

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GOWER SCHOOL DISTRICT
62 BOARD OF EDUCATION, DUPAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, HELD IN GOWER
DISTRICT BOARD ROOM**

in said district at 7:00 p.m. on the 20th day of May, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

President Fetouh convened the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

The following board members were present: Fetouh, Jankowski, Lupo, Pitsoulakis, Polanco-Webb, and Williams. Mrs. Akhter arrived at 7:02 p.m.

Also present: Superintendent Simon, Assistant Superintendent Laratta, Chief Financial Officer Riegler, Director of Special Education Dr. Cadard, Principal Murphy and guests.

BOARD SALUTE

The Board recognized Mr. Kevin Neubert, Ms. Jen Brinkley, and Ms. Sarah LaVallee for their hard work and dedication to the Gower Middle Musical this year. This was the *fifteenth* annual show. Congratulations to the entire cast and crew for a great production!

The Board also saluted Mr. Steve Pittman and Ms. Jen Brinkley. This year Gower was recognized for the first time by the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation as one of the 2026 Best Communities for Music Education. Now in its 27th year, the award recognizes schools and districts nationwide for their leadership in expanding equitable access to music education.

Finally, the Board saluted our outstanding 2026 retirees. Congratulations to Ms. Cheryl Wander, Ms. Lisa Hoffman, Ms. Margie Kielty, Ms. Tammy Lange, and Mrs. Rebecca Laratta! We wish them the best of luck in this next life chapter. Mrs. Meg Hoff, Mrs. Tracy Murphy, and Dr. Victor Simon each spoke about the retirees from their respective buildings, and Board members shared their gratitude, as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Superintendent's Report included an update from Accelerated Track Committee ([Appendix A](#)), a separate report on the Gower Middle School Report Card Update - Standards-Based and Traditional Grading ([Appendix B](#)), and a report on the 2025-2026 5-Essentials Survey Data ([Appendix C](#)).

A full copy of the [Superintendent's Report](#) may be found in the Board materials of the May 20, 2026 meeting as posted online.

REPORTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Correspondence

The Board received correspondence from Ericka Polanco-Webb, Kim Dyer, the Elementary Science Olympiad State Coordinator, and Ms. Jeanette Quirk, retiring LADSE School Psychologist.

Freedom of Information Requests

No FOIA requests were received.

Enrollment Report

As of May 13, 2026, the enrollment at Gower West was 519 students and at Gower Middle 392 students for a total enrollment of 911 students.

First Reading and Posting of the Following Policies

- i. 4:175 - Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications
- ii. 6:40 - Curriculum Development
- iii. 6:145 - Migrant Students
- iv. 6:190 - Extracurricular Activities

Board Reports: Gower Foundation, PTO, and IASB

The Gower Foundation, PTO and IASB reports were reviewed and can be found [here](#).

Monthly Financial Reports

The financial reports were presented to the Board and there were no questions.

Preliminary FY27 Education Fund Budget

Mr. Brian Riegler provided an overview of the Education Fund Budget for fiscal year 2027 and noted it will be fine-tuned over the summer after fiscal year 2026 is closed. There were no questions from the Board.

Memorandum of Understanding - 2024-2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement

Dr. Simon highlighted the changes that were proposed for the CBA and noted it's a report and not an action item. Unless the Board has objections, the changes will be made and take effect immediately with agreement from the Gower Education Association. No objections were raised.

Board Charter and Social Contract - Self-Evaluation

The Board reviewed Section 1, Unity of Purpose. There was consensus that no changes needed to be made at this time.

ACTION ITEMS

a. Consent Agenda

- i. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of the Regular Meeting, April 22, 2026
- ii. Approval of the Closed Session Minutes of the Regular Meeting, April 22, 2026
- iii. Monthly Payroll and Approval of Bills
- iv. First Reading and Posting of Policies
- v. Second Reading and Adoption of Board Policies
 - i. 4:80 - Accounting and Audits
 - ii. 4:140 - Student Fees and Waiver of Student Fees
 - iii. 6:70 - Teaching About Religions
 - iv. 6:120 - Education of Children with Disabilities
- vi. Personnel Action: Hiring
 - i. Natalie Harden - Resolution NO. 26-08 Authorizing and Approving the Gower West Assistant Principal's Contract effective July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027

- ii. Hannah Rakofsky, GM Guidance Counselor, effective August 18, 2026
 - iii. Maria Roman, 8th Grade ELA Teacher, effective August 18, 2026
 - iv. Jenna Zimmerman, GM School Social Worker, effective August 18, 2026
- vii. Personnel Action: Resignation
 - i. Malcom Brown, GM SpEd Teachers Assistant, effective May 5, 2026
- viii. Authorization for the Release of Closed Session Minutes and the Destruction of Closed Session Recordings
- ix. Approval of 8th Grade Washington, DC 2026 Class Trip
- x. Approval of 8th Grade 2026 Class Trip - Chicago Signature Cruise
- xi. Approval of Contract with Thomson Reuters - CLEAR Proflex

Mrs. Hoff stated how excited she is to welcome Natalie Harden to Gower and talked about how Natalie stood out from the beginning because of the value she places on relationships with kids and how much she'll bring to Gower West. Mrs. Harden also spoke and said she is looking forward to joining the team and thanked everyone for the support through the process.

Members Pitsoulakis motioned and Polanco-Webb seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ayes: Akhter, Fetouh, Jankowski, Lupo, Pitsoulakis, Williams, Polanco-Webb

Nays: None.

Motion passed on a roll call vote.

CLOSED SESSION

Members Fetouh motioned and Pitsoulakis seconded to adjourn to closed session to confidentially discuss the following items:

- a. The appointment, employment, compensation, performance of specific employees. *5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)*.
- b. Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. *5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)*.

Ayes: Akhter, Fetouh, Jankowski, Lupo, Pitsoulakis, Williams, Polanco-Webb

Nays: None.

Motion passed on a voice vote.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to open session at 10:02 p.m.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS

- a. Board Policy Review
 - i. 6:210 - Instructional Materials - last action - revised 8/23/2022
 - ii. 6:240 - Field Trips - last action - revised 8/23/2022
 - iii. 6:250 - Community Resource Persons and Volunteers - last action - revised 8/23/2022
 - iv. 7:285 - Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program - last action - revised 8/23/2022

- b. Annual Superintendent Evaluation and Performance Contract
- c. IASB Joint Annual Conference - Registration opens June 1st

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. May 25 - No School, Memorial Day
- b. May 26 - 8th Grade Graduation, Gower Middle School, 7 p.m.
- c. May 29 - Early Dismissal and Last Day of School
- d. June 2 - Summer School Begins
- e. June 17 - Regular Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.
- f. June 19 - Juneteenth (District Closed)
- g. June 25 - Last Day of Summer School

ADJOURNMENT

Members Fetouh motioned and Akhter seconded to adjourn open session at 10:02 p.m. Motion passed on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Schillinger
Board Recording Secretary

_____ President

_____ Member