



**Wednesday, May 8, 2024  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205  
HELD AT THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL 17101 SOUTH PARK AVENUE, SOUTH HOLLAND,  
ILLINOIS, AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS CONFERENCING AT 6:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m. President Graham made the following announcement: Any person may record or broadcast an open Board meeting. Special requests to facilitate recordings or broadcast an open Board meeting should be directed to the Superintendent at least 24 hours before the meeting. Recording meetings shall not distract or disturb Board Members or participants. Please know if you participate in public participation, you are part of the Board meeting and may be taped.

ANNOUNCEMENT  
BY BOARD  
PRESIDENT

On roll call, Members Banks, Davis, Graham, Lawrence, and Owens answered. Member Brown joined at 6:45 p.m. Members Moody and Owens were absent. Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Superintendent, Dr. Jerry B. Doss, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources; Mr. Brett Fickes, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Mr. Thomas Porter, Executive Director of Special Services; Mrs. Rosaura Duran, Director of Human Resources; Mr. William Garrett, Manager of Operations; and Mr. Adam Dauksas, legal counsel, were also present.

ROLL CALL

**Report from Curriculum Committee:** The last meeting discussed honoring retirees, Edmentum contract, College & Career Tour in TN, Summer Program Updates, summer to Ghana, international trips for Thornwood, and Big Brother Big Sister. Mr. Fickes invited everyone to the Studio 205 Ribbon Cutting

COMMITTEE OF THE  
WHOLE

**Report from Finance Committee:** All items discussed at the last meeting and are on the agenda for approval. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, June 4.

**Report from Policy Committee:** None.

**Report from Discipline Committee:** None.

**Report from Facilities Committee:** All items discussed at the last meeting and are on the agenda for approval. Summer bus transportation was discussed. The next meeting will be held on May 30, 2024.

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded, to **Approve the Consent Agenda**, which includes the following:

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Regular Meeting and Executive Session Minutes dated April 10, 2024
- B. The District 205 bills as presented for payment dated April 10, 2024 through May 7, 2024

MINUTES

BILLS

Dr. Cunningham stated the following:

SUPERINTENDENT  
REPORT

Good evening,

I address you today to provide an update on our transportation services and to acknowledge a recent interruption in our communication regarding this matter. Firstly, I would like to express my understanding of the disruption caused by the service interruption of Swift K-12, our primary tool for transportation updates. Swift K-12 has played a crucial role in keeping our parents and school buildings informed about the status of First Student buses. However, we encountered a service interruption as Swift K-12 will cease operations on June 30, 2024. I know the disruption of communication has been inconvenient for you, and the district has prioritized addressing the issue.

Our IT Department worked tirelessly to reinstate the service, ensuring communication for the remainder of the school year. The service has been restored today, and we have resumed sending transportation updates to parents. Additionally, the district is currently looking into different communication service providers. We expect to have a solution before June 30, 2024.

Secondly, I wish to acknowledge the challenges we faced with our inter-district transportation plan. As a district, we experienced significant obstacles posed by the pandemic, including the frustration of providing transportation between our schools. These obstacles were a direct result of our service provider, First Student, inability to secure bus drivers mainly due to a nationwide shortage of drivers. We understand how this must have affected you and your children's daily routines. To address this issue, the district devised a plan to purchase buses, with the state reimbursing 80% of the cost. Despite manufacturing delays, our buses arrived just before the 2023-2024 school year started. In the interim, we arranged for smaller transportation groups to manage inter-district transportation until our buses and driver system are fully operational. We are thankful for the cooperation extended by Thornridge, where our buses have been stationed since their arrival.

We understand the frustration caused by seeing our buses idle while we continue to face challenges with First Student. However, it's essential to note that our buses are designated for inter-district transportation and after-school activities only. We will continue to collaborate with First Student for daily school transportation. Our Summer Programs will mark the inaugural operation of our buses, and we intend to utilize them for all inter-district travel during the 2024-2025 school year. We remain committed to planning, working, and implementing strategies to enhance the education of our students.

Lastly, I emphasize the considerable time and effort it takes to develop and manage an inter-district transportation service. From planning routes to ensuring safety protocols, this endeavor demands careful coordination and dedication from our team. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate this complex process.

Thank you for your continued support during these challenging times.

