



### I. CALL NORTH COOK PUBLIC HEARING MEETING TO ORDER

The Public Hearing Meeting of the Governing Board of North Cook Intermediate Service Center was called to order by Executive Director, Dr. April D. Jordan, at 7:32 a.m.

Members Present: Michelle Adams, Keith Bellof, Marcus Campbell, Kari Cremascoli (7:35 am), Karen Foley, Arlen Gould, Lisa Lau, Sheila Yousuf-Abramson

Members Absent: Don Angelaccio, Anny Lee, Ileo Lott

Recording Secretary: Karla Sanchez, Office Manager/Exec. Admin. Assistant, NCISC

Others Present: April D. Jordan, Executive Director, NCISC  
Allison Slade, Assistant Executive Director, NCISC  
Terrie Simmons, Business Manager, NCISC  
Alina Morelli Baima, Director of Education & PL, NCISC  
Cheryl Moore, Director of Human Resources, NCISC  
Mer Fenton, Director of Communications, NCISC

### II. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – Megan Chin, Assistant Principal of Springman Middle School, District 34 and Carolyn Allar, Principal of North Elementary School, District 62

### III. DISCUSSION ITEM

- a. Application for Waiver of Modification of State Board Rules and/or School Code Mandates (105 ILCS 5/13B-20.25: Modification to expand enrollment to K-3)

Dr. Slade read the following- We are holding this public hearing as a part of the required process to request an **administrative waiver of ISBE Rule 240.20(e)** pursuant to **Section 13B-20.25 of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/13B-20.25)**. Currently, the Alternative Learning Opportunities Program (ALOP) serves students in grades 4 through 12, providing targeted academic support, intervention, and enrichment to help students succeed. The purpose of today's public hearing is to discuss why this proven program should be expanded to include students in kindergarten through third grade.

NCISC has identified a need to provide earlier access to alternative learning supports for students demonstrating significant academic, behavioral, or social-emotional challenges in the primary grades. Allowing enrollment of students in grades K–3 will enable NCISC and its member districts to intervene earlier, provide individualized support, and reduce the need for more intensive interventions at later grade levels.

The requested waiver supports the goals of improving student outcomes, increasing access to appropriate educational programming, and addressing the diverse needs of students served by NCISC and its participating districts.

Early elementary years are a critical period for learning. Research and experience consistently show that skills developed in grades K–3, particularly in literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional development, form the foundation for long-term academic success. When students struggle during these early years, the gaps often widen over time, making later intervention more difficult and less effective. By extending ALOP to younger students, we have an opportunity to identify learning needs earlier, provide timely support, and prevent small challenges from becoming long-term barriers.

Expanding ALOP to serve grades K–3 is not about replacing core instruction, but about strengthening it.

This hearing is an opportunity to consider how expanding ALOP can better serve our youngest learners, strengthen our educational system as a whole, and ensure that more students enter the upper grades prepared, confident, and ready to learn. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration and welcome input from all stakeholders as we discuss this important step forward.

Dr. Slade opened the floor for the public to comment:

Megan Chin, Assistant Principal for Springman Middle School of District 34, stated she is excited about this program. There is an immense need in their district. They have over 80 students with our advocates. Once students enter middle school, they experience the same challenges that have been an ongoing problem. The advocates have been helping students with siblings, however, their siblings are unable to receive the same support. She believes this will be a great help to their students and families.

Carolyn Allar, Principal at North Elementary School of District 62, stated this is the first year they used the ALOP program and it has been amazing for their students in fourth and fifth grade. Part of the challenges they are facing are that younger students need additional support. She would like to make those connections with those students earlier on to tackle the challenges before they make it to Middle School.

Dr. Slade asked if there were any additional board comments. No comments or concerns were raised.

#### **IV. ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Resolution requesting the Administrative Waiver for schools regarding ALOP

Vice-Chair Board Chair, Keith Bellof asked the board to review the drafted resolution.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Governing Board affirms that the requested waiver will not endanger student health or safety, will not compromise civil rights, and will support improved educational opportunities for students served by NCISC; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the **Executive Director (or designee)** of NCISC is authorized to take all actions necessary to complete and submit the waiver application, including certification of compliance with ISBE requirements and inclusion of public hearing

**Proposed Motion**

I move that the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board approves **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE WAIVER REQUEST TO THE ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (ISBE)**, as stated above.

**Resolution**

It was moved by **Keith Bellof**, seconded by **Arlen Gould**, that on this **21st day of January, 2026**, the North Cook Intermediate Service Center Governing Board approves **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE WAIVER REQUEST TO THE ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (ISBE)**, as stated above.

**Roll Call Vote:**

	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Adams	✓	___	___
Angelaccio	___	___	___
Bellof	✓	___	___
Campbell	✓	___	___
Cremascoli	✓	___	___
Foley	✓	___	___
Gould	✓	___	___
Lau	✓	___	___
Lee	___	___	___
Lott	___	___	___
Yousuf-Abramson	✓	___	___

The Vice-Chairperson declared the motion carried.

**V. ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING MEETING**

Resolution: It was moved by Keith Bellof and seconded by Sheila Yousuf-Abramson at 7:45 a.m. that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote: All 8 present voted Aye

The Public Hearing Meeting adjourned at 7:45 a.m.

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Keith Bellof, Vice-Chairperson on behalf of Don Angelaccio, Chairperson

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Gina Shalzi, Recording Board Secretary (for Karla Sanchez)