

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 186, SPRINGFIELD,**  
**SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS**  
**Tuesday, January 21, 2025 (5:30 PM)**

The Board of Education convened in Regular Session on January 21, A.D., 2025, at 5:30 p.m., there being present thereat:

Present: Micah Miller, President  
Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Erica Austin  
Sarah Blissett  
Ken Gilmore  
Debra Iams  
Buffy Lael-Wolf  
Anthony Mares via phone

Jennifer Gill, Superintendent

**CALL TO ORDER**

**1.1 Roll Call**

President Miller called the meeting to order.

**1.2 Approval of Remote Attendance by Anthony Mares**

Member **(Micah Miller)** Moved, Member **(Erica Austin)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion "That Anthony Mares be allowed to attend remotely via telephone for medical reasons."

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 5 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 5 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

**APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Approval of Executive Session**

**Resolution:** That the Board of Education approves adjournment to Executive Session to consider the following items:

- 2.1 Student Discipline and Other Matters Concerning Individual Students - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9, 10)
- 2.2 The Appointment, Employment, or Dismissal of Employees – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)
- 2.3 Contract Negotiations - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)
- 2.4 Pending and Imminent Litigation - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Sarah Blissett)** Moved, Member **(Erica Austin)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'That the Board of Education adjourns to Executive Session to consider the following matters: 2.1 Student Discipline and Other Matters Concerning Individual Students - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9, 10), 2.2 The Appointment, Employment, or Dismissal of Employees – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), 2.3 Contract Negotiations - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2), 2.4 Pending and Imminent Litigation - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 5 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 5 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Miller

Those voting "no": None

### **Adjournment to Executive Session**

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m. and reconvened at 6:46 p.m. Upon reconvening, it was noted that seven Board members were present as Ms. Lael-Wolf joined the meeting at 5:33 p.m. and Mr. Mares joined the meeting by phone at 5:33 p.m.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **3.1 Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Miller asked those in attendance to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

#### **4.1 Approve the Agenda for January 21, 2025**

Resolution: That the Board of Education approves the agenda.

### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Anthony Mares)** Moved to approve the agenda. Member **(Erica Austin)** seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion, 'That the Board of Education approves the agenda.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller

Those voting "no": None

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

#### **5.1 President's Comments**

Mr. Miller read the following statement:

*Public comments will occur during the Public Comments portion of the meeting. The Board will not allow interruption during the meeting. If you are interested in addressing the Board, fill out the required Public Participation form and submit it to Ms. Hammers. Alternatively, those wishing to participate via the telephone may email their name, phone number, and topic of discussion or agenda item number to [boe@sps186.org](mailto:boe@sps186.org).*

## **5.2 Student Report**

There was no student report at this time.

## **5.3 Recognition of Lincoln Magnet School 7th Grade Girls Basketball**

The Board of Education congratulated the Lincoln Magnet School-Ball Charter School 7th Grade Girls Basketball Team for their 3rd place finish at the IESA 3A State Tournament.

Joy Bardwell  
Amari Chandler  
Layla Hullum  
Caleese Jones  
Morgan Jones  
Alyicial McBride  
Hannah Nichols  
Lydia Nichols  
Rachel Thomas  
Zoe Williams

Head Coach: Shekela Lee  
Assistant Coach: Dominique Lee  
Assistant Coach: Regina Porter

It was noted that Mr. Mares' call dropped at 6:58 p.m. and he rejoined the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **6.1 Superintendent's Report**

#### **Celebrate 186**

Superintendent Gill provided the bi-weekly Celebrate 186 presentation. Copies of the presentation filed with the Official Minutes are available [here](#). The report covered the following topics.

#### **Basketball City Tournament**

Superintendent Gill shared information about the Boys' and Girls' City Basketball Tournaments. She reported that the tournament begins on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, and runs through Saturday, January 25, 2025, at the Bank of Springfield Center in downtown Springfield. She thanked this year's tournament sponsors, the Bank of Springfield, Troxell and Pekin Insurances, O'Shea, Horace Mann, Brown Hay & Stephens, and the Illinois Educators Credit Union.

