

**Board OF EDUCATION**  
**COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 64**  
**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held at 7 p.m.**  
**April 18, 2024**  
**Jefferson School - Hendee Rooms**  
**8200 Greendale Ave, Niles, IL 60714**

Board president Pearl called the meeting to order at 7: p.m. Other Board members in attendance were Matt Doubleday, Phyllis Lubinski, Monica Milligan, Gareth Kennedy and Rachel Georgakis. Member Touzios was not present. Also attending were: Superintendent Dr. Ben Collins, Dr. Joel Martin, Assistant Superintendent of HR, Dr Adam Parisi, Chief School Business Official, Dr. Samantha Alaimo, Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning, Matthew Tombs, Director of Innovation and Technology, Alicia Schmeisser, Director of Student Services, Frank Borkowski, Assistant Director of Facilities, Chris Lilly, Communications Specialist, Christine Bednarek, Assistant to the Superintendent. Ms. Michelle Barkley, Principal of Jefferson School and approximately 60 members of the public were in attendance.

Board of Education meetings are videotaped and may be viewed in their full length from the district's website at <http://www.d64.org>. The agenda and reports for this meeting are also available on the website or through the District's Office at 8182 W Greendale Ave, Niles, IL 60714.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The board was led in the pledge by the Jefferson students and families in attendance.

**OPENING REMARKS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD**

Dr. Pearl mentioned that she was impressed with the pledge from the students. She also commented that she was proud of the board and the formation of the new committees, two of whom met that evening with very productive meetings. She said the board will still work through the process but this makes it more efficient and functional.

**SPOTLIGHT ON JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Jefferson School Principal Ms. Michelle Barkley presented to the board on Jefferson School. She shared the accomplishments of the students, staff and the newly formed parent advisory committee. She stated it was clear early on the importance of building community and a sense of belonging at the school. There have been several events to bring parents, students and teachers together. The group hosted several events throughout the year and was able to raise \$15,000 which will be used to upgrade the sensory room, gross motor room and adding some items to the outdoor courtyard. She thanked the members of the advisory committee who were present and stated she was truly fortunate to have met and worked with them this year. To accomplish building a sense of belonging in the school they utilized the Buttery Buddy program which is a positive behavior recognition program. Teachers nominate students for being a fabulous friend, helping hand and wonderful worker. The students are then recognized with an award and are featured in the monthly school newsletter. The Butterfly Buddies in attendance then joined the board for a picture and were congratulated by those in attendance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none.

**EDUCATOR APPRECIATION WEEK**

Dr. Pearl shared that she has been going around to all the schools this year and it has been remarkable to see the educators in our district and all that they do everyday.

Dr. Collins echoed the sentiment and also stated with all the different categories of staff in the schools there are so many people it takes to have good environments for our students and that he wanted to thank all of those staff members. He

also stated that if there is anything a parent could do it would be to send staff members a heartfelt note. He said he still has every note that he received from a parent and he still reads them at the start of every school year. He joked they also love starbucks, dunkin donuts and really anything involving caffeine.

### **SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE**

Dr. Collins stated that we have had several community engagement events and there are approximately 15 events over the next month.

He also congratulated the Music Department for being recognized as one the Best Communities in education again.

He mentioned the retirement and recognition dinner which will be held on May 21st and the promotion ceremonies in June and invited the board members to attend both events.

He spoke briefly about Autism Awareness month and mentioned that we have a great program in our district and stated that it is a good time to remember what we can all do to make the world a more inclusive place.

### **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Dr. Pearl stated that the committees met and had very productive discussions and asked Member Kennedy to start with the Finance and Facilities Committee.

#### Finance Facilities

Chair Kennedy stated the committee talked about 4 topics:

Rowe property - the property is still owned by the district and the discussion centered around coming back to the board next month to offer it for sale again with no set price. The board can then decide whether or not to accept any offers. They also discussed the more north lot and perhaps working with the park district regarding a land swap with land at Franklin. Once the new Executive Director of the Park is in place we will explore this option.

Regular Bus Contract - went out to bid due to a new law that required bidding and Dr. Parisi will share the details later in the meeting.

Lincoln Phase IA - This was the most extensive discussion and the committee went through the plan floor by floor. They also discussed some potential options to expedite some work as well as the safety and with work taking place during the year. The first cost will be the midwest mechanical contract which will be presented later in the meeting.

Field Attic Discussion - The cost came back as more expensive with less square footage making the 2nd floor addition over the Kindergarten classrooms the better option. Safe to say we explored the option and can now put that aside.

