



Bensenville Elementary School District 2

Board of Education Special Meeting
Minutes – May 21, 2025

President James Stoltman called the Regular Meeting of the Bensenville Elementary School District 2 Board of Education, DuPage County to order at 6:30 p.m., at the Educational Administration Center, 210 S. Church Road, Bensenville, IL.

Roll call verified that there was a quorum of the Board present with the following members present and absent as listed below:

Board of Education	Title	Present	Absent
Jacqueline Dye	Member	X	
Victoria Gonzalez	Secretary	X	
Robert Laudadio	Member	X	
Milton Mercado, Jr.	Member	X	
Anita Miller	Vice-President	X	
Maria Cristina Reyes	Member		X
James Stoltman	President	X	
Administration			
Dr. Katie McCluskey	Superintendent	X	
Mr. Paul Novack	C.F.O.	X	
Dr. Anne Paonessa	Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning		X
Mr. Dustin Berman	Assistant Superintendent for Student Services	X	
Cindy Snyder	Administrative Asst. to the Superintendent & Clerk of the Board	X	

Others Present: Tim Waldorf, Community Relations Coordinator, Dr. Jeff Kersten, Principal Tioga School, Tony Zameron & Jay Pasternak- Community Members, Lydia Ryan and Lydia’s family.

Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Stoltman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing for 2024-25 Amended Budget

- Mr. Stoltman opened the Public Hearing on the 2024-25 Amended Budget at 6:31 p.m.
- Mr. Novack presented on the 2024-25 Amended Budget - The amendment re-allocates spending authority between various accounts but does not increase the overall spending authority for the year. Overall results for 2024-2025 will be better than budgeted for both expenses (about 3.5 percent below budget) and for revenues (about 4 percent above).
- Audience Participation – questions and clarification – there were none.
- Mr. Stoltman closed the hearing and returned to the regular board meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Public Comment:

- A resident addressed the Board about supervising BMS students when they go to neighboring Bensenville Community Public Library following dismissal on school days.

Celebrations

- **Dr. Jeff Kersten:** On behalf of the Board, Dr. Katie McCluskey, Superintendent of Schools, congratulated Dr. Jeff Kersten, Tioga School Principal, on successfully defending his dissertation and earning his Ed.D.

in Educational Leadership from National Louis University. A personalized name plate was given to Dr. Kersten as a small gift.

- **Celebration - 2025 End-of-Year Celebration and Staff Recognition:** Dr. McCluskey recognized staff who retired, reached milestone anniversaries with the District, earned tenure with the District, or were honored with the District's "Those That Excel" Awards during a May 13 celebration at White Pines Golf Club.

Board Committee Reports

A. Announcements - none

Administrative Reports

A. Announcements

- 4th of July Parade – Dr. McCluskey asked if any board members would like to participate in the 4th of July Parade. This year BEA will not be joining the board. There will only be a bus available to ride in and the committee requests no throwing candy, only tossing.

B. FOIA Report – Mr. Novack reported:

- Painters District Council No. 30 - Union - Paint purchases and upcoming projects involving painting, drywall, and/or glazing. Provided recent purchases; an earlier FOIA response satisfied the request for upcoming projects.
- Civic IQ – Commercial - Purchasing records for 2022 and later years
- SmartProcure – Commercial - Purchasing records from 2/14/2025 to present.
- Ad.Cuius.Bonum – Commercial – 10 requests of Certain vendor payment records, not clearly described, from various fiscal years. Request closed for inactivity. The District returned request #1-10 for clarifications. No response was received.

C. Enrollment Report – Dr. McCluskey reported that the District's pre-kindergarten program has continued to see encouraging growth, with its overall enrollment increasing from 131 students in 2022-2023 to about 158 students last year and 181 students this year.

D. Property Tax Appeals Report – Mr. Novack reported that a property tax lawsuit against the District will be dismissed. Other taxpayers would not have benefitted if the lawsuit had succeeded. The suit alleged that some of the District's 2021 property taxes were improperly imposed and should be refunded to the plaintiffs. The District provided documents to the plaintiffs showing the taxes were proper.

