

## MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

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

November 18, 2025

Mr. Legardy called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. The following Board members were present for all or part of the meeting:

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

Mr. Legardy noted Mr. Pauling was not in attendance this evening due to a business commitment. Student Board Representative Anaya Mootry was absent.

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, and Communications and Community Engagement Director Erdey were also in attendance for all of the meeting.

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

**Public Comments.** Ms. Tonya Harper, attending her first Board meeting since moving to Homewood, thanked HF staff for their work with diverse learners and praised Dr. Alexander and Assistant Superintendent Martinez for their responsive and compassionate support. She noted many strengths but urged the district to improve IEP transition processes, emphasizing early communication, clearer expectations, and better cross-department collaboration. Strengthening transitions, she said, would reduce gaps, lessen family stress, and help prevent issues.

Mr. Troy O'Quin commended Dr. Alexander and the Dad Squad for a highly successful event that brought joy and strong engagement, noting over 100 fathers participated. He thanked staff for welcoming families and highlighted that such involvement is uncommon in other districts. He also praised this year's production of *Frankenstein* that was presented in the *Black Box* including its exceptional set design. Mr. O'Quin referenced the proposed 2026–27 student schedule, expressing hope for community discussion and concern about frequent changes affecting the current sophomore class.

Mr. Rick Bloomberg thanked the board for the opportunity to speak. He expressed concern regarding the proposed scheduling changes, stating that families lack information and urging the board to consider student and parent perspectives, not solely staff and administration, and to allow opportunities for discussion.

Pastor Doyle Landry stated that the single page tonight that he distributed to board members is related to the October 28th Evergreen Park Community High School Board agenda, which occurred one week after HF's last meeting. He said Dr. Robert Grossi, HF Class of '81, "created tonight's two minutes" after stopping him in the hallway to thank him for his honesty. Pastor Landry said, "I tell the truth," noting he likes direct race conversations. He spoke on the need for honest talk about moving Black boys forward and he added that at the school board meeting at Evergreen Park the superintendent and principal welcomed honest talk about moving Black boys forward. Pastor Landry noted that Black boys "everywhere are struggling," including the one who took three shots at him on October 4. Pastor Landry concluded by saying that making HF an IB school "for everyone" requires that "everyone reads at grade level."

Ms. Joni Bradley Scott, parent of a freshman and a senior, shared that her two children have had very different experiences at HF and noted that while each student's journey is unique, the systems that support them should be equitable, transparent, and consistent. She expressed concerns about perceived favoritism, uneven opportunities, and inconsistent communication across programs, activities, and pathways. Ms. Bradley Scott stated that when access appears to depend on "who you know" or how loudly someone advocates, trust is eroded and students internalize the resulting stress. She asked the board and administration to streamline practices, increase transparency in processes such as course placement and leadership opportunities, and track participation to ensure equity. She emphasized that policies should center on whether they support the success of all students and urged the district to address areas where inequity or unclear communication may exist so that every student has an equal foundation for success. Mr. Legardy thanked her and encouraged continued conversation with administration regarding her specific concerns.

Ms. Larocca, Flossmoor resident, retired educator, and former board member, stated that upon reviewing the board agenda, she noticed that expenditures, new course proposals, and the proposed new schedule were not included. She raised a second question regarding personnel and policy edits related to suspensions, specifically asking about the board's approval process and what documentation is required. She referenced Dr. Grossi's comment that the next ten years may be more difficult, noting that while the district has been engaged in renovating and new construction, she is concerned about the future. Ms. Larocca also addressed extra responsibility contracts, noting that some individuals appeared twice and it was unclear who would be filling several positions. She asked whether all positions are properly posted, pointing out that this has been a recurring issue. Additionally, she inquired about a Career and Technical Education hire, asking whether it represents a new position or a replacement. Mr. Legardy responded that some of her questions pertain to items on tonight's agenda, while others will not be addressed at this meeting, and suggested that she contact the superintendent's office for clarification on her questions.

