

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 186, SPRINGFIELD,**  
**SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS**  
**Tuesday, February 20, 2024 (5:30 PM)**

The Board of Education convened in Regular Session on February 20 A.D., 2024, at 5:30 p.m., there being present thereat:

Present: Micah Miller, President  
Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Erica Austin  
Ken Gilmore  
Debra Iams  
Buffy Lael-Wolf  
Anthony Mares

Jennifer Gill, Superintendent  
Harrison Gray, Student Representative

**CALL TO ORDER**

**1.1 Roll Call**

President Miller called the meeting to order.

**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 Pending and Imminent Litigation - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Deborah Iams)** Moved, Member **(Anthony Mares)** 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 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": Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

## **Adjournment to Executive Session**

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m. and reconvened at 6:42 p.m. Upon reconvening, it was noted that six Board members were present as Ms. Austin joined the meeting at 5:32 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 February 20, 2024**

Resolution: That the Board of Education approves the agenda.

### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Anthony Mares)** Moved to approve the agenda. Member **(Buffy Lael-Wolf)** 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: 6 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 6 - 0**.

Those voting "aye":	Austin, 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 Comment**

*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.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

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

#### **Celebrate 186**

Superintendent Gill provided the bi-weekly Celebrate 186 presentation. Copies of the presentation have been filed with the Official Minutes. The report covered the following topics.

#### **Franklin Middle School Basketball**

Superintendent Gill reported that the Franklin Middle School 7th grade Boys Basketball team recently won the 4-A State championship. Members of the team in attendance were introduced and presented with certificates of achievement. Board members and Superintendent Gill congratulated the boys and their coaches for their achievement.

### **Poetry Out Loud**

Superintendent Gill reported that Southeast High School student Ashlya Richards placed first in the Poetry Out Loud competition. She will represent the school district at the State competition on March 11, 2024, at the Hoogland Center for the Arts in downtown Springfield.

### **Abe Lincoln Region Elementary School Principal of the Year**

Superintendent Gill reported that Patricia Nikson, Principal of Fairview Elementary School was recently recognized as the Abe Lincoln Region Elementary School Principal of the Year. She congratulated Ms. Nikson on the award.

### **Black History Month Recognition**

Superintendent Gill reported that Terrance Jordan, Director of School Leadership & Family and Community Engagement, and Board member Austin were recently recognized by the City of Springfield for their commitment and dedication to the Springfield community during Black History Month. She congratulated Ms. Austin and Mr. Jordan on their recognition and thanked them for their dedication to the community.

### **African American History Bowl**

Superintendent Gill invited the public to attend the 2024 African American History Bowl finals on February 25, 2024, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Springfield High School.

### **All City Music Festival**

Superintendent Gill announced that the All City Music Festival will take place on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Sangamon Auditorium on the University of Illinois Springfield campus. She reported that the event is open to the public.

### **Career Fair**

Superintendent Gill reported that the District will host a Career Fair on Thursday, February 22, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and again from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the District Office, 3063 Fiat Avenue. She noted that there are immediate openings in several different areas, including paraprofessionals, substitute teaching, civilian substitute security, clerical and more.

### **School Celebrations**

Dr. Nicole Moody introduced Joby Crum, Principal of Grant Middle School, and Sarah Beveridge, Principal of Butler Elementary School, who addressed the Board with celebrations from their buildings.

### Grant Middle School

Mr. Crum shared slides with data from the school. He reported that the school had improvements in the Panorama survey results from the end of the 2022-2023 school year to the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year. All but one category and sub-category were in the green. He noted that this has been achieved by staff working to create a positive atmosphere upon entering the building. He noted that suspensions have decreased 38.2% from the 2022-2023 school year through the first semester of the

2023-2024 school year. He attributed this to new administrative, support and classroom staff that have created positive expectations from the first day of school.

Next, Mr. Crum overviewed the MAP testing data from the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year to the middle of the 2023-2024 school year. He noted strong growth in each grade level and amongst students requiring total skills recovery. Mr. Crum then shared photos from the school. Lastly, a student addressed the Board regarding the positive impact teachers, staff and administrators have had on him and shared his academic successes.

#### Butler Elementary School

Ms. Beveridge reported that the school has a “Commendable” designation. She noted that the IAR test data has contributed to the designation and shared data from the test. She reported strong increases on the test in ELA, Math and Science scores from 2021 to 2023. Additionally, she noted that 95% of the staff report that new initiatives are supported in the building. That same percentage of staff are extremely optimistic or quite optimistic that the school will continue to improve. Additionally, 100% of the staff reported the work environment in the building being either extremely positive or quite positive.

Ms. Beveridge reported that climate and culture, a targeted learning focus, standards-based instruction, grade level intervention block, AVID, small group instruction, student goal setting, building thinking classrooms, and co-teaching inclusive practices have all contributed to the growth seen in the building. She then shared photos from the school.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **7.1 Old Business**

There was no old business at this time.

