



Board Briefs

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[November 19, 2024 Regular Action Meeting](#)

[Board Meeting Videos](#)

Approval of Agenda

The Board voted to approve the November 19 agenda as presented.

Recognition

School Board Member Appreciation Day

Superintendent Dr. Chala Holland read a resolution in honor of School Board Member Appreciation Day, officially celebrated on November 15. The resolution expressed gratitude for the many hours Board members spend in service to District 113 students, staff and community.

Board Reports

President

Board President Anne Neumann shared the Board's gratitude to all who work in public schools as November 18-22 has been designated by the National Education Association as American Education Week. She also noted that she, Board member Rick Heineman and several District administrators will be attending the Triple I Joint Conference (IASB, IASA, IASBO) this coming weekend.

Ms. Neumann reiterated several elements of [Dr. Holland's November 18 message reminding everyone of the collective commitments and values in District 113](#). She emphasized that the District is committed to fostering an environment where diverse perspectives are valued and those perspectives are expressed through civil discourse; that the District does not tolerate bullying, racism or hate speech; and to model respect and empathy for students, staff and the community. She closed by wishing students and staff a Happy Thanksgiving.

ED-RED

ED-RED Liaison Rick Heineman said that though unable to attend the most recent meeting, the group continues to discuss the impact of tax increment financing (TIF) on school districts and school district input on implementing TIF districts.

TrueNorth

TrueNorth Liaison Jenny Lupa provided an update from the November 13 TrueNorth Leadership Council meeting. Highlights of that meeting include the potential expansion of a Chicago Botanic Garden field trip to high school students and young adults; a new holistic training program for staff throughout their career and in the future, expanding that training program to member districts. She noted that TrueNorth had received a clean audit report with no issues reported, that the Leadership Council passed the FY 2026 budget resolution and that they received an update on Glenview District 34's intent to withdraw. The next meeting is in January.

Facilities Committee

Facilities Committee Chair Rick Heineman reported that the committee had met earlier in the evening with some items appearing later in the agenda, including an update on the installation of solar panels and the impact of those panels on electric buses. The committee also discussed health-life safety projects and providing that list to the states as well as compiling a list of infrastructure construction projects that the Board intends to do so that the District can begin moving forward on proposals for those projects.

Administration Information Reports

Superintendent

In her report, Superintendent Dr. Chala Holland provided the following updates:

- **District 113 is Launching ParentSquare** - District 113 is working to enhance communications functionality and consolidate multiple communications modes through a platform called ParentSquare. A standalone communication with detailed information was sent on Thursday, November 21. ParentSquare is increasingly being used across many districts because it offers many benefits including the ability for each user to customize their settings to receive communications in their preferred language and greater flexibility in terms of how and when they receive communications. An emergency **test** will run on Tuesday, December 10 at 4 p.m. with the plan to fully launch ParentSquare for emergency mass notifications on January 6, 2025.
- **Comments on the Illinois School Report Card 2024** – in addition to the overview of the results of the report cards, the Board will also hear about some of the steps being taken to continue to engage in a cycle of school improvement.
- **Comments on the Common Bell Schedule** – To be implemented in the 2025-26 school year, the schedule is a vehicle in which the District will live its priorities. The allocation of sequenced time allows the creation of opportunities for student learning, student support and staff collaboration. The schedule is something everyone experiences and is also the foundation of a tiered system of support in the form of a Tier 1 resource.

In closing, Dr. Holland said that as the District continues to implement and discuss priorities that have been in consideration over the past year or multiple years, she acknowledges that all will need to be mindful that even with the best of intentions, there are things we will learn through the process of implementation. She said that throughout the implementation process and beyond, the District will continue to monitor the impact of decisions on students and staff and will remain open, adaptable and responsive to what is learned.

FOIA

Dr. Holland reported the FOIA requests received since the last meeting and their disposition. The report is posted in BoardDocs online.

