



Board Briefs

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[May 27, 2025 Regular Action Meeting](#)

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Public Hearing Regarding Driver's Education Fee

As required by Illinois School Code, the Board held the public hearing required before the Board formally adopts a resolution later in the meeting.

Board Reports

President

Board President Anne Neumann reminded Board members to hold dates for the Triple I Joint Conference with Illinois Association of School Boards-Illinois Association of School Administrators-Illinois Association of School Business Joint Conference held this year from November 21 to 23.

Neumann said she looked forward to celebrating HPHS and DHS seniors this week at their graduations and wished them congratulations. She also wished students and staff a successful finish to the school year. She closed by thanking Chief Operations Officer Brian Ahmer at his last meeting for his service to the district.

Policy Committee

Policy Committee Chair Jaime Barraza reported on the committee meeting held immediately prior. The policies reviewed will move forward for review by the full Board at the June 10 meeting.

Administration Information Reports

Superintendent

Superintendent Dr. Chala Holland said that this week is an exciting one with graduations Wednesday and Thursday and it being the last week of student and staff attendance. She thanked staff for pouring into the lives of our students in meaningful ways all year, thanked families for their partnership, and thanked members of Cabinet and the Board for their support throughout the year. She closed by wishing everyone a safe and restorative summer break.

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:

World Languages

The World Languages Department continues to deliver exceptional learning experiences. Mrs. Athena Sawyer and her Chinese language students recently visited Deer Park, the school's preschool and daycare, to teach the Chinese Zodiac story. Young learners were captivated by the tale of the animal race and participated in learning Chinese words and corresponding movements. Seniors Emma, Zane, and Nick were recognized for their enthusiastic engagement with the children. Chinese students also led their first guided tours in Chicago's Chinatown. They conducted research on historical sites, presented to their peers, and demonstrated strong public speaking and cultural literacy.

As of May 12, 2025, the Class of 2025 has earned 81 Seals of Biliteracy across nine languages and 87 Commendations Toward Biliteracy in five languages. All students have completed the AAPPL (Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Language) testing, with one Class of 2028 student earning the Polish Seal of Biliteracy — a milestone achievement.

Fine and Applied Arts

The Honors Business Incubator program, led by Joe Navickas and Amy Burnetti, had a standout year. The program grew to 6 sections and supported 33 student-led teams. The year culminated in Pitch Night 2025, where 10 teams were selected to present their ventures. The first-place team, Everlahm — Jesse Feldman, Josh Koyfman, Elan Mesa, and Jay Noren — created an innovative product for golf glove preservation, with mentorship from Lee Guthman. The department extends gratitude to the community mentors and parent volunteers whose support contributed to the program's success.

In Television and Film, teacher Brett Schwartz and his students earned 8 nominations from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences — a remarkable recognition of their work.

The Visual Arts Department, under the guidance of Chris Sykora and Tim Bleck, celebrated several outstanding student honors:

- Sade Muscarella (Junior): Best in Show for Mixed/Alternative Media
- Alex Nodland (Junior): Best in Show for Sculpture
- Ryan Blitz (Junior): Silver Award in Photography

Additionally, DHS students were chosen to represent the school at the Central Suburban League Art Exhibition.

The Fine Arts Department also hosted a signing day on May 19 to honor students committed to pursuing arts in college — a celebration of their creative accomplishments and future ambitions.

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

Highland Park High School (HPHS) recently honored its graduating seniors with a memorable prom celebration and an emotional Senior Clapout, marking the end of their high school journey.

The energy and unity of the HPHS community were clearly felt during these heartfelt send-offs. Graduation is eagerly anticipated to follow.

The school also hosted a dedicated junior class assembly, officially ushering in the next generation of school leaders. Students were encouraged to reflect on traditions and to embrace new, inclusive practices. The message emphasized that with leadership comes responsibility, and that students play a vital role in shaping the school culture moving forward.

Academic Achievements

An impressive 847 students completed over 1,600 AP exams in the past month — a testament to their dedication to academic rigor. Gratitude is extended to all AP teachers, proctors, and support staff whose commitment helped guide students through this challenging process.

Environmental Science Partnership

Environmental Science and AP Environmental Science students partnered once again with the Park District of Highland Park and Trout Unlimited. Over the school year, students raised trout from eggs in classroom aquariums, learning about ecosystems and environmental stewardship. On May 2, over 300 trout were successfully released into a local watershed at Rosewood Beach in Highland Park. This effort was led by teachers Aaron Fay, Matt Kracht, and Beth Peterson.

