BOARD OF EDUCATION PRAIRIE-HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HIGHLAND SCHOOL

3015 WEST 163RD STREET MARKHAM, ILL

JANUARY 20, 2026

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance (2:220)**

2. **Roll Call (2:220)**
The following members were present: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Matthews, and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Also, present: Superintendent, Dr. Kanisha Brown, and Assistant Superintendent of [OBJ], Instruction & Equity, Dr. Jamie Crosen.

3 **Presidents Report:** Dr. Musaindapo, share information about the EDI Conference, she stated that the conference was both edifying and she enjoyed being a part of it.

4. **Superintendent Report (3:60 & 8:30) Superintendent-**
Dr. Brown provided an update on the district's strong fiscal position, highlighting that no tax anticipation warrants were needed despite county tax delays, and announced a fundraising gala for the Hills Foundation. "I am proud to say again with the fiscal leadership, we did not have to take out any tax assistance warrant. This quote was stated at the beginning of the superintendent's report to immediately highlight the district's positive financial status." If you eliminate debt, you levy less, you pay down your tax collection rate." The superintendent said this while explaining the direct benefit to taxpayers of the board's strategy to pay off bonds and reduce the district's principal debt. in most communities, there's two realistic ways for us to build generational wealth and one of them is through real estate... and the other one is typically through life insurance policy. So, we're going to make sure that through this program, it also provides opportunities to have a better understanding of those pieces."

5. **DISCUSSION**

1. Board Retreat-Dr. Musaindapo, shared information about the retreat, also informed the Board that information was in the folders.

2. Bremen Township Policy-Board Member Ms. Crain shared information about her meeting with the Bremen Township Treasures, and she talked about the possibility of a new policy being put in place.

3. NSBA Early bird Registration/classes - Information is provided in the folder for Early bird registration and classes that are made available for those who plan to attend.

4. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Conference-Dr. Brown shared results from the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Conference through PowerPoint.

5. Special Education Consultant-Dr. Brown, shared with the Board of Education that she had two candidates for the position she was looking to bring to the Board. It was asked if there were any enteral candidates in mind for the position, the answer no.

6. Black History Month Extravaganza-Dr. Brown and the Board of Education discussed the Black History Extravaganza; an allocation sheet was provided for the Board of Education members.

7.Professional Development-There were 3 professional developments listed they were discussed amongst the Board of Education.

6. Presentation:

6.01. HYA- CSBO Update- **HYA & Associates, Presenters:** The search committee reported having seven applications total, with initial screening completed and panel interviews underway. They noted concerns about candidates also applying to other districts and some being new to CSBO certification [21:22] [21:53] [22:39]. So, in regard to the engagement phase, we have two focus groups. One of the focus groups was the school districts themselves and then the other focus group was representation. And then now we're in the recruitment phase and the recruitment phase based on feedback and the superintendent we created a job description, and we posted that. And we also shared that with the school district. Today we have actually ... We had six applications of which we did some initial screening. And so we have one intended as of today. And then we had our first panel interview last week, and we have another one scheduled for this week from another potential candidate. And actually. So, do you see seven today or six? Yeah, we saw the seventh today. Thank you. And so in the process of interviewing some questions to discuss presented to the superintendent of the board was one of concerns for us not to focus on candidates that have also submitted applications to other schools also. And we can definitely let you know who those are once we decide that also we start your community process. The other thing, there were a couple of candidates that were considering moving forward, but they are very new to be a CSEO, like certification. So, we wanted to check in to see if they would get a mentor during that transition phase or someone to support them. One has done some financial work, but not necessarily from a district from just a particular program. They were responsible for budget certification to be. So, we just have two that have no experience at all in that, but particularly the one that has financial experience. So far, two. So far two, the only other thing, one person who had some concern about positions, it was just some people take a person with them, and they were going with that particular. And so then as far as the timeline, which is from October to now, we completed all those pieces for the most part fully in the recruitment phase at this point. And we are in the process now of doing reference checks and background checks, particularly. And the current background check is not an HR background check searching online to see if there's anything out there, red flags or racist concerns that you all know even though there's a lot of candidates we should know that. So that's where we are with those things. Our plan is basically scheduled

so far we are on track to basically 2% to you in February unless something changes out of the current candidates that we have shown ready to present to you all in February.