She then shared the seeds and schedule for each evening's games, as well as half-time performance information and the band and choirs' schedules. She also shared information about the program cover, designed by Lanphier High School student Riley Stender and the Superintendent's Student Roundtable's Unity Day event.

#### **American Sign Language**

Superintendent Gill reported that the District American Sign Language (ASL) will be added to the high school curriculum. She noted that ASL is a world language recognized as a foreign language through ISBE and is the third most studied language across the United States. She reported that middle school students were polled to determine possible interest in taking ASL.

Next, Superintendent Gill indicated that ASL courses are slated to begin with the 2025-2026 school year. The curriculum and course offerings were approved at the Curriculum Council meeting in December, 2024. Students will complete their course selections by February 16, 2025. At that time, the number of sections needed, which will in turn determine the number of positions that will be needed. She then overviewed the process used by the Curriculum Counsel to select the curriculum. She then shared the timeline for implementation.

### **Job Fair**

Superintendent Gill shared information about an upcoming job fair. She reported that the fair will take place on February 13, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and again from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. at the district's administrative center.

### **Our Schools Our Future**

Superintendent Gill shared photos and an update from the Springfield High School construction project including photos of the shells of the new competition gym, competition entrance, storm shelter, main entrance, inner atrium, and the south end of the Commons.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **7.1 Old Business**

There was no old business at this time.

### **7.2 New Business**

#### **IASB Liaison Report**

Ms. Lael Wolf reported that IASB has requested that each board discuss the Vision 2030 documents. Additionally, the association's division meetings will be held in late February or early March.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **8.1 Public Comment**

Mr. Miller asked if there was any public comment. He then read the following statement:

*Public comments will occur during the Public Comments portion of the meeting. The Board will not allow interruption during the meeting. If you are interested in addressing the Board, fill out the required Public Participation form and submit it to Ms. Hammers. Alternatively, those wishing to participate via the telephone may email their name, phone number, and topic of discussion or agenda item number to [boe@sps186.org](mailto:boe@sps186.org).*

The following individuals addressed the Board regarding wages for teaching assistants:

- Amy Harris Long
- Neha Mascar
- Patricia Landers
- Stacy Lawrence
- Angie Ausmus
- Jared Lampke
- Aaron Graves

## **PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD**

There were no presentations to the Board at this time.

## **BUSINESS REPORT**

### **10.1 Business Report**

Board members were provided with copies of the Business Office Report for January 21, 2025. Copies filed with the Official Minutes are available for public viewing [here](#).

Steve Miller, Director of Business Services, reported that during December 2024, the Education Fund saw revenues of \$5.9 million and expenditures of \$13.0 million. For the same time period, the Operations and Maintenance Fund saw revenues of \$98,000 and expenditures of \$1.5 million.

For the Investment Balances Report, as of December 31, 2024, Mr. Miller noted that the District had a combined cash balance of approximately \$85.0 million in the bank for all funds. For the operating funds only (Education, Operations and Maintenance, Transportation, and Working Cash Funds), total cash in the bank was approximately \$49.5 million. He indicated that total investments are \$66.6 million. Year-to-date earned interest on all cash accounts for the month was approximately \$1.1 million. The interest rate on all cash accounts for December was 2.5% or 250 basis points. The total balance of cash and investments for all funds as of December 31, 2024, was approximately \$151.6 million. He further noted that the district also shows recorded County sales tax proceeds received during the month of December of approximately \$1.1 million for the September collection period. Total collections of sales tax since 2019 is approximately \$63.6 million.

Next, Mr. Miller shared graphs comparing year-to-date expenditures from the current fiscal year to year-to-date expenditures from the same time periods of the 2023 and 2024 fiscal years. He indicated that as of December, the District had used approximately 40.02% of the budget in the Education Fund and 39.9% of the Education, Transportation, and Operations and Maintenance Funds, combined.

### **10.2 Bond Report for Facilities Funding**

Board members were provided with copies of the Bond Sale Presentation. Copies of the presentation filed with the Official Minutes are available [here](#).

