
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, NAPERVILLE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 203, DUPAGE AND WILL COUNTIES, ILLINOIS, HELD AT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION CENTER, 203 WEST HILLSIDE ROAD, NAPERVILLE, IL.
April 6, 2026, AT 7:00 P.M., CLOSED SESSION 5:30 p.m.

Call to order

President Charles Cush called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Board members present: Charles Cush, Melissa Kelley Black, Holly Blastic, Joe Kozminski, and Marc Willensky, Kristine Gericke, and Amanda McMillen.

Administrators present were:

Dan Bridges, Superintendent,

Dr. Mark Cohen, Deputy Superintendent High Schools,

Dr. Meredith Haugens, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources,

Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer/CSBO,

Lisa Xagas, Assistant Superintendent for Strategy and Engagement,

Closed Session

Amanda McMillen moved, seconded by Marc Willensky, to go into Closed Session at 6:03 p.m. for consideration of:

1. Pursuant to 5 ILCS120/2(c)(1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees or legal counsel, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or legal counsel to determine its validity.
2. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(2) Collective negotiating matters between the school board and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.
3. Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the school board, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired.

A roll call vote was taken, those voting yes: Cush, Blastic, Gericke, Kelley Black, Kozminski, McMillen, and Willensky. Those voting no: None. The motion carried.

The Board of Education entered closed session at 6:03 p.m.

Meeting Opening

Joe Kozminski made a motion, seconded by Amanda McMillen to return to Open Session at 7:23 pm. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting yes: McMillen, Gericke, Blastic, Willensky, Cush, and Kozminski. No: None. Absent: Kelley Black. The motion carried.

Welcome and Mission

Charles Cush welcomed all and read Naperville Community Unit School District 203's Mission Statement.

Roll Call

Board members present: Charles Cush, Kristine Gericke, Amanda McMillen, Joe Kozminski, Holly Blastic, and Marc Willensky. Absent Melissa Kelley Black.

Pledge of Allegiance

Led by the Board of Education

Administrators present: Dan Bridges, Superintendent, Chuck Freundt, Assistant Superintendent for Leadership and School Services, Mark Cohen, Deputy Superintendent/High Schools, Michael Frances, Chief Financial Officer/CSBO, Chuck Freundt, Assistant Superintendent for Leadership and School Services, Meredith Haugens, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Katie Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary, Allison Boutet, Assistant Superintendent for Middle Schools, Melissa McHenry, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services.

Recognition:

Good News:

Matt Sniadecki at Naperville North was recognized as the March Teacher of the Month, presented by WGN 9 News and Ankin Law. As part of the recognition, WGN 9 news anchor Lauren Jiggets traveled to North to film a segment for their broadcast.

The segment highlighted his unique, high-energy teaching style and his deep commitment to his students. Mr. Sniadecki is not only a teacher but also a Track & Cross Country coach, and he oversees the Project Positivity group at North, which aims to encourage students to support one another. He was nominated by Junior Molly Groves, who says that "his kindness and his care for us doesn't stop at the classroom door, it goes far beyond that," and "he teaches us that failure is an essential in life, you need it to grow."

A huge congrats to Mr. Sniadecki for this well-deserved recognition!

For the third year in a row, Dress Up 203 hosted a pop-up Prom boutique at Naperville Central High School. Dress Up 203 is a parent group that works to provide prom dresses to North and Central students who do not have the financial means to afford their own formal wear.

This year, over 600 dresses were donated from local businesses, and each student had their own personal shopper who helped find multiple dresses to try on. There were also volunteer seamstresses doing alterations if needed.

Dress Up 203 was able to offer each student with jewelry thanks to donations from the community, and had raffles for pre-dance nail, hair, and makeup appointments.

Prom will be on Saturday, April 18, for Central, and Saturday, May 2, for North.

For the third year in a row, Naperville has been ranked #1 in the "Best Cities to Live in America" list by Niche.

We're honored to be included in the factors that contribute to the ranking, alongside our friends at Indian Prairie School District 204

A big thank you to everyone who makes up our 203 community and helps us to excel.

The Bloom Room at Connections Transition Services has received a "Make Kindness Count Award" from the Collaborative Youth Team of Illinois and KidsMatter. 18 Connections students were recognized for this award.

The Bloom Room has four groups of students that participate weekly in making flower arrangements with flowers provided by Trader Joe's that are then delivered to 203 schools and offices, as well as to local businesses throughout the community. The students learn the basic skills of making flower arrangements and performing all tasks independently, allowing them to perform job skills while expressing their creativity.

The Bloom Room was chosen in recognition of its ability to perform selfless acts of kindness throughout the community. Both organizations nominated the Bloom Room for this award as they deliver joy and flowers at the same time. Each student was awarded a certificate and flowers in appreciation for their contribution to spreading joy and flowers throughout our community.

