

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
PERU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 124
March 19, 2025, 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the month of March of the Board of Education of Peru Elementary School District 124, LaSalle County, Illinois, was called to order in the Gymnasium at Northview Elementary School by Board President Patti Leynaud, on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 6:15 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Leynaud led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Members John Atkins, Rob Ankiewicz, Alison Goode, Simon Kampwerth, Austin Taylor, and President Patti Leynaud.

OTHERS PRESENT: Superintendent Jamie Craven, Megan Baltikauski, Brent Ziegler, Sara McDonald, Heather Baker, Natale Lindig, Aaron Buffo, Student IPA winners and families, and Opera for the Young participants.

MOTION: Moved by John Atkins, seconded by Rob Ankiewicz, to approve the regular meeting agenda of March 19, 2025. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Atkins, Ankiewicz, Kampwerth, Goode, Leynaud, and Taylor. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

PUBLIC COMMENT, CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Buffo addressed the Board of Education regarding the non-certified salary increases, as it is an action item on tonight's agenda. He expressed concern, particularly for the paraprofessional group, stating that their wages are not keeping the pace with current trends.

OPERA FOR THE YOUNG PERFORMANCE

Mrs. McDonald introduced Ms. Lindig, the music teacher at Northview, who then shared this year's opera-inspired backstory. Following that, the students performed "Welcome to the Planet."

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Moved by Member Ankiewicz, seconded by Member Goode, to approve the following items in the Consent Agenda:

- February 19, 2025 Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes
- February 19, 2025 Executive Session Meeting Minutes
- March 6, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
- March 6, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting Executive Session Minutes
- Financial Reports
- Monthly Treasurer's Report
- District Bills
- Required Board and Employee Travel Expense Reimbursements

ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Ankiewicz, Goode, Kampwerth, Taylor, Atkins, and Leynaud. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Administrative Reports

Mrs. McDonald's reported:

- **Kindergarten Pre-Registration:** Pre-registration for kindergarten started in late February and was done online for the first time this year. Parents received emails with instructions, and new families had to prove residency in person before completing registration. The process has been slow, and there are still many students who haven't completed their online registration. Currently, there are 72 students on the list, with 58 returning from PreK and 14 new students. Last year at this time, registration numbers were: 2024 - 77, 2023 - 92, 2022 - 79, 2021 - 78, 2020 - no data, 2019 - 74, 2018 - 74, 2017 - 67, 2016 - 64, 2015 - 57.
- **March Book Madness:** Northview School is participating in March Book Madness. The theme is "BOOKS ALWAYS WIN." There are 16 books in brackets, and each day, teachers read a book, with students voting for their favorites. The process continues until the winning book is chosen. The event gets the students excited, with announcements throughout the day.
- **IAR Testing:** IAR testing for grades 3 and 4 starts the week of March 24th. Northview School has also been selected to participate in a pilot ELA test, which won't have results but adds an extra hour of testing for students.
- **The Five Essentials Survey:** 4th grade students took a survey in early March about their school experience, teachers, and the subjects taught. This survey is part of the requirements for the state report card.
- **PTC Family Pizza and Bingo Night:** The PTC event at Parkside School on February 28th had around 350 attendees. It featured raffle prizes and a 50/50 drawing, raising about \$1800 for the PTC.

Mr. Ziegler Reported:

- **Enrollment:** The school has 373 students: 101 in 5th grade, 101 in 6th grade, 86 in 7th grade, and 85 in 8th grade.
- **IAR Testing:** The IAR Testing will take place from March 24-28. This year, there's a new platform, and Mr. Miller has trained staff through emails and an in-person session on March 21. We're encouraging students to do their best on assessments. Parent letters with motivational tips will be sent home next week.
- **SEL Saebrs Screenings:** SEL screenings were completed in January, reviewed by the SEL committee, and Tier 2 interventions have been assigned by the school's Social Worker, Julie Miller. A meeting with the ROE on March 14 is to finalize plans for the 2025-2026 school year.
- **Attendance:** Overall absenteeism is higher compared to last year. Our goal is to reduce chronic absenteeism, currently at 3%.
- **PLC Meetings:** Grade level teams are working on realigning social studies classes for the 2025-2026 school year. The new structure will be: 5th grade - US History, 6th grade - World History, 7th grade - Early US History, and 8th grade - Modern US History. All will include geography. Academic Coach and Reading Specialist, Katie Meyer, is helping with the transition and planning.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Craven Reported:

- This year's Excellence in Education Award Winners include teachers: Olivia Boucek, Alexia Donovan, Matt Guenther, retirees: Julie Miller, MaryJo Sonnenberg, Jamie Craven, Board of Education Members with 12+ years of service: Simon Kampwerth and support staff: Megan Baltikauski.
- Summer work projects will be discussed at an upcoming Building and Grounds Committee Meeting which is scheduled to be held prior to the April Board meeting.
- Ryan Linnig and Mr. Craven continue to meet to discuss a list of transition items.
- The Peru Education Foundation's Trivia Night was a great success.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

March updates include the following:

