

MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie Avenue, Flossmoor, Illinois

October 21, 2025

Mr. Riedel called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The following Board members were present for all or part of the meeting:

Ms. Jackson	Mr. Riedel
Mr. Legardy	Dr. Smith (Absent)
Dr. Leonard	Mr. Pauling
Dr. O'Quin	

Mr. Legardy attended the meeting via Zoom Video Conference. Student Board Representative Anaya Mootry was also in attendance.

Mr. Riedel noted that Mr. Pauling was delayed but would be arriving shortly. The presence of a quorum was noted and the meeting declared duly convened. Superintendent Norrell, Chief School Business Official Cook, Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development Assistant Superintendent Dallacqua, Staff Services Assistant Superintendent Martinez, Principal Alexander, Communications and Community and Engagement Director Erdey were also in attendance for all of the meeting.

Representatives of the Homewood Flossmoor Chronicle and HFEO were present, as well as, members of the public in addition to members of the Administrative Leadership Team.

Public Comments. Pastor Doyle Landry, community member, discussed literacy rates among Chicago Public Schools students, referencing a Chicago Tribune editorial that noted only about 20% meet literacy proficiency standards. He connected this issue to broader community challenges, including violence, mentioning that he personally survived a recent shooting on the CTA. The shooting elevated his concerns for misguided young Black males in today's society. Pastor Landry emphasized the importance of literacy and education as foundational to reducing violence and improving opportunities for young Black males. He thanked the board for earlier discussions on related topics.

Mr. Cedric Hakeem, community member and former educator in Chicago and Hawaii, highlighted his experience improving literacy and his current work through his business of supporting struggling Black males. He expressed interest in partnering with the community to explore how his programs could benefit local students.

Communications:

Student Representative. Student Representative, Anaya Mootry, shared her discussions with members of the student body. She reported that she and other students have positive things to say about school spirit at HF, including *Kedzie Krazies*. She also shared that they feel supported by teachers. She noted that students appreciate having trusted adults to talk to, but some expressed concerns about heavy workloads with classes, sports, activities and especially seniors balancing college applications and classes. Dr. Alexander is working with student leaders on these topics.

Delegation Comments. No comments.

Board Members. No comments

Superintendent's Report:

Public Relations Recognitions. District Happenings – Dr. Norrell enthusiastically shared that October has been a busy and successful month for the district, expressing gratitude to staff for their outstanding work in hosting a variety of engaging events. She presented a short video capturing the energy and spirit of the many community activities already held while reminding everyone that the month of October isn't even over yet. She also noted that the Illinois State Board of Education recently spent three days visiting the school, engaging positively with staff and leadership.

Special Olympics State Basketball Ring Presentation - Coach Brian Garland delivered remarks honoring the school's Special Olympics State Basketball team for their victory as state champions. He praised the athletes for their perseverance, teamwork, and representation of the school's values. In addition, he thanked members of his coaching staff Katie Rice, Tiffany Mucha, Katie Nieckula, Jen Olumstad and Aimee Veal for their hard work and

Special Olympics State Basketball Ring Presentation (con't.) dedication to the student athletes. He also thanked Gail Smith, David Dore, Jackie Bailey, HF administration and the Board of Education for their support throughout the season. Student Athletes Marco Agting, Gigi Bucci, Alyson Harris, Jasmin Harris, Jordan Jones, Faustin Kelly, Hannah King, Anaya McCoy, Quinn McNellis, Beverly Nwachukwu, Conner Peterson, Jeremiah Richardson, Nehemiah Richardson and Eliakim Taylor were called up along with the coaching staff to receive championship rings donated by Duke and Sarah Cranley from Jostens, a local sponsor. A group photo was taken with the Board of Education.