E. Evaluate 2023-2027 Free Meals Program (CEP) for possible extension – Mr. Novack reported that the District provides free breakfast and lunch to all students under a program funded by the US Department of Agriculture. The program is scheduled to last until 2027. The District is evaluating adding two years to the program if that would increase its reimbursement rate. The USDA funding is about \$1.1 million, which pays about 95 percent of the program's costs.

F. Budget Guidelines Update 2025-2026: Mr. Novack reported that the 2025-2026 tentative budget has been posted for public review. A public hearing will be held at the Board's June 18 regular business meeting, after which the Board will consider the budget for adoption. The budget anticipates revenue of \$47.1 million and authorizes expenses of \$47.3 million.

Consent Items

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Special Board of Education Meeting – April 23, 2025
2. Special Board of Education Meeting – April 23, 2025 - Closed Session

3. Special Re-Organizational Board of Education Meeting – April 23, 2025
4. Special Board of Education Meeting - May 8, 2025
5. Special Board of Education Meeting - May 8, 2025 - Closed Session

Recommendation: The Board of Education approves the above listed minutes as presented and attached.

B. Approval of Financial Reports

1. Bills April 2025
 - a) Accounts Payable
 - b) Imprest Checks
 - c) Advanced Checks
 - d) Credit Card Payments

2. Financial Statements as of April 30, 2025

Recommendation: The Board of Education approves the above listed financial reports as presented and attached.

C. Personnel

I. Resignation of Certified Staff

Concetta Gaspar, 8th Grade EL/ELA Teacher, Blackhawk Middle School submitted her resignation, no action by the Board of Education is necessary.

II. Resignation of Classified Staff

The following classified staff members have submitted their resignations effective June 4, 2025. No action by the Board of Education is necessary:

1. Aleli Exconde, Lunch Aide, Johnson School for the purpose of retirement.
2. Debbie Van Dyke, Lunch Aide, Johnson School.

III. Classified Staff – Not Returning

Jacquanet Goggins is not returning to her position at Tioga School, effective April 25, 2025. No action by the Board of Education is necessary for this resignation.

IV. Termination of Employment of Technology Coordinator

Recommendation: That the Board of Education Terminate the of Employment of Keith Lippoldt, Technology Coordinator, effective 6/30/2025.

V. Ratification of Employment for 2025-2026, Certified Staff

Recommendation: That the Board of Education approves the employment of the following certified staff member:

1. Paula Berger, FLES Teacher, Tioga School, effective August 15, 2025.
2. Dayana Ocegueda, 2nd Grade Dual Language Teacher, Johnson School, effective August 15, 2025, pending her May graduation.
3. Marieli Urquiza-Trujillo, FLES Teacher, Johnson School, effective August 15, 2025.

VI. Ratification of Employment – Classified Staff

Recommendation: That the Board of Education ratifies the employment of the following classified staff:

1. Francisca Cervantes, Administrative Assistant to the CSBO, effective June 16, 2025.
2. Jayden Martinez-Lamando, K-5 Special Education Paraprofessional Substitute, effective May 21, 2025.

3. Sarah McLain, Blackhawk Building Nurse, effective August 13, 2025
4. Cathleen Piazza, Bus Driver for the District, effective May 5, 2025.
5. Matthew Ross, Bus Driver for the District, effective May 5, 2025, and subject to issuance of the permits and licenses for school bus drivers.

VII. Summer School Staffing

Recommendation: That the Board of Education ratifies the employment of the following 2025 summer school Teacher/paraprofessionals:

1. Maria Castro-Botello, Summer School Crossing Guard.
2. Zeniha Selimovski, Summer School Crossing Guard.

VIII. Salary & Benefits for Classified Staff

Recommendation: That the Board of Education approve the pay and benefit levels for classified staff as follows:

1. A standard raise of 3.5% is recommended.
2. All job categories are recommended for the same raise. Ms. Chloe Johnson is recommended for 7% in order to align her pay with her peers.

IX. Ratification of Employment – Administrator

Recommendation: That the Board of Education approve the employment of Lydia Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning effective July 1, 2025.

