



MINUTES OF AN OPEN SESSION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, KENILWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 38, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS; HELD IN THE CAFENASIUM AT THE JOSEPH SEARS SCHOOL, 542 ABBOTSFORD RD., KENILWORTH, ILLINOIS, AT 6:30 P.M. ON THE 20TH DAY OF JANUARY 2026.

Board President Kate Tarbert called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Upon Roll Call, the following Board members answered as present: Ms. Lisa Graham, Mr. Eric Hayes (arrived at 6:41), Ms. Jessica Katz, Ms. Kate Tarbert, Mr. Brian Van Klompenberg, and Ms. Mileva Zunjic.

The following members were absent: Ms. Adrienne Eynon.

Administrators and staff present: Ms. Kate Donegan, Superintendent; Mr. Nathan McBride, Chief Operations Officer; and Ms. Rachel White, Board Recording Secretary.

Ms. Tarbert entertained a motion to go into closed session for consideration of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees; the selection of a person to fill a public office, as defined in the Open Meetings Act, including a vacancy in a public office; and pending litigation. [5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1, 3, 11)]

A motion was made by Ms. Graham, seconded by Ms. Katz, to go into Closed Session at 6:35 p.m. The motion was carried with a voice vote of 5 to 0.

RECONVENE OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to open session at 7:06 p.m.

Upon Roll Call, the following Board members answered as present: Ms. Adrienne Eynon, Ms. Lisa Graham, Mr. Eric Hayes, Ms. Jessica Katz, Ms. Kate Tarbert, Mr. Brian Van Klompenberg, and Ms. Mileva Zunjic.

Administrators and staff present: Ms. Kate Donegan, Superintendent; Dr. Carrie De La Cruz, Director of Student Services; Mr. Nathan McBride, Chief Operations Officer; and Ms. Rachel White, Board Recording Secretary.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Tarbert invited public comment. There was none.

INFORMATION

Strategic Plan Survey Key Findings



Ms. Donegan and Mr. McBride presented key findings from the Strategic Plan Survey conducted in partnership with Hanover Research, which gathered feedback from staff, students, and parents/guardians. Ms. Donegan reported that the survey focused on identifying priority areas, assessing perceptions of current performance, and gathering input to inform the District's next strategic plan. She noted that Hanover's analysis recommended prioritizing staff engagement and support, strengthening behavioral and social-emotional supports for students, and increasing family and community involvement in decision-making.

Mr. McBride explained that survey results indicated strong ratings for high-quality instruction, student participation, academic support, facilities, technology, and communication with families. He added that areas for growth included behavioral and social-emotional supports, inclusivity and cultural representation, parent involvement in decision-making, and staff retention, particularly among diverse staff. Mr. McBride also noted that recruiting and developing high-quality teachers and leaders were viewed positively, though longer-tenured staff expressed less favorable perceptions of support. He reported that academic support opportunities were prioritized over enrichment, and respondents were generally satisfied with extracurricular and after-school offerings, with interest in STEAM and athletics varying by stakeholder group.

Ms. Donegan stated that the next steps include gathering additional input through focus groups with students, parents, and staff to further inform the development of the District's new strategic plan.

Financial Planning and Fund Balance Update

Mr. McBride presented a District financial update aligned with the strategic goal of assuring that taxpayer dollars fund student-centered, high-return programs and invest in a safe, future-focused environment. He reported on budget performance for fiscal year 2026, including year-to-date revenues and expenditures within the operating funds, and provided an update on the Cook County tax delay. Mr. McBride noted that the District has received approximately 40 percent of the Education Fund levy through the second installment, representing a five-month delay from the typical July distribution, with the remaining balance still pending.

Mr. McBride reviewed updated fund balance projections in relation to Board Policy 4:20, which requires maintaining a year-end fund balance-to-revenue ratio of no less than 40 percent and outlines actions if the ratio exceeds 50 percent. He emphasized the administration's commitment to monitoring reserves, maintaining compliance with state guidelines, and informing the Board of any need to draw upon reserves or borrow funds. The Board was also briefed on current debt obligations, including outstanding general obligation bonds, refunding bonds scheduled for repayment in Levy Year 2026, and limited tax debt certificates issued in 2024. Additionally, Mr. McBride reported that the District issued \$4.2 million in Tax Anticipation Warrants to manage cash flow during the tax delay, with repayment required by February 17, 2026.



Mr. McBride outlined the Five-Year Facilities Plan, including a proposal to allocate \$250,000 annually, beginning in fiscal year 2028, for ongoing building improvements and life-safety and security projects. He highlighted recently completed projects, current initiatives, and potential future needs. Mr. McBride stated that the next steps include continued monitoring of fund balances and the tax delay, benefits renewal planning in March 2026, and the initiation of the fiscal year 2027 budget development process.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Tarbert invited public comment. There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Tarbert entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Graham, seconded by Mr. Hayes, to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. The motion passed with a voice vote of all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

All Ayes.

Attest for Distribution: _____
Mr. Eric Hayes, Secretary

Approved: _____
Ms. Kathryn Tarbert, President

ATTEST: _____
Mr. Eric Hayes, Secretary