

**LINCOLN-WAY AREA SPECIAL EDUCATION
Joint Agreement District 843**

MINUTES

Regular Meeting, February 27, 2024

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Special Education, Will County, Illinois, held at Pioneer Grove Educational Center, 601 Willow Street, Frankfort, IL 60423, at 7:00 p.m. on the 27th day of February 2024.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

Roll Call

Present: Dana Bergthold (District #210), Terry Doyle (District #114), Jim Martin (District #161), Ann Zaremba (District 157c)

Absent: Anna Briscoe (District #159)

Staff Present: Sarah Rexroad, Director
Sabina Fitzgerald, Accounting Specialist and Board Secretary

Visitors Present: Judy Boyens, Assistant Director and Transportation Supervisor
Kevin Richter, Technology Coordinator
Michael Romeo, Administrator
Carlene Hochhalter, Teacher
Emily Leitschuh, Teacher
Susan Eisenbrandt, Visitor
Carrey Bunda, Visitor
Michelle Heggerty, Visitor

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan Eisenbrandt spoke to the Governing Board about the need for a fence around the playground at Pioneer Grove.

C. CONSENT AGENDA

Acting on the recommendation of the Director, Ann Zaremba moved, seconded by Terry Doyle for the Governing Board to ratify the Consent Agenda as follows:

1. Approval of January 23, 2024, Regular & Closed Session Minutes
2. Approval of Financial Statement
3. Approval of Current Payables
4. Approval of Personnel Items
 - a. *Employment*
Sidney Stafford, *Bus Monitor & Driver in Training*, effective February 16, 2024
 - b. *Resignation/Retirement*
Lily Hochhalter, *Bus Monitor*, effective February 9, 2024
Lawrence Piwnicki, *Principal*, effective June 30, 2024
 - c. *Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)*

***Voting Aye: Bergthold, Doyle, Martin, Zaremba
Motion carried: 4 Aye, 0 Nay***

D. REPORTS

1. Administrative Reports
 - a. SELF – Michael Romeo
Mr. Romeo reported the February focus on Communication included a “stand for your colleague” activity during the school improvement early release day. The staff role played scenarios

regarding dealing with students. The March focus will be Family Outreach which highlights communication with students' families. Two additional students added a general education class to their schedule, so now 60% of the SELF students are enrolled in at least one general education class. There are currently three students in the STLR classroom with the potential to add two more. Family Sports Night was held the night before, and ten families attended.

- b. Pioneer Grove – Judy Boyens
Dr. Boyens presented Mr. Piwnicki's report in his absence. There are currently 67 students enrolled at Pioneer Grove. One agency paraprofessional resigned, however Mr. Piwnicki interviewed a replacement who seems promising. The PEAK Curriculum materials arrived and Emily Leitschuh is scheduled to attend the train the trainer sessions. The school improvement committee met and discussed how to better train new staff, as well as plans for transitioning new students.
 - c. Technology – Kevin Richter
Mr. Richter reported multifactor authentication has been completed but he still gets calls from staff to assist with authentication and accessing email. The new laptops have arrived and one has been given to an employee to test before distributing to the staff. The deadline to submit e-rate forms to request funds for the Wi-Fi project is March 1. We will then be able to go to bid and find a vendor. We received the iPads that were purchased with ESSER III funds and they are ready for student use.
 - d. Transportation – Judy Boyens
Dr. Boyens reported we currently have 50 drivers transporting 612 students. Training on the Traversa system is mostly finished and it went well. The staff will start using the system in May, running along with the current system and then we will use Traversa exclusively for ESY.
2. Finance Report
- a. Review of Accounts
Mrs. Rexroad reported that there is nothing unusual in the financial reports. The accounts are on track with the budget.
 - b. Transportation ESY Rates
Mrs. Rexroad suggested decreasing the daily ESY bonus that was instituted during Covid. We have changed the drivers' pay structure and given them increases. Mrs. Rexroad discussed this with the Advisory Committee. The main concern with removing the bonus completely is we may not get enough staff. Mrs. Rexroad will work with Mr. Englert to analyze different scenarios including reducing the daily bonus rate and adjusting the guaranteed hours.
3. Director's Report
- a. Staff & Program Update
Mrs. Rexroad reported that Pioneer Grove's enrollment is 67. The SELF Program enrollment is 31 including the STLR classroom. Transportation is transporting 612 students.
 - b. Buildings & Grounds
Mrs. Rexroad distributed copies of the Facility Plan she prepared as part of her goals. The plan includes recommendations for all District 843 buildings. The Mackay Center is currently being used by District 210, as District #843 does not presently have a need for it. Mrs. Rexroad does not recommend making any improvements to the building at this time. The plan recommends some accessibility and ADA improvements to both Pioneer Grove and the Transition House. It also suggested sections of the roofs of both buildings would need replacement in 3-8 years.
 - c. FOIA
District #843 received and responded to four FOIA requests.
 - 1. Katie Sues – 3 Requests
 - 2. Carrey Bunda

E. CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Terry Doyle and seconded by Dana Bergthold to move to a closed session at 7:32 p.m. for the purpose of discussing:

- 1. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees.**
- 2. The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students.**
- 3. Litigation, when an action against, affecting, or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending in court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that such an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting.**

OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Jim Martin to return to open session at 8:34 p.m. On a voice vote the motion carried.

F. OLD BUSINESS

G. NEW BUSINESS

H. ACTION ITEMS

1. Lego Education

A motion was made by Ann Zaremba and seconded by Dana Bergthold that the Governing Board approve the purchase from Lego Education in the amount of \$17,251.20, as part of the ESSER III grant

Voting Aye: Bergthold, Doyle, Martin, Zaremba

Motion carried: 4 Aye, 0 Nay

2. Approval of Settlement Agreement

A motion was made by Ann Zaremba and seconded by Dana Bergthold that the Governing Board approve the settlement agreement in the case of Danielle Vita and Michael Vita v. Lincoln-Way Area Special Education District No. 843, et al., Case No.2022 LA000543

Voting Aye: Bergthold, Doyle, Martin, Zaremba

Motion carried: 4 Aye, 0 Nay

3. Acceptance of Gift

A motion was made by Ann Zaremba and seconded by Dana Bergthold that the Governing Board accept the gift of \$1,000.00 from the St. Mary Mokena Knights of Columbus Council 6993

Voting Aye: Bergthold, Doyle, Martin, Zaremba

Motion carried: 4 Aye, 0 Nay

I. NEXT MEETING

March 19, 2024 – 7:00 p.m. – Pioneer Grove Educational Center

J. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ann Zaremba with a second by Terry Doyle that the meeting is adjourned. All members voted Aye. Motion carried. President Martin declared the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sabina Fritzgerald
Accounting Specialist & Board Recording Secretary

President

Secretary