

GRANT COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 124 MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MAY 21, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING – Amended 2025/26 Budget

A public hearing was convened at 6:45 p.m. The following Board members were in attendance by roll call, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik. Public comment was solicited and none was given.

** At 6:47 p.m. a motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Yanik to adjourn the public hearing.

CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Grant Community High School District 124, County of Lake, State of Illinois, was held on Thursday, May 21, 2026 and called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Library of Grant Community High School, 285 E. Grand Avenue, Fox Lake.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All those in attendance stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

On Roll Call, the following Members were found to be present:

Mrs. Kathy Kusiak, President
Mr. John Jared, Vice President
Mrs. Laurie Hembrey, Member
Mr. Ed Lescher, Member
Mr. Bob Yanik, Member

Members absent:

Mrs. Shelly Booth, Secretary
Mrs. Ivy Fleming, Member

Administration present:

Dr. Jeremy N. Schmidt, Superintendent
Mrs. Beth Reich, Business Manager
Mr. Blair Schoell, Principal
Dr. Nathan Miller, Assistant Principal

Student Representative:

Ms. Izzy Ellington

AUDIENCE

Cheryl Bengston
John Benston
Paige Gruber
Pat Schafer
Sydney Lescher
Terry Shafer

Mr. John Jared served as Secretary pro tem due to the absence of Secretary Mrs. Shelly Booth.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes of regular meeting held April 16, 2026

Minutes of closed meeting held April 16, 2026

May Bills Payable

April Treasurer's Report

Destruction of closed meeting audio recording from November 14, 2024

** A motion was made by Mr. Yanik, second by Mrs. Hembrey to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Jared, Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – Recognition and Informational Items

Student Recognition: Student of the Month

Dr. Schmidt advised that May Student of the month, Gainele Muntu was unable to attend tonight.

IHSA State Journalism Champion

Journalism State Champion Sydney Lescher and teacher Paige Gruber were in attendance to be recognized for their achievements at the Journalism IHSA State Series. Sophomore, Sydney Lescher competed with all high school grade levels and earned the distinct honor of State Champion at the Journalism IHSA State Series held in Bloomington-Normal in April within the category of headline writing. Sydney thanked the Board and Administration for the opportunity and Ms. Gruber for always supporting her. Ms. Gruber spoke highly of Sydney and said that she is a next level champion who is consistently pushing the creative boundaries. She also thanked the Board for recognizing journalism and stated that she is very proud to be a bulldog!

Honor's Night

Dr. Schmidt informed the Board that our Senior Honor's Night was held on May 6 at Maravella's Banquet Hall. This event was heavily attended and it was a great night overall. Dr. Schmidt advised that 53 scholarships were given out totaling \$47,750.

Lake County Educator of the Year Nominees

Dr. Schmidt informed the Board that also on May 6 the Regional Office of Education (ROE) hosted the Lake County Educator of the Year celebration held at the Lake County Fairgrounds in Grayslake. English Teacher, Paige Gruber who was in attendance, was nominated for the Lake County Educator of the Year award. Librarian, Dr. Carrie Stump attended as the Guest of Honor for her category. Social Worker, Pam Skeels and Administrative Assistant to Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Michelle Jones were nominated in their respective award categories of Student Support Personnel and Educational Service Professional and attended the event as well. Administrators Dr. Stacie Noisey and Tina Sonders were there to support the nominees at this wonderful event.

County School Facility Occupational Tax

Dr. Schmidt advised the Board that the resolution directing the Regional Superintendent of Schools for The County of Lake, Illinois, to certify to the County Clerk of said County the question of imposing a retailers' occupation tax and a service occupation tax to be used exclusively for school facility purposes, school resource officers, and mental health professionals, for submission to the electors of said County at the general election to be held on the 3rd day of November, 2026 will be presented as an action item later tonight. He advised that many other Lake County schools

have already brought to their Boards to approve. He also advised that the County School Facility Occupational Tax was discussed at both the February and April 2026 Board meetings and asked if the Board members had any questions. No questions were addressed.

