

BOARD OF EDUCATION SCHOOL DISTRICT 149
MINUTES OF
THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
September 18, 2025

The Board Meeting convened at 6:39 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: Mr. Tillman, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. Elston, and Mrs. King.
Absent: Ms. Burks and Mr. Crivens.

Also in attendance: Dr. Maureen White, Attorney Centeno, Janene Preston Dr. Mellodie Brown, Robert Bufford, DeWayne Anderson, Nicole Taylor, Ernesta Ransom, La Toyla Jones, Martiae Jenkins-Alexander, Janice Opitz, Dr. NiTia Williams, Christal Washington, Marian Dowling, Daryll Lacey, Jason Battle, Tammy Buckley, Crystian Chatman, LaTasha Clark, Gerald Scott, Latasha Randle, Tanyell Hannah, Sparkle Tiffith, Jorie McCowan, Anna Karrison, Shelia Colone, Sharonne Dinnwiddie, LaWanda Scott, Dr. Ashlee Stanely, Taneka Boyce, LaNeisha Chandlier, Dr. Jerry Doss, Chief Pointer, Stacy Miles, Torrean Walker, Jamar Everett, and Carla Griffith.

The Pledge of Allegiance – Said by all

Cabinet Reports-

Dr. White reported on the following:

- Enrollment Update:
 - 1,377 elementary students and 632 middle school students (total 2,009).
 - Down 115 from last year, but expected to increase.
- Safety & ICE Protocol:
 - Recent ICE activity in Harvey led to a school lockdown.
 - Protocol provided by legal team; request to share with staff.
- Transportation Issues:
 - Safeway Bus Company services are declining.
 - Dr. Robinson is preparing a report; a possible executive meeting with Safeway.
- Student Records Compliance:
 - State law requires 60-year retention.
 - District is missing old records (dating back to 1975).
 - Subpoenas issued; referred to legal team.
- SPCA Negotiations:
 - Introductory meeting scheduled for Monday, Sept. 22 at 9 a.m.
 - Board direction needed on attorney representation.
- Facilities – BV VFD Replacement:
 - New Variable Frequency Drive needed for pump motors (\$15,518).
 - Possible cause: power outage; architects investigating warranty.
 - Inquiry on surge protection pending.

Dr. Jerry Doss, Associate Superintendent of District 205, introduced the district's unique Student Board of Education program, where elected students participate in advisory roles and committee processes alongside the official school board, contributing to decisions on curriculum, vendors, and transportation. Students also engage in project-based learning, completing two major projects each year focused on community building

and social awareness. This year's fall project, "Turn Up for Peace," is scheduled for Saturday, October 18, 2025, at Thornridge High School. The event aims to foster community unity while addressing issues such as gun violence, substance abuse, and mental health. Activities include games, food, fireworks, and educational components, emphasizing youth leadership and community engagement.

Student Board members Jason Vasquez (President) and Kolawole Dawodu (Member) highlighted the event's goals and extended an invitation to the District 149 community, offering transportation, supervision, and a permission slip process coordinated between districts. Dr. Doss also celebrated Thornton Township's academic and extracurricular successes, noting strong college placements and excellence in speech and drama programs. The overall presentation emphasized collaboration, student empowerment, and strengthening ties across the community.

Mrs. Ernesta Ransom, Early Childhood Director, presented an overview of the district's Pre-K Accelerate 2025 program, highlighting its purpose, processes, and achievements. Accelerate is an Illinois state-guided program that provides standards, guidelines, and resources to enhance early childhood education, ensuring quality outcomes for three- to five-year-old students enrolled in Preschool for All and Preschool for Expansion programs. The program requires annual Quality Improvement Plans, ongoing assessments, and participation in state monitoring every three years. Accelerate recognizes programs at different levels—licensed, bronze, silver, and gold—based on their adherence to quality standards across areas such as learning environment, instructional quality, program administration, group size, child-staff ratios, staff qualifications, and professional development.

Mrs. Ransom proudly reported that the district's Pre-K program has achieved the Gold Circle of Quality, reflecting excellence across all 15 state standards. The program emphasizes whole-child development, integrating language and literacy, mathematics, science, social-emotional skills, and gross motor activities. Hands-on, experiential learning includes activities such as interactive reading, science explorations with a marine biologist, math exercises, and social skill development to prepare students for kindergarten.

Mrs. Ransom also thanked the board for ongoing support, particularly in securing grants for classroom resources and playground development. She highlighted that the program's success relies on committed staff and continued state and district support, noting that achieving gold status required substantial effort, perseverance, and adherence to rigorous state standards. The presentation concluded with board acknowledgment of the Pre-K team's hard work and impact on early childhood education in the district.

Mrs. L'Tanya King, Board Member, reported that on September 4, Mr. Buford, Mr. Everett, and Mr. Crivens held a meet-and-greet to review the district's IT infrastructure. The discussion included an overview of the current technology landscape, identification of opportunities for improvement, and knowledge sharing about educational technology best practices. Key topics included the use of the district ticketing system, password reset procedures, and strategies to promote a digital mindset among administrators, teachers, and students. Cybersecurity was also highlighted as a critical area, with guidance provided on formalizing the district's cybersecurity program.