An additional "Make Kindness Count Award" was given to Cathy Mehl, a dedicated member of our HURRAH volunteer team. HURRAH, which stands for Happy, Upbeat Retirees & Residents Actively

Helping, is our volunteer program that provides a range of opportunities, from regular classroom assistance to helping with one-time school events, allowing volunteers to tailor their commitment to their schedule.

Cathy has been a part of our HURRAH team for three years, providing support to students and educators across Naperville 203. She shared that the program allows her to follow her passion for helping others through direct student interaction, saying, “I enjoy it! I feel like I am making a difference.” Her time provides students with extra attention and support, while easing the daily workload for busy teachers. Her volunteering mostly consists of helping with an activity or assisting with those small, crucial tasks that keep a classroom running smoothly. HURRAH volunteers play a vital role in supporting teachers, boosting students' confidence, and providing guidance that helps shape the future of Naperville’s youth, which is why they have been chosen to receive recognition for their immense contributions to providing kindness to our Naperville 203 community.

Public Comment:

President Cush gave the parameters for public comment.

Alisha Smith—Math specialist at Riverwoods. Support for vulnerable students. Schools well above state average in LA and Math. Added Math specialists to schools. Title schools have prospered with the addition of these supports. Concerned that the FTE will be reduced at Title Schools where the attrition is occurring. Scott and Mill Street are going down to one each. The proficiency scores are not what the district should be proud of. Now asking Math Specialists to teach Honors Math.

Dan Allamillo- thanked the BoE for listening to the community on the reduction of staff. Administration please be transparent with the BoE. Keep the impact of cuts between groups. If cutting positions must become a reality then the cuts should be in line with Administrations. He quoted several surrounding districts and the number of administrators they have. Don’t target the educators.

President Cush reminded the Board and Community that because questions raised during Public Comment address District Operational matters board has designated our Superintendent as the spokesperson for the District. As our designate to respond to Public Comment, he will apprise the Board accordingly.

Action by Consent:

President Cush reminded the Board and Community of the board agreements. He noted that it is each Board member’s responsibility to prepare for each meeting and to effectively express our concerns either to the Superintendent or the Board President in a timely manner. Board members have also agreed that avoiding surprises is paramount in displaying respect to all District Administration. The Board has tasked itself to send questions in advance of each meeting to the Superintendent to allow the provision of the best possible response for the community. It also allows for efficiency during the community’s meeting. Those same questions as well as new ones may be asked in Open Session. For transparency, please note if any questions were asked earlier. Mr. Bridges, did you receive questions from Board members? Superintendent Bridges responded that he received questions from six Board members.

1. Adoption of Personnel Report

	Effective Date	Location	Position
APPOINTMENT-ADMINISTRATION			

Mark Leipart	7/1/2026	Highlands	Principal
RETIREMENT-CERTIFIED			
Kevin Hayes	5/22/2026	NCHS	Business Education
RESIGNATION-CERTIFIED			
Laura Nebor	8/9/2026	River Woods	2nd Grade Teacher
Meghan Suman	8/7/2026	NNHS/WJHS	Occupational Therapist
RETIREMENT-CLASSIFIED			
Nancy Rapp	7/31/2026	Washington	Special Education Paraprofessional
Joan Plummer	6/1/2026	NCHS	Campus Supervisor
Sharon Kurolenko	8/11/2026	Highlands	Instructional Paraprofessional
Jing Chang	7/31/2026	Scott	Special Education Paraprofessional
RESIGNATION-CLASSIFIED			
Jeffrey O'Connor	3/12/2026	Transportation	Bus Driver
Denise Marsala	6/1/2026	NCHS	Department Secretary
Michelle Dunlap	5/22/2026	Jefferson	Technology Support Associate
Teri Andersen	6/5/2026	Naper	LC Paraprofessional
Matthew Muraglia	4/5/2026	Ranch View	Technology Support Associate
Joseph Sitzman	3/20/2026	Transportation	Bus Driver
Aneta Zabrocka Zhang	5/21/2026	Naper	Instructional Paraprofessional
Carrie Nadziejko	4/9/2026	PSAC	Administrative Assistant/Reporting Specialist
Rinku Kumari	3/27/2026	Madison	Special Education Paraprofessional
Margaret Bultman	4/17/2026	NNHS	Technology Support Associate
EMPLOYMENT-CLASSIFIED FULL-TIME			
Callum Wagner	3/16/2026	Madison	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ronald Hall	3/27/2026	Transportation	Bus Driver
Mark Hensel	3/11/2026	Transportation	Bus Driver

2. NNHS Mechanical Work

3. Vehicle Disposal

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented, seconded by Kristine Gericke. Those voting yes: Kozminski, McMillen, Willensky, Gericke, Blastic, and Cush. Those voting no: None. Absent: Kelley Black. The motion carried.