Mr. Percy Scott, parent of a freshman and a senior, thanked Principal Alexander for his leadership and praised the strong turnout of fathers at the recent Dad's Squad event, noting the diverse group of dads that attended truly reflected the HF community. Mr. Scott spoke on the new Homewood-Flossmoor Teacher Student Association (HFTSA) organization that was formed to operate independently from the HF Foundation, allowing the organization to fundraise and engage teachers and students directly. He encouraged additional community and teacher participation in the HFTSA.

#### **Communications:**

Student Representative. Student Representative, Anaya Mootry, was absent.

Delegation Comments. No comments.

Board Members. Mrs. O'Quin congratulated the Performing Arts Department, noting that all three performances of *Frankenstein* were outstanding, and she attended each one. She also recognized the choir, which will be performing this weekend at Governors State University, and commended the Speech Team for bringing home numerous awards last week.

Ms. Jackson extended well wishes for a warm and restful season as Thanksgiving approaches, noting it is a time to slow down and reflect. She expressed sincere appreciation for the teachers, staff, and administration, acknowledging the magnitude of their work, much of which goes unseen, and especially the heavy lift over the past six months amid significant changes. She stated that HF is truly blessed with an outstanding campus and, more importantly, exceptional teachers. While change is not always easy, she emphasized that it is necessary for growth. Ms. Jackson commended Dr. Norrell for stepping into her role with clarity, commitment, and purpose, noting that leading in a place with strong traditions is never easy and expressing appreciation for Dr. Norrell's willingness to do so. She added that as a community, they share the same goal and must remain open to new ideas and strategies. Ms. Jackson concluded by acknowledging the district's strengths and encouraging continued growth.

Mr. Legardy extended well wishes to the community as the holiday season approaches, noting it is a meaningful time to be with family. He remarked on how quickly the year has passed and encouraged everyone to pause and enjoy the moment. He reflected on what has been a great year so far and highlighted the many upcoming school events, including holiday concerts and productions, the basketball tournament, and Voyage to Excellence, encouraging families to take part. Mr. Legardy congratulated Principal Alexander on the continued growth of the Dad Squad, noting that it began with approximately 20 fathers three years ago and has become an important part of efforts to strengthen school culture. He also shared that he recently attended the inauguration of the president of Rutgers University, observing the focus on change in higher education and his message that "opportunity is not dead," even when institutions face challenges. He connected this message to concerns raised about change at HF, stating that as long as district decisions remain student-centered, he supports continued progress and emphasized that the board remains open and attentive to community input.

Public Relations/Recognitions. Dr. Norrell began by expressing her appreciation for the exceptional quality of staff within the district, noting that the level of talent present at Homewood-Flossmoor is unlike that of many institutions she has worked in throughout her 30-year career. She emphasized that this excellence is something for which the district, community members, and parents can all be grateful. She then introduced the evening's honoree, English teacher Sahar Mustafah, recognizing her for her outstanding accomplishments both within the English Department, school community and on a national platform. Ms. Mustafah, the daughter of Palestinian immigrants, explores her heritage through her writing. Her debut novel, *The Beauty of Your Face*, was named a 2020 Notable Book and Editors' Choice by *The New York Times Book Review*, and was included in Marie Claire's "Best Fiction of 2020 by Women." The novel has been translated into multiple languages and received several honors, including longlisting for the Center for Fiction's First Novel Prize and selection as a finalist for the Palestine Book Awards.

Her short story *Bethlehem* received the Book Lord Prize for Best Fiction (2022), and her flash story *Tree of Life* received the 2023 Robert J. DeMott Prize. Her work has been featured in various publications, including *Stories from the Center of the World: New Middle East Fiction*, the *Massachusetts Review*, and *Red Line: Chicago Stories*. Ms. Mustafah has also been awarded a 2023 Jack Hazard Fellowship and an Illinois Arts Council Grant. Her recently published second novel, *The Slightest Green*, continues to expand her national recognition. Dr. Norrell noted that Ms. Mustafah encourages her students to pursue multiple paths and to raise their voices as storytellers. She invited Ms. Mustafah to be recognized and presented with a certificate of appreciation. A photo was taken with the Board of Education.

