

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

**Regular Meeting – December 15, 2025**

The Stark County Community Unit School District #100 Board of Education met Monday, December 15, 2025, at the Stark County Elementary School cafeteria. Members present were Emily Leezer, Ann Orwig, Erin Price, Joseph Rediger, Chelsea Streitmatter, and Bruce West. Dane Richards was absent. Also present were: Brett Elliott, Superintendent; Emily Mastin, Elementary Principal; Jackie Colgan, Elementary Assistant Principal; Rebecca Lane, District Clerical/Payroll Clerk; Mike Bunch, IT; Stark County students, parents, and members of the community; and Karen Lisota, SCES Parents Club President.

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.

President Orwig opened the Public Truth in Taxation Hearing. Stark County makes it a practice to have a Truth in Taxation Hearing every year, whether or not it is required (a hearing is required for a funding increase above 4.99%). Mr. Elliott presented the rationale for the proposed tax levy, including predictions that school funding across the state will decrease and costs will continue to increase. He noted five key areas to keep a close eye on in regards to spending: salaries, benefits, energy, facilities, and casualty insurance. Mr. Elliott previously presented four tax levy options to the board. Based on the estimates, a 5.66% increase will maximize funding without increasing the tax rate. There were no questions from the board or comments from the public. Mrs. Orwig closed the Public Truth in Taxation Hearing.

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

- Approval of the November 17, 2025 Board Minutes;
- Approval of the November Elementary Activity Funds; November JH/HS Activity Funds; November Self-Insurance Fund; November Imprest Fund; and November Treasurer's Report;
- Approval of the November LEA checks as follows: City of Wyoming \$942.00, Humana \$153.95, Humana \$3,013.80, Humana \$696.17, Humana \$628.45, Stark County CUSD #100 \$175,783.51, Illinois State Fire Marshall \$250.00, Stark County CUSD #100 \$204,631.57, Coaching by Concept \$4,250.00, Angela Roark \$800.00, Kelly L. Stewart \$337.50, VISA \$747.95, VISA \$2,428.91, VISA \$1,828.85, VISA \$1,751.66, State Bank of Toulon \$957,000.00, Stark County CUSD #100 \$400.00, Imprest Fund \$5,661.18.

Motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Next on the agenda was the approval of December bills. Mr. West asked if the truck repair was for the truck that they had talked about. Mr. Elliott responded that it was a different diesel truck that needed some work. Motion was made by Mr. West, seconded by Mr. Rediger, to approve the December bills of \$511,408.53. Motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

### **Pride and Excellence Recognition**

The Board of Education proudly recognized the numerous Stark County Junior High and High School students who competed at the Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA) contest that included over 23,000 participants. Congratulations to Piper Tyree and Levi Sparks for being selected to participate in the All State Senior Chorus and Junior Band, respectively. This is a recognition that they are two of the best student musicians in the state of Illinois! They will perform at the Illinois Music Education Conference in January 2026 at the Peoria Civic Center.

This fall, music students worked on auditioning for the ILMEA District 2 Honor Band and Choir Festival. All students who were interested in participating had to prepare a video audition that included excerpts from selected pieces and showed off their ability to do basic skills with their voice or on their instrument. Those were judged by professional musicians from across the state of Illinois, and only the top auditions were selected to participate. 26 Stark County students were selected to participate across 4 ensembles: Junior Treble Chorus, Junior Mixed Chorus, Junior Band, and Senior Chorus.

Treble Chorus Participants: Auhnaleya Nanninga, Abbi Hildebrandt, Jenna Dean, Brylee Stookey, Cloie Jones, Avery Stroup, and Gabby Williams.

Junior Mixed Chorus Participants: Hailey Lane, Graicyn Pheiffer, Brailynn Galli, Autumn Endress, Caleb Endress, Benjamin Wilkinson, Quinn Hart, Allison Gibson, Jonathan Ely, Kadence Harlan, Albert Beckett, Mia Thompson, and Reed Marsh.

Senior Chorus Participants: Anna Newby, Piper Tyree, and Jocelynn Bush.

Junior Band Participants: Evie Hess and Levi Sparks.

Levi Sparks got first chair bass clarinet (which means he had the strongest audition in our entire ILMEA District, including students at larger schools).

Ms. Elswick led a performance of a choral piece that was performed by the ensemble at ILMEA. President Orwig congratulated the students on all of their success at ILMEA and thanked them for the beautiful performance.

### **Visitor Comments:**

There were no visitor comments.

### **Education Committee Report:**

Ms. McGann was absent due to illness today, therefore tonight's Education Committee Meeting was postponed until January. The board was given a print out to review before the next meeting.