6.02 FY26 School Maintenance Project Grant-Ms. Jamaica Canady shared with the Board of Education information regarding the school maintenance project grant for grant cycle year 2026. It will be quick because we're just going to go out over what the purpose is, our proposal is, and this must be approved by the board and presented to you all. Okay? Before we can even submit our application for this year. So, what is the school maintenance project grant? The purpose of the grant is a state grant that funds maintenance and upkeep of school buildings of structures used for educational purposes. There is a matching requirement for this grant and also with this grant there's an award amount of up to $50,000. So, if we do, as you'll see later with one of our projects, get approved for our $82,000 project; we must match dollar to dollar for $41,000. That's the way this grant works. Okay? Some of the eligible applications, applicants are public school districts, corporate, I mean cooperative high schools, type 40 area vocational centers, special education cooperative ROEs, regional offices of education, and intermediate service centers also known as ISCs. An eligible project is when we are doing maintenance or upkeep work such as facility repairs, health life safety improvements, security upgrades, and infrastructure projects. But this does not include any ongoing operational costs like knife or gas, common, landscaping, anything like that, or any in-house labor not contracted out.

6.03 Financial-Tax Collection Update-Dr. Brown updates about the tax collection- We know that the Cook County tax election really for some districts and for us, really caused us to look at how we were spending our money. And that became a statewide issue when we looked at just how much and where taxes were rising across the state. So, I really wanted to provide an opportunity and a space so that the board understood the impact of the fiscal stewardship and how we were able to align to our priority of fiscal efficiency. And so here are a couple of things that we need to celebrate. We need to celebrate the responsible leadership, taxpayer savings, and the fiscal stability that we have. Some of the things that we have been able to do as a team is number one, look at reducing our principal debt and paying off bonds. We were able to leverage our working cash. Looking within and becoming our own bank was really important. We were also able to avoid new debt. As Secretary Crane said earlier, we did not have to take out the tax assisted warrants. We did not have to make any short-term bonds. What we were able to do is what is called an interfund loan. So, we were able to take over, but we were only able to do that because we had reduced our principal debt just the year before by paying off bonds. What does this mean for us as a community? It really does mean a lower tax collection. Now, we know that there is a lot of variables that goes into taxes, but our responsibility to our community is making sure that we are not increasing our district therefore increasing our community debt, but rather we are putting things in place to get us through. So, our current financial context was, yes, Cook County property taxes were delayed. We started receiving our distributions in January. We are anticipating that our April tax collection will be delayed. Tax bills will be delayed by at least 30 days. How have we been

able to maintain stability? Again, we're staying in the course community. We are making sure that we are reflecting, looking at our expenditures, and keeping it down. We will continue to reduce our debt, our principal debt, and to continue to pay off funds. What is that major accomplishment? Just again, going back to 2004, you can see when we started to pay off our debt for our taxpayers. We eliminated almost just a little bit over $2 million in total net debt service levels, right? If you eliminate debt, you levy less; you pay your tax collection rate. Now, what did that mean to us? When we talk about it, if we strategically continue to pay off our debt, which means when bonds are probable, we're working to get our principal down.

6.04 Family, Community, and Business Engagement- New attendance expectations were presented requiring classes to have at least 10 students enrolled on the first day, with classes discontinued if attendance falls below 10 for three consecutive sessions. New program proposals included STEM RC car building, fitness programs, music mentoring, and real estate education [48:03] [48:19] [51:23] [51:51].

7. Department Updates

7.01 Curriculum and Instruction Update: Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction & Equity, Dr. Jamie Crosen. There was discussion of teacher evaluation and observation processes, with 1,657 observations completed including "instructional walkthroughs, mentoring documentations, formal evaluations, informal observations" [58:17]. The platform shows 212 forms completed with 42 currently in progress [58:40].