D. Authorize Loans from Working Cash to Other Funds

Recommendation: That the Board adopt the resolution authorizing occasional loans from the Working Cash Fund to the Tort Fund in amounts up to \$100,000 outstanding at any one time.

E. Authorize Treasurer's Bond

Recommendation: That the Board adopt the attached resolution approving the Treasurer's bond in the amount of \$5,000,000.

F. Approve Final Calendar for 2024-2025

Recommendation: That the Board of Education establish June 4, 2025 as the last day of student attendance as the closing date for the 2024-25 school year.

G. Approval of NET56 Contract

Recommendation: That the Board of Education approve the 14-month contract for Net56 to support the tech department.

A motion was made by Mr. Laudadio and seconded by Mrs. Gonzalez that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda items as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Laudadio, Gonzalez, Dye, Mercado, Miller, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

Dr. McCluskey Introduced the New Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning: The Board approved the hiring of Lydia Ryan, who will serve as the District's next Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning. Ms.

Ryan currently serves as the Chief of Academics and Schools Management and the Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Evanston/Skokie School District 65. Ms. Ryan will officially join the District on July 1.

Conference/Action Items

- A. Approval of the Consolidated District Plan** – Dr. McCluskey reported that the Consolidated District Plan allows grantees to answer one set of planning questions to meet requirements for all federal formula grants. (Formula grant programs are noncompetitive awards based on a predetermined formula. These programs are sometimes referred to as state-administered programs; ENTITLEMENTS. US Ed obligates the funds to the states who trickle down to the Local Education Agency based on the formula.)

It allows the explanation of coordination of funding and combines the required consultation documentation all in one place.

The Consolidated District Plan does require the District Board approval. The exception is that the district doesn't need its reapproval by the board every year if no changes are made to the plan.

District 2's FY26 Consolidated District Plan strategically aligns federal, state, and local resources to improve academic achievement, close subgroup performance gaps, and address chronic absenteeism. Grounded in a comprehensive needs assessment and districtwide data analysis, the plan prioritizes literacy and math proficiency—particularly for English Learners and students with disabilities—through implementation of high-quality curriculum, targeted interventions, professional development, and multi-tiered systems of support. A key focus includes supporting the first year of implementation of HMH literacy resources in grades K–8, ensuring teachers have the tools and training needed to deliver rigorous, standards-aligned instruction. The plan also strengthens co-teaching models, bilingual education, and social-emotional learning to ensure all students are supported in reaching grade-level expectations.

A motion was made by Mr. Laudadio and seconded by Mrs. Dye that the Board of Education approves the 2025-2026 Consolidated District Plan as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Laudadio, Dye, Gonzalez, Mercado, Miller, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

- B. Authorize Purchase of Internet Service for Tioga School** – Mr. Novack reported that Internet service is obtained from connections in W.A. Johnson School and in Tioga School. Blackhawk Middle School and the Admin Center obtain service via the Johnson School connection. A buried fiber network owned by the District connects all four buildings.

The Tioga School internet connection expires on June 30, 2025. To solicit proposals, E-rate guidelines have been followed. E-rate will contribute 90% of the cost for this purchase.

Bids were solicited in January and February for three-year contracts to provide 500Mb service to Tioga School. Three firms submitted proposals.

Firm	Annual Cost before 90% E-rate	Comments
Crown Castle	\$8,580	This bid is recommended. The service is 100% provided over buried fiber, which is the most reliable kind of service. Crown Castle, a leading provider of high-speed fiber connections, is the current provider at both W.A. Johnson School and Tioga School.
AT&T	\$7,609	This bid is not recommended, because much of the service is provided on overhead lines that are more subject to weather conditions than are buried fiber.
Verizon	\$14,218	This bid is not recommended, because of the price.

The E-rate bidding process requires the bid solicitation process that was followed. The District may use factors besides the price in its bid evaluation.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gonzalez and seconded by Mrs. Miller that the Board of Education authorize Administration to enter into a contract with Crown Castle to obtain three years’ internet service at Tioga School.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Gonzalez, Miller, Dye, Laudadio, Mercado, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

C. Adopt Amended Budget for 2024-2025 – Mr. Novack reported that an amended budget is proposed for this fiscal year, which closes on June 30.