School Board Policy Modifications – First Reading

Dr. Schmidt presented the Board of Education with the proposed changes to the following School Board Policies based on the direction from the Illinois Association of School Boards and legal counsel:

Section 200 Board of Education

- 2:220 School Board Meeting Procedure (Need to Answer Questions)
- 2:250 Access to District Public Records

Section 400 Operational Services

- 4:165 Awareness & Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse & Grooming

Section 500 Personnel

- 5:50 Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, & Cannabis Prohibition
- 5:250 Leaves of Absence
- 5:330 Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves

Section 600 Instruction

- 6:65 Student Social and Emotional Development
- 6:170 Title I Programs

Section 700 Students

- 7:300 Extracurricular Athletics

The PRESS Update Memo is included to provide supporting information for all proposed changes. Policies with non-material changes, including those with legal reference and footnote updates only, will be modified administratively and are not presented for change. The proposed policy changes are presented as a first reading only this evening. They will be presented for a second reading and potential action at the June meeting.

Principal's Report

Mr. Schoell presented his monthly report which included information on summer school, Freshman Honor's Breakfast, NAHS Induction Ceremony, NLCC Art Festival, Health and Wellness Fair, Pep Assembly, Prom, Signing Day, Send-offs and Celebrations, Spring Musical, and the IPA Breakfast in which students Izzy Ellington and Myles Foreman were recognized. Izzy was also key note speaker at the event and gave an amazing speech.

Student Representative's Report

Izzy Ellington provided her report which included updates on sports, club highlights, AP testing, Prom and Graduation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – Action Items

County School Facility Occupational Tax

Dr. Schmidt recommended the adoption of the resolution to place a school funding initiative on the November 3, 2026, general election ballot for Lake County voters, authorizing the public to decide whether to create this dedicated funding stream for school safety and facilities.

** A motion was made by Mr. Jared, second by Mr. Yanik to approve the resolution directing the Regional Superintendent of Schools for The County of Lake, Illinois, to certify to the County Clerk of said County the question of imposing a retailers' occupation tax and a service occupation tax to be used exclusively for school facility purposes, school resource officers, and mental health professionals, for submission to the electors of said County at the general election to be held on the 3rd day of November 2026 as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Consolidated District Plan

Dr. Miller presented the Board with the Consolidated District Plan (CDP). The CDP serves as our district's plan for the utilization of federal grant funds. Rather than managing our various federal programs in isolation, the CDP allows us to integrate multiple federal grants into a single, cohesive framework that aligns our spending with our specific student achievement goals.

** A motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Lescher to approve the Consolidated District Plan as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Overnight Travel

Dr. Schmidt requested approval for the following overnight trip requests:

- Eight students from our Journalism team qualified and traveled to Bloomington-Normal for the Journalism IHSA State Series. The sponsor, and the eight students traveled on April 23 and stayed overnight in order to compete in the competition on April 24. After the competition they traveled back home. When students qualify for extracurricular or co-curricular national competitions, the District has traditionally contributed half of the student costs to attend. The estimated cost to the Board for the competition will be \$1,810.25.
- This year, eight members of our Special Olympics team qualified in nine different track and field events for the State competition in Bloomington-Normal at Illinois State University. The Special Olympics team would arrive on June 12, 2026 and travel back to Fox Lake on June 13, 2026 after the competition ends. Allie Barker, head coach, Jordan Alexander, assistant coach, along with Katelyn Dupree and Czara Trujillo will attend the competition to coach and supervise the student athletes. The estimated cost to the Board for the competition will be \$1,577.22.

** A motion was made by Mr. Jared, second by Mr. Lescher to approve the overnight travel requests, as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey, Lescher

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Pilot Clubs 2026/27

Dr. Miller discussed the Dawg Pound and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) as two pilot clubs for the 2026/27 school year.

** A motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Lescher to approve the Dawg Pound and NAMI as pilot clubs for the 2026/27 school year as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Jared, Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Co-Curricular Sponsors 2026/27

The administration is recommending the approval of the co-curricular sponsors for the 2026/27 school year as presented.

