

**STARK COUNTY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #100**  
**Stark, Knox, Marshall, Henry & Peoria Counties, Illinois**

**Regular Meeting – February 24, 2025**

The Regular Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 18, 2025 was postponed to Monday, February 24, 2025 due to the inability to have a quorum at the meeting.

The Stark County Community Unit School District #100 Board of Education met Monday, February 24, 2025, at the Stark County Elementary School cafeteria. Members present were Emily Leezer, Erin Price, Dane Richards, and Bruce West. Ann Orwig was present virtually. Joseph Rediger and Brian Rewerts were absent. Also present were Brett Elliott, Superintendent; Emily Mastin, Elementary Principal; Jackie Colgan, Elementary Assistant Principal; Megan McGann, Jr./Sr. High School Principal; Michael Jenkins, Jr./Sr. High School Assistant Principal; Rebecca Lane, Unit Clerical/Payroll Clerk; Mike Bunch, IT; Leslie Rennick, Elementary Teacher, and her husband, Bob Rennick; and a member of the press.

With a quorum present, Vice President West called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance, and the Mission and Vision statements were recited.

Next on the agenda was the approval of February bills. Mr. West asked about the check to CORE Construction for the new gym. Mr. Elliott responded that all monies have been paid out of Fund 60 and there is approximately \$500,000 still due, which the board will discuss at a later date. Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. Richards, to approve the February bills of \$700,104.10. Motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

Mr. West presented Pride and Excellence Recognition to the 2025 ISBE Northwest Illinois Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Leslie Rennick. On Friday, February 14, 2025 Stark County Elementary Teacher, Leslie Rennick was contacted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to share the news that she has been selected as the 2025 Northwest Illinois Teacher of the Year. On February 18th, ISBE held an official press conference to release the names of the Illinois Teachers of the Year for each region. Mrs. Rennick is a special education teacher at Stark County Elementary who surrounds her students with love and support in a nurturing yet challenging learning environment. She can be found in her room late into the evenings and weekends preparing engaging and relevant learning activities for her students. She works hand-in-hand with her peers to maximize learning while meeting the individual needs of her students. We are honored and proud to have Mrs. Rennick as a member of the Stark County family. Congratulations to Leslie Rennick, the 2025 Illinois State Board of Education Northwest Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Mastin added that she is thankful to have Mrs. Rennick at SCES, even the small things that she does impacts the whole school. Ms. McGann added that she has not worked with Mrs. Rennick personally, but has seen her impact on the Junior High and High School students who still talk about how much they loved Mrs. Rennick at SCES.

Since our last board meeting, the following faculty and staff members have been nominated by their peers for the Golden Sledgehammer Award for their dedication to the PHEARCE philosophy and the elements to "Protect This House": Paige Milburn, Lexi Davis, Michelle Morrissey, and Maddie Myers. The award recipients were recognized either at the elementary morning assembly or on the SC News.

**Visitor Comments:**

No visitor comments.

**Education Committee:**

Secretary Leezer noted that the education committee meeting earlier tonight included presentations by both principals regarding the annual student handbooks and curriculum guide for the 2025-26 school year. The principals and committee discussed the changes to each document for the upcoming school year.

**Bargaining Team (Finance Committee):**

Mr. Elliott, Mrs. Leezer, Mr. Rediger, and Mrs. Mastin represented the district for negotiations this year. Mrs. Leezer provided a brief overview from negotiations. The interest based bargaining strategy was used, both sides were very transparent and had the same goals. Both the board negotiations team and the teachers' union negotiations team are very happy with and proud of the proposed contract. Mr. Elliott added that at this time, we are waiting to hear back from our lawyers regarding some legal verbiage. Once finalized, the union plans to share the proposed contract with the teachers on March 12<sup>th</sup>, followed by union vote on March 14<sup>th</sup>. The contract will then be up for Board of Education approval at the March 17<sup>th</sup> regular board meeting.