Overall results will be better than budgeted for both expenses (about 3.5% below budget) and for revenues (about 4% above). The projected deficit for 2024-25 is \$8 million, which is about \$3 million less than budgeted. The deficit is due solely to spending about \$11 million for the Blackhawk Middle School renovation. The renovation was completed under budget.

The amendment was provided for public review beginning Monday, April 21, 2025. A public hearing was held on May 21, 2025, after which the amended budget is presented for adoption.

The amendments offset one another. Here is a summary by Fund.

Fund	Net Increase (Decrease)	Comments
Education	(110,000)	Some accounts within Education have increased budgets, but the decreases more than offset them.
Operations & Maintenance	(313,577)	Some accounts within O&M have increased budgets, but the decreases more than offset them. See also the note about the Capital Projects Fund.

Transportation	260,000	For private bus costs that were left out of the original budget due to error.
Capital Projects	163,577	This is solely due to how the Blackhawk renovation expenses were allocated between two funds: the Capital Projects Fund and the Operations & Maintenance Funds. In other words, renovation spending in the O&M Fund was \$164,000 less than anticipated and was \$164,000 above budget in the Capital Projects Fund.
Total	-0-	

School Code requires each Fund to budget enough for its expenses. The amended budget does not, in the aggregate, authorize new spending. It does shift authorization among categories and funds.

A motion was made by Mrs. Dye and seconded by Mrs. Gonzalez that the Board of Education conduct the public hearing and adopt the amended budget as proposed.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Dye, Gonzalez, Laudadio, Mercado, Miller, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

D. Review & Update Operating Agreements – Dr. McCluskey reported that the Board reviewed the Operating Agreements for the Superintendent, Board President and Board member during the May 8, 2025 Special Board meeting.

As an outcome of the review the board members would like to add to the Board Member Operating Agreement, *“To focus on the District, not individual priorities, which will lead to genuine shared decision making by the Board.”*

The Superintendent and Board President Operating Agreements were determined to be fine as reviewed.

A motion was made by Mrs. Miller and seconded by Mr. Stoltman that the Board of Education revise the Operating Agreements for Board Member as presented.

Roll Call Vote

Aye: Miller, Stoltman Dye, Gonzalez, Laudadio, Mercado,

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

E. Authorize Renewal of Food Service Contract for 2025-26 – Mr. Novack reported that Sodexo provides the District’s food service. Students eat for free under a USDA program. Staff prices are about the same as the USDA reimbursement rate for students.

Sodexo sells all the meals to the District, which then resells them to students and staff. This memorandum concerns the price that the District pays to Sodexo. A second memorandum later this summer will ask the Board to establish prices at which meals will be sold to staff.

The District’s contract with Sodexo began August 1, 2024, and expires July 31, 2025. Up to four one-year renewals are permitted under rules issued by the USDA and the ISBE.

Mr. Novack reported that renewal is recommended for one year to be effective August 1, 2025.

The contract permits a price increase of 3.6% for this renewal, which is the “Food-Away-from-Home” component of the 2024 Consumer Price Index.

	2024-25 Price	Increase for 3.6% CPI	Proposed Price, 2025-26
Breakfast	1.9000	0.0684	1.9684
Lunch	3.6730	0.1322	3.8052
A la Carte equivalent	3.6730	0.1322	3.8052
After-School Snack	1.1500	0.0414	1.1914
CACFP meals for Head Start	Same as above		
Summer Breakfast & Lunch	Same as above		

A motion was made by Mr. Laudadio and seconded by Mrs. Dye that the Board of Education approve a one-year renewal with Sodexo America, LLC, for 2025-26 at the prices described above.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Laudadio, Dye, Gonzalez, Mercado, Miller, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

F. Extend ABM Maintenance & Custodial Contract – Mr. Novack reported that the District has contracted custodial, maintenance, and grounds services with ABM and its predecessors since 2005. A two-year extension is permitted and is recommended here. The current contract began July 1, 2020, and runs through June 30, 2025.