#### Education Committee

Chair Georgakis stated that the main focus was the hearing about ELA curriculum adoption. She stated she was very impressed with the prework, planning, learning, and collaboration amongst other neighboring districts that went into the process.

In addition, Alicia Schmeisser gave the committee an update on the Student Services Action plan as well as the specialized programs that serve the diverse learners in the district.

Dr. Pearl stated that we would move Agenda item A-7 up to accommodate the contractors in attendance.

**APPROVE LINCOLN PHASE IA CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT WITH MIDWEST MECHANICAL**

Dr. Parisi stated that the Finance and Facilities Committee discussed in detail the Phase 1A which involves the work that will take place this year and we would like to get as much work done this summer. This includes the design work which will plan out the work for the next 14 months and some pre-purchase of some mechanical items.

Member Lubinski asked if this was a guaranteed price with no change orders. Dr. Parisi stated yes.

ACTION ITEM 24-04-4

It was moved by Member Milligan and seconded by Member Kennedy that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge-Niles, Illinois, approve the contract with Midwest Mechanical Group LLC in the amount of \$1,677,864 for demolition, pre-purchasing of mechanical equipment and associated construction work for Lincoln Phase IA.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Milligan, Pearl, Lubinski, Kennedy, Georgakis, Doubleday

NAYS:

PRESENT:

ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

**APPROVE ELA CURRICULUM**

Dr. Alaimo was joined by Kitty McGrath, Cathleen McCarthy, Meghan Keefer, Lindsey Harrington and Ursi Cosentino from the curriculum review team. She stated this was a lengthy process and always involves thought of the strategic plan, what a sound curriculum consists of and what the standards are in our district.

There are three things that need consideration for a reviews such as this and they are:

- Professional Learning which involved a deep dive into state standards and best practices in ELA instruction
- Program Analysis including a rigorous review of programs available
- Lesson or Unit Sampling/Piloting where we learned about implementation, engagement and achievement

The work started last year and continued through this summer and in the fall the committee came together to evaluate the work that needed to take place. That work continued during the winter and spring along with the piloting. The team in addition the committee felt it was important to conduct site visits in neighboring districts.

The goals of the group are stated as:

K-5: choose a comprehensive ELA curriculum that offers balanced, explicit instruction and is engaging, inclusive, and focuses on the needs of all students.

6-8: choose an ELA curriculum that engages students as readers, writers, and thinkers. Our curriculum will meet the needs of all students through differentiation, enrichment, explicit and scaffolded instruction, and rigor, while supporting teachers.

The reasoning for the CKLA recommendation included:

- Alignment to Standards
- Integration of Standards and Strands

- Rigorous Text & Student Activities
- Current Research on Knowledge Building

The reasoning for the HMH Intro to Literature recommendation included:

- Alignment to Standards/Integration of Skills
- Rigorous & Engaging Texts
- A Range of Challenging Performance Tasks
- Explicit Skill Instruction using Notice & Note
- Accessible & Adaptable User Platform
- Differentiated & Scaffolded Learning Structure
- Currently we do not have an integrated approach for reading and writing.

For the HMH Into Literature program there was a 100% consensus that this was the right choice. There are many opportunities for both teachers and students digitally as well as on paper. For our gifted and talented students this was rigorous and they will work at a grade level ahead.

Dr. Alaimo stated they have had a good collaboration with D207 in regards to pacing guides and scope and sequence for grades 9 to understand what our students are doing as well as what their students are doing. This planning will continue.

She also stated the group has enjoyed a great collaboration with several neighboring districts who have already implemented the programs.

The cost for the K-2 program is \$330,878 and includes:

- 6-year subscription
- Teacher Print Editions
- Consumable Activity Books
- Student Readers
- Professional Development

Some of these costs will be offset in part by our title grant funding this year and next.

The cost for HMH Into Literature is \$439,190 and includes:

- 6-year subscription
- Consumable texts
- Print teacher editions
- Writable
- Professional Development

Costs are offset a bit by other programs that can be eliminated going forward as they are included in this program.

For grades 3-5 we would not be adopting this program until the 2025-2026 school year. The group identified challenges early for special education as well as the CofC program. The first challenge identified was the master building schedule as we currently do not have an integrated approach for reading and writing. In addition there are challenges with providing special education services to students as well. Dr. Aalimo stated the group has been problem solving this year and feels another year is needed to do more planning for the 3-5 adoption. She stated that the committee feels good about that as they do not want to rush into anything and an ELA adoption needs to be good as it affects everyone and everything we do. We can also continue doing piloting for 3-5 which is something they are currently exploring. Finally we can do this as a roll-up starting with K-2 and then moving into 3-5. She stated we are not shopping around, it would just be a long engagement. The 3-5 adoption would be a five year program and may require additional FTE

Dr. Alaimo thanked the committee members for their hard work and effort they put into the process. Specifically thanking Meghan Keefer, Lindsey Harrington and Ursi Cosentino who did a lot of work prior to the formation of the committee because they are passionate about ELA.