**Administrative Reports:**

Stark County Elementary School Principal, Emily Mastin, shared that all of our students have started Reading Bingo as we approach Read Across America Week at the beginning of March. Students are encouraged to step up their reading and fill in their bingo boards to earn a place at Bingo Breakfast in April. The Title I team is also planning a Family Literacy Night during Read Across America Week to continue to promote reading. We are proud of all of our teachers for completing Cycles of Inquiry in PLCs and proud of those who have completed coaching cycles with Mrs. Colgan. Both of our new teachers and three veteran teachers have completed at least one coaching cycle so far this year. Winterfest Fundraising Week was a huge success! Our district came together in an incredible show of support for the Hemminger family, raising over \$17,000. From fun events to generous donations, the community's kindness and generosity made a meaningful impact. Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed! Congratulations to Mrs. Leslie Rennick who is the ISBE Northwest Teacher of the Year. This is a well-deserved honor for her hard work and dedication. Our community is better because of you, Mrs. Rennick. SCES had no suspensions in the month of January. There were no questions for Mrs. Mastin.

Stark County Junior High/High School Principal, Megan McGann, shared that both the Junior High and High School Reading and Math teams met their STAR Growth targets of 3% when reviewing our Fall to Winter data. We continue to use our PLC time to focus on the Cycles of Inquiry with a shift in focus to ACT Prep for the High School and IAR Prep for the Junior High. The High School will take a practice ACT test on March 5<sup>th</sup> and all 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade students will complete the ACT/Pre-ACT on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Teachers participated in a Semester 1 Gradebook Audit to review our grading practices, analyze the number of formative/summative grades put in the first semester and provide feedback to our grading committee. We have also continued to work with Dara Carr from the Regional Office of Education during PLC time. We hosted a Bradford parent visit

during the Winterfest game on Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup> and provided a tour to two families. We had another Bradford student visit on Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup> where our upperclassmen from Bradford led a tour and FFA hosted an activity for the students. We have continuous visits planned with our BIST consultant this semester, Todd Jefferson, with an upcoming focus on students with repeat disciplinary behaviors. Winterfest was a major success with over \$17,000 raised for The Hemminger Family! This took a village and was a refreshing opportunity for our team and community to come together to support one of our own families in need. Special shout out to Melissa Jackson for all the work she did behind the scenes to secure community donations and lunch sales during the week. We continue to receive positive feedback on our Peer Mentoring process from both the mentors, mentees, and community volunteers. This has proven to be a huge step in the right direction to build support within our own walls. Junior High students really look forward to meeting with their mentors. Congratulations to Garrett Bruecks, solo High School Speech participant who competed in Sectionals this past weekend in Washington, IL. We recognized Lauren Best at the last board meeting for her honor as a NFHS National Arts Finalist for the Heart of the Arts Award, she was recently interviewed by News 25 for a special segment that will air on Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. There were no questions for Ms. McGann.

Stark County Superintendent, Brett Elliott, started his report by thanking the following team leaders who joined him on a Saturday to bargain a new teacher contract. This is a major responsibility taken on by these leaders to ensure that our district continues to move forward in a positive direction that also helps recruit and retain quality staff: Kaleena Conrad, Jade Noard, Sarah DeBord, Clint Terwilliger, Emily Leezer, Joseph Rediger and Emily Mastin. We are so proud of the extra efforts that were made to energize our entire district through our Winterfest Homecoming while teaching our students the power of humility and giving back. We cannot take these purposeful events for granted for how they truly impact our school culture and our entire community. We remind our community that this Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> is an 11:00 am dismissal for our students for our Faculty School Improvement Day (SIP). Also, Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup> is our spring faculty institute with no school for students. Spring Break is April 14<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> with students and staff returning on Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Elliott concluded his report with an update on the budget, showing expenditures through 58.33% of Fiscal Year 2025. He noted that the Transportation Fund looks higher due to a \$50,000 down payment that will later be reimbursed by the federal electric bus grant. There were no questions for Mr. Elliott.

**Unfinished Business:**

Superintendent Elliott presented an overview of the proposed school calendar for 2025-26 school year as recommended by the Annual Calendar Committee and presented at the last board meeting.

