



**Wednesday, August 12, 2026
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205
HELD AT THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL 17101 SOUTH PARK AVE, SOUTH HOLLAND,
ILLINOIS, AT 6:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 6:34p.m. President Graham made the following announcement: Any person may record or broadcast an open Board meeting. Special requests to facilitate recordings or broadcast an open Board meeting should be directed to the Superintendent at least 24 hours before the meeting. Recording meetings shall not distract or disturb Board Members or participants. Please know if you participate in public participation, you are part of the Board meeting and may be taped.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY
BOARD PRESIDENT

On roll call, Members Bowman, Bradley, Graham, and Lawrence answered. Member Davis arrived at 6:41pm. Members Banks and Moody were absent. Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Superintendent; Dr. Doss, Associate Superintendent; Dr. Tony Ratliff, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations; and Ms. Rosaura Duran, Director of Human Resources were also present.

ROLL CALL

Report from Curriculum Committee: None.

COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE

Report from Finance & Facilities Committee: The next meeting will be held August 27, 2026

Report from Policy Committee: None.

Report from Discipline Committee: None.

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Bowman seconded, to **Approve the Consent Agenda**, which includes the following:

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

BILLS

PERSONNEL

RATIFICATION

- Regular Meeting Minutes and Executive Meeting Minutes dated July 8, 2026
- The District 205 bills as presented for payment dated July 8, 2026, through August 11, 2026
- Personnel dated August 11, 2026 (Resignations, Leave of Absence, New Hires and Terminations)
- Ratification:
 - Approval of 2026-2027 School Calendar Revision

On roll call, Members Lawrence, Bowman, Bradley, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

The following individual addressed the board:

PUBLIC

PARTICIPATION

- Ms. D. James of Harvey had an issue with student enrollment. Thornton Principal brought her to the side to resolve.

Dr. Doss stated there have been three FOIA requests since last board meeting.	FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
Dr. Ratliff introduced Thornton HS Teacher, Brian Cepeda to present Thornton's Urban Farming Club. He gave a wonderful overview of the various crops that are grown, student and community involvement. The Board thanked Mr. Cepeda for all of his hard work into building this program over the years. Mrs. Lawrence stated that Mr. Cepeda taught her so much about better ways to garden and grow her own produce. Dr. Ratliff also gave praise.	PRESENTATION: THORNTON URBAN FARMING
Dr. Johnson presented the Preliminary Budget for Fiscal year 2027 . A public notice of the budget was posted to all required outlets. For the past 7 years, over \$35M has been rebated back to the taxpayers through the Property Tax Relief Grant Fund. The next meeting will request approval.	PRESENTATION: PRELIMINARY BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2027
Mrs. Lawrence moved, Ms. Bradley seconded the Approval of the Transportation Contract with Zoom Elite Transportation , as presented by Dr. Johnson. This contract is for limited and specific services related to students that includes a per route cost of \$314.15. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Bradley, Bowman, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.	APPROVAL OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES CONTRACT (1 OF 3)
Mrs. Lawrence moved, Ms. Bradley seconded the Approval of the Transportation Contract with Zoom Charter , as presented by Dr. Johnson. This contract is for limited and specific services related to students that includes a per route cost of \$440 for trips up to 15.9 miles, \$525 for trips between 16-25.9 miles, and \$600 for trips of 26 miles or more. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Bradley, Bowman, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.	APPROVAL OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES CONTRACT (2 OF 3)
Mrs. Lawrence moved, Dr. Davis seconded the Approval of the Transportation Contract with J&D Transportation , as presented by Dr. Johnson. This contract is for limited and specific services related to students that includes a per route cost of \$310.50. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Davis, Bowman, Bradley, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.	APPROVAL OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES CONTRACT (3 OF 3)
Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Bowman seconded the Approval of the Purchase and Installation of Security Cameras at District Football Stadiums , as presented by Dr. Johnson. The materials and installation will be completed by Tri-Electronics pursuant to the July 20, 2026 bid process for a total of \$192,050.00 for additional security cameras. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Bowman, Bradley, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.	APPROVAL OF PURCHASE & INSTALLATION OF SECURITY CAMERAS FOOTBALL FIELDS
Dr. Cunningham stated the following: Good evening, President Graham, members of the Board of Education, staff, students, parents, and members of our community. Tomorrow morning, our students return to school. As we prepare to officially begin the 2026–2027 school year, I want to use my report tonight to recognize some of the work that has taken place behind the scenes to get us here. Opening school successfully does not happen because of what we do on the first day of school. It happens because of the work that takes place long before the first student walks	SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

through the door.