The conversation included preliminary discussions on technology budgeting, ensuring sufficient resources for future initiatives. Additionally, AI implementation and infrastructure requirements were discussed, reflecting the district's commitment to integrating emerging technologies. The team agreed to meet monthly to continue sharing ideas, reviewing applications and hardware inventories, and advancing the district's technology goals.

Mr. Tillman referenced recent insights from the CUBE conference, particularly regarding AI applications in the classroom and shared excitement about the potential of AI tools to enhance teaching and learning, noting their capacity to transform classroom instruction.

Board President Report:

Mr. Tillman opened by acknowledging the recent passing of Dr. White’s mother, Patricia White, inviting a moment of silence in her memory. Mr. Tillman addressed recent district challenges, assuring the Board, staff, and community that all concerns will be handled swiftly, transparently, and thoroughly, emphasizing that the district’s mission and commitment to students remain unchanged. Highlighting the energy and excitement at the start of the school year, Mr. Tillman reinforced that nearly 2,300 students continue to benefit from passionate teachers and staff, and the district remains focused on producing positive, transformative outcomes.

Drawing on inspiration from a recent conference, Mr. Tillman shared that the Board is exploring new ideas and possibilities to enhance district performance. A personal reflection underscored resilience and commitment, noting communication with Dr. White during her bereavement leave as a reminder that the district must continue its work despite challenges. He concluded by affirming unwavering support for staff and the community, stressing that the district will not merely survive but thrive, maintaining dedication to its students and overarching mission.

Public Comments - None

<p>MOTION by Mrs. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve authorizing Township Treasurer to pay invoices dated September 8, 2025 and September 18, 2025 consisting of 92 pages and chargeable to the following accounts:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Education Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,372,589.55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operations and Maintenance Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 131,660.97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Debt Services</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 7,157.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transportation Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 370,287.82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Projects</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 167,126.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tort Immunity Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>\$ 289,780.07</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$2,338,602.39</td> </tr> </table> <p>ROLL CALL TO VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, and Mr. Tillman. MOTION CARRIED</p>	Education Fund	\$1,372,589.55	Operations and Maintenance Fund	\$ 131,660.97	Debt Services	\$ 7,157.49	Transportation Fund	\$ 370,287.82	Capital Projects	\$ 167,126.49	Tort Immunity Fund	<u>\$ 289,780.07</u>		\$2,338,602.39	<p>AGENDA ITEM F</p>
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<p>MOTION by Mrs. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. King, to approve consent agenda items F1-9:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval of payroll summaries for August 1, 2025, in the amount of \$411,659.63 2. Approval of payroll summaries for August 15, 2025, in the amount of \$1,362,393.22 3. Approval of payroll summaries for August 29, 2025, in the amount of \$1,023,848.47 4. Approval of the minutes from the regular board meeting held August 21, 2025 5. Approval of the minutes from the special board meeting held September 9, 2025 6. Approval of renewal of Raptor Technology school safety software, in the amount of \$6,490.00 7. Approval of renewal of SWIS behavior tracking through PBISApps, in the amount of \$3,475.00 8. Approval to renew a three-year School Portrait agreement with Lifetouch National School Studios for 2026-2029, at no cost to the district 9. Personnel Report Resignation: 	<p>AGENDA ITEM F1-9</p>
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<p>a. Approval of resignation of Shazea Nathan-Roberston, 6th Grade Special Education Teacher at CCA, effective September 3, 2025</p> <p>Employment:</p> <p>b. Approval of employment of Nechele Raye, Paraprofessional at NBLA, effective date TBD</p> <p>c. Approval of employment of KoriAnn Carter, Climate & Culture Coach at TBD, effective date TBD</p> <p>d. Approval of employment of Sheryl Gilmore-Davis, Day-to-Day Substitute Teacher, District Wide, effective date TBD</p> <p>e. Approval of employment of Stacey Holmes, Day-to-Day Substitute Teachers, District Wide, effective date September 16, 2025</p> <p>f. Approval of employment of Mark Scott, Culture & Climate Coach, at Caroline Sibley, effective date September 16, 2025</p> <p>Leave of absence:</p> <p>g. Approval of Intermittent FMLA for Sheria Robinson, OSS Administrative Assistant at the District Office, effective August 27, 2025 through June 30, 2026</p> <p>h. Approval of Intermittent FMLA for Jeanne Watson, Kindergarten Teacher at Berger-Vandenberg, effective August 24, 2025 through May 22, 2026</p> <p>i. Approval of Intermittent FMLA for LaTanzya Howell, Paraprofessional at SOFA, effective September 4, 2025 through May 22, 2026</p> <p>j. Approval of Extended Disability for Alicia Clay-Adams, Teacher effective August 11, 2025 through November 1, 2025</p> <p>ROLL CALL TO VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. King, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, and Mr. Tillman.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	
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Adjourn to Closed Session

<p>MOTION by Mrs. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to adjourn to a Closed session at 7:13 p.m.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Motion to convene to a closed session meeting for the purpose of discussing the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees or legal counsel of Dolton School District 149, 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) • Student Disciplinary Cases 5ILCS 120/2(c)(9) 2. Motion to adjourn closed session meeting and reconvene open session meeting <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, and Mr. Tillman.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM H</p>
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Adjourn from Closed Session at 7:47 p.m.