### **Triple I Board Conference Update:**

The board attended the Annual Triple I Conference in Chicago and provided updates on sessions that they attended. Unfortunately, President Orwig was ill and unable to attend the conference this year. Mr. West shared that exhibit hall was great, it is always nice to visit with different vendors and see our current vendors there as well. He attended a school finance session that explained the financial cliff and reiterated what we are up against over the next few years. Mr. West also attended a board meetings session that was a great refresher on what may and may not be said at a public board meeting. He felt this year's conference was much better than the last one he attended.

Mrs. Price added that the two key note speakers spoke about uniting as a board and how to react to adversity. Mr. Rediger commented that he attended a session about culture building and teamwork, he noted that they presented a lot of things that Stark County has already been doing for the past three years. Ms. Streitmatter appreciated Dr. Doug Bolton's presentation on making students feel like they belong and also enjoyed the exhibit hall. Mrs. Leezer attended an insurance session and another session that provided great ideas for rural communities and the possibilities that can be opened for students when small schools work together. Mrs. Orwig asked the board to think about the time and money spent to attend the conference, the board currently attends every other year. She questioned if they should attend more often or less often. Discussion tabled for later.

**Administrative Reports:**

Stark County Elementary School Principal, Emily Mastin, shared that our quarterly Student Problem-Solving Meetings have facilitated great progress, as evidenced by positive student outcomes, following the implementation of intentional and targeted interventions. These check-ins ensure that our support structures are dynamic and responsive to individual student needs throughout the academic year. The Specials team has planned a collaborative "Holidays Around the World" unit, which directly supports our strategic planning efforts to promote cultural learning and global awareness among our students. This cross-curricular initiative provides an engaging, hands-on opportunity for students to learn about diverse traditions and perspectives. Thank you to Miss Hagan, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Ropp, and Ms. Swope for your efforts on this initiative. Our recent December Spirit Days have been a tremendous success, fostering a strong sense of community and providing students with fun, engaging ways to celebrate the season. This week's festive activities will culminate in classroom holiday parties on Friday, further enhancing our positive school culture before winter break. We are eagerly anticipating our Holiday Concert on Tuesday evening, which will serve as a vibrant celebration of "Holidays Around the World" and allow our students to proudly showcase their musical and performance talents. This event is a wonderful opportunity to bring our school community together and recognize the hard work of our performers and staff. We extend heartfelt congratulations to Mrs. Hamilton for successfully completing her student teaching in 1st grade, and we are incredibly proud of the significant professional growth she demonstrated this semester. A special thank you is also due to Mrs. Gibler, who seamlessly stepped into an office support role to facilitate this opportunity, providing invaluable and unwavering service to our school community. There were no questions for Mrs. Mastin.

Stark County Junior High/High School Principal, Megan McGann, was unable to attend tonight's meeting due to illness. Superintendent Elliott shared details from her report: We will hold our Quarter 2 Problem Solving Student meetings this last week and focus on those students who have shown growth and/or need additional support in the classroom. We are wrapping up our Mid Year STAR testing in both Reading and Math. Our school focus in both areas is to show at least 2% growth from their Fall Benchmark data. Both the Junior High and High School teams will be recognizing those students that have met their growth goal. A reminder that the last day for Semester 1 grades will be on Thursday, December 18th. We do not send out physical report cards. All grades will be posted on Skyward for parents and students to access. We are able to print out report

cards and transcripts at the student/parent request from the front office. We hosted our first Rebel Roundtable on Friday (12/12/25) focusing on sharing information regarding our Discipline Policy and our Threat Assessment Team process. We had four parents attend that asked informative questions and provided our administrative team with feedback to continue to build our communication and transparency throughout our school community. (Mr. Elliott added that Mrs. Price attended the Junior High/High School Rebel Roundtable and Mr. Rediger attended the Elementary School Rebel Roundtable.) Thank you to our High School Student Council and Junior High Student Council for continuing to demonstrate their passion for helping others and bringing positive energy to our school. We have had a wonderful Thanksgiving and Holiday season due to the work that our students have put forward. We continue to bring awareness to our attendance incentives hosted by our partners at the State Bank of Toulon. Last month, we provided popcorn to all qualifying students. Popcorn was paid for and provided by Zach Wise at Country Financial and Lucky Dirt Co popcorn! Congratulations to Piper Tyree and Levi Sparks for earning All State achievement in Choir (Tyree) and Band (Sparks). Both students were recognized earlier in tonight's meeting. Both will perform at the All State performances in January at the Peoria Civic Center. Levi Sparks is the first ever Junior High Band All State Honoree from Stark County. There were no questions for Mr. Elliott regarding Ms. McGann's report.

