



**Wednesday, April 9, 2025
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205
HELD AT THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL 15001 BROADWAY AVE., HARVEY,
ILLINOIS, AT 6:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 6:39p.m. President Graham made the following announcement: Any person may record or broadcast an open Board meeting. Special requests to facilitate recordings or broadcast an open Board meeting should be directed to the Superintendent at least 24 hours before the meeting. Recording meetings shall not distract or disturb Board Members or participants. Please know if you participate in public participation, you are part of the Board meeting and may be taped.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY
BOARD PRESIDENT

On roll call, Members Banks, Brown, Davis, Graham, and Lawrence answered. Members Moody and Owens were absent. Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Superintendent; Dr. Jerry Doss, Associate Superintendent; Mr. Toriano Horton, Assistant Superintendent of Business Operations; Mr. Thomas Porter, Executive Director of Special Services; Ms. Rosaura Duran, Director of Human Resources were also present.

ROLL CALL

Report from Curriculum Committee: The last meeting was held on April 3, 2025, to discuss CEDA's student trip to Springfield, Mr. Cox-Bey discussed social emotional curriculum, etc.

COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE

Report from Finance & Facilities Committee: The last meeting was held on March 27, 2025. Two items reviewed are on the agenda for approval. The next meeting will be held April 24, 2025.

Report from Policy Committee: None.

Report from Discipline Committee: None.

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Brown seconded, to **Approve the Consent Agenda**, which includes the following:

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

- Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes and Executive Session Minutes dated March 12, 2025
- The District 205 bills as presented for payment dated March 12, 2025 through April 8, 2025
- Personnel dated April 8, 2025 (Resignations, Leave of Absence, New Hires and Terminations)
- Ratification(s)
 - Approval of the Thornwood Group Interpretation State Competition, Overnight Trip, Oak Lawn, IL, March 27-29, 2025
 - Approval of the Thornwood Girls' Track & Field Team Harris-Stowe State University Tour, Overnight Trip, St. Louis, MO, April 11-13, 2025

BILLS

PERSONNEL

RATIFICATION

- Approval of the Thornton Township High School Band Room 119 Renovation

On roll call, Members Lawrence, Brown, Banks, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

The following individuals spoke during Public Participation:

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Ms. Crayton of Dolton spoke about Palm Sunday and gratitude to administration.

Dr. Doss stated there have been two answered and 1 pending FOIA requests since last board meeting.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Dr. Ratliff presented the following information:

COMMUNICATIONS

- **Thornridge High School:**
 - Senior Kaliah Oparah
 - Over \$2.7M in scholarship offers
 - Schoolwide Rock Paper Scissors Battle
 - Hosted by Student Council with Dr. Moore engaging in the game throughout the day with students
 - Book Tasting
 - High-impact, fun event designed to introduce students to various types of books
 - Students were invited to dine and explore books would enjoy reading Skating Party
- **Thornton High School:**
 - Group Interpretation Competition
 - Earned 3rd place in IHSA State Competition
 - Sophomore Half-Cap Ceremony & Video Recap
 - Students are eligible if they complete the requirement of at least 10 credits throughout their freshmen and sophomore years
 - RHO Kapp National Social Studies Honors Society
 - 29 Seniors inducted due to academic excellence
 - Mielles Care- Warehouse Tour
 - Connected with the founders, students toured the space, observed the packing process, and engaged in an inspiring table chat session—receiving real-life advice on business, purpose, and perseverance
- **Thornwood High School:**
 - Brain Booster Activities During PLC
 - Engaged students to ensure they are socially and emotionally settled and prepared to participate and add value to their classes
 - Chicago State University
 - Awarded 35 seniors with free college tuition for 1 year, valued at a combined \$454,080
 - Secretary of State Visit
 - Alexi Giannoulis visited TW to highlight the 4 phase Driver Ed Program.
 - TW is only 1 of 3 schools in state to implement the 4 phases.
 - Group Interpretation
 - Performed The Watsons Go to Birmingham
 - 5 Students earned All State Cast Awards

Student State Capitol Trip with CEDA Presentation – Dr. Ratliff and CEDA rep, Ms. Gaston, along with TR Senior, Jabari Burkes spoke about their recent trip to the State Capitol. Rep Will Davis gave them an in-depth tour and Q&A session. Students walked away with a more in-depth knowledge of State Government.

PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Brown moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Thornwood Varsity Football Team Winona State University Summer Camp, Overnight Trip, Winona, MN, June 23-25, 2025**, as presented by Mr. Holmes. Student athletes will have the opportunity to train and compete with college athletes. On roll call, Members Brown, Banks, Davis, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF TW
VARSITY FOOTBALL
SUMMER CAMP,
OVERNIGHT TRIP

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Thornwood Varsity Competitive Cheerleading Team Mega Camp, Overnight Trip, Tampa, FL, June 25-30, 2025**, as presented by Mr. Holmes. This is an exclusive opportunity for the team to engage in a variety of activities and drills. The team fundraised to cover fees. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF TW
VARSITY
CHEERLEADING
CAMP, OVERNIGHT
TRIP

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the PRESS Plus Policy Update, Issue 117** as presented by Dr. Doss. This approval included updates as required, five-year reviews, etc. on Board Policy. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF PRESS
PLUS POLICY UPDATE,
ISSUE 117

Mr. Brown moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded the **Approval of the Thornton Township High School Band Room 117 Renovation** as presented by Mr. Horton. This room has significant wear and tear and potential hazards and in need of renovation. On roll call, Members Brown, Lawrence, Banks, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE TT
BAND ROOM 117
RENOVATION

