SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT OF LAKE COUNTY
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Judy Hackett, EdD
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Co-Interim Superintendents

Executive Board Meeting Summary
Thursday, January 22, 2026

PLEDGE AND AGENDA
Following the Call to Order/Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance by President McHugh, the Board accepted the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA
Minutes and financial matters were approved along with the following personnel items:
~ Request for Contracts for 5 educational support personnel (ESP)
~ Resignations/retirements by 2 ESP and 1 licensed staff
~ 3 Contract staff

SPECIAL RECOGNITION
STARS Student of the Month
The Board recognized a student from Ms. Samantha Mattea's classroom at Fairhaven School as the January STARS Student. This student struggled at the beginning of the school year but has since made great improvements. With the help of his team, he has shown tremendous growth. He has significantly improved his communication and academics through use of his communication device. He also demonstrates kindness with increasing social interaction.

Employee of the Month
The Board recognized Ms. Alexa Svetlecich, teacher at John Powers Center, as January's Employee of the Month. Ms. Svetlecich is an exceptional teacher. She consistently advocates for her students and helps them prepare for life after high school. She is hardworking, reliable, and is a valued member of the deaf and hard of hearing team.

Gifts to the Board
The Board received a special appreciation gift from Ms. Rebecca Slye's and Ms. Ashley Merkel's classrooms. Students hand-painted ceramic pots and planted succulents for each Board member.

PUBLIC COMMENT
There was one person who spoke at Public Comment.

SEDOL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) UPDATES
Goal 1: Provide exceptional programs and services to meet the needs of students throughout the SEDOL community (Ms. Amy Timonen)
Ms. Timonen presented on instructional practices for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) at John Powers Center (JPC).
Goal Highlights: Instructional Practices in Reading
- Really Great Reading- Aligns with the Science of Reading philosophy, addresses phonics, decoding and comprehension skills
- Orton-Gillingham- Multi-sensory approach to literacy, addresses phonological awareness, phonics, word analysis, spelling, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing
- Guided Reading- Individualized reading instruction to focus on fluency and comprehension

Staff utilize ASL, Visual Phonics, spoken language and visuals to support student learning
Students at JPC have shown a 66.7% overall growth in language arts.
Goal Highlights: Instructional Practices for Math
- Bridges Math Curriculum- Kindergarten through 5th grade, partnered with Hawthorn District 73 to

implement the Bridges Curriculum at JPC for the 24-25 school year, focuses on developing mathematical reasoning skills while building problem-solving skills, conceptual understanding, and procedural fluency, teaches students to “think like a mathematician”

- Amplify Desmos Math- 6th through 8th grade, partnered with Hawthorn District 73 to implement Amplify Desmos Math at JPC for the 25-26 school year, combines conceptual understanding, procedural fluency and application to support problem-based learning, develops student curiosity in exploring math concepts

Students at JPC have shown an 83.3% overall growth in math.

Goal 1: Provide exceptional programs and services to meet the needs of students throughout the SEDOL community (Dr. Jimenez-Captain)

Objective D: SEDOL leadership/member districts’ collaborative brainstorming to review continuum of SEDOL services to best address dynamic and changing needs.

- Committee Purpose: Identify the future SEDOL program/services and related next steps.

Goal 2: Establish an effective, equitable financial structure that best supports students and district needs (Dr. Thomas)

Objective 2: Refine staffing model to reflect programmatic needs.

- Identify the current model and variables to consider
- Compare with similar programs while continuing to meet the needs of our member districts and their students

Goal 3: Advance high standards and expectations (Ms. Timonen)

Goal Highlights: Specialized Safety Measures for DHH

- JPC partnered with local fire departments in Lake County to provide and install bed shaker smoke detectors for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing students
- No cost to families. The program was funded by Camp I Am Me and the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshall
- Thirty-three students received bed shaker smoke detectors installed in their home

OLD BUSINESS

Contract Approval

Dr. Barbini updated the Board on the contract with Modern Media Tech and the status of the Gages Lake School Community Room audio and microphone system project. This project is expected to be completed prior to the March 4, 2026 Governing Board meeting.

FY24and FY25 Audit Update

Mr. Kevin Smith, Eccezion, presented highlights of the FY24 final audit. He stated that the FY25 audit is well underway with an anticipated completion date of June 30, 2026.

Acceptance of the FY24 Audit

The Board approved the FY24 final audit.

2026 Summer Project Update

Ms. Allard presented the Board an updated list for the 2026 summer projects and the timelines.

Cyd Lash Academy (Building Closed for ESY): Boiler Replacement- new boiler & circulating pumps & BAS controls, sanitary PVC piping in boiler room changed to pressure rated PVC, replace glass with wire mesh insert, and change out plywood storage doors in locker rooms with frames and solid doors

Gages Lake School & Pre-Vocational: Determine whether removal or re-roof/decking of canopy, replace frames/doors on two exterior doors, and replace glass with wire mesh insert

John Powers Center: Replace water heater, replace electric circuit panel, replace glass with wire mesh insert, replace (parking lot) building entrance door canopy/awning, replace (parking lot) building entrance storefront metal & glass, replace (parking lot) building entrance doors, and replace magnetic-locks with electric strikes

Fairhaven: Replace water heater, remove water heater mixing valve, and change the non-fire rated gym hallway entrance/possible door access

FY26 Budget Amendment

The Board approved the amended budget for FY26 and recommended it be presented for Governing Board approval at the March 4, 2026, meeting.