Interdisciplinary Exhibition: American Studies

American Studies students created a powerful photography exhibit that explored dichotomous themes such as freedom vs. oppression and progress vs. stagnation. Their semester-long work culminated in a presentation and discussion with multigenerational guest audiences, fostering rich, reflective dialogue. Special thanks were extended to Gabby Perlen for her role in community engagement.

End-of-Year Gratitude

A sincere thank you was extended to the HPHS staff for their unwavering dedication and positive energy as the school year draws to a close. Their intentional efforts across all departments are deeply appreciated.

A heartfelt thank you to the entire staff who are going above and beyond to close this school year with an exclamation point in every part of our organization. Their dedication and intentionality is deeply appreciated.

Township High School District 113 Strategic Plan

Dr. Holland along with co-presenters Valeria Rodriguez, Alyssa Rivera and Dr. Kristen Ninni, who served as participants on the 65-member Strategic Plan Team presented the draft strategic plan to the Board. Dr. Holland explained that the last strategic plan was completed in 2017, noting how many things had changed making now the perfect time to revisit creating a new plan to guide the district over the next 5 years. She then provided an overview of the entire 5-month process, the multiple opportunities for input and feedback, as well as all the stakeholder groups that participated in some way throughout the entire process. The process culminated in a draft plan that will come back to the Board for a vote at the June 10 meeting.

Discussion

Consideration of a Resolution and a Petition for Withdrawal from TrueNorth Educational Cooperative 804 filed by Glenbrook High School District 225

The Board discussed a resolution and petition for withdrawal from TrueNorth Educational Cooperative 804 that was filed by Glenbrook High School District 225. District 225 is seeking to withdraw through a process outside of the cooperative's bylaws. Attorney Dana Crumley from District 113's legal counsel was present to advise the Board and answer questions. The item is listed for action later on the agenda.

TrueNorth Educational Cooperative 804

Dr. Holland along with Attorney Crumley provided an update on the state and stability of TrueNorth in light of additional pending petitions from other member districts to withdraw from the co-op. The co-op provides special education services and professional development services for 18 member districts.

The discussion included a recommendation by Dr. Holland to approve a resolution at the June 10 meeting to withdraw District 113 from the co-op. Dr. Holland cited a multitude of factors for her recommendation, including instability of the student service and financial model of the co-op given the current conditions, the lack of information from TrueNorth, and the probable negative financial impact to District 113 if it does not take action by June 30. Dr. Holland said withdrawing creates the safeguards needed to plan for a more stable learning environment for students learning and support and provides more financial stability and clarity for the district. She said this is the best decision for the district and closed by saying that the situation continues to change and that she will keep the Board updated as new details emerge.

2025-2026 Paper Bid

The Board reviewed administration's recommendation for the 2025-2026 paper bid. The bid followed a competitive process as required by Board policy. The item will come back for action at the June 10 meeting.

2025-2026 Individual and Small Group Transportation Bid

The Board reviewed administration's recommendation for student transportation services, conducted through a competitive process as required by Board policy. It covers transportation needs such as McKinney-Vento and special education routes, with vendor proposals evaluated on safety, service stability, and cost. The item will come back for action at the June 10 meeting.

Action

Consideration of a Resolution and a Petition for Withdrawal from TrueNorth Educational Cooperative 804 filed by Glenbrook High School District 225

The Board voted against a petition for withdrawal filed by District 225 from TrueNorth Educational Cooperative 804.

Approval of the 2025-2026 School District Treasurer's Bond

The Board approved as presented the school district's treasurer bond in the amount of \$18,957,000 per statutory requirements.

2025-2026 Special Issue Surety Bond Decrease Rider

The Board approved as presented the special issue surety bond decrease rider in the amount of \$600,000.

Approval of the Resolution Authorizing Driver's Education Fee

The Board approved as presented a resolution authorizing the driver's education fee.

Stormwater IGA between District 113 and the Village of Deerfield

The Board approved as presented an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between Township High School District 113 and the Village of Deerfield. As part of the planned 2025 summer construction season, District 113 will replace the East parking lot at Deerfield High School, including the associated stormwater management system located in the southeast portion of the property.

The Village of Deerfield has agreed to contribute funding toward the stormwater system improvements, as both entities utilize the infrastructure jointly. This agreement outlines the terms of the cost-sharing arrangement between District 113 and the Village of Deerfield.

Consent Agenda

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings

June 10, 2025

Regular Action Meeting

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

Administration Building