Mr. Novack also reported that ABM’s charges average about \$121,000 per month in the most recent 12 months. The District pays about \$114,000 of this and NDSEC pays the rest. The District has included NDSEC sites in the ABM contracts since 2014.

The charges equal ABM’s actual direct costs as approved by the District plus a 3.5% markup. The District has complete control over the direct costs billed to the District, because it can determine the number of staff in each area, the rates they are paid, and the purchases of supplies and equipment. The District does not pay for unfilled positions or for support from ABM’s regional office in hiring, payroll, safety programs, and general management guidance. The 3.5% markup was the lowest one offered by bidders in the 2020 bid process that the District conducted.

ABM provides excellent service to the District. They have been the successful low bidder in four consecutive bid rounds since 2005.

Mr. Novack reported that a re-bid is not recommended at this time, because the current contract gives the District a high degree of control in exchange for only a modest mark-up.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gonzalez and seconded by Mrs. Miller that the Board of Education extend through fiscal 2027 its contract with ABM for custodial, maintenance, and grounds services.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Gonzalez, Miller, Dye, Laudadio, Mercado, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

G. Book Returns Outside of Tioga & Johnson Schools – Dr. McCluskey reported that Bensenville Community Public Library has invited the District to partner with them to install and manage book returns outside of the District’s two elementary schools. The returns would be used for books belonging to both the Library and the District, both of which use the same system to manage and maintain their collections. **There was a consensus of the board to partner with the Bensenville Library.**

H. Authorize Summer Projects – Mr. Novack reported that three repair projects are planned for June and July.

- At Mohawk Park, an underground fuel tank will be removed. As a precaution, adjacent soil will also be removed.
- At Blackhawk MS, new floor tile will be installed in 12 rooms. The new tile will match flooring installed in other rooms last summer.
- Also at Blackhawk MS, new cabinets will be installed in five rooms. The new cabinets will match cabinets installed last year and will replace 1996-vintage cabinets.

Project	Expected Cost	Notes
Mohawk Park tank removal	\$56,450	RW Collins Company is the recommended company. The cost is slightly less than last fall’s proposal from the engineering firm that Collins is partnering with. Four companies attended the site visit but only Collins submitted a bid.
Cabinet replacement in five Blackhawk MS classrooms	\$41,197	Bids were solicited from three companies. Pio Custom Cabinetry of Bensenville is the lowest bidder. Replacement purchases under \$50,000 do not require sealed bids.
Floor tile replacement in Blackhawk MS west wing	Materials: \$30,028 Installation: \$49,085	Materials will be purchased directly from Mannington and installation will be purchased from Michael Kautz Carpets & Designs. In the 2023 and 2024 Blackhawk projects, Kautz was the installer and used Mannington product. Bear Construction submitted a bid of \$123,533 for both materials and installation; this was 56% higher than the combination of the two recommended sellers.

Mr. Novack reported that all the projects are recommended for the upkeep of the properties, although none are mandatory.

A motion was made by Mrs. Miller and seconded by Mrs. Gonzalez that the Board of Education authorize the projects above and payments of deposits for materials.

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Miller, Gonzalez, Dye, Laudadio, Mercado, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

Closed Session

- A. **At 7:12 p.m. motion was made by Mrs. Dye and seconded by Mrs. Gonzalez that the Board of Education go into closed session for the purpose of personnel.** *The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).*
and
- B. **Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).**

Roll Call Vote:

Aye: Dye, Gonzalez, Laudadio, Mercado, Miller, Stoltman

Nay: None

Absent: Reyes

Motion Carried.

At 7:32 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Laudadio and seconded by Mr. Mercado that the Board of Education adjourn from closed session. Upon voice vote, all board members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Adjournment

At 7:32 p.m. a motion was made by Mrs. Dye and seconded by Mr. Mercado that the Board of Education adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, all board members present voted aye. Motion carried.

No further business appearing, Mr. Stoltman adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

President

Secretary