President Pearl asked if we typically do a six year plan for curriculum programs? Dr. Alaimo said yes they are typically five or six years.

Member Kennedy asked will grades 3-5 continue to use the Units of Study? Dr. Alaimo stated yes, at some capacity, but there will be some classrooms who will pilot this program as well but we will also continue with our current structure.

Member Kennedy followed up by asking if there was a cost to continuing with the Units of Study program? With Unit of Study there was no annual adoption, there was an upfront cost that has already been absorbed. However there will be some cost for supplemental resources (i.e. classroom libraries, Being a Writer, Zaner Bloser Handwriting).

Member Kennedy also mentioned that Unit of Study has run into criticism that it is not research based since it has been adopted and wanted to know if the committee could reassure the board that they would not hear the same about these proposed programs after their adoption. Dr. Alaimo stated the committee feels very comfortable in the adoption and the one backbone is the recently adopted Illinois Literacy Plan and every component of these programs is included in that plan.

Member Kennedy then asked if staying with Units of Study for 3-5 would be the lesser of two evils given the challenges implementing this new program at this time? Dr. Alaimo answered that rushing something that is not going to help the most students would be detrimental to the district right now. One thing that has been under criticism is the reading and writing and workshop and she stated that there are pieces of the program that they are supplementing so some issues are taking a back seat to other programs.

Member Milligan stated that research shows that whenever you do rigorous curriculum adoption it is incredibly difficult work and you want teachers to have an amazing experience from the beginning as if they don't they can lean away from fidelity of implementation and supplement with things you are more comfortable with or have done in the past. She stated she would recommend how you can have the best first year possible which will set you up for continued success.

Member Kennedy stated that was related to the teachers experience he wanted to put the students' experience first. Is putting this off for a year the right thing to do by kids? The district has and continues to supplement the Units of Study for students and in addition supports teachers with supplement professional development. When the subcommittees met in spring the overwhelming response was that the 3-5 implementation at this time was not the best thing for our students.

Member Doubleday stated you cannot have a positive student experience without a positive teacher experience.

Dr. Alaimo stated that the committee is very excited about this implementation.

Member Georgakis thanked the members for their hard work and their willingness to say we are not able to implement all pieces at this time but that they will work on fixing the structures and systems to be able to do it the right way.

#### ACTION ITEM 24-04-1

It was moved by Member Milligan and seconded by Member Georgakis that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge - Niles, Illinois, approve the adoption of Amplify CKLA (Grades K-2) and HMH Into Literature (Grades 6-8) as recommended by the K-8 ELA Review Committee at the total cost of \$770,068.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Pearl, Kennedy, Lubinski, Georgakis, Doubleday, Milligan

NAYS:

PRESENT:

ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

Dr. Pearl thanked the committee members for all their hard work.

**APPROVE CONTRACT FOR REGULAR EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

Dr. Parisi stated that due to changes in the law we had to go out to bid for the transportation services. We had 5 different companies attend the pre-bid meeting and three companies that submitted bids. Going out to bid was advantageous at this time and Safeway Transportation came in at a savings of approximately \$300,000. In addition, to some challenges we have had in the beginning of the year with transportation and conversations with colleagues that are using Safeway have all been positive.

Member Lubinski

Member Milligan asked if Dr. Parisi had thoughts surrounding whether the bus driver recruitment/retention will be better with Safeway? Dr. Parisi stated reassurance from the GM of Safeway that they have not had these issues as well as conversations with colleagues in neighboring districts that use them without any of these issues were reassuring.

ACTION ITEM 24-04-2

It was moved by Member Milligan and seconded by Member Georgakis that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve a three-year contract for regular education transportation services with Safeway Transportation Company for the 2024-2025, 2025-2026, and 2026-2027 school years.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Georgakis, Lubinski, Milligan, Pearl, Kennedy, Doubleday

NAYS:

PRESENT:

ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

**APPROVE THE FIFTH AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION SERVICES CONTRACT**

Dr. Parisi stated the district has two separate contracts one for regular education transportation and a second one for special education transportation and that it just so happens that for the past number of years we have utilized the same company for both contracts. When we began looking at options for special education transportation we were looking to extend the contract with the current provider at a 6% increase for one year. Moving forward we will look to work with the district and the company to improve communication through the app and some different tools. He stated that transportation is a priority and that we want service to be as good as possible for our students and parents.