District Updates. Dr. Norrell shared her remarks on the recent production of *Frankenstein*, noting that she was impressed by last spring's play shortly after she was hired and continues to be blown away by the stellar performances of HF students. She also recognized November as School Board Member Appreciation Month and highlighted the #ThankABoardMember initiative, emphasizing that Illinois school board members are unpaid and serve tirelessly on behalf of the community. She encouraged everyone to join in expressing gratitude. Dr. Norrell noted that Mr. Pauling was absent because he is being honored in New York as part of Forbes' 2025 list of America's Best-in-State Lawyers, a distinction she described as a significant point of pride for HF, especially as he is a Viking alumnus. She also spoke about author Sahar Mustafah's upcoming book signing on Thursday at *Beyond the Book* in Homewood. Dr. Norrell provided an update on the HF Family Forum, noting that this was the second event that parents attended to learn about the district's pathways work. Additional forums will be held, and meetings with students, families, and community partners are planned quarterly. She announced that the Family Advisory Committee will meet tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. in the Viking Room for anyone interested in learning more about Career Pathways or raising other questions, and encouraged participation. Dr. Norrell stated that the community's feedback is important. The proposed new schedule will be shared publicly after it is first presented to staff, allowing internal stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback before it is released to the public for their input.

Executive Team Presentations. Dr. Cook provided information regarding the FY26 Insurance Renewal. The 2026 benefit renewal plan reflects an overall cost increase consistent with national trends. The medical plan renewal is projected to rise by 13.5% due to higher utilization, increased stop-loss premiums, and reduced prescription rebates. Dental plan costs will increase by 3.6% as a result of increased utilization, while the vision plan will see no change, as it is fully employee-paid. Blue Cross Blue Shield will discontinue COBRA administration at year-end; therefore, WEX is recommended as the new COBRA vendor. The district's broker evaluated the cost of adding GLP-1 medications for weight-loss treatment to the health plan. These medications are highly effective in treating diabetes, obesity, and other weight-related conditions. Adding them would increase PPO premiums by approximately \$264,000, raising the overall medical renewal from 13.5% to roughly 17.5%. These are considered long-term costs due to continued medication use and additional medical follow-up. If the district were to consider coverage, strict eligibility standards are recommended, such as a BMI of 30 or higher, or a BMI of 25 or higher with two comorbidities.

Consent Agenda. Mr. Legardy 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 in advance and to the public when appropriate, to assure an extensive and thorough review. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member. Mr. Legardy 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. Ms. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda, as listed:

Regular Board Meeting Minutes, October 21, 2025

Athletics – Out-of-State Travel

Closed Meeting Minutes Remain Closed and Not Available for Public Inspection

2025-2026 Parent Teacher Discipline Committee Appointments

Approval of Expenditures, \$1,371,972.79

Approval of Imprest Fund, \$53,680.13

Ratification of October 2025, Payroll, \$3,676,982.59

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

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

**Committee Reports:**

Finance Committee. Finance Committee Chair Mr. Riedel noted the next Finance Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at 7:45 a.m. in the Viking Room.

