

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 186, SPRINGFIELD,**  
**SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS**  
**Monday, July 15, 2024 (5:30 PM)**

The Board of Education convened in Regular Session on July 15 A.D., 2024, at 5:30 p.m., there being present thereat:

Present: Micah Miller, President  
Nicole Irlam, Assistant Board Secretary

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

Jennifer Gill, Superintendent

**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 **(Sarah Blissett)** 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: 4 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Bissett, Gilmore, Lael-Wolf, Mares  
Those voting "no": None

## **Adjournment to Executive Session**

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m. and reconvened at 6:16 p.m. Upon reconvening, it was noted that seven Board members were present as Ms. Austin, Ms. Iams, and Mr. Miller joined the meeting at 5:31 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 July 15, 2024**

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, Bissett, 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).*

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

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

#### **Moment of Silence**

A moment of silence was observed for Sonya Massey and others affected by violence in the Springfield community.

#### **Sangamon County Interactive Training**

Superintendent Gill reported that she, along with Ms. Austin and Ms. Iams, will attend a two-day training on violence prevention organized by Sangamon County. The training will bring teams from agencies

across Sangamon County together to cover topics including threat assessment and management foundations, how to implement the Sangamon County Community Support Team, community engagement, and team wellness/self-care. Subject matter experts from the federal and local levels will lead the training.

### **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.

### **Band Camp**

Approximately 100 middle school students from across the district recently attended a band camp where they honed their talents, made new friends, and interacted with fellow middle school students. Middle school Music and Band teachers led the camp.

### **Camp Invention**

Camp Invention recently highlighted two Lanphier High School students who volunteer with the program, Shyne Shakoor-EL and Stefan Bladen. The students have earned a new title, "Leaders in Charge", and help guide other volunteers. Superintendent Gill congratulated and thanked the students for their integrity, maturity, responsibility, and trustworthiness.

### **95 Percent Group Training**

Superintendent Gill reported that teachers across the district recently attended a 95 percent group training at the District's Administrative Office. She noted that the 95 percent group training is related to tier 2 interventions associated with the district's literacy framework. The training includes assessment tools for progress monitoring in phonics and phonemic awareness, which helps guide teaching and intervention strategies. She noted that the training aligns with the new Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan, which aims to enhance students' literacy skills.

### **ESports Logo Additions**

Superintendent Gill reported that the ESports Room at Lanphier High School used by the Springfield Capitols is now outfitted with the team's logo. She noted that the team recently hosted a junior ESports Camp for middle school students and incoming freshmen.

### **Registration, School Physicals and Immunizations**

Online registration is now open for the 2024-2025 school year through [www.sps186.org](http://www.sps186.org). Families are encouraged to register students now and make an appointment with their physician for the required physicals and immunizations.

In-person registration will be available at elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as the Early Learning Center, on August 5, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Registration at the middle and high schools, as well as at the Early Learning Center will continue on August 6, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### **Our Schools Our Future**

Superintendent Gill provided an update on current construction projects. She shared photos from Southeast High School's Spartan Field renovation, including the new restroom and concessions building under construction. She noted that the building will include a weight room, team room, and locker rooms.

Next, she provided information on work at Springfield and Lanphier High Schools. She reported that at Springfield High School, a twelve-classroom modular unit that will provide classroom space during the construction and renovation work on the main building will be finished soon. At Lanphier High School, the seating for the new auditorium is scheduled for installation in early August. She noted that an Open House is planned for Lanphier on October 26, 2024. The event is open to the public.

### **Student Cell Phone Use in Schools**

Superintendent Gill provided data and information to continue the conversation from previous Board meetings related to student cell phone use during the school day. She noted that during the 2023-2024 school year, there were 976 technology-related violations by 730 students in the middle and high schools as compared to 846 violations during the 2022-2023 school year. She further reported that of the 2023-2024 violations, 250 were computer or iPad-related, 140 were headphone-related, 479 were cell phone-related, 100 were video or photo-related, and 7 were threats. She indicated that 60 suspensions from the 2023-2024 school year can be linked to cell phone usage and 8 other suspensions were from other tech violations.

Alex Simmons, from Yondr, joined the meeting via Zoom to provide an overview of the company's product, the Yondr Pouch, which is used to manage cell phone usage by students while in school. Mr. Simmons reported that the product helps create a focused learning environment for students. He overviewed the product, training, and support provided with the product, and curriculum resources available to teachers from the company. Board members were provided with a Yondr Pouch to examine. He noted that schools that use the pouches have seen an increase in academic achievement and a decrease in student behavior issues.

Ms. Blissett asked what deterrents are in place to keep students from breaking into the pouch to use their phones. Mr. Simmons reported that a student must physically damage the pouch to get inside it. This damage would be obvious and may result in an infraction for violation of district policy, as well as an infraction for destruction of district property. Ms. Blissett expressed concern about the cost of replacing a damaged pouch.

