

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

**Regular Meeting – January 21, 2025**

The Stark County Community Unit School District #100 Board of Education met Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at the Stark County Elementary School cafeteria. Members present were Emily Leezer, Ann Orwig, Erin Price, Joseph Rediger, Brian Rewerts, Dane Richards, and Bruce West. No members 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; Kaleena Conrad, Teacher & Instructional Coach; and a member of the press.

With a quorum present, President Orwig called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance, and the Mission and Vision statements were recited.

Motion was made by Mr. West, seconded by Mr. Richards, to approve the consent calendar. Items approved under the consent calendar were:

- Approval of the December 16, 2024 Board Minutes;
- Approval of the December Elementary Activity Funds, December JH/HS Activity Funds, December Self-Insurance Fund, December Imprest Fund, and December Treasurer's Report;
- Approval of the December LEA checks as follows: City of Wyoming \$480.28 Stark County CUSD #100 \$153,315.81, Guardian \$367.15, Guardian \$3,345.94, Guardian \$567.13, Guardian \$471.16, Stark County CUSD #100 \$300.00, U.S. Postal Service \$500.00, Stark County CUSD #100 \$187,850.79, Angie Roark \$500.00, VISA \$2,230.92, VISA \$3,019.88, VISA \$943.13, Imprest Fund \$7,224.72, Bart Frey \$738.98.

Motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

Next on the agenda was the approval of January bills. Mr. West asked if this would be the last check to CORE Construction for the new gym. Mr. Elliott responded that there is approximately \$700,000 still due. Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mrs. Price, to approve the January bills of \$656,747.16. Motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

Mrs. Orwig noted that Lauren Best, the NFHS National Arts Finalist was not in attendance at tonight's meeting but that she had just been recognized at the grand opening of the new gym and on the SC News. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) developed the Heart of the Arts Award in 2013 as a way to recognize individuals who exemplify the positive ideals of performing arts that are the core mission of education-based participation in arts and activities. Students, coaches, administrators and other individuals associated with a high school's performing arts programs are all eligible for the honor, which generally recognizes individuals who have overcome adversity or gone above and beyond their peers. The IHSA receives one nominee to represent the entire state of Illinois each school year. This year, based on Miss Elswick's recommendation in support of Principal Megan McGann, the IHSA has chosen Stark County Senior, Lauren Best, to be the singular Illinois State nominee for her exceptional musical ability, passion, and leadership. Congratulations Lauren, we are proud of you!

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”: Thomas Blumer, Nikki Kelly, Linda Neiryneck, and Angela Tuthill. The award recipients were recognized either at the elementary morning assembly or on the SC News.

**Visitor Comments:**

No visitor comments.

**Calendar Committee:**

President Orwig provided an overview of the calendar committee meeting held last week which included two proposed options, detailed discussion and a unanimous recommendation. The Calendar Committee is made up of representatives from the administration, board of education, and teachers from both campuses. The option that the committee is recommending is very similar to the current year’s calendar. Details will be shared later in the meeting during the first reading of the 2025-26 school calendar.

**Henry Stark Governing Board Report:**

Secretary Leezer provided an overview from the Henry Stark Governing Board Meeting that was held at the end of December. There was discussion of the budget, staffing, renewal of the self-funded health insurance, a new executive director, the addition of an assistant executive director, and the purchase of a building in Kewanee. Henry Stark has put in an offer to purchase the old Kewanee American Legion building with the intent to start an Autism school in Kewanee so that students do not have to be transported to Peoria or the Quad Cities to receive the services they need.

**Administrative Reports:**

Stark County Elementary School Principal, Emily Mastin, shared that last week she, Mrs. Colgan and Mr. Jenkins attended the BIST Leadership Conference, where they had the opportunity to visit Kansas City area schools that currently implement the BIST program. Their experience allowed them to plan for further implementation, strengthening our capacity to support students in making improved behavioral decisions through a model of grace and accountability. Our recent STAR benchmark assessments show significant growth across all grade levels from the Fall to Winter windows. In ELA, the percentage of students performing at or above the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile increased from 31.12% to 43.83% (12.71-point increase), while in Math, it rose from 33.33% to 37.84% (4.51-point increase). The Parents Club recently wrapped up their final Project Playground fundraiser for 2024, raising nearly \$4,000 so far this year. They are now gearing up for the annual auction on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, in partnership with the Stark County Education Foundation, to continue supporting important initiatives like Project Playground. We’ve started 2025 strong by reteaching all common area expectations and implementing our BIST 10-day lessons to ensure students are equipped for success in school and life. Last week, our BIST vision team led a PLC focused on enhancing supports for student needs. There were no questions for Mrs. Mastin.