#### **7.2 New Business**

Ms. Austin discussed the importance of supporting African American administrators as doing so helps ensure African American students have role models in positions of leadership with whom they can identify. She further discussed systemic racism, disciplinary action taken toward students of color as compared to their counterparts, and the importance of providing appropriate support to students of color.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

#### **8.1 Public Comment**

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

*The Board of Education and I encourage public comment and public participation in Board meetings. However, it is inappropriate for any person to name a student or an individual employee, including designating an employee by job title rather than name, in open session. If any public commenter wants to address issues related to an individual student or a District 186 employee, that commenter is invited to contact the Board office or a member of the cabinet prior to public comment. It is not the intention of the Board to discourage public comment in any way; rather, it is the intention of the Board to address issues regarding individual students and employees in an appropriate manner. We thank you for respecting the privacy of our students and employees by following this rule.*

*District 186 streams board meetings on YouTube, and all content posted there is subject to YouTube's content guidelines.*

*Springfield Public Schools District 186 continues to encourage public comment. Statements made by speakers during public comment do not represent the views or opinions of the Board of Education or Springfield Public Schools District 186.*

The following individuals addressed the Board:

- Talia Hubbard-Williams via email regarding personnel matters and racism
- Judith Johnson via phone regarding personnel matters, supporting African American administrators and teachers, and racism
- Aaron Graves in person regarding personnel matters and the SEA's desire to work with administration to support teachers and students

## **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 the January 2024 Monthly Business Report. Copies filed with the Official Minutes are available for public viewing on the Electronic School Board website.

Steve Miller, Director of Business Services, reported that for January 2024, the Education Fund had revenues of approximately \$7.2 million and expenditures of approximately \$13.1 million. The Operations and Maintenance Fund for the same period had revenues of approximately \$580,000 and expenditures of approximately \$1.1 million.

With respect to the Investment Balances Report, Mr. Miller reported that as of January 31, 2024, the District had a combined cash balance of approximately \$91.8 million in the bank for all funds. For the operating funds only, which include the Education, Operations and Maintenance, Transportation, and Working Cash funds, total cash in the bank was approximately \$40.5 million. Total investments as of January 31, 2024 were approximately \$102.4 million. The year-to-date earned interest on all cash accounts for the month was approximately \$2.7 million. The interest rate on all cash accounts on January 31, 2024, was 2.5% or 250 basis points. The total balance of cash and investments for all funds as of that date was approximately \$194.3 million. Mr. Miller further reported that the District showed recorded County Sales Tax proceeds received during the month of January of approximately \$1.13 million for the October collection period. He noted total collections of approximately \$51 million.

Next, Mr. Miller shared a graph comparing the expenditures in the Education Fund by month for fiscal year 2023 (FY23) and fiscal year 2024 (FY24). He noted that as of January 2024, 46.54% of the budget for FY24 has been expended, as compared to 46.78% of the budget having been expended during the same period of FY23. He indicated that this is a difference of approximately \$400,000.

Mr. Miller then shared a second graph comparing expenditures in the Education, Operations and Maintenance, and Transportation funds from FY24 to FY23. He reported that for January FY24 46.26% of

the budget has been expended, as compared to 46.67% of the budget having been expended during the same period of FY23. He noted that this is a difference of approximately \$717,000.

Mr. Miller also provided an overview of ESSER III spending. He reported that the District received approximately \$46 million in ESSER III funds. He noted that all money from this needs to be encumbered by September 30, 2024, with the cutoff for spending being December 31, 2024. He indicated that of the \$46 million, the State of Illinois has mandated that \$11.6 million be spent in specific areas. The remaining \$35.5 million can be spent at the District's discretion in keeping with the ESSER spending parameters through an approval process with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Mr. Miller then shared a large-categorical breakdown for spending of the \$35.5 million. He reported that approximately \$4.5 million of the \$34.4 million available for general funds would be used for instructional expenses. Online services account for another \$1.8 million, with \$3.8 million set aside for instructional materials. Approximately \$1.8 million will be used for a technology refresh and approximately \$1.1 million will be used for professional development. Approximately \$14.1 million will go toward HVAC and safety upgrades. He then noted that the State of Illinois requires \$10.9 million of the funding to be used to address learning loss, with a portion specifically for tutoring services provided during regular school hours. He indicated that the rest of the learning loss funding would be used to pay for summer school programming. Additionally, portions of the mandated learning loss funds will be used to purchase a new curriculum for Literacy, Social-Emotional Learning, and Autism for all of the District's schools and for contractual agreements for after-school programs with local community organizations, such as Compass for Kids, Springfield Art Association, and the YMCA.

## **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 11.8 as described in the corresponding resolutions.

### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Anthony Mares)** Moved, Member **(Micah Miller)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends approval of the consent action items 11.2 through 11.8 as described in the corresponding resolutions'.

Superintendent Gill overviewed each of the Consent Action items.