Stark County Superintendent, Brett Elliott, shared that his experience at the Triple I Conference this year included the ISBE Student Advisory Board. He was proud that a lot of the things that the student board said needed to be put in place at schools, Stark County has already put into place. We are so proud of completing another highly successful 1<sup>st</sup> semester where we saw continued growth in our teaching and learning, facilities, athletics and extracurricular activities. Our students, teachers and staff continue to live the PHEARCE philosophy that is producing a tremendous culture of learning as we continue to Earn Our Stripes! We are proud to share the growth of our Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Evidence of positive, impactful teaching and learning can be seen throughout the district on a daily basis. Winter Break begins Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> - January 5<sup>th</sup>, with students returning Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>. Teachers will return Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup> for our annual winter institute. We want to wish our students, staff, administrative team, board of education and the entire community a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! Lastly, Mr. Elliott gave a budget update on expenditures through 41.7% of Fiscal Year 2026. He noted that transportation expenditures are approximately \$120,000 higher than this time last year and that we continue to track things closely. There were no questions for Mr. Elliott.

**Unfinished Business:**

The SCES Parents Club President, Karen Lisota, did a follow up presentation with new numbers and a proposal of doing the project in phases. She originally presented at the November board meeting. The new proposal was that the playground could be purchased and installed in two phases and that the Parents Club would fund \$40,000 in the first year and \$20,000 in the second year. She noted that the club aims to keep current school supports in place while raising funds for the playground. Sponsorship letters for their auction fundraiser were just sent out in December, and the plan is to send out playground sponsorship letters in January. The board asked a few questions and thanked Mrs. Lisota for all of her work and research. No action taken.

Next was the adoption of the Tax Levy. Mrs. Orwig made a motion to adopt the 2025 Tax Levy as presented at a 5.66% increase in funding and to direct the Superintendent to submit the Certificate of Tax Levy to the county clerks. Seconded by Mrs. Leezer, passed with a 6-0 vote.

It is recommended that we officially review the Risk Management Plan at the time of the Tax Levy approval. Through the Risk Management Plan, the following expenditures are charged to the Tort Fund: annual insurance premiums, legal cost/liability, and a percentage of salaries (Superintendent 50%, Building Administration 25%, School Nurses 20%, and Maintenance Director 10%). Mr. West made a motion to approve the 2026-27 Risk Management Plan as presented. Mrs. Leezer seconded, motion passed with 6-0 vote.

Next was the second reading of Press Policy Issue #120. The key components of the policy updates include student safety, student discipline, immigration, personnel and curriculum. Mrs. Leezer made a motion to approve the PRESS Policy Issue #120 as presented. Seconded by Ms. Streitmatter and passed 6-0.

**New Business:**

Superintendent Elliott reminded the board that The Local Government Travel Expense Control Act requires that all school boards in Illinois take action annually to comply with the law. One requirement is that each year, you set the maximum allowable reimbursement for travel, meals and lodging expenses for board members and employees. It is acknowledging the amount we have allocated for travel purposes. For Fiscal Year 2026, that amount is \$58,440 as indicated by our auditor. Mrs. Orwig made a motion to approve the expense reimbursements for the amount of \$58,440 for Fiscal Year 2026. Seconded by Mr. West. Motion passed with 6-0 vote.

The district owns a 2006 Ford F-150 maintenance truck that Mr. Elliott says is no longer used on a regular basis (151,992 miles) due to the purchase of the two plow trucks. He recommended that the board declare the truck as "Surplus Property" so that he can put it up for sale or bid. Mrs. Price made a motion to declare the 2006 F-150 truck as Surplus Property as presented. Seconded by Mr. Rediger. Passed 6-0.

**Items for Next Meeting:**

Discussion of the 2026-27 School Calendar; Approval of Annual Seniority and Honorable Dismissal List.

**Executive Session:**

Mrs. Price made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing employee compensation, employee performance, employment of personnel, retirements, and/or resignations at 6:52 pm. Seconded by Mr. West. Motion was approved 6-0.

Joseph Rediger was not present for open session following executive session.

After returning to open session, the board briefly discussed the SCES playground follow up presentation. At the Triple I Conference, Mr. West came across a company that does Health Life Safety Audits of playgrounds. There was discussion of possibly setting up a Building Committee Meeting and inviting the parents club to it. There was also discussion of inviting the sales person for the playground equipment to a future board meeting to present.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mrs. Orwig, 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 Mrs. Price, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of November 17, 2025, Not for Release. Motion was approved 5-0.

Mrs. Leezer announced the resignation of Brittany Venzon as Sophomore Class Sponsor, effective at the end of the 2025-26 school year.

Mrs. Leezer announced the resignation of Deidre Morgan, para-professional, effective December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Mrs. Leezer made a motion to place Lindsey Garcia, Junior High/High School Building Secretary, on paid administrative leave pending the review of her personnel records and employee performance. Seconded by Mrs. Orwig. Motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

Motion was made by Mrs. Leezer, seconded by Mrs. Orwig, to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. Motion was approved 5-0.

Ann Orwig  
President

Emily Leezer  
Secretary

Approved 1/20/2026