Those Who Excel Award Nominations - Dr. Norrell congratulated the 2026 Those Who Excel award nominees, emphasizing that the recognition is especially meaningful because nominees were selected by their colleagues and in the *Teacher of the Year* category, by students. The honorees include: Student Support Personnel: Heithon Hurdle Jr. and Christina Clark; Administrator: Gail Smith, chosen through a districtwide vote by administrators, staff, and teachers; Early Career Educators (teaching 0 – 4 years): John Manthey, Mylan Reeves, and Cody Rudnick; Teachers: Crystal Perez, Kanoa Mulling, and Steve Sifner, who tied in nominations and will represent the district in the statewide *Teacher of the Year* category; and Educational Service Personnel: Bobbi Ferree. Dr. Norrell extended congratulations to all nominees, as they will represent the district with pride at the state level.

District Updates. Dr. Norrell shared that all School District Board Member delegates will convene at the Illinois Association of School Board's annual state conference that will be held on November 21 and November 22, to vote on resolutions. HF Board members were asked to review the resolutions, providing feedback to Dr. Tamekia Smith, who will serve as HF's delegate. Any non-unanimous items will be addressed at the next board meeting on November 18th, prior to the November IASB conference.

Dr. Norrell noted that today, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors participated in the Fall PSAT testing. For juniors, the PSAT/NMSQT also serves as the National Merit Scholarship qualifying exam, offering potential scholarship opportunities. The results, alongside ACT scores, will be used to guide students in planning for their post-high school goals.

Executive Team Presentations. International Baccalaureate Visit – Dr. Dallacqua shared that HF will host representatives from the International Baccalaureate (IB) next week for a site visit as part of its candidacy for the IB Career-related Programme (CP). The visit will include leadership meetings, classroom observations, and tours of the district's facilities. Discussions will focus on HF's readiness for IB CP implementation, development of the IB Learner Profile, integration of learning approaches, reflective projects, service learning, and career-related studies. Q&A sessions will address authorization requirements, and the visit will conclude with feedback, action planning, and next steps for advancing the IB CP program. Dr. Norrell added that the Planning Committee will be updated on the visit at the November 11th Planning Committee meeting, and a brief report will be shared with the board.

Financial Analysis Presentation – Dr. Norrell introduced Dr. Robert Grossi, Bloom Township retired treasurer and HF alumnus. Dr. Norrell noted that she has been in discussions with Dr. Cook and Dr. Grossi on five-year financial projections for the district. She added the discussions focused on capital projects, particularly for B and G buildings, and the district's ongoing efforts to ensure spaces to meet academic and career-prep needs. Dr. Norrell emphasized caution with major capital projects due to financial uncertainty and recommended continued planning and analysis before initiating new construction or renovations. Dr. Grossi introduced Mr. Bob Lewis also in attendance this evening and noted that Mr. Lewis and Ms. Elizabeth Hennessey recently met with the Finance Committee regarding a debt overview and possible funding options for the district. Dr. Grossi noted his long experience with multiple school districts in Illinois and praised HF for maintaining strong financial practices. He stressed the importance of unbiased, thorough financial analysis and presented a projection model based on a 50% probability of better performance and 50% probability of worse performance. Historically, from FY2017–FY2025, the district's revenues consistently exceeded expenditures, averaging 4.4% revenue growth and 4.1% expenditure growth. Excluding major capital projects, total revenues exceeded expenditures by \$39 million over the nine-year period. The EBF (Evidence-Based Funding) program revenue grew by approximately \$16 million over the past decade; HF has also received PTRG funding annually, providing taxpayer relief. However, EBF is now frozen and unlikely to return, posing challenges for future revenue growth. Dr. Grossi spoke on capital investment and funding and noted that Between FY2017–FY2025: \$7.4 million was invested in major capital projects; \$18.4 million funded with bond proceeds; and \$39 million from fund balance reserves. The district fund balance policy requires a minimum of six months of expenditures (180 days). The ISBE financial profile rubric aligns with this standard. By 2025, fund balances have decreased, with 54% of revenue from property taxes (growing with inflation) and 31.83% from EBF/PTRG, which will slow significantly. Based on his assumptions, Dr. Grossi is projecting that revenue growth is expected to slow, with CPI assumptions lower than historical 4.4% growth. Fund balance projections show a potential drop from \$58.8 million to \$36.7 million under current assumptions. Even in a best-case scenario,