Ms. Lael-Wolf asked if the pouches are signal-blocking. Mr. Simmons reported that the pouches are not signal-blocking. However, the company does offer the feature as an add-on option.

Ms. Lael-Wolf then asked Mr. Simmons to expand on the information related to medical pouches for students with medical issues such as diabetes, who use their phones to monitor their health. Mr. Simmons reported that the medical pouches look identical to the locking pouches but close with velcro, allowing those students to access their phones.

Mr. Miller asked if phones must be turned off before being placed in the pouches. Mr. Simmons reported that Yondr recommends that phones be turned off or put in airplane mode before being placed in the pouch, however, this is not required for the bag to be used appropriately.

There was then a discussion about implementation. Mr. Simmons noted that the date of implementation is flexible and stressed the importance of completing the planning work for implementation. Superintendent Gill reported that other districts have done a soft launch of the pouches before rolling them out district-wide.

Mr. Miller asked about hurdles that other districts have had to overcome. Mr. Simmons reported that consistency has been the biggest hurdle for other districts. He noted the impact of proper planning on this and reported that the company checks in with schools regularly after implementation to address any issues.

Ms. Blissett asked if any schools keep the pouches at the school rather than sending them home with students. Mr. Simmons reported that this is practiced at some smaller schools for logistical reasons. Ms. Blissett asked that if the pouches are purchased, a policy be enacted to address discipline for students who destroy multiple pouches.

Mr. Miller asked about recommended purchasing quantities. Mr. Simmons reported that the company recommends purchasing approximately 15% more pouches than needed based on current enrollment to account for new students, loss, and destruction.

Mr. Mares asked about staff training. Mr. Simmons overviewed the implementation and training processes.

Mr. Gilmore asked about the number of schools using the pouches. Mr. Simmons reported that the pouches are used in approximately 2500 schools. Recommendations for the number of locking/unlocking devices needed were also discussed.

Ms. Lael-Wolf asked if other districts had received significant pushback from parents. Superintendent Gill reported that one district in Texas had significant pushback from parents but, for the most part, other superintendents have reported few issues or pushback from parents.

There was additional discussion about the locking/unlocking devices and the cost of the pouches, as well as available incentives and benefits of the pouches.

Mr. Mares asked about the size of other districts currently using the pouches. Mr. Simmons noted that the company works with districts of all sizes. The largest districts are between 15,000-25,000 students. Mr. Simmons then discussed the support provided by the company and the timelines for delivery.

Ms. Blissett asked for additional information related to costs and budgeting.

There was then some discussion about the impact the pouches will have on teacher enforcement of a cell phone policy, the implementation process, alternatives that could reduce student cell phone usage during the school day, and policy enforcement.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **7.1 Old Business**

There was no old business at this time.

### **7.2 New Business**

There was no new business at this time.

### **7.3 Board Policy Review**

Board members were provided with draft copies of the Board Policy Manual for review. It was noted that changes have been made to align the manual with the Illinois Association of School Boards' PRESS policies.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **8.1 Public Comment**

Mr. Miller asked if there was any public comment. There were no public commenters at this time.

## **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 June 2024 Monthly Business Report. Copies filed with the Official Minutes are available for public viewing [here](#).

Angela Burris, Director of Accounting, reported that for June 2024, Education Fund revenues were approximately \$54.9 million. Education Fund expenditures for the same period totaled approximately \$11.7 million, with revenues exceeding expenditures by approximately \$43.2 million. For the Operations and Maintenance Fund, revenues for June 2024 were approximately \$8.5 million and expenditures were approximately \$1.4 million, with revenues exceeding expenditures by approximately \$17.1 million.

Ms. Burris noted that the district saw larger than normal revenues during June due to two local property tax payments (May and June) received during the month.

Ms. Burris reported that for the Investment Balances Report, as of June 30, 2024, the District had a combined cash balance of approximately \$86.4 million in the bank for all funds. For the operating funds only (Education, Operations & Maintenance, Transportation, & Working Cash Funds), the total cash in the bank was approximately \$56.5 million. Total investments on the date were approximately \$100.1 million. The year-to-date earned interest on all cash accounts for the month was approximately \$3.3 million. The interest rate on all cash accounts on June 30 was 2.5% or 250 basis points. The total balance of cash and investments for all funds as of June 30, 2024, was approximately \$186.5 million. Ms. Burris stated that the district also shows recorded County sales tax proceeds received during June 2024 of approximately \$1.2 million for the March collection period. She indicated that sales tax collections received since the inception of the tax in 2019 are approximately \$56.7 million.

Next, Ms. Burris shared a graph comparing the percentages of expenditures in the Education Fund by month for fiscal years 2023 and 2024. She noted that for fiscal year 2024, as of June, the district was at 86.86% of budgeted expenditures compared to 94.60% for the same period of the 2023 fiscal year. She noted that additional bills are expected for the fiscal year, which will be reflected in a report created at the end of July.