**Action Items:**

Tax Levy Adoption. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education adopt the General Tax Levy Resolution. Dr. Cook noted that as presented at the October board meeting, the amount levied will account for the allowable growth as well as the anticipated revenues from new taxable property. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education adopt the Special Tax Levy Resolution for Working Cash. Dr. Cook stated The Working Cash Fund levy enables the district to maintain this fund. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education adopt the Loss-Factor Resolution as presented. Dr. Cook shared that Cook County applies a standard loss factor to account for uncollected, late, or partially paid taxes, and the district’s historical loss experience averages 6%. To ensure the district receives the full revenue necessary for operations and debt service, he is requesting that the County Clerk apply a 6% loss factor to the 2025 levy. This adjustment brings the district to a true 100% collection rate without exceeding tax cap limitations. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution authorizing the Reduction of Certain Fund Levies for the 2025 levy year. Dr. Cook noted that the County Clerk’s office is required to limit the total tax extension in accordance with the tax cap formula and must reduce the levy as necessary to ensure the district remains within those limits. This resolution directs the County Clerk to apply any required tax-cap reductions solely to the Education Fund. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education authorize the President to sign the Certificate of Compliance with the Truth in Taxation Law. Dr. Cook stated that this step is necessary for the County Clerk to legally extend the levy and ensures that the district’s tax process remains open and accountable. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Property Tax Abatement due to the Property Tax Relief Grant Programs. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve the resolution to abate property taxes as a result of its participation in the Property Tax Relief Grant programs (PTRG) in the amount of \$1,281,000. Dr. Cook shared that the district has previously participated in the state’s Property Tax Relief Grant program, and while no abatement is required from past grants, the board is electing to voluntarily abate a portion of the 2025 tax extension. As discussed at the October 2025 board meeting, the district will abate an amount equal to the estimated increase in the 2025 aggregate tax extension. This optional abatement effectively offsets the year-over-year increase, providing tax relief to the community. Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith. Nays - None. Motion carried.

2025 Estimated Tax Levy. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution determining the estimated amount of money to be raised by taxation for 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the Truth in Taxation Law. Dr. Cook explained that the board must formally estimate the amount of money it intends to levy and determine whether that amount exceeds 105% of the prior year’s tax extension (excluding debt service). Since the district is below the 105% threshold, no Truth in Taxation hearing is required. This resolution formally reports the district’s projections and compliance with the law. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Planning Committee. Dr. Smith noted that the next Planning Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. in The Viking Room. She reported that the committee met on November 11, 2025 and the following items were presented and discussed:

- Illinois School Report Card - Dr. Dallacqua presented an overview of the indicators contributing to the school's "Commendable" designation, most notably the high graduation rate. Additional indicators include proficiency in math, ELA, and science; ACCESS scores; chronic absenteeism; 9th-grade on-track; and 5Essentials data.
- Continuous Improvement Update - Dr. Norrell reviewed diagnostic data from the prior school year, including on-track measures and academic performance. She identified targeted areas for improvement and emphasized building a collaborative, districtwide continuous-improvement structure.
- IB for All Update - Dr. Dallacqua reported updates on college and career pathways and IB expansion. Two CTE pathways were approved last year, and five new pathways were submitted, bringing the total to 14, including Welding. IB courses now align with more than half of the pathways, several of which offer dual credit. She reviewed the IB candidacy timeline and noted that consultant feedback positions the district for an update within two weeks. She explained distinctions between IB Career-Related Programs and the IB Diploma Programme and shared a video summarizing staff IB training and reflections.
- New Course Proposals and Updates - Dr. Dallacqua shared new IB and AP course proposals and reviewed course name changes to align with pathways. She noted that some honors courses may be replaced with AP or IB equivalents. She highlighted the expansion to 19 pathways and updates to the Physics curriculum, including reinstating Physics as an option for STEM-focused students. Dr. Alexander clarified that Physics is no longer a graduation requirement.
- Toddle IB Planning Tool - Dr. Dallacqua presented Toddle as the proposed districtwide platform for IB planning and evaluation. Toddle provides IB-aligned templates, unit-planning tools, lesson archives, assessment records, and streamlined access for IB auditors.
- IB DP Expansion for All Students - Dr. Norrell noted the district currently covers IB Diploma Programme testing costs but not AP exam fees, creating an equity gap. She explained that covering testing for all IB students (DP and CP) would be more cost-effective than the current model. Until alternative funding is identified, families would continue to pay for optional AP exams.
- Proposed 2026–2027 Bell Schedule - Dr. Norrell presented a draft schedule. The structure supports internships, early college experiences, and expanded learning time. Benefits include stronger alignment with community college pathways and improved instructional flexibility.
- Collaborative Video Update - A video was shown that showcased professional learning community work, highlighting teacher collaboration and instructional growth.
- Early College Pilot Proposal - Dr. Norrell proposed an early college pilot allowing approximately 45 students on track to graduate HF in December to take two Prairie State College courses and one high school course during Spring 2026. Students would remain enrolled in high school. The pilot would be fully funded through Title I.