And this summer, our team has done some exceptional work.

Securing Tomorrow Today

I want to begin with Dr. Jerry Doss and the work he has led with our architect and staff on **Phase One of our Securing Tomorrow Today Plan**.

Phase One is complete, and it was completed before the opening of school.

I have had the opportunity to walk through our buildings and see the work firsthand. The classrooms look great, and the response from our staff has been extremely positive.

These improvements are about much more than buildings. They are about creating environments that our students and staff can be proud of and providing the facilities necessary to support teaching and learning.

We are now preparing for Phase Two.

I will not steal Dr. Doss's thunder tonight because he will soon have the opportunity to present the work in greater detail to the full Board and our community. But I do want to publicly thank him and everyone involved in getting Phase One across the finish line on time and preparing us for what comes next.

Teaching, Learning, and Opportunity

Dr. Tony Ratliff's leadership in Curriculum and Instruction has also been stellar.

We have continued to improve the way we train and prepare our staff, while strengthening the systems that support teaching and learning throughout the district.

Our **Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum** continues to improve because of the work of Dr. Ratliff and his staff. This is important work because we want every student, regardless of which of our schools they attend or which classroom they enter, to have access to a strong, rigorous educational program.

Dr. Ratliff also expanded our back-to-school professional development from two days to three days this year.

That additional day matters.

If we expect our teachers and staff to perform at a high level for our students, then we have a responsibility to make sure they have the training, preparation, and tools necessary to do so.

We are also opening a new **Welding Lab at Thornwood High School**.

That investment reflects what we believe in District 205.

We want our students to have choices.

Our mission is to ensure our graduates leave us **enrolled, enlisted, or employed**. That means we must create multiple pathways to success. The new welding program provides another meaningful opportunity for students to develop skills that can lead directly to careers and economic opportunity.

Financial Strength and Responsible Planning

I also want to recognize Dr. Sheila Johnson.

Dr. Johnson, Dr. Doss, Dr. Rob Grossi, and I have spent considerable time reviewing our financial position and making sure our budget planning is where it needs to be.

It is.

Once again, the State has approved the property tax relief grant. That means District 205 will receive additional funding from the State while providing property tax relief to our community, and we will do so while maintaining a balanced budget.

That is significant.

Dr. Johnson has also worked closely with Dr. Doss to ensure that the funding necessary for **Phase Two of Securing Tomorrow Today** is properly planned and available.

At the same time, we have been able to invest in additional positions and resources that will directly support our staff and students.

That combination is important: **investing in our schools, investing in our people,**

providing relief to our taxpayers, and maintaining our financial stability.

Those things do not happen accidentally. They are the result of planning, discipline, and responsible stewardship.

So Much Further Along

I said something at the beginning of last school year that I am grateful to be able to say again tonight:

We may not be where we want to be, but we are so much further along than where we used to be.

And I don't say that simply because our classrooms look better.

I say it because our **systems are stronger.**

Our facilities are improving.

Our curriculum is stronger.

Our professional development is more intentional.

We are creating additional pathways for our students.

Our financial position is strong.

And we continue to build the organizational capacity necessary to serve our students well.

There is still work to do. There will always be work to do.

But tonight, on the eve of another school year, I think it is appropriate to recognize progress.

I want to thank Dr. Doss, Dr. Ratliff, Dr. Johnson, our principals, directors, administrators, teachers, support staff, Buildings and Grounds staff, technology staff, and everyone who has worked throughout this summer to prepare our schools.

I appreciate the work of my staff tremendously.

And I want to thank this Board of Education.

The progress we are seeing is possible because this Board continues to support the work, invest in our students and staff, and give us the opportunity to keep moving this district forward.

Tomorrow morning, the planning becomes practice.

The classrooms will be filled.

Our teachers will begin teaching.

Our students will begin learning.

And another school year will begin.

We are ready.

Thank you for the opportunity to lead this district, thank you for your continued support, and thank you to everyone who helped get us to this point.

We look forward to an excellent opening tomorrow and an outstanding 2026–2027 school year.

There was no Executive Session this evening.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:09p.m., Ms. Bradley moved, Mr. Bowman seconded to **Adjourn the Meeting.** All in favor voice voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Education Regular Meeting Presentation is available on our website at <https://www.district205.net/board-of-ed/board-of-education/board-of-education-meeting-presentation-decks>

PRESENTATION DECK



President



Secretary