Board of Education Reports:

Board Member McMillen Updated on her participation on ISBE SEL standards committee. They have been revised and are consulting on how to release them to the public. A rewarding process. There is no date for the finalization. IASB strategic planning process. An environmental assessment was completed. Met with other members of school boards. Focused on the evaluation of the environmental assessment and the direction of IASB.

Board Member Kozminski reported on his visit to Mill Street. Visited classrooms, met with Home and School members and had a presentation by the Student Council. Met the two Principals of the day. I appreciated the hospitality.

Board Member Willensky reported on his visit to MJHS-visited some classrooms and talked with students and teachers.

President's Report:

President Cush reported on his visit to Connections and had a great visit. Invited people to see the facility. Have an outward facing coffee bar. Great cup of coffee and a great price. Superintendent Bridges added there will be additional information in the Board update.

Superintendent/Staff/School Reports: No Report.

Discussion without Action:

Superintendent Bridges invited Jennifer Donatelli and Andrea Szczepanski to present the new course proposals.

New Course Proposals

The Naperville 203 administration has recommended a suite of new high school courses for the 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 school years designed to align with college and career readiness and emerging industry pathways. The proposed new offerings include AP Computer Science Principles, AP Networking, Exploring AI, Culinary 2 Baking and Pastry, Advanced Acting, and French 5. A primary focus of these proposals is the expansion of dual credit opportunities, such as the transition of AP French to French 5, which allows students to earn guaranteed, transferable college credit through the College of DuPage at no cost to families while still offering the option to take the AP exam. The Exploring AI course is specifically designed to address the proper usage and inherent risks of artificial intelligence, ensuring students understand both its benefits and potential misuses as a tool. In the performing arts, Advanced Acting will be added to create a comprehensive three-level sequence for students. To streamline the curriculum and reduce redundancy, the district also plans to retire several courses, including Honors Latin 3-4, Computer Programming 1 and 2, Information Technology Systems 1 and 2, and the original Culinary 2. These updates are part of a broader vision to enhance academic rigor and eventually provide pathways for students to earn an associate's degree alongside their high school diploma.

Board Questions/Comments:

Thank you for the exploring the AI class. Will it cover the dangers and the positives of AI?

Mrs. Szczepanski responded, yes.

Appreciate that there will be the proper use of AI being taught.

Thank you for the transition to rethinking courses and making them more modern and what students need now. Moving from AP to Dual Credit is valuable for students. Allows for college credit and will be transferable to most colleges. Will you look to transition other language courses?

Mrs. Szczepanski noted that we are always looking to expand Dual Credit courses. When an AP course is aligned with a Dual Credit class, it cannot be called an AP course.

Are there three levels of Acting?

Mrs. Szczepanski stated there are three levels.

What is the difference between AP and DC?

Mrs. Szczepanski responded that College Board offers the AP courses. It is not guaranteed college credit. Dual Credit is college credit if the student makes a C or better. Next year we will have about 40 courses in Dual Credit.

How do you take French 5 if you are in High School for four years?

Mrs. Szczepanski noted that 8th graders can take French 1.

The Dual Credit is awesome. The amount of rigor we are exposing our students to will allow them to be successful in college. Great opportunity to be successful. The cost benefit for parents also allows students to take more classes.

How close are we to have an opportunity to have a student graduate with a HighSchool diploma and an Associate's degree?

Mrs. Szczepanski stated we are working with partners to get teachers to be credentialed to teach at the college level. We are close.

Instructional Resources

Superintendent Bridges introduced Jennifer Donatelli. We will seek approval on April 20, 2026.

The administration's recommendation for instructional resources for the 2026-2027 school year focuses on maintaining high standards of alignment with both district curriculum and Illinois learning standards. The district regularly reviews these materials to replace dated resources with updated digital versions, support the implementation of new curriculum, and ensure that the diverse needs of all students are being met. For the upcoming 2026-2027 cycle, there are minimal new resources being proposed for approval; instead, the majority of the instructional resource budget is designated for renewing existing digital licenses and platforms that have been previously vetted and approved.

The selection process is highly collaborative, involving curriculum teams and teachers from across different buildings who identify the criteria for evaluation based on state guidelines and best practices. Leadership teams and project managers further refine this process by using "ed reports" and other data to select the top three to five resources for final evaluation by a designated team. During the board's review, it was clarified that the term "extended texts" listed in the proposals refers to the novels for which student fees are collected. This rigorous vetting and review process is designed to ensure that the district provides the best possible core and supplemental resources for K-12 education.