- ACCESS testing has been completed.
- Career Exposure and Exploration have been recent discussions amongst administration. LPHS shared their PACE Model with Parkside, highlighting expectations for 8th grade students entering high school. Parkside staff was then provided an opportunity to list examples of career based instructional stages and lessons currently in use. A refined list is currently being organized into a sample PACE model for Peru Elementary.
- Technology needs for FY26 will be presented to the Board for approval at the April or May meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of 2025-26 Agreement for Physical & Occupational Therapy Services

MOTION: Moved by Member Kampwerth, seconded by Member Ankiewicz, to approve the agreement for physical and occupational therapy services from Sprout Educational Services for the 2025-26 school term as presented. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Kampwerth, Ankiewicz, Goode, Atkins, Leynaud, and Taylor. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Approval of 2025-26 Contracts for the Provision of Food Services for L.E.A.S.E. Circuit Breaker School; The Reginal Safe School Program; & The MENTA Group

MOTION: Moved by Member Atkins, seconded by Member Goode, to approve the contracts for the provision of food services for the 2025-26 school term as presented. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Atkins, Goode, Ankiewicz, Taylor, Kampwerth, and Leynaud. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Approval of Fire Extinguisher and Inspection Services

MOTION: Moved by Member Atkins, seconded by Member Ankiewicz, to approval of the fire extinguisher and inspection services with GETZ Fire Equipment Company as presented. This item will be revisited at a later date. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Atkins, Ankiewicz, Kampwerth, Taylor, Goode, and Leynaud. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Moved by Member Ankiewicz, seconded by Member Atkins, to adjourn to Executive Session at 6:55 p.m. for the discussion of information regarding the employment, performance, or dismissal of employees or district legal counsel; and discussion of information

related to employee salaries, benefits, and issues related to collective bargaining; and discussion regarding denial of access to school property as it related to board policy 8:30. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Ankiewicz, Atkins, Kampwerth Taylor, Goode, and Leynaud. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

MOTION: Moved by Member Ankiewicz, seconded by Member Kampwerth, to return to Regular Session at 7:39 p.m. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Ankiewicz, Kampwerth, Atkins, Leuynaud, Goode, and Taylor. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

ACTION ITEMS AFTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

Re-Employment of Recommended Non-Tenured Faculty for the 2025-26 School Term

MOTION: Moved by member Atkins, seconded by member Taylor, to re-employ the following non-tenured faculty for the 2025-26 school term.

- **Fourth Year (re-employment results in tenure):**
- **Third Year:** Connor DeWalt, & Sarah Fowler-Haag
- **Second Year:** Christian Parry, Chloe Cinotto, Meghan Doll, Natalie Lindig, & Lisa Michael **First Year:** Madison Pearson, Katie Robinson, Ali Ciucci, Carly Bowman, Addison Ripka, & Carly Christman
- **Accelerated Tenure:** Hailey Bickett -3rd Year
- **Portable Tenure:** Leslie Rudnicky- 2nd year

ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Atkins, Taylor, Ankiewicz, Kampwerth, Leuynaud, and Goode. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Approval of Non-Certified Staff Salary Increases for the 2025-26 School Term

MOTION: Moved by member Goode, seconded by member Atkins, to approve the 2025-26 non-certified staff salary increases as presented. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Goode, Atkins, Taylor, Ankiewicz, Kampwerth, and Leuynaud. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Approval of Non-Certified Staff Contracts

MOTION: Moved by member Taylor, seconded by Atkins, to approve the 2025-26 non-certified staff contracts as presented. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Taylor, Atkins Goode, Kampwerth, Leynaud, and Ankiewicz. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

MOTION: Moved by member Ankiewicz, seconded by member Kampwerth to approve the non-certified contract for Heather Baker as presented. ROLL CALL, VOTING AYE: Ankiewicz, Kampwerth, Leynaud, Atkins, Taylor, and Goode. NAYS: None. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Approval of Employment Recommendation

MOTION: Moved by member Ankiewicz, seconded by member Kampwerth, to approve the recommendation to employ Madison Redfun-Hofbauer as a deaf and hard of hearing teacher commencing the 2025-26 school term. AYE 6, NAY 0. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Approval of Retirement Request

MOTION: Moved by member Kampwerth, seconded by member Ankiewicz, to approve the retirement request from Karole Ochs. AYE 6, NAY 0. **The motion carried 6-0.**

The Board of Education tabled the retirement request from Jeanine Sonnenberg.

Approval of FMLA Request

MOTION: Moved by member Atkins, seconded by Member Ankiewicz, to approve the FMLA request from Addison Ripka. AYE 6, NAY 0. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Approval of Resignation

MOTION: Moved by Member Goode, seconded by member Kampwerth, to approve the resignation notice from Carlie Kowalski. AYE 6, NAY 0. The motion carried 6-0.

MOTION: Moved by Member Atkins, seconded by Member Ankiewicz, to approve the resignation notice from Krista Miller. AYE 6, NAY 0. **The motion carried 6-0.**

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Moved by Member Ankiewicz, seconded by Member Atkins, to adjourn at 7:43 p.m. AYE 6, NAY 0. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Patti Leynaud, Board President

Megan Baltikauski, Board Secretary