2025:

- Teacher Institutes: Tuesday, August 12 and Wednesday, August 13, 2025
- First Day of School for Students: Thursday, August 14
- Early Release (1:45 pm) through Labor Day
- Labor Day: Monday, September 1, 2025 No School
- Evening Parent Conferences: October 14 and 16
  - Early Release, 1:45pm on Oct. 14, 16 for conference prep

2025 (continued):

- Parent Conference Trade Day (No School) Friday, October 17
- Thanksgiving Break: November 26-28
- Winter Break: Friday, December 19 – Friday, January 2

2026:

- Teacher Institute: Monday, January 5, 2026
- Students/Staff return from Winter Break Tuesday, January 6, 2026
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: Monday, January 19 No School
- Presidents Day: Monday, February 16 No School
- Friday, March 13: Teacher Institute
- Spring Break Friday, April 3 – Friday, April 10 (Easter, April 5)
- Students Return from Spring Break: Monday, April 13
- Graduation: Sunday, May 17, 2026\*
- Eighth Grade Promotion/Last Day: Wednesday, May 13, 2026\*
- Last Day of School/SIP Day: Thursday, May 21, 2026: 11:00 am Student Dismissal
- Emergency Days: May 22,26,27,28, 29
- SIP Days: September 24, October 29, February 25, April 29, May 21
- Early Release Wednesdays (8:00 am – 1:45 pm)
- In Session: Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Mt. Pulaski

\*Graduation and Eighth Grade Promotion dates to be approved at a later date.

Mr. Richards made a motion to approve the 2025-26 school calendar as presented.

Seconded by Mr. West and approved 5-0.

Superintendent Elliott provided an overview of the bid opening meeting held on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 with bids from three companies. After discussions with Transportation Director, Toni Nowlan, the recommendation is to award Midwest Bus Sales the (1) Activity Bus 3-year lease and Midwest Transit Equipment the (5) 65 Passenger 3-year bus leases. Mrs. Leezer made a motion to award the 3-year activity bus lease (1) to Midwest Bus Sales and the (5) 3-year leases of 65 Passenger Buses to Midwest Transit Equipment as presented for FY26. Mrs. Price seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

### **New Business:**

Principal Mastin and Principal McGann presented overviews of the proposed 2025-26 student handbooks at tonight's committee meeting. This was the first reading with possible approval in March. No action taken.

Ms. McGann provided an overview of changes to the proposed 2025-26 curriculum guide at tonight's committee meeting. This is the first reading with possible approval in March. No action taken.

Superintendent Elliott presented the SCES window replacement plan through Taylor Glass that is part of the strategic plan. The project will be divided into three phases in order to monitor finances and work around the school calendar. Phase I will begin this spring with a target window of spring break at a cost of \$34,500. Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve phase one of the SCES window replacement project as presented. Seconded by Mr. West. Passed 5-0.

At the last board meeting a discussion was had regarding the scoreboard issues at the athletic complex. Superintendent Elliott has received quotes ranging from \$28,000 - \$34,000. Mr. West asked if the scoreboard would be similar to what is in the new gym, to which Mr. Elliott responded yes. Mrs. Price made a motion to approve the superintendent to pursue a scoreboard replacement project at a max cost to remain below the \$35,000 bidding threshold. Motion seconded by Mr. West and motion passed by a 4-1 vote. Mrs. Orwig voted against.

**Items for Next Meeting:**

Approval of School Handbooks; Approval of High School Curriculum Guide; Approval of Updated School Calendar; Possible First Reading of PRESS Policy updates.

**Executive Session:**

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. Richards, to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing employee compensation, employee performance, resignations and retirements at 6:30 p.m. Motion was approved 5-0.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. West, to reconvene from Executive Session at 7:19 p.m. and to hold the Executive Session minutes, Not for Release. Motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. Richards, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 21, 2025, Not for Release. Motion was approved 5-0.

Mrs. Leezer announced the retirement of Vicki Nowlan, Junior/Senior High School Clerical, on October 31, 2025.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer to approve Erin Hardigan as Musical Art Director. Mr. West seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve Cassandra Williams as Assistant Cook. Mrs. Price seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer to approve the maternity leave of Grace Michal/McClure from April 13, 2025 through the conclusion of the 2024-25 school year. Mr. West seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Mrs. Leezer announced the resignation Andrew Collins, Junior High Science Teacher, Assistant Junior High Football Coach, and Junior High 8th Grade Basketball Coach, effective at the conclusion of the 2024-25 school year.

Mrs. Leezer announced the resignation of Kara Dauck, Pre-K Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-25 school year.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer to approve Kelsey Berchtold as High School Softball Assistant Coach. Mr. West seconded and motion passed 5-0.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. West, to adjourn at 7:22 p.m. Motion was approved 5-0.

Ann Orwig  
President

Emily Leezer  
Secretary

Approved 3/17/2025