



## **CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT 63**

8502 Bailey Road • Darien, Illinois 60561-5333

# **Board of Education Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, January 20, 2026**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Education of Cass School District 63, DuPage County, Illinois; held at Cass Junior High School at 7:00 P.M. on the 20<sup>th</sup> Day of January, 2026.

### **I. Welcome and Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

#### **A. Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **B. Roll Call**

Upon roll being called, the following members answered present: President Lana Johnson, Vice President Rinku Patel, Secretary Urszula Tanouye and Members Katie Marinelli, and Steve Wyent. Members Chris Green and Fiyaz Khan were absent.

Also in attendance: Superintendent Mark R. Cross, Principal Katie Doyle, and Board Recording Secretary Gayle Wilson

#### **C. Recognition of Audience, Announcements and Correspondence**

President Johnson welcomed everyone in attendance and noted that the Board received FOIA requests from CT Mills and Illinois Retired Teachers Association.

#### **D. Student and Staff Spotlight and Recognition**

Mr. Cross recognized teachers Marie Musil and Lauren Niedziela for providing our 5th grade students with an incredible learning opportunity with the recent wax museum project. He further acknowledged Darien Deputy Police Chief Austin Jump, who joined in our training of staff on school safety and crisis response planning. Lastly, Mr. Cross thanked Gayle Wilson for her excellent work with the district website, as well as the transition to BoardBook.

#### **E. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.



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#### **II. Consent Agenda**

- A. Approval of the January 20, 2026 Regular Meeting Agenda**
- B. Approval of the December 16, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes**
- C. Approval of Personnel Recommendations**
- D. Approval of Financial Reports**
- E. Approval of the District Bills**

Mr. Cross reviewed the consent agenda highlighting the recommendation to hire Bridget Gilmartin as Concord Elementary social worker four days a week, Karen Fitzgerald contractual speech pathologist, and Madie Canong as the junior high STEAM teacher for the remainder of the school year. Teacher Djola Jemin is requesting FMLA leave the start of the 2025-26 school year.

*Member Wyent moved and Member Marinelli seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.*

*Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Wyent, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 5 to 0.*

#### **III. Reports, Updates and Informational Items**

##### **A. Administrative Reports**

Katie Doyle gave an overview of upcoming events at Concord Elementary highlighting chess club, a visit from the Cass Jazz Band and the upcoming Shining Comets awards.

Mark Cross gave a Cass Junior High update and then shared that CPI for this year is 2.7 percent, reviewed the January enrollment report, and shared about the second annual multicultural celebration schedule for April 17.

##### **B. Strategic Plan Progress Review**

Mr. Cross shared a six-month review of the Strategic Plan, highlighting three areas of growth, and four areas targeted for continued improvement. There are 15 indicators fully in the implementation stage, with the remaining six in the developing or emerging stages. Mr. Cross said this plan has been a great tool for getting critical work done over the course of five years.



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#### **C. Second Reading of Recommended Board Policy Updates**

Mr. Cross reviewed the recommended several key policy updates which were first presented at the December Board meeting.

#### **D. Update and Discussion Regarding Phase III Facility Planning**

Mr. Cross shared an update on the Phase III facility plans and noted that the District would soon be seeking bids for the summer 2026 work that includes flooring and lighting in specific classrooms at Concord, as well as potentially upgrading the STEM lab and the library. He also shared progress on the intergovernmental work with the City of Darien for the potential replacement of the Cass Junior High parking lot.

### **IV. Recommended Action Items**

#### **A. Approval of Recommended Board Policy Updates**

*Member Marinelli moved and Secretary Tanouye seconded a motion to approve the recommended Board policy updates.*

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Member Wyent, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 5 to 0.

#### **B. Approval of 2026-27 School Year District Calendar**

*Vice President Patel moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to approve the 2026-27 school year calendar.*

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Vice President Patel, Member Wyent, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 5 to 0.

#### **C. Approval of 2026-27 Board Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations**

*Member Marinelli moved and Secretary Tanouye seconded a motion to approve the 2026-27 Board meeting dates, times, and locations.*

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Member Wyent, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 5 to 0.



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*Member Wyent moved and Member Marinelli seconded a motion to enter into closed session for the purpose of semi-annual review of closed session minutes per ILCS 120/2(c)(21) and to discuss pending litigation against, affecting or on behalf of the school district per ILCS 120/2(c)(11).*

#### **V. Closed Session**

Vice President Patel left the meeting during closed session at 8:57 p.m.

The Board returned from Closed Session at 9:05 p.m.

#### **VI. Recommended Action Items After Closed Session**

##### **A. Approval to Release Closed Session Minutes with Any Exceptions Noted in Which the Need for Confidentiality Remains**

*Member Wyent moved and Secretary Tanouye seconded a motion to approve the release of closed session minutes with any exceptions noted in which the need for confidentiality remains.*

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Wyent, Secretary Tanouye, Member Marinelli, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 4 to 0.

##### **B. Authorization of Destruction of Verbatim Audio Records from Closed Sessions Held Prior to July 1, 2024, per the Illinois Open Meetings Act.**

*Secretary Tanouye moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to authorize the destruction of verbatim audio records from closed sessions held prior to July 1, 2024, per the Illinois Open Meetings Act.*

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Secretary Tanouye, Member Wyent, Member Marinelli, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 4 to 0.

##### **C. Approval of Settlement Agreement of Judiciocracy LLC and COGS Lawsuit**

*Secretary Tanouye moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to enter in to a settlement agreement with Judiciocracy LLC, which includes a payment of \$770 to the Plaintiff.*



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Roll Call Vote – Aye: Secretary Tanouye, Member Wyent, Member Marinelli, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 4 to 0.

#### **VII. Conclusion**

##### **A. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

##### **B. Board Member Comments**

There were no Board member comments.

##### **C. Adjournment**

*Member Wyent moved and Secretary Tanouye seconded a motion to adjourn this Board of Education Meeting of January 20, 2026 at 8:35 p.m.*

Voice Vote – Aye: Member Wyent, Secretary Tanouye, Member Marinelli, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 4 to 0.

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Lana Johnson, Board of Education President

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Urszula Tanouye, Board of Education Secretary