Financial Analysis Presentation (con't.) maintaining six months of reserves will require committing all available fund reserves. Realistic worst-case scenarios show further financial strain, emphasizing the need for careful fiscal planning. Dr. Grossi emphasized that the next 10 years will likely be more challenging than the previous decade. He added that the district is well-positioned but must remain fiscally disciplined. His key recommendations include: maintain strong reserves and bond ratings; carefully evaluate capital projects and tax abatements; prioritize essential projects over discretionary ones; and consider forward-looking strategies to keep the district financially solvent with sub-2% revenue growth. Mr. Pauling and other board members emphasized the importance of focusing on fund balance health, financial discipline, and the impact of debt and tax abatements. Mr. Riedel emphasized that future decisions must balance necessary actions versus desired projects and ensure long-term financial stewardship for the district and community. Dr. Grossi added that bonds from 2022 will be callable in 2028–2029, which provides flexibility in fund balances if needed. Mr. Pauling and Ms. Jackson thanked Dr. Grossi for clarifying projections and scenarios, noting the importance of using this data for strategic planning and further discussion at future retreats. The board expressed appreciation for Dr. Grossi's forward-thinking approach and affirmed their commitment to maintain the district's strong financial position while preparing for upcoming challenges.

2025 Levy Presentation – Dr. Cook provided a presentation on the 2025 Levy. Required board action on the levy will take place at the November 18 board meeting and levy documents are required to be filed with the Clerk's office by December 30. Factors considered in setting the levy include the district's financial condition, quality of educational services and programs and facilities. Real estate taxes, which account for 56% of district revenue, are projected to grow by the lesser of CPI All Urban (2.9%) or 5%. The proposed levy increase is \$49,366,000, representing a 2.9% increase above the maximum allowable extension prior to PTRG abatement and anticipated new property revenue. Dr. Cook reviewed tax abatement history since levy year 2018, including mandatory and optional abatements totaling \$34.62 million in overall tax relief back to the taxing body, with 97% funded by state resources and the remainder from district education funds and adjustment levies. In compliance with Public Act 103-0394, the ratio of the three-year average operating expenses (\$63.9M) to the June 30, 2025 fund balance (\$46.7M) was calculated at 0.73, well below the 2.5 threshold required by the statute. Mr. Grossi was asked if he agreed with the recommendation and stated that he does for this year, though he noted that the strength of his recommendation diminishes slightly each year. While there is no perfect "sweet spot," he feels it is reasonable to proceed one more time. The projected number decreased because this is the second year of the PTRG grant, and no grant is anticipated for next year, resulting in a lower figure for 2025. Dr. Cook will present this information at the November board meeting regarding the levy, showing that as of June 2025, fund balances remain well below the 2.5 threshold, at 0.73.

Consent Agenda. Mr. Pauling stated that our adopted rules of Parliamentary Procedures, Robert's Rules and Bylaws, provide for a consent agenda listing for approval of the Board by a single motion. Most of the items listed under the consent agenda have gone through board subcommittee review and recommendation. Documentation concerning these items has been provided to all board members and the public in advance to assure an extensive and thorough review. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member. Mr. Pauling asked if any board member requested any item on the consent agenda be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion. No request was made to remove any consent agenda items. moved, seconded by that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, as listed:

Special Board Meeting Minutes September 29, 2025

Regular Board Meeting Minutes, September 16, 2025

Field Trip Request Addendum (substitution) – Debate Team, New Orleans, LA

Approval of Expenditures, \$2,863,943.57

Approval of Imprest Fund, \$41,944.34

Ratification of September, 2025, Payroll, \$3,373,286.42

Personnel Report, as listed. *The Personnel Report, that includes Resignations, Appointments, Adjusted Appointments, Per Diem, Leaves, Retirements and Extra Responsibility/Stipend is attached.*

Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel, Mr. Pauling. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Finance Committee. Finance Committee Chair Mr. Riedel reported that the last Finance Committee meeting was held on October 7, 2025, and the next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2025, at 7:45 a.m. in the Viking Room. The August 5, 2025, meeting minutes were approved at the October 7, 2025 meeting.. Mr. Riedel highlighted the following items that were discussed during the October 7th meeting: included:

- **Science Building Remembrance:** Plans to honor Ronald Simonson, who lost his life while working on the new science building, with a tree planting in conjunction with the Green Commission, a plaque, reception, and invitation to his family to attend the recognition reception that will be held in memory of Mr. Simonson.
- **Facilities Review and Capital Projects:** Reviewed the revised 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan. All items for 2025–26 are budgeted except up to \$1 million for tennis courts, pending a ground stability study; prior work on the football field suggests the study may not be necessary. Ongoing discussions will continue regarding future capital projects and opportunities for financial efficiency.
- **Bond Issuance Options:** Robert Lewis and Elizabeth Hennessey presented potential bond issuance options, exploring impacts on the taxing body and the district’s fund balance. The committee will continue reviewing ways to fund projects efficiently and responsibly.
- **Safety and Security Proposal:** Dr. Norrell reported that the committee requested a full scope of work with deliverables regarding a safety and security proposal. An assessment of campus facilities, both internal and external, will be conducted by a consultant who has worked with numerous districts. He is a retired police chief and has been trained in FEMA and incident threats to public facilities and spent time at Quantico and was trained by the FBI. He will consult with staff and administrators and provide recommendations to the board in closed session. The financial cost of the assessment will also be presented prior to the consultant beginning any work.
- **Levy Timeline and Illuminate Service Contract:** The committee reviewed the levy timeline and the Illuminate contract. He pointed out that the Illuminate contract is an action item on tonight’s board agenda. He noted the work that will be done with Illuminate will replace the previous software that was used by Dr. Cook, and will now be prepared by Dr. Grossi resulting in a net cost reduction and net savings.

Action Items:

Service Contract – Illuminate. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Mr. Legardy, that the Board of Education approve the contract with Illuminate, Inc., for consulting services, for an annual fee in the amount of \$19,200. Ms. Jackson asked if the discount will continue to be applied. Dr. Cook responded that there is a 2% increase. However, it would take approximately 10 years to return to the current payment level of the discontinued software that was previously being used. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Science Building Remembrance Request. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve the Science Building Remembrance in memoriam of Mr. Ronald Simonson. Dr. Norrell stated upon approval by the board on this item, a date will be announced soon. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Mr. Pauling. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Planning Committee. Mr. Legardy noted that the Next Planning Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 11, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. in The Viking Room.

Personnel Committee. Ms. Jackson stated that the next Personnel Committee will be held on November 11, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Superintendent’s Conference Room.

New Business: None

Adjournment. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education be adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

President

Vice-President/Secretary

6.7.1 RESIGNATIONS

1 Shea Sumpter Permanent Substitute Teacher Eff 10/17/2025

6.7.2 APPOINTMENTS

Start Date/Salary

Certified

1 * [Danny Mackey](#) Teacher, Career Technical Education Eff TBD
DePaul University, Master of Business Education, 2020 \$60,883.00 (prorated)

delete 2 Jerry Logan Teacher, Career Technical Education Eff TBD
Keller School of Management, Master of Project Management, 2001 \$85,890.00
Keller School of Management, Master of Business Administration, 2001
Western Illinois University, Master of Arts and Sciences - Sociology, 1996

Support Staff

3 Lawrence Pointer Instructional Assistant, SPED Eff 9/25/2025
Calumet College of St Joseph, Master of Psychology \$24.13/hour
North Park University, Bachelor of Communication