The following individuals spoke during Public Participation:

PUBLIC  
PARTICIPATION

- Ms. F. Crayton of Dolton- Wished all mothers a Happy Mother's Day; issue with handicapped parking being covered. She thanked everyone for the Crayton dedication and wished the students all the best
- Mr. D. Bearden of the Faculty Association- Happy Nurses' Day and Teacher Appreciation Week; Announced retirements and service recognition; Looking forward to the next TABs meeting
- Mr. D. Etheridge of South Holland- provided some personal background, Math Teacher at Thornton, provided some great updates with scholarships
- Mr. K. Wendorff, Thornwood Teacher- overview of various issues with student attendance, cell phone policy, etc. and is looking forward to working with everyone
- Ms. E. Bourne, Thornridge Teacher- thanked the board and administration and some great collaborations with other organizations, professional development, and more training to come
- Ms. S. Dinwiddie, Coach- had information that needed to be discussed in Executive Session. She was directed to speak with Dr. Cunningham
- Dr. S. Khedkar Rao, Clarendon Hills- physician discussed the importance of clean air and providing more education about this to our students. She was directed to speak with Mr. Fickes
- Nordeson Green Earth Foundation- discussed how they would like to partner with D205 on clean air education
- Mr. R. Sinwelski of Harvey Historical Society- spoke about partnering with D205 and Harvey's Historical Society upcoming events

Dr. Doss stated there have been 2 FOIA requests since last board meeting and they have all been answered and responded to.

FREEDOM OF  
INFORMATION ACT  
(FOIA)

Mr. Fickes presented the following information:

COMMUNICATIONS

- Teacher Appreciation Week
  - Expressed gratitude for all our teachers do every day
- Thornridge High School
  - Senior Decision Day
    - Post-High School plans were shared with all
    - Alumni awarded three students with a free laptop
  - South Suburban College's Resource Day
    - Students had an opportunity to visit South Suburban's Pharmacy, Early Education, Legal, and Technology Departments
  - University of Illinois Urbana Champaign Tour
    - Juniors and Sophomores visited the College of Agriculture, Consumer & Environmental Sciences
  - Stomp the Violence Step Show
    - Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) hosted their annual scholarship fundraiser. The \$1,000 scholarship is given to a TR's graduating senior.
- Thornton High School
  - ASE Master Certification for the NAVISTAR Program
    - D205 is the only high school program in North American with this level of designation

- Senior Transition Conference 2024
  - o Alumni gave out over \$200,000 in scholarships
- Sophomore Half Cap Ceremony
  - o 213 Sophomores were eligible to participate
- Freshmen Wildcats on Track
  - o 305 Freshmen were eligible to participate
- Thornwood High School
  - P.U.R.S.E. Foundation Scholarships
    - o 2 Seniors were awarded this scholarship
  - Senior "E" Decision Celebration
    - o Post high school plans were shared with all
  - Art Shows
    - o Two students won awards at the South Suburban Regional Art Show
    - o Two students also won awards at the Congressional Art Show sponsored by Congresswoman Robin Kelly
  - Earth Day Expo
    - o 100 middle school students visited and learned about how important earth day is and viewed many of our students' projects
  - Mental Health and Wellness Fair
    - o Great event to showcase resources that focus on positive mental and physical health
- Peace Center
  - Ray Price Memorial Scholarship Recipient
    - o Senior Amarra Lewis earned this scholarship through hard work the past year and a half
- Employee Recognition
  - Retirees
    - o 3 employees are retiring this year, and we wish them the best
  - Service Years Recognition
    - o Celebrated multiple employees with 25 years of service and Debra Mitchell for 40 years of service

Thornwood Baseball Player, Amira Hondras- Mr. Fickes

- She made IHSA history by pitching a complete baseball game
- Amira Hondras thanked everyone

Thornton Dungeons & Dragons ComiCon Trip- Mr. Fickes

- This provides educational, as well as social and emotion learning for students and provides entertainment for a genre, they have interest in.
- Students gave their insights into the ComiCon Convention and experience with the group

MIM Recording Studio- Mr. Whitaker & Mr. Clark

- This was a two-year project that included updating all equipment and will provide a creative outlet for students, as well as an educational experience

D205 AP African American History, Washington, D.C. Trip- Mr. Fickes

- Overview of this recent trip included a visit to museums, universities, and multiple government buildings. This was a very educational trip for all students and staff
- Staff members and students all provided their insights on their experience

PRESENTATIONS

Studio 205- Class of Cosmetology & Barber School Students- Mr. Fickes

- Ribbon cutting will be held May 9, 2024
- Marilyn Rouse introduced all students enrolled

