



CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT 63

8502 Bailey Road • Darien, Illinois 60561-5333

Board of Education Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Education of Cass School District 63, DuPage County, Illinois; held at Cass Junior High School at 7:00 P.M. on the 23rd Day of September, 2025.

I. Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

Upon roll being called, the following members answered present: President Lana Johnson, Vice President Rinku Patel, Secretary Urszula Tanouye, and Members Chris Green, Fiyaz Khan, Katie Marinelli, and Steve Wyent.

Also in attendance: Superintendent Mark R. Cross, Cass Junior High Principal Christine Marcinkewicz, Concord Elementary Principal Katie Doyle, and Board Recording Secretary Gayle Wilson

C. Recognition of Audience, Announcements and Correspondence

Mrs. Johnson welcomed guests to the meeting and shared that the district received and fulfilled two FOIA requests.

D. Student and Staff Spotlight and Recognition

The district recently recognized our IT professionals Mike Van de North and Mark Pragides for National IT Professionals Day. Also recognized were our athletics coaches, including baseball coach Craig Damrow, cross country coaches Scott Kondraschow and Sarah Leganski, softball coach Danielle Hosman and assistant coach Mr. Trezzo, and golf coach Landon Mitchell.

E. Public Comments

There were no public comments.



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II. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the September 23, 2025 Meeting Agenda**
- B. Approval of the August 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes**
- C. Approval of the August 19, 2025 Closed Meeting Minutes**
- D. Approval of Personnel Recommendations**
- E. Approval of Monthly Financial Reports**
- F. Approval of the District Bills**

Mr. Cross reviewed the consent agenda items, noting that about half of this month's invoices were for recent construction costs. There was a question about the SASSED invoice and it was explained that most of the costs for students attending SASSED programs come at the front end of the school year with some smaller invoices that will be paid later in the school year.

Member Wyent moved and Member Khan seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Wyent, Member Khan, Member Green, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

III. Public Presentation and Hearing for the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

Member Marinelli moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to open the Public Hearing for the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Marinelli, Member Wyent, Member Green, Member Khan, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

Mr. Cross reviewed the fiscal year 2026 budget, with no changes from the tentative budget presented at the August meeting. There is a small deficit of just over \$185,000, excluding planned capital improvements makes progress on the facilities plan. This follows a healthy surplus in FY25, as the district has built its fund balances over the last several years. Excluding estimated expenditures related to facility improvements, the total expenditure budget for FY26 is just under \$15.5 million.



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There were no public comments.

Member Green moved and Member Marinelli seconded a motion to close the public hearing for the fiscal year 2026 budget.

Voice Vote – Aye: Member Green, Member Marinelli, Member Khan, Member Wyent, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

IV. Reports, Updates and Informational Items

A. Administrative Reports

Mrs. Marcinkewicz noted that great progress is being made with MTSS, including fluency testing at Cass Junior High School. She announced that student council is now part of the Illinois Association of Junior High Student Councils that will afford students leadership opportunities. Mrs. Marcinkewicz stated that fall sports are coming to a close and shared that the participation rate is on the rise as more kids are getting involved in athletics at Cass.

Ms. Doyle noted that Concord is also working on MTSS, and they are changing their approach to testing to allow for the different abilities at the different grade levels, and noted that NWEA testing has not been administered in the fall in recent years. She gave an overview of the WIN (What I Need) program that helps identify each individual student's needs. Ms. Doyle said that there will be 13 new preschool students starting in early October, and that special education teacher Jenny Kirkpatrick's class is going out into the community once per month for life skills experiences.

Mr. Cross noted what a great start to the school year this has been. There has been a lot of change for staff and students and everyone is embracing it. Mr. Cross shared an invitation the Board received from the Board President of District 86 to a meeting with the elementary districts to discuss student success. The Board agreed that this is a topic best discussed with district administrative leadership. The Board also received an invitation to a meet and greet from District 86 at the upcoming Joint Annual Conference in November.



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B. 2025-26 Enrollment Update

Mr. Cross reviewed the enrollment numbers for the 2025-26 school year reminding the Board that we do not have SASED programs housed in our schools any longer. With a large graduating class in May of 2025 and a smaller incoming Kindergarten class, our enrollment is down 9 students from last year.

C. First Reading of Recommended Board Policy Updates

Mr. Cross reviewed the recommended Board Policy updates and noted that most are five year reviews without any substantive changes. The Board will be asked to approve the recommended updates at the October meeting.