7.02 Specialized Services: As presented

7.03 Human Resources: Dr. Oliver, The district completed 1,657 teacher observations this school year and held a student conduct community meeting with over 44 participants [58:17] [54:59] [55:21]. HR reported on recruiting season preparations and medical insurance renewal reviews [1:01:00] [1:03:26].Dr. Oliver also shared that we would have career fairs that we will be attending locally as well as virtually. There is a request for one particular person. We'll talk about that a little bit with Sol Rawls. As we look to look at our deficiency in our ESL and bilingual population, Sol Ross University in Alpine, Texas specializes in educating those persons that come from Latino descent. It's open. It is a public school for everyone, but they do produce an astonishing number of teachers that are bilingual and ESL certified. So, we are possibly looking at an opportunity to go there within communication with them on attending that. With our frontline electronic scan, we're really excited about being able to hopefully push this out with everyone before February. We have done our beta testing in technology, and we will work with the food service this week. So, we're really excited about that with them being able to scan in. And we can do away with the cards that we have to process for payroll. We are updating. You will see that, and I do have that noted on our job. Descriptions and posting vacancies, you will probably see a new book. We're trying to go for a uniform look. When we went back and evaluated and looked at all the jobs, they had different templates. So, we are working on ensuring that all our hosting's have the same template that is being used. We will resume our campus visits next week. We will start back doing those campus visits starting on Monday, and that schedule will go out to the principal who will basically utilize because we did have their input. We wanted to know the best time to come to campus week without just causing little instructional

disruption. And just when we could be accessible to most of our employees. Our medical insurance renewal rates review. This one is huge. I was asked to serve on one of the boards for the possibility of a co-op. I will be able to bring back more information. That meeting is tomorrow at four o'clock. The city removes me, but I know it's about an hour and a half away. So, I will be leaving tomorrow to see exactly what those proposals are as we look at the increased healthcare rates that we're possibly going to be tripping down to some of our employees. Policy updates. You do have your policy update for a second read. I believe it's policy 120 that is included in your packet.

7.04 Family, Community, and Business Engagement: class attendance expectations, recruitment expectations, instructor agreement, which I have an instructor agreement that I'll pass out. Recruit more IBM and DDR instructors/vendors. So, what you see on the agenda tonight is some vendors that I've put forward that are what I consider IBM, which is interest-based mentoring, and DDR, which simply means data driven resources, recruiting FEC counselor support and hiring qualified staff. At the bottom, I have the community counting on us. So if you've watched the news recently, you see how vulnerable childcare is in our country and how easily it can be taken away. A lot of our families depend on us, and you can only imagine what it would look like if childcare was taken away within our community. So, us being prepared to respond to something I believe is very important. So new attendance expectations. So, classes must have at least 10 students enrolled on the first day. So we're going to shoot for that target. We'll have a two-week registration window, and that way we can ensure that classes have 10 students on the first day of enrollment. I think in the past we may have let classes begin and then try to work up to that figure. Our classes should maintain the daily attendance of 10 students throughout the session. If attendance falls below 10 for three consecutive classes, the class will be discontinued. As I spoke about last session, I had to discontinue about four to five classes because attending simply wasn't there. We will implement a PBIS attendance incentive to help support and promote success around attendance. Recruitment strategies. So more IBM classes. So IBM, I talked a little bit last time about interest-based mentoring classes, and the idea that interest helps to drive the attendance. Things that our children and adults are interested in will help to drive attendance. And also our data driven resource classes, which we're looking for, the free resources to help drive the attendance. Making sure that both the FEC and instructors have the equal responsibilities of recruiting students, Eventbrite, mass emails, robocalls, social media press. We have to really increase our social media presence, have in-person and school administration partnerships, and targeted student presentations. So when I talk about targeted student presentations, it's my vision that we have some programs that support and serve as an alternative to suspension, which means we would have a targeted population that would promote these classes too, or students who have discipline data around fights and different things like that. So having some classes that are specifically for a targeted population of students, which probably would be considered tier two or tier three students. The instructor agreement, as you see, it covers six different areas, scope of service, minimum enrollment, requirement, attendance and cancellation policies, professional expectations is a big one, compensation, safety and compliance, termination and contracts. So, as I mentioned in the last session, one of my biggest hurdles was things like instructors calling off less than 24 hours before class starts. And here we have students who are dependent on them and have enough inconsistencies within their life to where they don't need their instructor that they're looking forward to not showing up. I have call-offs within the hour of the classes to start. So putting things in