Stark County Junior High/High School Principal, Megan McGann, has returned from her maternity leave. She shared that we have 97% of Freshmen currently on track (63 of 65 Freshmen) after Semester 1 and 62 out of 63 Seniors on track to graduate. Supports have been put in place for all students to have a successful second semester. Administration has held Grade Level meetings for all students to review school expectations and academic standing after first semester. These conversations included sharing upcoming important dates for graduation and scholarships with Seniors. Thank you to Dara Carr from the ROE who spent several weeks in PLCs with our staff working through teaching and learning strategies to improve our practice. We would like to thank Mr. Blumer for his time and positive energy that he brought to SCJSHS during Ms. McGann's maternity leave. The students and staff grew to love his presence and we are so appreciative of him 'watching over' the building with such pride. Congratulations to Lauren Best who is the Illinois State Nominee for the National Federation of State High School Associations Heart of the Arts Award. Lauren was chosen for her exceptional musical ability, passion, and leadership by the IHSA. We are excited for the opening of the new gymnasium and gearing up for Winterfest – which will take place from February 3-7. Our focus for this year will be fundraising for the SC Angel Fund, which was started at Stark County Elementary School. Winterfest will include a Walk-A-Thon in the new gym. Mr. Rewerts asked about the drop in enrollment for the junior class, Ms. McGann noted that could be due to grade level adjustments but that she was also aware that a few students had left. There were no other questions for Ms. McGann.

Stark County Superintendent, Brett Elliott, shared that we are proud of the Grand Opening Event we hosted on January 10th for the new gymnasium. We want to thank the entire community for coming out to support this historic event. We have received authority from the federal government to move into tier II of the solar bus grant. We will be meeting with our solar provider and architect this month to take the next steps of our new bus barn and solar install in preparation for our first electric bus. All funding is covered by the federal grant and will be completed by the end of 2025. We will begin bargaining with the teacher association in February for a new collective bargaining agreement. We want to remind everyone to review our Snow/Emergency Day protocols available on our website and remain flexible as we make decisions for learning and safety of our students and staff. We had an eLearning Day today due to the weather, but plan to be back in school tomorrow. Mr. Elliott finished with a budget update on expenditures through 50% of fiscal year 2025. There were no questions for Mr. Elliott.

**Unfinished Business:**

After our first reading in November, our Cardiac Emergency Response Plan is ready for board approval to meet the new state mandate for all districts. Mr. West made a motion to approve the Cardiac Emergency Response Plan as presented. Seconded by Mr. Rediger and approved 7-0.

District Instructional Coaches, Jackie Colgan and Kaleena Conrad, presented an update on the new instructional coaching program and its growth over this first semester. Mrs. Colgan and Mrs. Conrad have participated in classroom observations, push in sessions, sessions of co-teaching, one on one teacher meetings, learning walks, collaboration meetings with Mr. Elliott, and more! With 10 out of 28 teachers at the Junior High/High School being in their first years of teaching, Mrs. Conrad has focused on supporting

these new teachers, setting goals with them, and celebrating their successes, big and small. Mrs. Colgan has also spent a lot of time with the new teachers at the Elementary School as well as helping teachers with more experience who have reached out to her for support. Mrs. Price added that she feels they are doing a great job and that this will be a great recruitment and retention tool for the district. She asked if they had sent out any kind of satisfaction survey after semester 1. Mrs. Colgan noted that although they had not sent out a survey, she does often end her meetings with a reflection and discussion of how the meeting has helped the teacher. Mr. Rewerts asked if they had been getting any resistance from the teachers. Mrs. Conrad felt that there had not really been any resistance, she noted that there was an initial adjustment of getting used to her presence in the classroom but that the teachers and students had both adjusted well. It helped that Mr. Elliott was already present in the classrooms on a regular basis. Mr. West noted that it will be interesting to see if the instructional coaching support will be mirrored in the teacher evaluation results and hopes that the coaching will take away some of the anxieties of the professional evaluations. No action taken.

**New Business:**

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

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: Oct. 14 and 16
  - Early Release, 1:45pm on Oct. 14, 16 for conference prep
- Parent Conference Trade Day (No School) Friday, Oct. 17
- Thanksgiving Break: November 26-28
- Winter Break: Friday, Dec. 19, 2025 – Friday, Jan. 2, 2026

2026:

- Teacher Institute: Monday, January 5, 2026
- Students/Staff return from Winter Break Tuesday, Jan. 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: Sept. 24, Oct. 29, Feb. 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.

This was the first reading, with a final recommendation up for approval in February.  
No action taken.

Next was an annual action item to accept the faculty seniority list in the event of a reduction in force. This meets our annual PERA/RIF requirements. This document has been accepted by the teacher association and district office. Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve the annual faculty seniority list as presented. Seconded by Mr. West. Passed 7-0.

Another annual task in the event of a reduction in force, which will not occur this year, is the acceptance of the annual sequence of honorable dismissal list. This lists the order for dismissing faculty. This has been verified by the teacher association. Mr. Rediger made a motion to accept the updated Sequence of Honorable Dismissal List as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Rewerts and motion passed by a 7-0 vote.

