of the remaining bond liability of \$600,000. The item will come back for action at the May 27 meeting.

Resolution Authorizing Driver's Education Fee

As required by Illinois School Code, the Board reviewed a resolution authorizing the driver education fee in the amount of \$240 for the 2024-2025 school year, the same amount it has been charged since the 2019-2020 school year. The required public hearing will be held at the May 27 meeting before the Board formally adopts this annually required resolution.

Action

Approval of Payment of Invoices to Avoid Late Fees

The Board voted to authorize payment of invoices to avoid late charges from certain vendors when Board approval of the invoices comes after the due date. The checks will be released but still appear on all reports and could be pulled for auditing purposes. The list of companies for fiscal year 2026 can be found on BoardDocs.

Approval of FY 2026 Designating Depositories Resolution

As it does each year, the Board voted to adopt a resolution to authorize signatories and depositories for the following fiscal year.

Approval of Legal Firm Engagement Letters

The Board approved the engagement of the following law firms for legal services: Franczek; Engler, Callaway, Baasten & Sraga; and Kriha Boucek.

Approval of Donation Agreement for Warrior Gym Scoreboard

The Board approved an agreement with the DHS Booster Club for its generous donation to upgrade the sound system and video board in the Warrior Gym.

Approval of Salary and Benefits Agreement with Bus Drivers

The Board voted to approve as presented the 2025-2029 salary agreement with the district's bus drivers.

Consent Agenda

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings

May 27, 2025

Policy Committee Meeting

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Highland Park High School Giant Conference Room* - Note location change

Regular Action Meeting

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

Highland Park High School Cafeteria* - Note location change