#### **Action Items:**

New Course Proposals & Course Updates. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve the new course proposals and course changes for the 2026-2027 school year, as presented. Dr. Leonard expressed concern about the number of proposed new courses, noting the uncertainty of the budget and the potential long-term costs. She cautioned against adding niche courses that may impact student access to fine arts electives and worried that students might feel pressured to take summer school, creating financial burdens for families. She requested additional information before moving forward. Dr. Norrell explained that approximately five or six of the proposed courses are entirely new, some IB, most AP, and several dual credit options. She noted that the district is already offering much of the instructional content but is not currently securing the associated endorsements or college credit for students. The expansion aims to maximize credit opportunities and strengthen transcript triggers through IB, AP and dual credit pathways aligned with state requirements. She emphasized that the district's 2,600 students must still fill the same number of course seats, and the proposal helps mitigate low-enrollment classes, which are costly to run. Dr. Leonard questioned whether pathways might "pigeonhole" students. Dr. Norrell clarified that students may cross over among electives and that pathways require only two advanced courses, allowing flexibility. She reiterated that some students may thrive more in dual credit

than AP or IB coursework. Dr. Leonard also stressed the need for transparency with families and the community, particularly regarding programmatic changes and the bell schedule which is not included on tonight's agenda. She stated that parents should receive information earlier and that significant changes require broader engagement. Dr. Norrell responded that parent sessions have been held, though attendance has been low, and the administration will continue outreach efforts. Dr. Norrell added the proposed bell schedule will be shared with staff tomorrow. Many elements of the changes are tied to state mandates and preparation for 2028 requirements. Mr. Riedel sought clarification that the proposal does not require additional FTE. Dr. Norrell confirmed that staff credentials were carefully reviewed through ELIS and that current staff are qualified to teach the proposed courses, with some pathways requiring specific CTE certification already accounted for. Mr. Riedel noted that the board would be approving the ability to offer the courses, contingent on student interest. Dr. Norrell agreed, noting that course requests will determine which classes actually run. Dr. Leonard and Dr. O'Quin both expressed appreciation for the extensive work on IB expansion while reiterating their desire for additional community input prior to the vote. Mr. Legardy asked about the implications of delaying the vote. Dr. Dallacqua stated that the primary timeline concern is that counselors need to finalize the course description book and begin the course request process. Dr. Norrell added that state-approved pathways cannot be rolled out without board authorization. Ms. Jackson highlighted the benefits of the committee structure and encouraged board members to schedule individual time with Dr. Norrell for deeper review and understanding. Dr. Smith stated that providing more course options aligns with the district's goals and student feedback, noting that low-enrollment courses simply will not run and there is no penalty. She cautioned that delaying adoption delays opportunities for students. Dr. Norrell offered to meet with board members individually or as a group to provide any additional information needed. Dr. Leonard stated she is now comfortable moving forward, provided that sufficient information is made available to students, parents, and the broader community. Dr. O'Quin thanked the administration for the detailed discussion and noted that much of this information is new for the community. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. Leonard, Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Toddle IB Unit Planning Proposal. Mr. Legardy moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve the adoption of Toddle as the district-wide IB planning and evaluation tool. Dr. Norrell explained that Toddle provides a platform that supports teacher IB curriculum alignment and better prepares the district for the IB audit. Dr. Dallacqua added that Toddle is specifically designed around IB standards, offering integrated tools that assist new teachers with lesson design and unit planning. Mr. Riedel asked whether Toddle is replacing an existing system. Dr. Dallacqua confirmed that teachers currently use ManageBac, but it is underutilized and does not include an evaluation model or the required five-year audit check-in features. Mr. Riedel noted Toddle will be replacing ManageBac which will be discontinued. Mr. Riedel requested that, at the time of the one-year subscription renewal, the board receive teacher feedback on whether Toddle is saving time and improving workflow. Dr. Dallacqua agreed to provide this information to the board. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard. Nays - None. Motion carried.

