



**Wednesday, May 14, 2025
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205
HELD AT THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL 17101 SOUTH PARK AVE., SOUTH HOLLAND,
ILLINOIS, AT 6:30 PM**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:35p.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, Bradley, Davis, Graham, Lawrence, and Moody answered. Member Owens was absent. Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Superintendent; Dr. Jerry Doss, Associate Superintendent; Mr. Thomas Porter, Executive Director of Special Services; Ms. Rosaura Duran, Director of Human Resources were also present. ROLL CALL
- Report from Curriculum Committee:** None. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
- Report from Finance & Facilities Committee:** Last meeting was held on May 8, 2025, and all items are on this agenda to be approved. The next meeting will be held on May 29, 2025
- Report from Policy Committee:** None.
- Report from Discipline Committee:** None.
- Committee Appointments:** Board Member assignments were made to the Curriculum, Discipline, Finance & Facilities, and Policy Committees. Representatives for IASB Liaison, SCOPE, and Student Board were also assigned.
- Dr. Davis moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded, to Approve the Consent Agenda, which includes the following:** CONSENT AGENDA
- Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes and Executive Session Minutes dated April 9, 2025 MINUTES
 - Approval of Special Board Meeting Minutes dated April 30, 2025
 - The District 205 bills as presented for payment dated April 9, 2025 through May 13, 2025 BILLS
 - Personnel dated May 13, 2025 (Resignations, Leave of Absence, New Hires and Terminations) PERSONNEL
 - Ratification(s) RATIFICATION
 - Approval of the Thornwood Drone Nationals, Kettering University, Overnight Trip, Flint, MI, May 18-20, 2025

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

The following individuals spoke during Public Participation:

PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION

- Ms. L. Carter of South Holland: Spoke about her Godson's enrollment at Thornridge, being dropped due to truancy
- Mr. G. Hillard of South Holland: Spoke about referee pay taking too long
- Ms. S. Warren of Joliet: Spoke about her daughter losing privilege to attend prom
- Ms. Q. Hardy: Spoke about her children's safety in school. Principal Holmes immediately spoke with her afterwards
- Mr. K. Riley from Striving for Greatness Transportation: He would like to meet with Supt to discuss a possible partnership.

Dr. Doss stated there have been three FOIA requests since last board meeting and all have been answered.

FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT

Dr. Ratliff presented the following information:

COMMUNICATIONS

- **Thornridge High School:**
 - Field of Dreams Trip
 - The Baseball team enjoyed a great time at the movie site
 - Half-Cap Ceremony & Boat Ride
 - Two great events to celebrate student achievements
 - Gates Scholarship & QuestBridge Match Recipients
 - Congratulations to Kaliah Oparah and Harmony Davis on receiving the Gates Scholarship
 - Congratulations to Abdulbasit Lawal on receiving the QuestBridge Match Scholarship
 - Senior Decision Day & Senior Luncheon
 - Seniors proudly announced their post-secondary plans and celebrated with a luncheon
 - Chess Team & Jazz Band
 - Chess team competed in a state competition and Jaliel Bibs earned the Board One SAC Conference "Player of the Year" with an outstanding record of eight wins and one draw
 - Job Fair
 - Special thanks to Dolton Trustee Norwood for sharing her vision and partnering with the College & Career Center to host a Job Fair
- **Thornwood High School:**
 - Decision Day
 - Almost \$13 million in scholarships awarded
 - Art Show
 - The IB Visual Arts students held their annual art show Secretary of State Visit
 - Mental Health Fair
 - Hosted their first Mental Health day for student and staff
- **PEACE Center:**
 - Post-Secondary Day
 - Seniors proudly announced their post-secondary plans
 - Congratulations to New Board Members

- **Ray Price Memorial Scholarship Winners**

- FA President Mark Danielson announced the four scholarship winners (3 Future Educators, 1 Vocational)

- Employee Retirement and Service Anniversaries celebrated

Student Awards Presentation – Dr. Ratliff celebrated seniors that achieved acceptance into the Top 6 Universities in the country. Special congratulations for those enlisted in the various branches of military service. We also had a number of students employed through our various programs (manufacturing, diesel engine technology, barbering & cosmetology). All students were awarded medals for their exemplary achievements.