Due to a recent Kentucky Title IX ruling, the August 2024 Title IX policies are null and void. Thus, we have been instructed by legal to readopt the previous 2020 Title IX PRESS policies, administrative procedures and exhibits. Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve readopting the 2020 Title IX PRESS Policies, Procedures and Exhibits as presented. Mr. Richards seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

Superintendent Elliott presented the renewal of our annual contract with M and M Lawn Service to maintain lawn care of the football stadium property from April 1 – November 30, 2025 at a rate of \$50/hour. Mrs. Orwig made a motion to approve the 2025 Lawn Service contract with M and M Lawn Care as presented. Seconded by Mr. Rewerts and passed by a 7-0 vote.

Next was an annual approval to seek bids for bus leases for the new fiscal year. There are five 65 passenger buses and one activity bus coming off lease this year. Mrs. Orwig made a motion to approve the superintendent to let bids for bus leases for FY26. Mr. West seconded. Passed 7-0.

### **Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Vision 2030 Resolution**

Superintendent Elliott provided an overview of the IASA Vision 2030 Plan. He recommended that the board supports Vision 2030. Mrs. Orwig read the following resolution aloud:

Illinois Vision 2030

*WHEREAS, public education plays a defining role in ensuring equal opportunity for children in Illinois and throughout the United States; and*

*WHEREAS, it is our collective duty to ensure that every student, regardless of demographic or geographic identity, has equal access to a quality, public education; and*

*WHEREAS, we believe that strides need to be proactively made to face challenges and continually improve our public education system; and*

*WHEREAS, there have been three areas of prioritization identified as integral in improving our public education system: Future-Focused Learning, Shared Accountability, and Predictable Funding; and*

*WHEREAS, Future-Focused Learning should address: promoting future-driven skills that allow for more college and career exploration; enhancing student safety and well-being; attracting and retaining a high quality and diverse educator pipeline; and promoting curriculum and instructional flexibility to meet the unique needs of local communities; and*

*WHEREAS, Shared Accountability should address: reforming the Illinois assessment system to be a timely and useful measure of student proficiency and growth over time; reforming the current accountability system to provide local flexibility for identifying indicators that create a more holistic view of student success; and reforming the mandate process to ensure implementation procedures that promote flexibility and local decision making; and*

*WHEREAS, Predictable Funding should address: protecting the integrity and funding of the evidence-based funding formula; strengthening public education through pension reforms; and establishing equitable funding sources for Capital and safety needs; and*

*WHEREAS, it is imperative that any education improvement proposal for comprehensive change must be developed and supported by not only the education community, but in collaboration with families, communities, businesses, and others whose priorities reflect the best interests of the students;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stark County CUSD #100 Board of Education joins with the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA), Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), Illinois Principals' Association (IPA), Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO), Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS), Superintendents' Commission for the Study of Demographics and Diversity (SCSDD), Illinois Alliance of Special Education Administrators (IAASE), and the Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools (AIRSS) in supporting the Vision 2030 education improvement policy; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Stark County CUSD #100 Board of Education urges the Illinois General Assembly to approve the necessary legislative changes to implement the recommendations under the three pillars of education improvement as contained in the Vision 2030 policy.*

Mr. West made a motion to adopt the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Vision 2030 as presented, adopted this 21st day of January, 2025. Mr. Rewerts seconded and motion passed 7-0.

**Items for Next Meeting:**

Approval of the 2025-26 School Calendar; Possible Finance Committee Meeting; Education Committee meeting; First Reading of School Handbooks and High School Curriculum Guides; Approval of bus bids; Board of Education Building Visits Reports.

**Executive Session:**

Motion was made by Mrs. Price, seconded by Mr. Richards, to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing employee compensation, non-renewals, employee performance, employment of personnel and resignations at 7:09 p.m. Motion was approved 7-0.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. West, to reconvene from Executive Session at 8:14 p.m. and to hold the Executive Session minutes, Not for Release. Motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mrs. Orwig, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of December 16, 2024, Not for Release. Motion was approved 7-0.

Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve Jason Clark as High School Physical Education teacher beginning the 2025-26 school year. Mr. West seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer to approve Clint Terwilliger as High School Boys Head Track Coach. Mr. Rewerts seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve Jade Noard for morning cafeteria supervision. Mrs. Orwig seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer to approve an unpaid leave of absence for Mary Beth Newby, Rtl Aide, from January 27, 2025 through April 30, 2025. Mr. Richards seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

Mrs. Leezer announced the resignation of Felicia Potter, kitchen worker, effective January 9, 2025.

Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve the maternity leave of Amy Sierra beginning approximately March 6, 2025 through the remainder of the 2024-25 school year. Mrs. Orwig seconded. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mr. Rewerts, to adjourn at 8:16 p.m. Motion was approved 7-0.

Bruce West  
Vice President

Emily Leezer  
Secretary