IB DP Expansion for All Students Proposal. Dr. Smith moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve the funding of the subject fees for the IB CP Programme. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O'Quin. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Early College Proposal. Dr. Smith moved, seconded by Dr. Leonard, that the Board of Education approve the Early College Dual Enrollment Program with Prairie State College for up to 45 December graduates at a total cost not to exceed \$45,990, funded through Title I and Title IV. Mr. Riedel inquired about the cost per student for the partnership with PSC. Dr. Norrell explained that PSC is providing a 10% discount on the total bill, making it less costly for the district. The program is a pilot allowing students to take classes at Prairie State College, an initiative the board expressed interest in last year. This is the first time HF students will participate, approximately 15 years after similar programs began elsewhere. A group of 45 students on track to graduate in December will have the opportunity to experience college life on PSC's campus, earn dual credit, and participate fully in the pilot. The program will be entirely grant-funded through a special grant. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Personnel Committee. Ms. Jackson reported that the next Personnel Committee meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The committee met on November 11, 2025, where Ms. Martinez discussed a new partnership with SIU to place a student teacher at HF for the second semester, which is included on tonight's agenda. Agenda items 7.32 and 7.33 will be tabled. The committee reviewed policies through the Press system, noting that most are first reads and have minor updates or cleanups, with a formal vote expected in December. Some revisions addressed suspension policies, clarifying the superintendent's authority and aligning with current practice. The board opted to maintain a 10-day suspension limit rather than the Press recommendation of 30 days. In addition, an adjustment to increase a vocational driver stipend was presented, increasing it from \$400 to \$450. The committee also discussed the Chief School Business Official position, deciding to conduct an internal search initially due to cost considerations, with the option to explore external assistance if necessary. The meeting then moved into executive session to discuss employment matters.

**Action Items:**

Pre-Service Educator Southern Illinois University Partnership Agreement. Ms. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education support the university partnership with Southern Illinois University. Roll Call: Ayes – Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Tuition for Pathways Teaching Endorsement Program Agreement. This item was tabled.

District Unique Policy Edits to IASB PRESS Board Policies. The district's Unique Policy Edits was tabled and was noted as a first read with a formal vote expected at the December board meeting.

Letter of Understanding- IA Vocational Driver Stipend Increase. Ms. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education approve the Letter of Understanding with the Homewood-Flossmoor Educational Organization (HFEO), an affiliate of the NEA-IEA, dated November 18, 2025, and authorize the President to sign the official document. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson. Nays - None. Motion carried.

**New Business:**

Benefits Insurance Renewal. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education approve the 2026 renewals for the Medical, Dental, and Vision plans, and authorize the administration to transition COBRA administration services from Blue Cross Blue Shield to WEX, Inc., effective January 1, 2026 as recommended by the Chief School Business Official and the Superintendent. Dr. Cook shared that the district's 2026 benefit plan renewals reflect overall cost increases consistent with national trends while maintaining stable employee benefits. The medical plan is projected to increase 13.5% (approximately \$910,000) in expected costs and 13.0% in maximum exposure, driven by higher utilization, increased stop-loss premiums, and reduced prescription rebates. Coverage of GLP-1 medications would add an estimated \$264,000 in PPO premium costs, raising the total medical increase to about 17.5%, with recommended eligibility tied to medical necessity standards. Dental plan costs are projected to rise 3.6% due to modest utilization increases, while the vision plan remains unchanged, as it is fully employee-paid. Blue Cross Blue Shield will discontinue COBRA administration at year-end; WEX is recommended as the new vendor to provide comprehensive services. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. Leonard, Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy. Nays - None. Motion carried.