** A motion was made by Mr. Yanik, second by Mrs. Hembrey to approve the co-curricular sponsors for the 2026/27 school year as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Lake County Health Department – Assessment and Counseling Services 2026/27

Dr. Schmidt advised that we would like to partner again with the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) and Community Health Center provide assessment and counseling services related to substance use and abuse.

** A motion was made by Mr. Jared, second by Mr. Lescher to approve a one-year agreement for LCHD to provide assessment and counseling services for the 2026/27 school year as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Personnel

Dr. Schmidt recommended the following personnel recommendations:

Recommend the employment of the following individuals:

- Lindsay Clarke, Bilingual Teacher, MA, Step 5, 2026/27
- Samantha La Vine, EL Teacher, MA+30, Step 12, 2026/27
- Ryan Martin, 15 hour/week bus driver, \$26.53/hr., starting April 20, 2026
- Benjamin Quint, Bilingual Teacher, MA+45, Step 11, 2026/27
- Amber Whitmer, Administrative Assistant to Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, \$20.19/hr., starting June 1, 2026

Recommend the position change of the following individual:

- Mary Beth Adamek from 15 hour/week bus driver to on-call substitute, effective April 20, 2026

Recommend accepting the resignation letters from the following individuals:

- Kevin Connerty, Part-time food service, effective immediately
- Tom Dubois, On-call Substitute Bus Driver, effective May 1, 2026
- Sabrina Galiano, Director of Transportation, effective July 10, 2026
- Linda Jacobs, Bus Driver, effective May 31, 2026
- Robert Koske, Bus Driver, effective June 1, 2026
- Rachel Lesiak, School Psychologist, effective at the end of the 2025/26 school year
- Ryan Martin, 15 hour/week bus driver, effective April 27, 2026
- Dulce Olmos Ocampo, EL Teacher, effective at the end of the 2025/26 school year
- Tara Singer, Choir Accompanist, effective May 19, 2026
- Kyle Whitman, Asst. Football Coach, effective immediately

Notification of an intermittent FMLA request from the following individual:

- Mallory Whitman, Athletic Trainer, effective August 10, 2026 – December 7, 2026.

** A motion was made by Mr. Lescher, second by Mrs. Hembrey to approve the personnel recommendations as presented

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey, Lescher

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Final Amended 2025/26 Budget

Mrs. Reich advised the Board that the 2025/26 budget has been amended to reflected federal grants and state funding that was recently finalized. She advised that the final Equalized Assessed Value from Lake County with our extension for the 2025 levy has been updated and expenses have been trimmed everywhere possible, projecting out the rest of the year.

** A motion was made by Mr. Yanik, second by Mr. Jared to approve the final amended 2025/26 budget as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Jared, Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Tentative 2026/27 Budget

Mrs. Reich advised that we have begun building the 2026/27 budget. There are less than 30 days between both the May and June meetings and the June and July meetings, so in order to meet the statutory requirements, we are recommending to put the tentative budget on display now, with a hearing and approval request in July. The full tentative budget presentation will be on the June Board meeting agenda.

** A motion was made by Mr. Jared, second by Mr. Yanik to authorize putting the 2026/27 tentative budget on display for the statutory 30 days.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

National School Lunch Program – 2026/27

Mrs. Reich advised that as part of the Healthy Hunger Free Act of 2010, Section 205, the district each year must analyze the price charged for school lunches using a paid lunch equity calculator provided by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The paid lunch equity calculator determines the amount that the lunch price must be increased based on our lunch prices and number of paid lunches served in October of 2025. Mrs. Reich recommended raising the student and adult lunch prices for the 2026/27 school year.