4 * Jacob Schroeder Dean's Assistant Eff TBD
\$22.88/hour

5 * Leah Tolliver Permanent Substitute Teacher Eff TBD
\$34,040.00 (prorated)

* Pending successful completion of all legally required background checks

6.7.3 ADJUSTED APPOINTMENTS

delete 1 Valarie Leak From: Registered Nurse Eff 8/11/2025
To: School Nurse / PEL TBD
add 2 [Valarie Leak](#) From: Registered Nurse Eff 8/11/2025
To: School Nurse / PEL \$94,242.00

6.7.4 PER DIEM

1 Jerni Mahone Texbook Center Worker Eff 10/22/2025
\$15.00/hour

6.7.5 LEAVES

1 Tiffany Stewart-Williams Teacher, English Eff 8/11/2025
Intermittent FMLA
2 Dion Perozzi IT, Network Specialist Eff 10/29/2025
3 Heather Jordan CTE, Department Secretary Eff 8/11/2025
Intermittent FMLA
4 Annette Hall IA, Sped Eff 8/11/2025
Intermittent FMLA

6.7.6 RETIREMENTS

1 Regina Casto	Instructional Assistant	Eff 6/16/2026
2 Regina Handson	Dean's Assistant	Eff 9/30/2026

6.7.7 EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY / STIPEND

[See Activity Memos](#)

[See Auxillary Memos](#)

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF MEMORANDUM

October 21, 2025

EXTRA-RESPONSIBILITY CONTRACTS 2025-2026 (AUXILIARY)

RECOMMENDATION: "That the Board of Education authorize the President and Secretary to sign extra-responsibility staffing contacts with the following person(s) for the 2025-2026 school year, as recommended by the Assistant Superintendent of Staff Services and the Superintendent:

	First Name	Last Name	Position	Stipend
delete	Kizawanda	Olowe	Guidance Counselor	\$2,000.00
delete	Libby	Day	IB Coordinator	\$3,500.00
	Libby	Day	IB Ext Essay Coordinator	\$2,200.00
	Daniel	Gould	Collaborative Lead - English	*\$1,765.00
	Robin	Noble	Model Teacher	*\$1,044.00
delete	Chenise	Belue	Guidance Counselor	\$2,000.00
	Chenise	Belue	Case Manager	\$1,300.00
	Valarie	Leak	Doctorate	\$2,500.00
	Total			\$8,809.00

* Prorated amount

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF MEMORANDUM
October 21, 2025

TEACHER CONTRACT 2025-2026

RECOMMENDATION: "That the Board of Education authorizes the President and Secretary to sign a (1.0) contract with Danny Mackey, Career Technical Education Teacher in the amount of \$60,883.00 for the 2025-2026 school year, as recommended by the Assistant Superintendent of Staff Services and the Superintendent."

<u>Lane and Step</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Teaching Field</u>
MA step 1	\$60,883.00	Career Technical Education

Education:
DePaul University, Chicago, IL Master of Business Administration, August 2020

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF MEMORANDUM
October 21, 2025

TEACHER CONTRACT 2025-2026

RECOMMENDATION: "That the Board of Education authorizes the President and Secretary to sign a (1.0) contract with Valarie Leak, School Nurse (PEL) in the amount of \$94,242.00 for the 2025-2026 school year, as recommended by the Assistant Superintendent of Staff Services and the Superintendent."

<u>Lane and Step</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Teaching Field</u>
2 nd MA+15/step 10	\$94,242.00	School Nurse PEL

Education:

Trinity Christian College - RN – BSN, 2002

University of Phoenix – Master of Business Administration, 2011

Grand Canyon University – Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership, 2023

Virginia University of Lynchburg – Doctor of Healthcare Administration, 2024

Experience:

Homewood Flossmoor High School, School Nurse October 2023 – present

Sunbelt Staffing, Nursing January 2019 – June 2021

UI Health (Mile Square Health Center) March 2012 – October 2017