FY2026 School Maintenance Project Grant Program. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education authorize the Chief School Business Official to submit an application for the FY2026 Round 1 School Maintenance Project Grant with the Illinois State Board of Education as recommended by the Chief School Business Official, Director of Operations and Maintenance, and the Superintendent. Dr. Cook stated that the School Maintenance Project Grant is a state-funded, dollar-for-dollar matching grant providing up to \$50,000 for facility maintenance projects. The district has consistently applied for this non-competitive grant to support roofing replacement projects. For FY2026, the grant is planned for use toward replacing Library and Technology roofing. Dr. Cook added that board approval and certification signed by the President is required as part of the application. Roll Call: Ayes – Dr. O'Quin, Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Parent/Student Agreement. Dr. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Riedel, that the Board of Education approve the Agreement in Lieu of Expulsion for student #686930248, and approve and fund the placement at the alternative educational placement described in the agreement. Roll Call: Ayes – Mr. Riedel, Dr. Smith, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Leonard, Dr. O’Quin. Nays - None. Motion carried.

Adjournment. Mr. Riedel moved, seconded by Ms. Jackson, that the Board of Education be adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

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President

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Vice-President/Secretary

**6.8.1**      **RESIGNATIONS**

1	Christopher Baker	Assistant Swim Coach	Eff 11/14/2025
2	Paula Lueder	HR Specialist	Eff 11/14/2025
3	Craig Sline	Police Liaison	Eff 11/14/2025

**6.8.2**      **APPOINTMENTS**

1	Natosha Lee	Permanent Substitute Teacher	<b><u>Start Date/Salary</u></b> Eff 11/19/2025 \$34,040.00
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**6.8.3**      **PER DIEM**

1	*Darryl Hervy	Athletic Game Worker	Eff 11/19/2025 \$27.00/hr
2	Daniel Wilson	Police Liaison	Eff 11/19/2025 \$34.00/hr

\* Pending successful completion of all legally required background checks

**6.8.4**      **LEAVES**

1	Jontil Grubbs	CTE Teacher Intermittent	Eff 10/24/2025
2	Janet Hicks	SPED, Occupational Therapist Intermittent	Eff 9/11/2025
3	Kelly Shereky	SPED Teacher	Eff 10/22/2025 - 11/3/2025

**6.8.5**      **EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY / STIPEND**

[See Athletic Memo](#)  
[See Auxillary Memo](#)

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF MEMORANDUM  
November 18, 2025

**EXTRA-RESPONSIBILITY CONTRACTS 2025-2026 (ATHLETICS)**

RECOMMENDATION: "That the Board of Education authorize the President and Secretary to sign extra-responsibility athletic updated amount contracts 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
		<i>Boys Basketball</i>	
Brandin	Brown	Boys' Basketball / Head Varsity Coach	\$10,629.00
Tyrone	Allen	Boys' Basketball / Assistant Varsity Coach	\$6,572.00
Shea	Sumpter	Boys' Basketball / Assistant Varsity Coach	\$8,140.00
Markus	Starks	Boys' Basketball / Assistant Varsity Coach	\$7,160.00
John	Manthey	Boys' Basketball / Head Sophomore Coach	\$7,699.00
Mark	Collins	Boys' Basketball / (.5 Assistant Sophomore)	\$3,098.50
Jay	Reed	Boys' Basketball / (.5 Assistant Sophomore)	\$2,297.00
Desmond	Blocker	Boys' Basketball / Head Freshman Coach	\$7,160.00
Josh	Evans	Boys' Basketball / Associate	\$3,350.00
		<i>Girls Basketball</i>	
Tony	Smith	Girls' Basketball / Head Varsity Coach	\$11,002.00
Gaetana	Davis	Girls' Basketball / Head JV Coach	\$6,572.00
Evan	Bercot	Girls' Basketball / Head Freshman Coach	\$8,870.00
Gerald	Green	Girls' Basketball / Assistant JV Coach	\$6,383.00
Catherine	Brown	Girls' Basketball / Assistant Freshman Coach	\$6,989.00
Louis	Dickson	Girls' Basketball / Assistant Varsity Coach	\$7,375.00
Jontil	Grubbs	Girls' Basketball / Associate	\$3,350.00
Lawrence	Pointer	Girls' Basketball / Assistant Varsity Coach	\$6,249.00
		<i>Cheerleading (Competitive)</i>	
Zenia	Smith	Cheerleading / Head Varsity Coach	\$8,870.00
Elayne	Evans	Cheerleading / Head JV Coach	\$7,033.00
Sabrina	Johnson	Cheerleading / Head Freshman Coach	\$7,101.00
Khayla	Kelly-Morton	Cheerleading Assistant	\$3,350.00
		<i>Girls Gymnastics</i>	
Kory	Thompson	Girls' Gymnastics / Head Varsity Coach	\$9,572.00
Robert	Chapel	Girls' Gymnastics / Assistant	\$7,243.00
		<i>Dance (Competitive)</i>	
Kari-Lynn	Burroughs	Dance / Head Varsity Coach	\$8,499.00
Jerese	Twitty	Dance / Assistant Coach	\$7,101.00
Asja	Stamps	Dance / Head JV Coach	\$5,569.00
		<i>Boys Swim</i>	
John	Fitzgerald	Boys' Swim / Head Varsity Coach	\$8,140.00