plain, simple language to make sure that it's clear around expectations is something I believe is very important.

7.05 Technology Update: Mr. Leonard Hill shared with the Board of Education that Technology spent a bit of time before the preparation for the EDI conference. We have to work with attending the parking center, organization, certain pieces of it, making sure the projectors and the room breakout rooms are all set up properly in accordance to our program. We also make sure to structure a health desk someplace close to the main door area, make sure we can support anybody that comes in, have any questions, and make sure we touch bases with all the presenters to give them the Wi-Fi passcode and educate that event. And also, we made sure we had enough parts and pieces and connections for all of the presenters as far as making sure attachments and officially. We also saved some money for the district by ... Instead of using the attending visual audio, we did that one. So, I would say that throughout my team for being able to understand that. Next piece I would like to highlight is the black history as a technology department has been preparing for this event. We have already been working with the teachers in preparation for the event for them to start creating their scripts, creating video content, and things of that nature. We also reached out to our editor to prepare her for engaging with the teachers once all the projects have been. We're expecting all of the content for the projects to be provided to the editor by January 24th, in which case the editor will have approximately two weeks to prepare all of those videos and communication with the principal teachers and have that in Marcus Theater's hands by February 13th, which is two weeks for Marcus Theater to then edit to be able to. We're expecting to do the Black History Trail and Marcus Theater on February 28th.

7.06 Operations: Foy Bryant Operation & Maintenances: As Presented

Athletic Department Update: Mr. Hurd shared with the Board of Education about the following games that would be forthcoming; he shared that the PHJH will be the host school for sectionals this year. He also stated that Junior High Athletics is in the middle of or near the end of their basketball season for boys. I went to the boys' seventh grade regional last week at Coolidge, and they beat Brooks. They'd be Brooks, so they'll play again on Wednesday night in the regional semi-finals, and then eighth grade will begin next week with their regionals. Prairie Hills is hosting the sectional for both the seventh and eighth grade boys. So that'll be a couple of weeks. Okay. It sounds good. And then elementary ... So, volleyball kicks off too. I think their first game was today. I'm not sure how they did, but that was their first game. The girls' volleyball season at junior high and then elementary basketball kicked off last Thursday or last week, so I would send that schedule.

8. **Policy**
   8.01 2nd Reading Press Plus 120-

9. **Audience Participation:** Ms. Crain moved and it was seconded by Ms. Jordan to open Audience Participation. On roll call members voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Vicki Walker, and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan.

   Motion Carried 6:34

Ms. Crain moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Ratliff to close Audience Participation. On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Sharron Davis and Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Carlene Matthews and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan.

Motion Carried 6:39

10. Board of Education Action Items

10.01. Approve Payment for Consultant Bryn Gibson-Tabled

Ms. Crain moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Ratliff to **table** payment for consultant Bryn Gibson. On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Sharron Davis and Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Carlene Matthews and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan.

Motion Carried

10.2 Approve Payment for Consultant Bryn Gibson-Tabled

Ms. Crain moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Ratliff to **table** payment for consultant Alexander Dumas. On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Sharron Davis and Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Carlene Matthews and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan.