Excellence in Effort

DHS Principal Dr. Kathryn Anderson highlighted the following in her report:

- **World History Silk Roads Lab:** World History classes participated in the annual Silk Roads Lab, an interactive learning experience designed to bring the ancient trade network to life.
- **Fine and Applied Arts:** Classes in this department have been bustling with creative and collaborative events including:
 - Business Incubator with 33 teams exploring entrepreneurship under the guidance of local mentors;
 - Child Development students sharing Halloween-related art lessons and field trips; Dance and Dance Advisory classes preparing for a spring recital;
 - The bands hosted an impressive concert culminating in a side-by-side performance with the Chicago Brass Band.
 - The Chorus program continues to foster community through the MS/HS Chorus Festival, where a “Chorafamily” system—initiated by student Mikey Evarts—brought high school and middle school students together for friendship, mentorship and shared experiences.
 - **Tech Campus** students who were named Students of the Quarter for Quarter 1 by their instructors: Dakota Rose McCleary for Emergency Medical Services I, Briana Denise Garcia for Certified Nurse Assisting and Pamela Yadanza for outstanding performance in their respective programs.
 - **Heart of a Warrior:** DHS hosted its 2nd annual Heart of a Warrior award ceremony recognizing students who exemplify the attributes of Self-Awareness, Collaboration, Empathy, Adaptability, Agency and Purpose.

As part of her report, HPHS Principal Holly Fleischer highlighted the following:

- **Talktober:** Devised by Jesse Villanueva and Debbie Castellani, Talktober emphasizes the importance of specifically supporting the growth of speaking skills for students receiving English Language services.
 - In Precalculus, teachers focused on building confidence in the classroom by utilizing “non-curricular thinking tasks” where math students are given puzzles and challenges to solve together
 - In Dance, students draft their dance performances to encourage meaningful feedback and increase students’ comfort around talking about their art
 - In Engineering, each student presents their design to a small group, and then, using a “decision matrix,” students engage in discussion, rating each design based on expected criteria.
 - In World History, students are acquiring skills to engage in meaningful discussions about learning. After watching a documentary, students split into three small student-led processing groups where they deepen their understanding of classroom content through peer-to-peer discussions about learning.
- **Social Studies** - Students enrolled in Civics were honored to meet Lake County Clerk Anthony Vega and Deputy of Civic Engagement Sol Cabachuela for an afternoon in-school field trip. The Civics team has focused on elections in the United States this

semester, and the opportunity for students to meet their elected official in charge of election administration was a culmination of their in-class studies. An important part of the afternoon, Deputy Cabachuela generously provided real-time, in-auditorium Spanish language interpretation for select Civics students using HPHS school interpretation technology, creating a more inclusive experience for all involved. After the presentation, Clerk Vega held a rich question and answer session where students asked excellent questions regarding elections in the United States and Lake County.

Informational

Illinois School Report Card 2024

As it does every year, Administration presented [an informational report on the results of the Illinois School Report Card](#). District 113 schools are in the top 12.8% of high schools in Illinois. The summative designation for DHS is exemplary with a score of 93.52 and for HPHS is commendable, with a score of 90.31. This year the exemplary threshold is 91.26. Overall, both schools reported high levels of academic proficiency in English language arts (ELA), math and science; high graduation rates; and improvement in the chronic absenteeism rate since the pandemic. Growth opportunities include working with students who are not experiencing the same high levels of academic proficiency, continuing to address student attendance, and improving graduation rates for identified groups of students.

The report cards can be found on the [District 113 website](#). If a District 113 parent or guardian wishes to receive a printed copy by mail, please contact Dezi Tilmon, Executive Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Dr. Lisa Dallacqua at 224-765-1017.

Bell Schedule Committee Report

Dr. Anderson presented an informational report on the Bell Schedule Committee's recommendation for a new, common schedule approved by the Superintendent to be implemented for the 2025-26 school year. A common schedule was a requirement of the 2023-26 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Education and the District 113 Education Association (DEA). The schedule is the result of extensive research and multiple rounds of feedback. This is the first time the District has formally adopted a shared schedule across both schools. More information will continue to be shared with staff, students and families in preparation for the 2025-26 school year.

School Reports

Student Liaison Reports

DHS senior Lila Peck shared that many students have been working hard for the upcoming student-produced show "STUNTS" running this weekend along with the many events taking place this month during School Chest in honor of Mother's Trust Foundation. She reported that swimmer Krika Illkiu placed 3rd in the 100m breaststroke, breaking her own school record. Finally, she said reaction to the new bell schedule has been mixed but students are excited that school will start slightly later and end slightly earlier.