D. Update Regarding the Superintendent Search Process

There are already 29 applications for the upcoming superintendent vacancy upon Mr. Cross' retirement in June 2026. The application deadline is October 10. The Board will review candidates with the screening consultants in October, will be interviewing finalists during the month of November, and is expected to announce the next superintendent in December. The new superintendent will officially begin duties July 1, 2026.

E. Update and Discussion Regarding Phase III Facility Planning

The Board discussed potential Phase III facility planning, which would be for work expected to be completed in the summer of 2026. The Board authorized Mr. Cross and the Facilities Committee to vet proposed projects with the school district architects for further review later this fall.

F. Update Regarding the Federal Impact Aid Advocacy Funding

Mr. Cross recently attended the NAFIS Conference for Impact Aid advocacy in Washington, DC and said that despite the huge cuts that are proposed for federal K-12 funding in general, federal impact aid appears to be excluded from the cuts at this time. He said this can always change, which is why being a part of the national effort with continued bipartisan advocacy is essential.

V. Recommended Action Items

A. Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget



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Member Wyent moved and Member Green seconded a motion to approve the fiscal year 2026 budget.

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Wyent, Member Green, Member Khan, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

B. Approval of Phase II Facility Project Change Orders

Mr. Cross reviewed a total of five change orders for the Phase II summer projects, including one for the exterior site work that is a credit totaling \$29,363.71. For the interior renovations, there were four change orders presented totaling \$210,024.00, resulting in a grand total change order request to date of \$180,660.29

Member Green moved and Secretary Tanouye seconded a motion to approve the Phase II facility project change orders.

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Green, Secretary Tanouye, Member Khan, Member Marinelli, Member Wyent, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson. Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

C. Approval of Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance Renewal

Mr. Cross reviewed the 18-month Blue Cross Blue Shield renewal of 14.4 percent, which is an effective annualized renewal of 9.6 percent for 12 months. The renewal is for 18 months as part of the transition to the Educational Benefit Cooperative, administered by the district's new brokers at Gallagher. The renewal will be locked in for 18 months as the school district transitions from a January 1 renewal to a July 1 cycle beginning in 2027.

Mr. Cross also reviewed the SunLife dental renewal as the district works to stretch this to an 18 month renewal as well, and there is no increase in the EyeMed vision insurance coverage. The information has been reviewed by the district insurance committee, and open enrollment will be in November.



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Member Khan moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to approve health, dental, and vision insurance renewal.

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Khan, Member Wyent, Member Green, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson.
Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

D. Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance of the Contract and By-Laws Document of the Educational Benefit Cooperative and Authorizing Membership in the EBC

Member Khan moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance of the Contract and By-Laws Document of the Educational Benefit Cooperative and Authorizing Membership in the EBC.

Roll Call Vote – Aye: Member Khan, Member Wyent, Member Green, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson.
Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

E. Approval of District Concussion Oversight Team Members

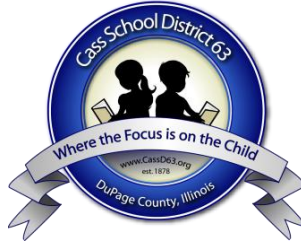
Mr. Cross said that the Board is required to annually appoint Concussion Oversight Team members. It is recommended that the following people be appointed: Concord Nurse Katie Beringer, Cass Nurse Amy Lesnicki, Cass Principal Christine Marcinkewicz, Medical Community Member Dr. Rinku Patel, Superintendent Mark Cross, Athletic Coach Landon Mitchell, and Athletic Director Amy Pollitz.

Member Khan moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to approve the District Concussion Oversight Team Members.

Voice Vote – Aye: Member Khan, Member Wyent, Member Green, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson.
Nay: None. Motion carried 7 to 0.

VI. Conclusion

A. Public Comments



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There was no public comment.

B. Board Member Comments

There were no Board member comments.

C. Adjournment

Member Wyent moved and Member Khan seconded a motion to adjourn this Board of Education Meeting of September 23, 2025 at 8:40 p.m.

Voice Vote – Aye: Member Wyent, Member Khan, Member Green, Member Marinelli, Secretary Tanouye, Vice President Patel, and President Johnson.
Nay: None. Motion carried 6 to 0.

Lana Johnson, Board of Education President

Attest: _____
Urszula Tanouye, Board of Education Secretary