Motion Carried

10.3 Approve Payment for Ms. Robinson Educational Services -Consent

10.4 Approve Payment for Consultant Diamond Holt-Tabled

10.5 Approve Vendor I-Fly-Consent agenda

10.6 Approve Vendor Automotive Education-Tabled

10.7 Approve Vendor Larry Daniels-Consent Agenda

10.08 Approve Linda Fowleks- (Special Education Consultant)

Ms. Matthews moved and it was seconded by Ms. Ratliff to Approve Special Education Consultant (Linda Fowleks)- On roll call members voting Aye: Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, Nay: Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Joyce Ratliff. Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion not Carried

10.09 Approve vendor Marc Dixon-Tabled

10.10 Approve vendor A&P Lion (Physical Training wellness program)-Tabled

10.11 Approve vendor-Dion Madkins- (Innovators Stems Mentor)-Tabled

10.12 Approve vendor-Alif Muhammad- (Teacher Build Car)-Tabled

10.13 Approve vendor-Farrior Homs Inc- (Teach Real Estate)-Consent agenda

10.14 Approve vendor-XtraMath-Subscription)-Consent agenda

10.15 Approve vendor- Chicago Dog Baseball-Tabled

10.16 Approve Invoices and Supplementals- Ms. Matthews moved and it was seconded by Ms. Crain to Approve **Invoices and Supplementals with the obsession of Unjaded.** On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Vicki Walker and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Nay: None Abstain: Ms. Carlene Matthews Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan.

Motion Carried

10.17 Approval Department Payroll- Ms. Ratliff moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Matthews to Approve **Payroll**. On roll call members voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Vicki Walker, and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion Carried

10.18 Approve New Vendors-Presented

10.19 Approve Personal Recommendation- Ms. Matthews moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Crain to Approve **Personal Recommendation.** On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Vicki Walker and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion Carried

10.20 Approval Professional Development- Ms. Ratliff moved seconded by Ms. Matthews to Approve **Professional Development**. On roll call members voting Aye: Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Sharron Davis and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Nay: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Joyce Ratliff. Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion not Carried

10.21 Approve 2nd Quarter Compensation- Was not uploaded for Board to see so therefore no voting occurred.

10.22 Approve Black History Month Extravaganza-Ms. Ratliff moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Matthews to Approve **Black History Extravaganza.** On roll call members voting Aye: Dr Sylinda Musaindapo. Nay: Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Joyce Ratliff. Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion not Carried

10.23. Board Approve Retreat Dates-None

10.24. Approve FY 26 School Maintenance Project Grant-Consent agenda

10.25. Approve second reading press plus 120-Consent agenda

Ms. Joyce Ratliff moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Carlene Matthews, to place the following items on consent agenda. 10.3, 10. 5, 10.7, 10.13, 10.14, 10.24 and 10.25. On roll call members voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Vicki Walker, and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan.

Motion Carried

Ms. Carlene Matthews moved and it was seconded by Ms. Aubry Crain, to approve the following items on consent agenda 10.3, 10. 5, 10.7, 10.13, 10.14, 10.24 and 10.25. On roll call members voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Vicki Walker, and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan.

Motion Carried

11.New Business
11.01 Possible Discipline of Administrative

12. FOIA Request

13. Executive Session
Ms. Matthews moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Crain to go into **Executive Session.** On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Matthews, Ms. Vicki Walker and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion Carried

Ms. Crain moved, and it was seconded by Ms. Walker to come out of Executive Session. On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Mathews, Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion Carried

After the Board of Education came out of Executive session a vote was taken to place Superintendent Dr. Kanisha Brown on Administrative leave. On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Carlene Mathews, Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Joyce Ratliff, Nay: Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, and Ms. Sharron Davis, Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motion Carried

L. Adjournment Ms. Matthews moved and it was seconded by Ms. Crain to Adjourn Mtg.
On roll call voting Aye: Ms. Aubry Crain, Ms. Sharron Davis, Ms. Carlene Mathews, Ms. Vicki Walker, Ms. Joyce Ratliff and Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo. Nay: None Absent: Ms. Juanita Jordan

Motioned Carried

Submitted by:

Dr. Sylinda Musaindapo, Board President

Aubry Crain, Board Secretary