1. The final budget will be based on a cash basis, which includes Evidence-Based Funding and tuition revenues being calculated accordingly;

2. For final budget purposes, total expenditures in the Education Fund for FY26 be set at $52,782,408 and that those expenditures be offset by tuition, district contractual and grant revenue, leaving a fund balance of $2,931,609;
3. Total expenditures in the Operations and Maintenance Fund be set at $3,718,226; in the Debt Service Fund at $181,800; in the Transportation Fund at $861,536; in the IMRF Fund at $1,200,000, in the Capital Projects Fund at $3,350,000.

The fund balance based on year-end fund balance to revenue ratio is 8.12%. The district seeks to maintain a year-end fund balance to revenue ratio not less than 8-11 percent, as calculated under IL State Board of Education's School District Financial Profile, less any flow-through money.

FY27 Budget Timelines and Updates

Ms. Allard updated the Board on the FY27 budget timelines with final approval at the August Governing Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Skyward Update

Ms. Allard informed the Board of the smooth transition of processing the first payroll through Skyward. She gave a shout out to the business department and human resources for working so well together and as a team through the system change over.

Programming Updates

Mr. Crowley discussed that Grayslake North High School has informed SEDOL that they are seeking to terminate their current housing contract with SEDOL to reclaim building space for the 2027-28 school year. This change will cause the high school deaf and hard or hearing program currently located at Grayslake North High School, to relocate. This information has been shared with families, staff, and SEDOL member districts. At this time, SEDOL will begin the planning process to review the needs of students, location options within our member districts, and parents' concerns. A parent forum meeting will be held in the near future as well.

March Governing Board Meeting

The Board reviewed the draft agenda for the March 4, 2026 Governing Board meeting.

FOIA Request

1. On November 19, 2025, Mr. Max Binnington submitted a FOIA request for *any contracts and/or RFPs related to risk management and/or liability insurance*. Dr. Wojcik replied on December 22, 2025, granting part and denying part of the request.
2. On November 19, 2025, and December 8, 2025, Mr. Max Binnington submitted a total of three voluminous commercial FOIA requests. Dr. Wojcik replied on December 22, 2025, denying these requests and asking if he would like to revise the request. To date, no response has been received.
3. On December 18, 2025, CT Mills requested copies of the most current existing records listing all active employees within our district. To ensure their records remain accurate, they requested the latest version currently on file that includes the following fields: • Full Name • Title/Position • Work Email Address • Work Location. Dr. Wojcik replied on December 23, 2025, and included the information requested.
4. On January 7, 2026, E. Campos requested copies of any purchase orders or invoices for paint made by the school district and contractors performing the projects that exceeded $1,000 within the past five (5) years. Dr. Wojcik replied with information on January 14, 2026.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no Closed Session

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Finance Committee will meet February 11, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. in the Administration Building Board Room.

INFORMATIONAL

SEDOL Foundation Events

- Ping Pong- February 1
- Laremont Trivia Night- March 7

- Dinner Dance- April 25
- Pucks for Autism- June 12-14
- Golf Invitational- September 14
- 5K Run/Walk- September 19
- One Special Night- November 7

Upcoming SEDOL Events

January:			
American Sign Language Winter Classes Begin	John Powers Center	1.21.26	6:30 - 8:00
February:			
SEDOL Board Finance Committee	Admin Bldg	2.11.26	8:30 am
Parent University	Admin Bldg	2.19.26	6:30 - 8:00
"Be Mine Valentine"	Fairhaven School	2.12.26	9:00 - 2:00
SEDOL/ROE All Staff Institute Day	Grant High School	2.13.26	8:00 - 3:00
SEDOL Foundation/Laremont Presentation at IAASE	Champaign, IL	2.26	
IAASE Winter Conference	Champaign, IL	2.25-27	
March			
Dr. Jennifer Thomas, incoming Superintendent Visit	Wednesday, March 4th pm		
SEDOL Staff Meet and Greet w/ Dr. Thomas	Gages Lake School Gymnasium		3:30 - 4:30
SEDOL Board and Community Welcome Reception	Gages Lake School Community Room		5:30 - 6:30
SEDOL Governing Board Meeting	Gages Lake School Community Room		7:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Joanne Osmond announced that this will be her final Board meeting. She has decided to step down earlier than planned in order to pursue future endeavors.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

2025-26 Executive Board Meeting Schedule *SEDOL Office Bay Room*

Thursday, February 26, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Thursday, March 19, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Thursday, April 2, 2026 – 8:30 a.m. *FY27 Budget Meeting*
Thursday, April 23, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Thursday, May 28, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Thursday, June 25, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Thursday, July 23, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.

2025-26 Governing Board Meeting Schedule *Gages Lake School Community Room*

Wednesday, March 4, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, June 3, 2026 – 7:00 p.m