ACTION ITEM 24-04-3

It was moved by Member Milligan and seconded by Member Kennedy that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve the Fifth Amendment to the Special Education Transportation Services Contract with Lakeview Bus Lines, Inc. at a 6.0% increase in the current rates for special transportation.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Lubinski, Kennedy, Georgakis, Milligan, Doubleday, Pearl

NAYS:

PRESENT:

ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

### **2024-2025 BOARD DATES DISCUSSION**

Dr. Collins stated it was hard to believe that we were talking about next year already. He said the dates are in draft form and would be approved at the next meeting. The August meeting was moved up in case we needed to vote on a referendum, this date would meet that deadline. November was moved earlier to stay away from the Triple I Conference. Tentatively May 1st would be an organizational meeting which would be after the election and certification of results. The January meeting was moved back one week to help with bills and payroll coming off the winter break.

Dr. Pearl thanked Dr. Collins for adding the January IASB training placeholder in the calendar. She stated when they met with the IASB representative they talked about monitoring the district's performance and possibly doing that with the administration/central office.

We will revisit this topic next month as an action item.

### **APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDED PERSONNEL REPORT**

Dr. Joel Martin stated that the report was pretty straight forward and the next couple of reports will start to be a bit more lengthy with retirements and new hires.

#### ACTION ITEM 24-04-5

It was moved by Member Milligan and seconded by Member Kennedy that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve the Personnel Report dated April 18, 2024, noting that the Personnel Report is based on the recommendation of the superintendent, and not upon the board's direct knowledge regarding any of the specific individuals selected for employment.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Georgaks, Pearl, Milligan, Lubinski, Doubleday, Kennedy

NAYS:

PRESENT:

ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Bills <u>Fund</u>	Fund Total
10 - Education Fund	\$342,713.29
20 - Operations and Maintenance Fund	\$171,890.51
30 - Debt Services	\$475.00
40 - Transportation Fund	\$349,425.50
60 - Capital Projects Fund	\$19,818.71
Total:	<u>\$884,323.01</u>

Payroll & Benefits (January) Fund	Fund Total
10 - Education Fund	\$4,426,602.38
20 - Operations and Maintenance Fund	\$240,675.00
40 - Transportation Fund	\$1,662.80
50 - IMRF/FICA Fund	\$84,079.12
51 - SS/Medicare	\$114,209.04
Total:	<u>\$4,867,228.34</u>

The Accounts Payable detailed list can be viewed on the District 64 website's business services page at [www.d64.org](http://www.d64.org).

- Bills, Payroll and Benefits
- Approval of Financial Update for the Period Ending February 29, 2024

ACTION ITEM 24-04-6

It was moved by Board Member Milligan and seconded by Board Member Georgakis that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge – Niles, Illinois, approve the Consent Agenda for April 18, 2024, which includes: bills, payroll & benefits; and approval of financial update for the period ending February 29, 2024.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Milligan, Georgakis, Doubleday, Lubinski, Pearl, Kennedy

NAYS:

PRESENT:

ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

ACTION ITEM 24-04-7

It was moved by Board Member Milligan and seconded by Board Member Kennedy that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64 Park Ridge-Niles, Illinois approve the minutes from the regular meeting on March 21, 2024; and the closed meeting on March 21, 2024.

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Georgakis, Doubleday, Pearl, Kennedy, Lubinski

NAYS:

PRESENT: Milligan



ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. Collins mentioned closed minutes and that he is supposed to meet with Matt to discuss the closed minutes and make recommendations to the board which minutes should be released every six months. He stated that they will figure out a schedule but wanted to let the board know that is the process and we are working on it. Member Lubinski confirmed that was the process previously utilized as well.

May 2nd there is training with the board and IASB regarding self evaluation. 5:30 dinner and 6:00 p.m. workshop.

**BOARD RECESSES & ADJOURNS TO A CLOSED MEETING**

At 8:27 p.m. it was moved by Board Member Kennedy and seconded by Board Member Georgakis to recess from the regular Board meeting and adjourn to a closed meeting to discuss the following: the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors, or specific volunteers of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor, or a volunteer of the District or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)] and student disciplinary cases [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9)].

The votes were cast as follows:

AYES: Kennedy, Pearl, Doubleday, Milligan, Georgakis, Lubinski

NAYS:

PRESENT:

ABSENT: Touzios

The motion carried.

**BOARD ADJOURNS FROM CLOSED MEETING & ADJOURNS**

At 10:22 the board resumed the regular meeting. At 10:22 p.m. it was moved by Board Member Lubinski and seconded by Member Kennedy to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Signed Date: May 16, 2024.

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President

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Secretary