Board Questions/Comments:

What is the vetting process for these resources.

Mrs. Donatelli stated we have teachers across buildings in the curricular areas as well as best practices given by the state. The leadership team then will evaluate to choose the ones best aligned.

What is the difference between an extended text and the novel fee we pay?

Mrs. Donatelli noted they are the same.

Policy Review: Policy 7.180 Preventing Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment

Superintendent Bridges introduced Mark Cohen who will take the next three policies.

The annual policy review process involved a collaborative evaluation featuring input from students, parents, staff, and board liaisons to ensure alignment with state updates and community needs. A significant portion of the review focused on Policy 7.180 (Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), which was updated to expand the definition of cyberbullying to include "digital replicas" created by AI tools. This change follows updates to the Illinois school code and addresses student concerns regarding how AI-generated images can negatively impact individuals over time. Data shared during the background review revealed that bullying incidents have significantly decreased following a post-COVID spike, a trend credited to student feedback and the implementation of restorative justice practices.

Regarding Policy 7.190 (Student Discipline), the district decided to retain language regarding conduct "on or around" school grounds for firearm possession notifications, despite a suggested press update to remove it, to maintain a clear safety nexus for students traveling to and from school. Current disciplinary data shows that 70% of high school referrals are now related to attendance (tardiness and truancy), while cell phone-related infractions have decreased significantly. Additionally, the Co-curricular Code of Conduct was updated to better manage activities without defined season lengths. The background data for this code showed high efficacy, with only five repeat offenses out of 98 violations over two years. This low recidivism is attributed to the restorative process, which provides students a "teachable moment" to lower sanctions through participation in restorative sessions with student advocacy specialists.

Superintendent Bridges added that Board Members Blastic and McMillen are the Board liaisons.

Board Questions/Comments:

It is unique in how we engage, staff, parents and students to review data and the policy changes. The reductions in behaviors and conduct. Students indicated they feel safer. Biggest component was around AI.

Policy Review: Policy 7.190 Student Discipline

Board Questions/Comments:

PRESS suggested change to the policy about school grounds and the committee wanted it to stay as it is currently written in the policy.

Dr. Cohen noted that it added clarity to keep the language in the policy.

Policy Review: Policy 7.240 Co-Curricular Code of Participation

Dr. Cohen stated this policy did not change in a significant way. We did review the data. Great conversations with students.

Board Questions/Comments:

Can you talk about the Restorative process to lessen the consequence?

Dr. Cohen responded that it makes the situation a teachable moment. This process has been successful in reducing incidences.

Facility Rental Fees:

Superintendent Bridges introduced Chuck Freundt and Melanie Brown.

Mr. Freundt stated that Mrs. Brown has done her due diligence and reviewed all fees. This work actually began with the addition of the turf field at NNHS. The memo notes areas that need to be updated. We really need to gather some additional data in order to give a more comprehensive view. The main reason for tonight is to review the fees for the turf field and the personnel costs associated.

Board Questions/Comments:

Thank you for the report. Coming back in 2027 with a full list of rental spaces. Will that give us information on both the volume and are we making any money or breaking even?

Mr. Freundt stated that it is very rare for us to rent to a for profit organization. In terms of philosophy, we believe that the rates were set to break even. The rates are now old and we are not necessarily breaking even. The direction of the Board would be helpful as we set the fees.

Superintendent Bridges added that we will add this topic to the Board planning calendar before a discussion and decision is made.

Current rental fees are great. When was the last time these were updated?

Mrs. Brown stated July 2009.

I appreciate your looking into these.

This is a great example of Administration in looking at every area of the budget.

We will vote on this set of fees and then have a bigger discussion. Mrs. Brown, we appreciate the professionalism you bring and the perspective you bring. This is helpful.

Discussion with Action:

Consideration of Board of Education Expenses

Superintendent Bridges noted the Board Policy that requires Board of Education expenses to be approved by roll call vote.

Board Questions/Comments:

None.

Amanda McMillen made a motion to approve the Consideration of Board of Education Expenses as presented, seconded by Joe Kozminski. Those voting yes: Cush, McMillen, Kozminski, Blastic, Willensky, and Gericke. Those voting no: None. Absent: Kelley Black. The motion carried.

New Business

None

Old Business

None

Upcoming Events

April 20 Board meeting will be at WJHS-

Adjournment

Kristine Gericke moved and seconded, by Joe Kozminski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Those voting yes: McMillen, Blastic, Gericke, Willensky, Cush, and Kozminski. Those voting No: None. Absent: Kelley Black. The motion carried.

Approved: April 20, 2026

Charles Cush, President
Board of Education

Susan S. Patton, Secretary
Board of Education