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 6 - 0**.

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

### **11.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of February 5, 2024**

**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 #24-09 — Springfield High Additions and Renovations Bid Release 1**

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

Bid #24-09 — Springfield High Additions and Renovations Bid Release 1

### **11.5 Approval of the Balanced Calendar for the 2024-2025 School Year**

State law requires express permission be given by the Board of Education for Elizabeth Graham and Southern View schools to operate as balanced calendar schools. This resolution fulfills the Board's legal obligation to provide operating permission for Elizabeth Graham and Southern View.

The attached calendar reflects as closely as possible those teacher institutes, teacher inservices, and school improvement workshops shown on the regular school calendar as approved by the Board of Education.

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, the parents, staff and administrators of Elizabeth Graham and Southern View schools have studied, adopted, and implemented the concept of balanced calendar schools; and

WHEREAS, the staff, administrators and parent organizations of Elizabeth Graham and Southern View schools have developed a proposed calendar for the 2024-2025 school year; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Graham and Southern View schools have requested permission to continue operation as balanced calendar schools for the 2024-2025 academic year;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Elizabeth Graham School and Southern View School are granted permission to operate as a balanced calendar school and to follow the proposed calendar for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **11.6 Approval of a Consultant Agreement with Ryan Haack**

Consulting agreements with Ryan Haack

Ryan Haack will provide two school assemblies at Black Hawk School (one for grades K-2 and one for grades 3-5) approximately 60 minutes in length for each. The speaker will share their story of being born with a congenital limb and how it impacted him as he grew up, which will include sports demonstrations and interactive dialogue around being a good friend to all no matter what someone looks like and how our differences are good.

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Black Hawk School has requested permission to enter into a consultant agreement with Ryan Haack for a school assembly; and

WHEREAS, Black Hawk School will use its school level Title I funds as allowed for the school assembly;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Black Hawk school will enter into a consultant agreement with Ryan Haack for a full school assembly on March 8, 2024, at a total cost of \$4,000.

**11.7 Approval of an Agreement with the Illinois Principal Association**

The Illinois Principal Association will provide evaluation training to a group of teacher mentors at Southeast High School. This supports Southeast's school improvement plan.

Cost: \$4,300

Funds: Title I

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Southeast High School has a school improvement plan; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Principal Association can provide training that supports components of the school improvement plan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an agreement with the Illinois Principal Association to provide training at a cost of \$4,300 to be paid from Title I funds.

**11.8 Approval of an Amended Agreement with DotCom Therapy, Inc.**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, District 186 desires services of DotCom Therapy, Inc. for speech/language tele-therapy services; and

WHEREAS, DotCom Therapy, Inc. is appropriately qualified and able to provide 1.3 FTE speech/language tele-therapy services to Springfield Public School District 186 for the sole purpose of covering speech/language pathology vacancies;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an amended agreement between Springfield Public School District 186 and DotCom Therapy, Inc. to extend the contract end date from March 29, 2024 to May 24, 2024, at an amended estimated contract cost of \$108,927.00 to be paid in monthly minimum payments as stated in the amendment.

**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 **(Anthony Mares)** Moved, Member **(Debra Iams)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends the adoption of the Personnel recommendations, as presented.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 6 - 0**.

Those voting "aye":	Austin, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller
Those voting "no":	None
Those abstaining:	Austin, Lael-Wolf on page 4, line 1 only.



## **12.2 Student Discipline**

**Resolution:** That the Board approves the student discipline as discussed in Executive Session and summarized by the Superintendent, as follows:

- That one 8th-grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Washington Middle School through the end of the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year with a program; and
- That one 9th-grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Springfield High School through the end of the 2023-2024 school year with a program

### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Buffy Lael-Wolf)** Moved, Member **(Anthony Mares)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'That the Board approves the student discipline as discussed in Executive Session and summarized by the Superintendent, as follows:

- That one 8th-grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Washington Middle School through the end of the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year with a program; and
- That one 9th-grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Springfield High School through the end of the 2023-2024 school year with a program

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 6 - 0**.

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **13.1 Next Regular Meeting — Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. — Board Room**

### **13.2 Upcoming District Events**

March 4 - No School - Holiday

March 29 - April 5 - No School - Spring Break

### **13.3 Freedom of Information Act Report**

#### **Board Member Announcements**

##### **Student Art Display at the African American History Museum**

Mr. Gilmore announced that he had visited the student art display at the African American History Museum earlier in the day. He encouraged others to visit, as well. He noted that there are many pieces of student art on display.

##### **African American History Month**

Ms. Austin reported that she had attended an assembly at Lanphier High School earlier in the day honoring Dr. Doss. She also reported attending African American History Month events at Laketown Elementary and Jane Addams Elementary.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Miller declared the meeting adjourned until Tuesday, March 5, 2024. The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

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Micah Miller, President

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Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Dated: March 5, 2024