PRESENTATIONS

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the District 205 Summer 2025 Calendar**, as presented by Dr. Ratliff. The summer calendar was presented, which included July 17, 2025, as Graduation at Thornton Township HS. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Bradley, Davis, Graham, and Moody voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF D205
SUMMER 2025
CALENDAR

Mrs. Moody moved, Dr. Davis seconded the **Approval of the IHSA Membership Renewal Resolution for 2025-2026**, as presented by Dr. Ratliff. This is to renew our membership for all three schools in the Illinois High School Association by confirming our district continues to be recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education, voting to adopt this resolution. On roll call, Members Moody, Davis, Banks, Bradley, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF IHSA
MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL
RESOLUTION

Mrs. Moody moved, Dr. Davis seconded the **Approval of the 2025 Thornridge Varsity Uniforms for \$96,010.00** as presented by Mr. Garrett. This is to invest in the modernization and enhancement of Thornridge High School's athletic programs through the purchase of new Nike uniforms for all sports teams including: Football, Flag Football, Boys & Girls Volleyball, Boys & Girls Cross Country, Boys & Girls Basketball, Boys & Girls Track, Boys & Girls Bowling, Baseball & Softball. On roll call, Members Moody, Davis, Banks, Bradley, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF 2025
THORNRIDGE VARSITY
UNIFORMS

Mrs. Bradley moved, Mrs. Moody seconded the **Approval of the Thornton Township High School Swimming Pool Repairs base bid of \$595,000.00** as presented by Mr. Crump. This pool has been inoperable since 2018. The repairs will focus on key areas to return the pool to restore functionality and meet safety requirements. On roll call, Members Moody, Bradley, Banks, Davis, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE TT
SWIMMING POOL
REPAIRS

Mrs. Moody moved, Dr. Davis seconded the **Approval of the Asbestos Abatement for Summer 2025 Flooring Repairs for \$523,200.00** as presented by Mr. Crump. All three main schools were assessed, and the most immediate issues will be addressed. On roll call, Members Moody, Davis, Banks, Bradley, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF
ASBESTOS
ABATEMENT FOR
SUMMER 2025
FLOORING REPAIRS

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mrs. Moody seconded the **Approval of Temporary AC Rentals for Thornton, Thornridge, and Thornwood Gymnasiums for Graduation for \$14,085.00 for each school (grand total for three schools \$42,255.00)** as presented by Mr. Crump. Due to the ongoing stadium renovation project at each school, graduation will be held indoors. None of the gymnasiums have air conditioning. This is to provide a comfortable environment for all attendees. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Moody,

APPROVAL OF
TEMPORARY AC
RENTALS FOR D205
GRADUATIONS

Banks, Bradley, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

Dr. Cunningham stated the following:

SUPERINTENDENT
REPORT

Good evening, everyone. It is my great honor to stand before you tonight as the proud Superintendent of Thornton Township High School District 205.

This evening, I want to share a truth that too often goes unnoticed: *public education works*. And it works exceptionally well here in District 205.

We are not just sending students to college—we are sending them to Harvard, to Stanford, and to every point in between. We are not just launching careers—we are launching futures. Our graduates are reporting to duty at Lackland, Parris Island, San Diego, Great Lakes, Fort Moore, Fort Jackson, Fort Leonard Wood, and Fort Sill. They are training to **serve**, to **defend**, and to **lead**.

And some don't need to go far to make an impact. They serve right here in our communities—in barber shops, cosmetology salons, machine shops, and as electricians. They build the world we live in. They are proof that our mission—*Enrolled, Enlisted, or Employed by graduation*—is not just a motto. It is a *promise fulfilled*.

Too often, the world only sees our struggles. They miss the greatness of our *students*. They talk about what's wrong. I am here to talk about *what's right*.

And tonight, I am focusing on **success**.