Business Director Miller introduced Anne Noble, Managing Director, Stifel Public Finance, who provided an overview of the presentation. Prior to the presentation, Superintendent Gill reiterated that the sales tax and these bond revenue funds by law can only be used for facilities.

Ms. Noble reported that the District needs to generate approximately \$184.4 million of bond proceeds during 2025/2026 for the updated Capital Improvement Plan. She then provided information on non-referendum debt payable from the Operating Funds and Alternate Revenue Bonds (ARBs), non-referendum GO bonds, and historical tax exempt rates since January 2020. She provided a financing scenario to generate the needed \$184.4 million which includes bond issuances in April 2025 and 2026. She then shared several charts with information related to County Sales Tax Revenue History by month from inception in 2019, existing ARBs against updated sales tax revenue, and ARBs issued in 2025 and 2026.

Next, Ms. Noble reported that DSEB bonds issued in 2026 require taxable restructuring of existing bonds. She estimated the proceeds to be received from this to be approximately \$85.11 million. She then

provided a timeline for Series 2025 Alternate Revenue Bonds. The timeline includes a Resolution of Intent for approval at the February 3, 2025 meeting, a BINA hearing at the February 18, 2025 meeting, a resolution approving parameters authorizing the bond sale at the March 10 meeting, and the opening of the sale on March 17, 2025, with a close on April 7, 2025. She then overviewed the District's debt capacity, Working Cash bond capacity, and existing debt service on levied bonds.

It was noted at 8:00 pm that Mr. Mares' call had dropped and he did not return to the meeting.

## **CONSENT ACTION ITEMS**

### **11.1 Approval of Consent Action Items**

Approval of consent action items as listed in the agenda.

**Resolution:** The Superintendent recommends approval of the consent action items 11.2 through 11.7 as described in the corresponding resolutions.

### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member (**Micah Miller**) Moved, Member (**Debra Iams**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends approval of the consent action items 11.2 through 11.7 as described in the corresponding resolutions'.

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

### **11.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of January 6, 2025**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Springfield School District 186 reviews the minutes of the regular session and the executive session of the previous Board Meetings; and

WHEREAS, copies of these sets of minutes were distributed to the Board in the board packet prior to this meeting;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the aforementioned sets of regular session and executive session minutes and directs the Secretary to include them in the official records of the Board of Education meetings.

### **11.3 Approval of Payroll and Bills Payable**

**Resolution:** That the Board of Education approves payroll and bills payable as shown in the attached report.

### **11.4 Tabulation of Bids and Recommendation for Purchase and Payment**

#### **Bid #25-05 — Ambulance Service - Home Football Games**

**Resolution:** BE IT RESOLVED to accept the low acceptable bid for the following bids and to approve payment of same upon completion:

Bid #25-05 - Ambulance Service - Home Football Games

### **11.5 Approval of the 2025-2026 School Calendar**

Draft Calendar

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Springfield School District 186 is required to develop an annual calendar identifying pupil attendance days for the upcoming school year; and

WHEREAS, the Calendar Committee has reviewed and recommended adoption of the proposed calendar;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the proposed public school calendar for the 2025-2026 school year and directs the Superintendent to submit the adopted calendar to the Regional Office of Education for approval.

### **11.6 Approval of an Agreement with American Institutes of Research**

Agreement

Each of our schools that received a newly designated Intensive or Comprehensive Summative Designation as a result of their 2024 Illinois Report Card data will receive additional supports from ISBE this year to support their school improvement efforts. This additional support includes engaging in work with ISBE designated consultants who will conduct needs assessments at each of the schools. These needs assessments are proposed to provide feedback to the schools on areas of continued or additional focus for school improvement. As a part of the process, each district's Board of Education must approve a consulting agreement/contract. This agreement is to conduct school-level needs assessments in support of the Illinois State Board of Education's work with intensive schools in District 186.

Cost: \$171,504

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Springfield Public School District 186 has developed Work Plans for School Improvement; and

WHEREAS, the designated schools (Lee, Graham, Addams and Lanphier) have identified a need for support in developing priorities using listening and learning visits, data review and root cause analysis, and school strategy research and development; and

WHEREAS, the American Institutes for Research is an approved partner that can provide these supports;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an agreement with the American Institutes for Research for a total amount of \$171,504 to be paid by ISBE School Improvement funds.