First Name	Last Name	Position	Stipend
Denise	Darling-Mills	Boys' Swim / Assistant (Dive Coach)	\$7,208.00
Justin	Hovorka	Boys' Swim / Associate	\$3,350.00
Aden	Kosel	Boys' Swim / Assistant	\$6,067.00
		<i>Boys' Wrestling</i>	
Jim	Sokoloski	Wrestling / Head Varsity Coach	\$11,002.00
Robert	Palumbo	Wrestling / Assistant Coach	\$7,208.00
Cody	Rudnik	Wrestling / Assistant Coach	\$5,569.00
Terrell	Alexander III	Wrestling / Assistant Coach	\$6,786.00
Kendall	Coleman	Wrestling / Associate	\$3,350.00
Travis	Ford-Melton	Wrestling / Head Freshman Coach	\$4,594.00
Evan	Roberts	Wrestling / Head JV Coach	\$7,208.00
		<i>Girls' Wrestling</i>	
Scott	Aronson	Wrestling / Head Varsity Coach	\$8,817.00
Alima	Toheeb-Lawal	Wrestling / Assistant Coach	\$4,594.00
Cameron	Beale	Wrestling / Assistant Girls' Coach	\$4,594.00
Jameel	Carter	Wrestling / Associate Girls' Coach	\$3,350.00
		<i>Strength/Conditioning</i>	
Adam	Vogel	Strength Coach	\$7,208.00
Nick	DeBenedetti	Weight Room Coordinator - Winter (.5)	\$2,678.50
LaVoise	McCoy	Weight Room Coordinator - Winter (.5)	\$1,926.50
Rob	White	Weight Room Coordinator - Winter (.5)	\$3,097.00
Matt	Ramos	Weight Room Coordinator - Winter (.5)	\$3,097.00
Larry	Dawson	Weight Room Coordinator - Winter (.5)	\$3,097.00
Marcus	Rodgers	Weight Room Coordinator (Fall) (.25)	\$1,544.00
Reggie	Barker	Weight Room Coordinator (Fall) (.25)	\$1,544.00
		Total	\$293,262.50

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF MEMORANDUM

November 18, 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:

	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Stipend</b>
	Reginald	Brown	Viking Compass	\$250.00
	Christina	Clark	Viking Compass	\$250.00
	Robin	Noble	Viking Compass	\$250.00
	Tiffany	Madison	Viking Compass	\$250.00
	Jeanettra	Watkins	Viking Compass	\$250.00
	Chante	Andrews	Model Teacher	*\$2071.37
delete	Annette	Hall	IA Designated Voc Bus Driver	<b>\$1,800.00</b>
delete	Anna	Tenny	Case Manager	<b>\$1,300.00</b>
	Total			\$3,321.31

\* Prorated amount