A-C CENTRAL C.U.S.D. #262
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
UNIT OFFICE
April 15th, 2026 – 6:30PM

PRESENT	MEMBERS	ABSENT
Curtis Cosner		
Carissa Myers		
Kara Martin		
Jennifer Fanning		
Deb Petefish		
Daniel Edge		
		Brian Rennecker

Others present: **Superintendent**–Dr. Amy Zahm; **Principals**– Anthony Mansur **Technology**–Dustin Janssen **A-CCEA**– Sydney Wallbaum, **Parents**– DeAnna Johnson, Tracy Taft, Mike Taft, Clint Cave, Dawn Sunley, Brock Ruppel **Students**– Abby Taft, Caden Cave, Madalynn Johnson, Bailey Dahmer, Lucas Johnson **Citizen– Other**- Devron Ohrn **Media**-Samantha Ogletree, Michael Kloppenburg **Unit Staff**–Nancy Having

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Curtis Cosner led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Proposed Agenda

Martin/Myers- Motion to approve the proposed agenda as presented. Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Recognition of Visitors and Guests

Curtis thanked everyone for coming and stated we have some people signed up to talk but we are going to start with students of the month.

Special Presentations

April Students of the Month

Senior- Abby Taft -Our senior student of the month for April is Abby Taft. Abby is the daughter of Mike and Tracy Taft. She is described by her teachers as organized and responsible. Abby is an excellent student and a great leader. She actively participates in class discussions and is willing to help other students when needed. Abby is an active member of many clubs and activities. She excels in FFA where she is the Chapter President and earned her state degree this year. Abby is also involved in Beta Club, Student Council and Track to name a few. We are proud to call Abby an A-C Central Knight!

8th Grade- Madalynn Johnson -Our 8th grade student of the month for April is Madalynn Johnson. Madi is the daughter of DeAnna Johnson and Joey Johnson. Madi is described by her teachers as a hard working focused student. She strives for perfection and is always willing to help out her fellow classmates. Madi never complains and is always prepared for class. She is involved in a variety of activities. She is a member of Student

Council and plays softball, volleyball and basketball for A-C. We are proud to call Madi an A-C Central Knight!

Student Resource Officer Presentation: Sheriff Devron Ohrn presents an early proposal to establish a Student Resource Officer program shared between two school districts (Ashland and Virginia). The role of the SRO is to foster positive relationships between law enforcement and students, not to punish or police minor infractions. The goal is prevention and building trust, enabling students to share concerns that might avert serious incidents. SROs require specialized training beyond standard police certification, and continuity (having the same officer regularly present) is important for trust and effectiveness. Financial considerations are significant; the total annual cost for a highly qualified deputy is estimated at approximately 133,920, with roughly 48,915 attributable to the school year portion (about 67% of a full year). Splitting costs between two districts would reduce the individual cost to about 24,457. The sheriff is open to flexible scheduling, including part-time presence or split shifts, although staffing constraints in the sheriff's office may impact feasibility. The program has precedents in nearby districts such as Beardstown, where SROs have positively impacted student and community relations. The sheriff acknowledges historic attempts to implement such a program locally and suggests exploring grants or tort funds to offset costs, though he has limited expertise on school financing.

Knight Lights

- Accolades from the board

Numerous awards and recognitions for Beta Club members, reflecting strong academic and extracurricular involvement. Abby Taft places as a runner-up in district parliamentary procedure contests alongside other students performing well. The choir got to sing at a hockey game. Music students earn superior ratings at IHSA and IESA solo and ensemble contests: Chase Jones, Kayden Jennings, Edgar Hernandez, Jillian Martin, Eli Lynn with best of day as well as Max Kesselring receiving best vocal solo awards and statewide poetry recognition from the Illinois Association of Teachers of English (IATE).. There was the Ethan Mahoney Bass Fishing Tournament where 1st place was Dillion Stremstefer and Braxton Stice. Dillion received the big bass. Cadence Goodall selected for the 2026 Illinois Leadership Seminar; Bella Smith chosen as Menard Electric Co-op Ambassador for Youth, with a trip to Washington, D.C. Fundraising efforts for the Cass County Food Pantry were successful, with the blood drive; plans for upcoming drives announced. High school baseball boasts a strong record (14-3), high school softball is at .500, and high school track and field athletes have set school records in triple jump and high jump. Isaac was named preseason track and field athlete by SJR. Donkey Basketball Fundraiser: Humorous reflections on the event, including participants' performances and crowd reactions.

Administrators and Committee Reports

Elementary Report – Mrs. Starkey receives donor choose funding. "Is a Book Really Just a Book?" The classroom project was recently funded by Donors Choose. She has ordered many books related to social emotional learning. A few are listed below: Kindness is My Superpower, Just Now I Feel Angry, Impulsive Ninja, Me and My Feelings, Enemy Pie and This Llama Can Write. Mrs. McDorman shadowing at Elementary Mrs. McDorman came to the elementary school. April 8th and spent the day learning our current routine. The students enjoyed meeting her. She will be coming two more days before the end of the school year.

