BOARD BRIEFS

A report of items discussed and actions taken at the April 14, 2026 Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Effie "Chrissi" Petropulos, President
Joy Labudzik, Vice President
JoAnna Grove, Secretary
Tierza Lammel, Member
Antonio Medina, Member
Laura Schroeder, Member
Stacy Berkin, Member

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Adam Thorns, Superintendent
Mrs. Megan Nothnagel, Curriculum Director
Mrs. Kathy Picciolini, CSBO
Mr. Cary Hillegonds, Director of Student Services
Mrs. Karoline Burcheri, Director of Bilingual/EL
Mrs. Fran Setaro, Principal
Mrs. Leighanne Kaczmarek, Asst. Principal
Mr. Geoff Youngberg, Principal
Mrs. Julie Bazian, Asst. Princpal
Dr. Katy King, Principal
Mrs. Emily Geyer, Asst. Principal

CHICAGO RIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT 127 ½

Leaders in Learning

Reports to the Board

- Dr. Thorns shared the current enrollment, explained staffing needs, and informed the Board that the next PTA event was the End of the Year Bash being held May 20 from 5-7 PM at Ridge Lawn School. He discussed the 8th grade end-of-the-year events including the 8th grade banquet at Garden Chalet on Friday, May 15, at 6:30 PM and 8th grade graduation at Richards High School on Thursday May 28, at 7:00 PM. Dr. Thorns talked about ongoing student registration. Discounted fees would be available until April 20. Kindergarten registration was being held at Ridge Lawn on April 15 and Ridge Central on April 16. Both will be from 3:30-6:00 PM. He then shared the possibility of adjusting PreKindergarten hours to be inline with State requirements. During this discussion he explained the importance of utilizing the teacher's time to support the students and staff. Dr. Thorns explained the Consolidated

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

May

- Non-binding class size recommendations
- Tentative Amended Budget

Reports to the Board cont.

- District Plan for the 2026-2027 School year and the procedural requirement for approving it in order to apply for future grants. He also reminded the Board about completing their Statement of Economic Interest by May 1. He ended his section by reviewing the Freedom of Information Act requests received over the last month.
- Mrs. Nothnagel discussed the Early Literacy screener assessment plan that will be required for PreK-3rd grade students three times a year. She then shared an updated assessment plan with the Board. She also discussed the District's ongoing purchase of curriculum consumables including Math workbooks for K-8 grade students.
- Mrs. Picciolini discussed the Student Chromebook three-year cycle for replacements, The E-Rate Category 2 that will be used to replace switches, and the renewal of the Time Clock Plus contract which is used as the attendance system for staff.

Personnel

The Board approved the hiring of:

- Victoria Reed, Special Services Director, eff. July 1, 2026
- Nicholas Furio, PE/Health Teacher at Finley Jr. High, eff. August 17, 2026
- Rachel McDoniel, paraprofessional at Ridge Lawn, eff. April 7, 2026
- Ouardia Belfankroni, paraprofessional at Ridge Lawn, eff. April 20, 2026
- Kristy Grove, Library Clerk at Ridge Central, eff. April 7, 2026

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Tuesday, April 28 , 2026:
Study Session at 6:30 PM in the Boardroom.

Tuesday, May 12, 2026:
Regular Board Meeting at 6:30 PM in the Boardroom.

Personnel continued

- The Board approved the posting for two summer custodial workers.
- The Board accepted the resignation of a school social worker at Finley Jr. High, eff. after the last day of school.
- The Board approved the termination of a substitute teacher.
- The Board approved adding additional names to the substitute teacher list: Catherine Wilson.
- The Board awarded tenure to the following individuals effective at the start of the 2026-2027 school year:

Finley Jr. High:
Jack Aleman, Special Education Teacher
Leighann Cannon, 6th Grade Social Studies
Morgan Crowley, School Counselor
Raven San Miguel, 6th Grade Math Teacher
Paul Taeuber, 8th Grade Social Studies

Ridge Central School:
Kelly Fifer, Special Education Teacher
April Gemini, Special Education Teacher
Nicole Koulos, 1st Grade Teacher
Colleen Larson, 3rd Grade Teacher
Jill Phillips, Art Teacher
Lauren Rozner, ELL Teacher
Doaa Shehadeh, Social Worker
Regina Siniawski, 4th Grade Teacher
Veronica Sroka, Speech Language Pathologist
David Stonis, 5th Grade Teacher
Nikole Stonis, Kindergarten Teacher

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Wednesday, April 15
3:30 PM - 6:00 PM at Ridge Lawn

Thursday, April 16
3:30 PM - 6:00 PM at Ridge Central

Ridge Lawn School:
Olivia Crowley, 1st Grade Teacher
Kati Esparza, School Counselor
Jillian Heinrich, ELL Teacher
Victoria Herr, 3rd Grade Teacher
Tiffany Minnella, Speech Language Pathologist
Mary Kate Moriarty, PreK Teacher
Suzane Naser, ELL Teacher
Jennifer Niemiec, 5th Grade Teacher
Stephanie Pucher, 4th Grade Teacher
Tamkinat Rasheed, ELL Teacher
Terrence Russell, Computer Skills Teacher
Helen Theodore, 1st Grade Teacher

Board Action

- The Board took action to post 26 policies for a first reading.
- The Board approved the 2026-2027 schedule of Board Meetings and Study Sessions.
- The Board approved the 2026-2027 Consolidated District Plan.
- The Board approved the purchase of student Chromebooks from Vision 21 Solutions.
- The Board approved a contract with Dyopath for E-Rate Equipment and Services.
- The Board approved payment to NWEA for growth and fluency assessments.
- The Board approved payment to Kendall Hunt for Illustrative Math consumable workbooks.
- The Board approved payment to Discovery Education for Dreambox Math and Dreambox Reading.

DONATIONS

The Board took action to accept a donation from “Dreambox” to clear some teachers classroom wishlists.

Board Action

- The Board approved a 5-year contract with Time Clock Plus for the employee time and attendance system.
- The Board approved a 1.0 FTE Special Educational Instructional teacher.
- The Board approved a 1.0 FTE 3rd grade teacher.
- The Board took action on a resolution releasing closed session minutes and destruction of verbatim recordings 18 months and older.