Last night, we celebrated twelve student board members—our senior leaders. These young people weren't born into leadership. They *chose it*. They ran for office. They showed up. They kept their grades up. They took on challenges, completed service projects, and gave voice to their peers. They didn't just participate in District 205—they helped **change it**.

Every single one of them is college-bound, scholarship-winning, and purpose-driven. They are **scholars, athletes, artists, activists, entrepreneurs, and future educators**. Each one carries the legacy of District 205 forward into the world.

From Nifemi's passion for public health and mental health awareness to Ivan's commitment to public service and youth empowerment. From Harmony's fight for equity to Nyla's dream of improving lives through biomedical engineering. From Dorthy's academic excellence to Amiracle's advocacy for student inclusion. From Devin, who will become a history teacher and coach, to Anya, who combines nursing and entrepreneurship. From Audrey, who merges biochemistry and art, to Valeria, who will return to the classroom as a teacher. From Jacqueline's mentorship and academic leadership to Dhyana's drive to heal children through occupational therapy. These students represent the **very best of who we are**. And if you want to know whether public education works, look no further than *them*.

When someone says to you, "Public education is broken," tell them about **District 205**. Tell them that we don't measure success by problems avoided—we measure it by lives changed. And every one of these students has changed.

I want to thank our Board of Education for its unwavering commitment to student success. I thank our **principals**, our **teachers**, and our **Staff** - those who work behind the scenes and on the front lines—to lift these young people toward their goals. You *see* them. You *believe* in them. And you *refuse* to give up on them.

And to our graduates—our newest leaders, thinkers, and doers: thank you. You've shown us what's possible. You've reminded us that leadership starts with a decision—to **care**, to **try**, to **stand up** and **do the work**. You've made us proud.

So now, as we welcome a new class in the fall and say goodbye to this exceptional one, let us remember this:

What we do matters. Our work is hard—but it is worthy. And our students will always be worth it.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025. May you go forward with courage, with purpose, and with the unshakable knowledge that your story started here—with us.

Thank you. And Godspeed

At 7:44p.m., Mrs. Lawrence moved, Dr. Davis 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, Davis, Banks, Bradley, Graham, and Moody voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

At 8:55p.m., Mrs. Lawrence moved, Dr. Davis seconded to **Reconvene Regular Session**. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Davis, Banks, Bradley, Graham, and Moody voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

RECONVENE
REGULAR SESSION

Mr. Banks moved, Dr. Davis seconded the **Approval of the Administrator Retirement Benefits Plan**. This is to formally approve changes to match the teachers' retirement plan (6% increase over 3 years, currently at 2 years and insurance coverage) as presented by Dr. Cunningham. On roll call, Members Banks, Davis, Bradley, Graham, Lawrence, and Moody voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF
ADMINISTRATOR
RETIREMENT BENEFITS
PLAN

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Resolution for Termination of Tenured Teacher, Leissa Pierson**. The board accepts the resolution regarding the dismissal as presented by administration. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Bradley, Davis, Graham, and Moody voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF
TERMINATION OF
TENURED TEACHER

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Resolution for the Resignation Agreement of Tenured Teacher, Valerie Vickers**. The board accepts this resignation and release as presented by administration. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Bradley, Davis, Graham, and Moody voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

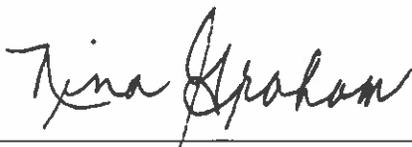
APPROVAL OF
RESIGNATION AND
RELEASE OF
TENURED TEACHER

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mrs. Moody seconded the **Approval of the Resolution for the Resignation Agreement of Tenured Teacher, Kyle Rusco**. The board accepts this resignation and release as presented by administration. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Moody, Banks, Bradley, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF
RESIGNATION AND
RELEASE OF
TENURED TEACHER

At 8:59p.m., Mrs. Lawrence moved, Dr. Davis seconded to **Adjourn the Meeting**. On roll call, Lawrence, Davis, Banks, Bradley, Graham, and Moody voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT



President



Secretary