Students were given medals for their exemplary participation (for all presentations)

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Edmentum Renewal Contract**- as presented by Mr. Fickes. This is an online resource for credit recovery and is a three-year contract. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
EDMENTUM  
RENEWAL  
CONTRACT

Dr. Davis moved, Mr. Brown seconded the **Approval of the Go Guardian's Pear Deck Renewal** as presented by Mr. Fickes. This is used for online assessments at all buildings and all departments. On roll call, Members Davis, Brown, Banks, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF GO  
GUARDIAN'S PEAR  
DECK RENEWAL

Mr. Brown moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded the **Approval of the Fourth Annual Summer College & Cultural Tour** presented by Mr. Fickes. This was presented to both the Finance and Curriculum Committees. Partnering with the Family Centered Educational Agency students will visit several colleges and experience cultural tours in Memphis and Nashville, TN. Dr. McKenzie of FCEA spoke on the grand opening of their new facility for students, and a brief overview of their work. On roll call, Members Brown, Lawrence, Banks, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
FOURTH ANNUAL  
SUMMER COLLEGE  
& CULTURAL TOUR

Dr. Davis moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded the **Approval of the Summer 2024 Calendar** presented by Mr. Fickes. A brief overview of the summer programming was provided. On roll call, Members Davis, Lawrence, Banks, Brown, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
SUMMER 2024  
CALENDAR

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the D205 Foreign Language European Tour, Overnight and Out of the Country Trip, June 10-19, 2024**, as presented by Mr. Whitaker. Students will travel to Belgium, France, and Switzerland and is being fully funded by Explorica. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
D205 FOREIGN  
LANGUAGE  
EUROPEAN TOUR,  
OVERNIGHT AND  
OUT OF THE  
COUNTRY TRIP,  
JUNE 10-19, 2024

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Ghana Field Trip, Projected June 21-29, 2024**, as presented by Mr. Fickes. Ten students from the PEACE Center to provide an educational and cultural experience. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, and Graham voted aye; Member Davis passed due to a conflict of interest and conveyed her support for the trip; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
GHANA FIELD TRIP,  
PROJECTED JUNE  
21-29, 2024

Dr. Davis moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Thornwood Culinary Field Trip to Italy, April 17-26, 2025**, as presented by Mr. Holmes. This allows students to be immersed in a global cuisine experience. On roll call, Members Davis, Banks, Brown, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
THORNWOOD  
CULINARY FIELD  
TRIP TO ITALY,  
APRIL 17-26, 2025

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Thornwood Culinary Field Trip to Paris, April 17-26, 2025**, as presented by Mr. Holmes. This allows students to gain a global and cultural experience for those within the fashion department. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
THORNWOOD  
FASHION  
DEPARTMENT FIELD  
TRIP TO PARIS,  
APRIL 17-26, 2025

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the District-Wide Roofing Repairs** as presented by Mr. Holmes. This includes repair and maintenance of all buildings and was approved at the Finance Committee. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF THE  
DISTRICT-WIDE  
ROOFING REPAIRS

Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of PRESS Plus Policy Update 113**. These updates were available for review since the last board meeting. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF  
PRESS PLUS  
POLICY UPDATE  
113

At 8:19p.m., Dr. Davis moved, Mr. Brown seconded to **Go into Executive Session** pursuant to Section 2C of the Illinois Open Meetings Act to consider:

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees;
- Student discipline;
- Collective negotiating matters, and
- Pending, probable or imminent litigation.

On roll call, Davis, Brown, Banks, Graham, and Lawrence voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

At 9:25p.m., Mr. Banks moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded to **Reconvene Regular Session**. On roll call, Members Banks, Lawrence, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

RECONVENE  
REGULAR SESSION

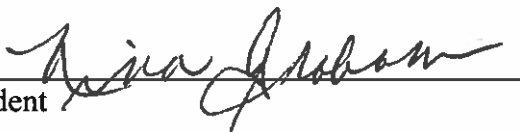
Mrs. Lawrence moved, Mr. Banks seconded the **Approval of the Settlement Agreement with Former Student**. On roll call, Members Lawrence, Banks, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; voted nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVE  
SETTLEMENT  
AGREEMENT WITH  
FORMER STUDENT

At 9:27p.m., Mr. Banks moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded to **Adjourn the Meeting**. On roll call, Members Banks, Lawrence, Brown, Davis, and Graham voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
President



\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