Senior Miles Walker from HPHS shared that next Tuesday is GrandGIANTS Day where students can bring their grandparents or a special older guest to school for the day. Miles reported that

students worked hard putting together their performances for Frankenstunts and how fun it was to see the work come together. In closing, he congratulated Girls Tennis and Boys Cross Country who brought home CSL North Conference Championships at the Varsity level this fall and the HPHS Robotics team Silly Servos for placing 2nd at the FIRST Tech Challenge meet on November 2.

Discussion

School Resource Officer Agreement between Township High School District 113 and the City of Highland Park

The Board reviewed the proposed school resource officer agreement between the City of Highland Park and District 113. The item will come back to the December 17 School Board meeting for action before moving to the City of Highland Park.

Transportation Capital Purchases - Diesel/Electric School Buses

Also discussed at the Facilities Committee meeting, Chief Transportation Officer Brandon Hayes reviewed a proposal with the Board to purchase 6 new buses: 3 diesel and 3 electric. The item is on the agenda for action later in the meeting in order to meet the deadline to qualify for EPA grant funding. The total projected expense for all six buses for the 2024–2025 budget year is \$460,142.

EV Charging Stations for Electric Buses and Solar to Offset Future Electrical Costs

Following the discussion at the Facilities Committee earlier in the evening, the Board discussed adding electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for electric buses. Also included in the discussion were potential additional solar upgrades that would, over time, offset the cost of electricity for charging. The options discussed provide the District with the opportunity to maximize incentives available now under the Inflation Reduction Act. The item will come back at a future meeting for action.

Course Proposals for the 2025-26 School Year

The Board discussed a proposal to add two AP Cybersecurity courses aligned to College and Career Pathways for the 2025-2026 school year. The item will come back to the December 17 meeting for action.

Action

FY 2025 Round 1 School Maintenance Project Grant Application

The Board voted to authorize the Administration to apply for the School Maintenance Grant and to reserve local funds in the amount of \$50,000 to cover the District's portion of the grant costs. The Illinois State Board of Education has made available to the District a school maintenance project grant, a dollar-for-dollar state matching grant, that will provide awards of up to \$50,000 exclusively for the maintenance or upkeep of buildings or structures for educational purposes.

Estimate the Aggregate Levy

The Board voted to approve as presented its intent to levy for the 2024 tax year a total aggregate of \$113,835,288 exclusive of bond and interest costs, or \$119,790,798 with bond and interest costs, and authorize the publication of a notice in compliance with the *Truth-in-Taxation Act* for a public hearing on the 2024 tax levy to be scheduled for Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at

Township High School District 113, 1040 Park Avenue West, Highland Park, IL 60035. To comply with the *Truth-in-Taxation Act*, the 2024 tax levy must be "determined" by Board action at least 20 days before the Tax Levy Hearing.

Transportation Capital Purchases - Diesel/Electric School Buses

The Board approved as presented proposals from Central States Bus Sales, Inc. in the amount of \$169,240 after rebates and incentives to supply 3 electric school buses and from Midwest Transit Equipment in the amount of \$170,902 for 3 diesel school buses.

Girls Water Polo Cooperative for Deerfield and Highland Park High Schools

The Board approved as presented Administration's proposal to submit a request to the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) to create combined DHS and HPHS water polo teams, known as a "co-op," due to a decrease in participation in recent seasons.

Lake County School Mutual Aid Response Team Agreement

The Board approved as presented an agreement vetted by the Lake County Regional Office of Education (ROE) and approved by the Lake County State's Attorney to provide training, professional development and sharing of resources to prepare school districts and cooperatives for response and recovery activities.

Approval of Settlement Agreement with Employee

The Board voted to approve as presented a settlement agreement with an employee.

Consent Agenda

The Board approved [the consent agenda](#) as presented. The consent agenda includes personnel, stipends and board bills.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings

December 17, 2024

Policy Committee

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Administration Building

Regular Action Meeting

6:00 p.m. Closed, 7:00 p.m. Open

Administration Building