Final Action on Closed Session Items

<p>MOTION by Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, seconded by Mrs. Tillman, to approve student discipline decisions as discussed in closed session</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, and Mr. Tillman.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM I1</p>
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Old Business

<p>MOTION by Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve tentative dates of September 30 or October 8 at 6:00 p.m. for the Board to receive training from SuperEval at no cost to the District .</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. Tillman, and Mr. Tillman.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM J1</p>
<p>MOTION by Mrs. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve the purchase of a table for the upcoming Bringing the Community Together Scholarship Fundraiser Gala hosted by the Advocates of Change on October 24, 2025, in the amount of \$1,000.00</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, and Mr. Tillman.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM J2</p>

New Business

<p>MOTION by Mrs. Tillman, seconded by Mr. Tillman, to approve the SY 25-26 School District 149 budget, as presented at the August 21, 2025 board meeting.</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Tillman, Mr. Tillman, Mrs. King, Mrs. Elston, and Mrs. De Vasher-Williams.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K1</p>
<p>MOTION by Mr. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. King, to approve Trunk or Treat in partnership with Fass Glass Corvette Club on October 31, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., at Caroline Sibley.</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mr. Tillman, Mrs. King, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. Tillman, and Mrs. De Vasher-Williams.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K2</p>
<p>MOTION by Mrs. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve the purchase of language and literacy curriculum for ELL students, with Imagine Learning, in the amount of \$12,500.00.</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, and Mr. Tillman.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K3</p>
<p>MOTION by Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve the purchase of 25 digital portable radios (walkie talkies) for Diekman, in the amount of \$10,500.00.</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. Tillman, and Mr. Tillman.</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K4</p>

Mrs. De Vasher-Williams asked how many schools would be receiving the Responsive Classroom books.

Dr. White answered that the books are for all the schools.

<p>MOTION by Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve the purchase of a total of 270 Responsive Classroom Books for staff, through Center for Responsive Schools, in the amount of \$7,925.00. ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. Tillman, and Mr. Tillman. MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K5</p>
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Mrs. King asked how long the district has offered this CTE programs.

Dr. White answered that this is the third year. The program started as a pilot, had a full implementation last year, and this is the second full year.

Mrs. King asked how many students the program accommodates and how it operates.

Dr. White explained that it's a rotating program and students select their interest area and participate in 50-minute sessions. Students rotate in and out of various programs, such as culinary or agriculture, which is why extensive programming is necessary to serve all the students. Typically, no more than 20 students are placed in any session, as the instructors are not certified teachers, and the goal is to avoid overwhelming them with class size or behavioral issues.

Mrs. King asked whether the \$22,000 cost would change if all students wanted to participate.

Dr. White clarified that the amount remains the same for the first semester.

Mrs. De Vasher-Williams asked if the programs could give presentations.

Dr. White responded that the programs absolutely can give presentations, noting that the culinary students once presented the Board with guacamole and chips, and the music bus also performed. She added that students are encouraged to showcase their work, which makes the experience both fun and engaging.

<p>MOTION by Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve CTE Short Filmmaking program for semester one with Elév31, in the amount of \$22,000.00. ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. Tillman, and Mr. Tillman MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K6</p>
<p>MOTION by Mrs. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. Elston, to approve CTE Culinary program for semester one with Feeding the Future, in the amount of \$25,000.00. ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Tillman, Mrs. Elston, Mrs. King, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, and Mr. Tillman MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K7</p>
<p>MOTION by Mrs. Elston, seconded by Mr. Tillman, to approve CTE Agriculture program for semester one with The Hive, in the amount of \$12,500.00. ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Mrs. Elston, Mr. Tillman, Mrs. King, Mrs. De Vasher-Williams, and Mrs. Tillman MOTION CARRIED</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM K8</p>

Mr. Tillman reminded the Board of the upcoming IASB South Cook Division Fall Dinner on October 7th and to the Joint Annual Conference in November.

Mrs. King reminded the Board that they needed to circle back about the Board goals, which included the evaluation process for Dr. White and strategic planning. Mrs. King also inquired about a deep dive into student learning data.

Dr. White offered to meet directly with Mrs. King to discuss the data.

Adjournment

MOTION by Mr. Tillman, seconded by Mrs. Tillman, to adjourn the board meeting at 8:12 p.m. ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: ALL IN FAVOR MOTION CARRIED	AGENDA ITEM L
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Wilbur Tillman, President

Sheryl Tillman, Secretary