She then shared a second graph comparing the percentages of expenditures in the Education, Operations and Maintenance, and Transportation Funds by month for fiscal years 2023 and 2024. She reported that as of June, the district had expended 88.75% of budgeted fiscal year 2024

expenditures compared to having expended 95.41% by the same time of the 2023 fiscal year.

There was some discussion regarding potential funding sources for the Yondr Pouches.

Superintendent Gill then overviewed the costs associated with the PowerSchools proposal.

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

### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Anthony Mares)** Moved, Member **(Sarah Blissett)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends approval of the consent action items 11.2 through 11.6 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 July 1, 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 #24-17 — Lead-Based Paint Abatement – Lawrence School**

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

Bid #24-17 — Lead-Based Paint Abatement – Lawrence School

### **11.5 Approval of the Amendments to the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement for the Capital Area Career Center**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, the Springfield Public School District No. 186 (“District”) is a member of the Capital Area Career Center (“CACC”); and

WHEREAS, the Executive Council has approved the proposed amendments to the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Control has approved the proposed amendments to the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement by a minimum two-thirds favorable vote; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the District determines that it is in the best interest of the School District and CACC to approve the proposed amendments;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 186, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The Board of Education of the District hereby approves the proposed amendments to the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement.

Section 2. The Superintendent is hereby directed to provide a signed copy of this resolution to the Director of CACC within 60 days of receipt of proposed amendments.

**11.6 Approval of an ISBE Learning Partner for School Report Card Improvement - Carnegie Learning**

Grant funds are allocated to districts with schools categorized as needing comprehensive or intensive improvement support, based upon various indicators listed on the Illinois School Report Card (i.e. academic proficiency, academic growth, chronic absenteeism, 9th graders on track, and graduation rate). Grant funds may be used for planning and implementing school improvement activities such as contracting for professional services from state-approved learning partners who help schools analyze data, research evidence-based interventions to improve academic growth and proficiency, and monitor school improvement plan progress.

These learning partners are consultants that help with school improvement goals, which are determined based on school-level needs assessments. The learning partner funding flows directly from ISBE Title Grant Funds. The two proposals are ready for approval from Fairview and Dubois. These schools plan to partner with Carnegie Learning, the publishing company for the District’s new elementary Math curriculum, Clear Math. This partnership will support continued professional learning and development for teachers implementing the new program in its second year. This teacher training and support will ultimately support continued increases in student learning and achievement in math.

Fairview Cost: \$35,000

Dubois Cost: \$25,000.03

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

WHEREAS, the designated schools, Dubois and Fairview, have identified a need for continued professional learning and development for teachers implementing the new math program; and



WHEREAS, the Carnegie Learning is an approved IL Empower partner that can provide these supports;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an agreement with the Carnegie Learning for a total amount of \$60,000.03 to be paid from Title I School Improvement 1003(a) funds.

## **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 (**Erica Austin**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends the adoption of the Personnel recommendations, with the following changes:

- Page 5, Letter E, Change of Assignment, Certified Item 4, change from Language Arts, Iles School to Special Education Lanphier High School.

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 Salary Determination for Substitute and Hourly Support Staff**

Salaries for support staff are reviewed and set for coming school years, including Substitute and Hourly Support Staff.

**Resolution:** The Superintendent recommends approval of the salaries for Substitute and Hourly Support Staff for the 2024-2025 school year.

#### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member (**Sarah Blissett**) Moved, Member (**Anthony Mares**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends approval of the salaries for Substitute and Hourly Support Staff for the 2024-2025 school year.'

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

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

### **12.3 Approval of the Preparation of the Fiscal Year 2025 Tentative Budget**

The School Code requires that the Board designate who is authorized to prepare the budget each fiscal year.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of School District No. 186 in the County of Sangamon, State of Illinois, that Mrs. Jennifer Gill and Mr. Steven Miller are hereby appointed to prepare a tentative budget

for the said School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, which tentative budget shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board.

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Micah Miller)** Moved, Member **(Buffy Lael-Wolf)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of School District No. 186 in the County of Sangamon, State of Illinois, that Mrs. Jennifer Gill and Mr. Steven Miller are hereby appointed to prepare a tentative budget for the said School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, which tentative budget shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board.'

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

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

Those voting "no": None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**13.1 Next Regular Meeting — Monday, August 5, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.**

**13.2 Upcoming District Events**

July 17 - First Day of School for Graham and Southern View

August 5, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Registration - All Schools

August 6, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Registration - Middle Schools, High Schools, ELC

August 19 - First Day of School for Regular Calendar Schools

**Board Announcements**

Ms. Austin congratulated Springfield High School graduate Daija Lott on being selected as the Miss Illinois Miss Juneteenth. She also thanked the Superintendent's cabinet members for the reports they regularly provide to Board members during the meetings.

Mr. Gilmore wished balanced calendar school students and teachers a happy first day of school.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Miller declared the meeting adjourned until Monday, August 5, 2024. The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

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Micah Miller, President

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Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Dated: August 5, 2024