Dr. Davis moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Asbestos Abatement for Summer 2025 Flooring Repairs** as presented by Mr. Horton. All three main schools were assessed, and the most immediate issues will be addressed. On roll call, Members Davis, Banks, Brown, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF
ASBESTOS
ABATEMENT FOR
SUMMER 2025
FLOORING REPAIRS

Mr. Brown moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded the **Approval of Thornridge High School Swimming Pool Repairs** as presented by Mr. Crump. This pool has been inoperable since 2018. The repairs will focus on key areas to return the pool to a usable state. On roll call, Members Brown, Lawrence, Banks, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF TR
SWIMMING POOL
REPAIRS

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of Thornridge High School Exterior Renovations** as presented by Mr. Crump. The exterior is in urgent need repairs. The CMM Group will complete the work, projected to be completed in 2.5 months. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE TR
EXTERIOR
RENOVATIONS

Dr. Cunningham stated the following:

Good evening,

Tonight, I want to take just a few minutes to reflect on a single word — *service*.

It's a word we use often in education, in government, in the military, and in community work. But have we stopped to think about what it really means?

SUPERINTENDENT
REPORT

The word *service* has deep historical roots. It comes from the Old French *servise*, meaning “attendance, assistance, or duty.” And further back still, from the Latin *servitium*, meaning “slavery or servitude” — a condition of being bound to another.

At its origin, service meant labor done for someone else — often not by choice. But over time, the definition evolved. What once implied obligation has grown into something far more powerful. Something noble.

Military service came to symbolize duty, protection, and sacrifice. **Public service** grew to represent civic responsibility — not serving a ruler, but a community. **Volunteer service** is perhaps the clearest expression of generosity — giving time, energy, and heart, without any expectation of return.

Across all of these, one thread runs true: **Service is about contributing to something greater than yourself.**

That idea brings to mind a story from the late anthropologist Margaret Mead. When asked what she considered the first sign of civilization, she didn’t point to tools or weapons, agriculture or language.

She pointed to a *healed femur* — a thigh bone that had once been broken and had mended. Why? Because in the animal world, a broken femur is a death sentence. You can’t run, you can’t hunt, you can’t survive. But a healed femur is proof that someone cared. That someone stayed behind, protected the injured, brought them food, helped them heal.

Mead said: *That’s the beginning of civilization.* Not the invention of fire — but the decision to stop and care for someone else.

Last night – I told these things to the Students Board during their superintendent report – I couldn’t in good conscience not repeat it to our Board of Education because that is what you continue to do too!

You’ve shown up. You’ve listened. You’ve asked hard questions. You’ve helped shape ideas into programs, policies, and progress. You’ve taken calls — sometimes tough ones — in parking lots, at the grocery store, and yes, even through your relatives. You’ve spent your time, your energy, and your own resources not for recognition, but because you care.

It’s not easy. It’s not always appreciated. And it certainly doesn’t come with a paycheck. But it does pay — in futures. It pays when a student graduates with confidence. When a child finds their voice in music, in STEM, or on the field. When a family feels supported. When our mission — that every student is *enrolled, enlisted, or employed* upon graduation — becomes a reality.

I said last night - To our seniors on the student board: you’ve already begun a journey of leadership that matters. You’ve made your mark here, and wherever you go next, I hope you carry this spirit of service with you. It’s not always glamorous, and it won’t always get applause, but it will always matter.

Tonight- to our Board of Education — I say **thank you**. Thank you for your tireless commitment. For your leadership. For helping us build the kind of school district where futures are not only imagined — they are built, one decision at a time.

My team and I are grateful. Our students benefit. And our community is stronger because of you. Thank you for your service.

At 7:22p.m., Dr. Davis moved, Mr. Brown seconded to **Go into Executive Session** pursuant to Section 2C of the Illinois Open Meetings Act to consider:

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees;
- Student discipline;

- Collective negotiating matters, and
- Pending, probable or imminent litigation.

On roll call, Lawrence, Moody, Banks, Brown, Davis, Graham, Moody, and Owens voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

At 8:17p.m., Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded to **Reconvene Regular Session**. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

RECONVENE
REGULAR SESSION

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Brown seconded the **Approval of the Faculty Association Grievance Decisions**. The board denies Faculty Association Grievances #111524 (FA Release Periods) and #012925 (Investigations Procedures) for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's prior written decisions. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Brown, Banks, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF
FACULTY ASSOC
GRIEVANCE DECISIONS

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Dr. Davis seconded the **Approval of the Non-Renewal of Probationary Teachers**. The board accepts the resolution for the non-renewal of probationary teachers who are not completing their final probationary year of service, such teachers being Crystal Franklin, Drew Boyter, Patrick Casas, and Lisa Combs as presented by administration. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Davis, Banks, Brown, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

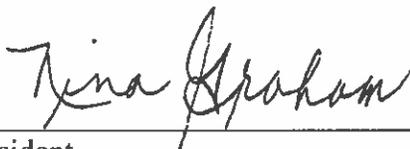
APPROVAL OF NON-
RENEWAL OF
PROBATIONARY
TEACHERS

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Dr. Davis seconded the **Approval of the Resolution Authorizing a Notice of Remediation for Tenured Teacher, Kyle Rusco**. The board accepts this resolution as presented by administration. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Davis, Banks, Brown, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF K.
RUSCO NOTICE TO
REMEDY

At 8:20p.m., Mrs. Lawrence moved, Dr. Davis seconded to **Adjourn the Meeting**. On roll call, Lawrence, Davis, Banks, Brown, and Graham voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT



President



Secretary