### **11.7 Approval of a Consultant for Sacred Heart-Griffin High School**

Contract

The Bureau of Education and Research will provide a two day on-site training "Strengthen Student Learning in Block Schedule Classes with Cutting-Edge Ideas and Interactive Strategies" for Sacred Heart Griffin staff March 3 and March 4, 2025.

Cost: \$5000

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Bureau of Education and Research will conduct a two-day workshop to instruct staff at Sacred Heart Griffin about how to Strengthen Student Learning in Block Schedule Classes with Cutting-Edge Ideas and Interactive Strategies; and

WHEREAS, Bureau of Education and Research is qualified to provide such training and has agreed to provide such training over two days at a cost of \$5,000; and

WHEREAS, Bureau of Education and Research consultant services are completely reimbursable through the Title II grant;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the consultant Bureau of Education and Research per the terms identified above and directs the Superintendent to execute the necessary documents on behalf of the Board.

## **ROLL CALL ACTION ITEMS**

### **12.1 Approval of Personnel Recommendations**

**Resolution:** The Superintendent recommends the adoption of the Personnel recommendations, as presented.

#### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member (**Micah Miller**) Moved, Member (**Buffy Lael-Wolf**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends the adoption of the Personnel recommendations, with one change.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

### **12.2 Approval of a Resolution Regarding a Farm Lease**

Approval of the 2025-2026 farm lease agreement for the Koke Mill tract of 40 acres at a rate of \$300 per acre.

**Resolution:** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS Springfield School District No. 186 is the owner of farm property on Koke Mill Road that is part of The South 61 acres of the North 122 acres of the Northwest Quarter of Section 12, Township 15 north, Range 6 West of the Third Principal Meridian; and

WHEREAS there are no immediate plans to construct school facilities or other improvements on approximately 40 acres thereof;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Superintendent is hereby authorized and directed to enter into a Farm Lease of such unimproved property with Cain Family Farms for a term commencing effective March 1, 2025, and ending February 28, 2026, at a cash rental rate of \$300 per acre.

#### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member (**Debra Iams**) Moved, Member (**Sarah Blissett**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS Springfield School District No. 186 is the owner of farm property on Koke Mill Road that is part of The South 61 acres of the North 122 acres of the Northwest Quarter of Section 12, Township 15 north, Range 6 West of the Third Principal Meridian; and



WHEREAS there are no immediate plans to construct school facilities or other improvements on approximately 40 acres thereof;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Superintendent is hereby authorized and directed to enter into a Farm Lease of such unimproved property with Cain Family Farms for a term commencing effective March 1, 2025, and ending February 28, 2026, at a cash rental rate of \$300 per acre.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 5 Nay: 1. The motion **Carried 5 - 1**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf  
Those voting "no": Miller

**12.3 Approval of the Use of Lanphier Auditorium for Board Member / Candidate Forum (Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 5:30 p.m.)**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, the Springfield Education Association would like to hold a Board member/candidate forum at Lanphier High School on January 28, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the SEA has invited all candidates to participate in the forum;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Education approves the Springfield Education Association Board member/candidate forum to be held at Lanphier High School Auditorium on Monday, January 28, 2024.

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member (**Micah Miller**) Moved, Member (**Sarah Blissett**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'WHEREAS, the Springfield Education Association would like to hold a Board member/candidate forum at Lanphier High School on January 28, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the SEA has invited all candidates to participate in the forum;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Education approves the Springfield Education Association Board member/candidate forum to be held at Lanphier High School Auditorium on Monday, January 28, 2024.

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**13.1 Next Regular Meeting — Monday, February 3, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.**

**13.2 Upcoming District Events**

January 22-25 - Boys & Girls Basketball City Tournament

**13.3 Freedom of Information Report**

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Miller declared the meeting adjourned until Monday, February 3, 2025. The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

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Micah Miller, President

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Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Dated: February 3, 2025