** A motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Lescher to approve raising the student lunch price from \$3.75 to \$4.00, and raising the adult lunch price from \$4.25 to \$5.00 in order to comply with the paid lunch equity component of the National School Lunch Program, and the school breakfast price stay the same at \$1.50 for all breakfast meals as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Medical Rates for the 2026/27 School Year

Mrs. Reich advised the Board that as mentioned last year, the Lakes Region Benefit Cooperative has undergone some changes over the past two years. We have a new benefits consultant, USI Insurance Services who is working to consolidate the plans across the cooperative. Last year, Grant consolidated with other districts on the HMO plans. This year we are recommending consolidating with the other districts in the cooperative to offer the Delta Dental plans and the EyeMed vision plan, which coordinated well with requests that we received during negotiations for more dental plan options. For health insurance, we are recommending a slight rate increase, 2.9%, this year on all our PPO plans and our high deductible plan. For the HMO plans, we can't control the rates as we purchase those fully insured off the shelf. This year, the rate increase is 16%.

** A motion was made by Mr. Yanik, second by Mr. Lescher to approve the monthly medical rates for the 2026/27 school year as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey, Lescher

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

SchoolLinks Renewal

Mrs. Reich advised the Board that we are recommending a 3-year contract be approved to continue using the SchoolLinks program. This program has been used during multiple activity schedules throughout the year for students to complete schoolwide College and Career Readiness activities.

** A motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Jared to approve the 3-year renewal quote with SchoolLinks as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik

Nay: None
Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Delta Dental and EyeMed Vision

Mrs. Reich advised the Board that as mentioned earlier tonight, we are aligning with the Lakes Region Benefit Cooperative in changing our dental and vision plans to the same as the rest of the cooperative. The new plans will give employees more dental options and better vision coverage.

** A motion was made by Mr. Yanik, second by Mr. Jared to approve the Delta Dental Plans and EyeMed Vision Plan and the rates associated with each plan as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Jared, Hembrey, Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak
Nay: None
Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

Quest Food Management Services, LLC Consulting Agreement for 2026/27

Mrs. Reich advised the Board that as we continue to look for ways to trim expenses, we are recommending a modification to our consulting agreement with Quest Food Management Services. For the last 3 years, we have had one of Quest's employees onsite and utilized their recipes and menu software. After discussing with staff, we are confident that we can run the food service program inhouse without their staff onsite, but we do need their recipes and the menu software. Quest has agreed to allow us to continue to use their proprietary recipes and give us access to their menu and production software with training for \$8,000 for the 2026/27 school year. We will reassess at the end of next year to determine if we will continue or make changes.

** A motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Lescher to approve the consulting agreement with Quest Food Management Services, LLC for the 2026/27 school year, in the amount of \$8,000 as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Hembrey, Lescher Yanik, Kusiak, Jared
Nay: None
Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

OTHER BUSINESS

School Nurse, Cheryl Bengston was in attendance to be recognized as the 4th quarter Excellence in Education recipient. Principal, Blair Schoell read Cheryl's nomination that was submitted by peers and mentioned that GCHS is very thankful to have Cheryl. Blair also stated that Cheryl is always ready and available for whatever might be in store for her on a particular day. Cheryl thanked the Board and Administration for the honor and mentioned that she started during COVID and wouldn't have been able to do it with out the support of our Administration, she stated that she never felt alone.

Dr. Schmidt informed the Board that four Freedom of Information Act requests were received and fulfilled.

CLOSED SESSION

** At 8:21 p.m. a motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Yanik to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing student disciplinary cases 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(9); other matters relating to individual students 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(10), the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees 5 ILCS 120/2

(c)(1); collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(2).

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

** At 9:20 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Lescher, second by Mr. Yanik to end closed session and return to open session.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Lescher, Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

ACTION CLOSED SESSION

** A motion was made by Mrs. Hembrey, second by Mr. Lescher to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2026-2030.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Yanik, Kusiak, Jared, Hembrey, Lescher

Nay: None

Absent: Booth, Fleming

Motion – **Passed**

ADJOURN

** At 9:21 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Jared, second by Mr. Yanik to adjourn the meeting.

Kathy Kusiak, President

Shelly Booth, Secretary