MS/HS Report – The A-C Central MS/HS Choir had many of its members perform on March 20th at the Bloomington Bison's hockey game! The students did a wonderful job performing before the game and many of them also got to have their first hockey experience! Isaac Rennecker, Kade Parker, and Caden Cave competed at the 2026 IL Top Times meet in Bloomington on March 29th. For their top finishes, Isaac was 2nd in the triple jump, Kade earned 7th in the 3200m, and Kade/Caden placed 12th in the 4x400m.

Technology Report – Finished up IAR testing, and overall it went well. There were a couple of mild issues during the very first sessions, but that is to be expected and we got those worked out quickly and didn't have any major problems after that. We are still looking ahead at the ACT and ISA tests that need to be taken, but we are pretty much ready for those to start. The ACT is set for April 14 and the ISA test is set for April 21-23. Keeping an eye on state reporting at the end of the year always seems to be a rush with multiple deadlines all coming at once and multiple different areas and reports the state requires. I have been trying to do what I can where I can to reduce that rush some. Cody and I spent a couple days over spring break working on getting my room ready for the upcoming HVAC project. This involves getting things ready to be moved since the room will need to be empty during their construction. We're also starting to organize other summer IT tasks, like device refreshes, inventory, and general maintenance to make sure we're prepared for when school lets out. I also shut things down during that planned power outage and blew some dust out of some of the devices that needed it. I have had a couple meetings with vendors to finish up planning for things that I want to improve on this summer and upgrade some stuff where needed like our firewall which is reaching the end of life for our model. Also been working with our student device supplier. Procuring student devices has been more difficult this year due to the global impact on computer hardware from various factors.

Maintenance and Grounds – Chandlerville-Front door is now fixed- key fobs work Monthly walk through done with R. Carney before she left. The hallway off the gym (boiler leak hallway) is painted. The old ag shop continues to have pieces of roof fly off and it is leaking. Currently working on a summer plan; **Ashland-** Bus barn parking lot project completed. The old boiler system has been demoed and cleaned up. Materials will be hauled off for scrap. Jeff Perkins has started tuck pointing at the Ag Shop. Met with Tremco who got on the roof to do yearly maintenance work, they also fixed a leak by the front commons area Replace hot water heater in the District Office that was leaking. Made a trip to

Williamsville to get a used stove and oven for MS/HS kitchen. This will be put in over the summer. There is a place in the boiler room that has a leak-looking for the source and a fix for this. Spoke with Ed Doyle and E.L Pruitt about different rebate options Currently working on a summer plan; **Solar-** Ameren shut off power and made a connection on 4/2/26. Ameren agreed and signed the IA. Weather permitting should be done in the next 3-4 weeks. We still need to schedule a witness test with Ameren after completion. **HVAC-** E.L. Pruitt has installed a sump-pump pit in the boiler room. Waiting on Ottoboun to pour concrete pad. Met with Kevin Handy about plans going forward. Asbestos test done, was positive for asbestos less than 1% . More testing to follow. **Transportation- Tim Richard-** Oil and filters changed. 6 month/10k mile inspections done. White Ford van transmission issue; new replacement quote $7,300, rebuild kit is under $4.000 from Bills Service scheduled on April 13th. The white van has 113,000 miles. All yellow buses are up and running.

Superintendent – Dr. Zahm reports on budget matters: The Education Budget Fund (EBF) has been allocated with 240,000 for Operations & Maintenance (O&M) and 100,000 for transportation. The amended budget process is underway, including grant adjustments. Current job postings include openings for third grade, elementary math RTI, high school science, PE/health, middle school science, and K-12 music/choir teachers, with interviews in progress. FOIA requests have been received recently, including routine purchase order inquiries and a mysterious email affecting multiple districts with no clear source or content.

Executive Session (Exceptions 1)

Edge/Myers- Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:03 p.m. in accordance with State Statute to discuss the following:

- Exception 1. Adjournment to Executive Session for the purpose of: The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by P.A. 93-0057.

Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Return to Open Session

Myers/Petefish- Motion to come out of executive session at 7:25 p.m. and to approve and seal the minutes of the executive session. Voice vote: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on March 18th, 2026
B. Approval of Closed Session Minutes for the Regular Meeting on March 18th, 2026
C. Approval of Treasurer's Report
D. Approval of Activity Reports
E. Approval of Bills Payable
F. Approval of Journal Entries

Fanning/Edge- Motion to approve the Minutes of Regular Board Meeting on March 18th, 2026, the Closed Session Minutes for Regular Meeting on March 18th, 2026, the Treasurer's Report, Activity Reports, Bills Payable in the amount of $161,229.32, Journal Entries, as presented. Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Personnel Report

Hires:

Alyssa Price- Varsity Volleyball Coach
Brittany Lane- 2026 Summer Custodian
Renee Carter- Elementary Teacher SY 26-27

Transfer:

Extracurricular:

Kim Hill- 6th Grade Class Sponsor- SY 26-27
Robyn Lovekamp- 8th Grade Class Sponsor- SY 26-27
Tracy Taft- Freshman Class Sponsor- SY 26-27
Stephanie Lindsey- Sophomore Class Sponsor- SY 26-27
Shannon Nash- Junior Class Sponsor- SY 26-27
Mason Vincent- Senior Class Sponsor- SY 26-27
Mason Vincent- Senior Trip Sponsor- SY 26-27
Kim Hill- MS Spelling Bee- SY 26-27
Kaitlin Johnston- Art Club- SY 26-27
Tracy Taft- BETA Club- SY 26-27
Sophia Biehl- Fall Play Director- SY 26-27
Sophia Biehl- Fall Play Sets- SY 26-27
Jackie Kesselring- Fall Play Director- SY 26-27
Jackie Kesselring- Fall Play Sets- SY 26-27
Shannon Nash- History Club- SY 26-27
Tracy Taft- NHS- SY 26-27
Mason Vincent- STAR- SY 26-27
Andrew Willmore- ESports- SY 26-27
Jennifer Guillou- Supervised Study- SY 26-27
Sophia Biehl- MS/HS Morning Supervisor-cafeteria- SY 26-27
Colin Arthalony- MS/HS Morning Supervisor- Gym- SY 26-27
Andrew Willmore- MS/HS After School Supervisor- Gym- SY 26-27
Lisa Doyle- .5 Elementary Yearbook/Social Media-SY 26-27 (Social Media)

Resignations:

Trina Jones- 2026 Summer Custodian
Fanning/Petefish- Motion to approve the Personnel Report, as presented. Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

<u>Old Business (discussion only):</u>

Facility Projects discussion - particularly flooring and roofing updates after asbestos removal. The proposed flooring options include luxury vinyl planking, which is a snap-together tile system laid down rather than glued. A roofing estimate of approximately 12,000 was shared but deferred to a later timeframe (August–September) due to current project priorities. HVAC project details remain uncertain; no solid timeline or plans are available. Storage logistics during HVAC work are explored, weighing options between renting pods (around 70 each per month, requiring multiple units) versus utilizing existing indoor spaces such as the cafeteria and commons area to avoid damaging grass and mold risks. The plan favors internal storage and phased room work to minimize costs and disruptions.

Feasibility Study and Timeline - Minutes from a recent meeting were reviewed concerning a feasibility study related to potential school reorganization. There was confusion about the junior high deactivation mentioned; it was clarified that only the high school was under consideration for reorganization. Brochures from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) on reorganization, consolidation, and deactivation were distributed for reference. It was emphasized that any reorganization or deactivation requires a public vote, not a board decision alone. Representatives Ralph and Vic previously spoke to both boards; Vic is no longer available, but a Zoom meeting is scheduled with Ralph's colleague and Shannon. Multiple options can be presented for consideration in the study; infeasible options can be eliminated to save time and money. Discussion highlighted the complexity regarding junior high facilities if only two schools remain, noting the need to possibly combine elementary and junior high students and associated costs, including gym space and extracurricular accommodations. The feasibility study is exploratory; final decisions and ballot measures rest with the public. Enrollment trends from 2017 onward show a declining pattern, though the trajectory may not continue linearly. The school board awaits cost information expected after an upcoming Friday meeting before establishing timelines or making decisions.

Junior High Sports Program Discussion - This extensive segment centers on junior high sports, particularly the possibility of expanding or modifying co-ops with PORTA. The board addresses the need to set goals and parameters for junior high athletics, with emphasis on increasing participation, maintaining age-appropriate competition, and building continuity into high school programs. A three-part approach is proposed. 1st expanding the Junior High Co-op with PORTA to combine rosters and align with existing high school co-op structures, thus increasing roster sizes and reducing the need to play younger kids up. 2nd developing 5th and 6th Grade Programs to focus on skill development and fundamentals in a developmental, non-competitive environment. And 3rd implementing a Multi-Year Plan spanning from the current year through 2027–28, with gradual expansion and evaluation phases. The discussion reveals some confusion about committee roles and previous collaboration efforts, with an emphasis that these are preliminary talking points rather than firm decisions. The committee agrees that sports like junior high baseball, softball, and boys and girls basketball are focal points for potential co-op expansion. Considerations include scheduling, coaching structures (such as providing assistant coaches from AC to ease transitions), and practice logistics (notably the debate about using Nate's Park for practices). Geographic and transportation factors are analyzed, concluding that traveling to PORTA or Nate's Park involves similar time commitments by bus. The board recognizes that co-op agreements in IESA are more flexible year-to-year compared to IHSA, which requires earlier commitments. The importance of clear, direct decisions is stressed to avoid prolonged deliberations like those experienced with high school sports co-op formation. It is suggested that further meetings with key stakeholders (Colin and Mansur), occur before the next board meeting to refine recommendations. The board also contemplates hybrid arrangements for teams with uneven grade-level participation, though concerns about developmental appropriateness and logistics arise. Community members provide public comment supporting the inclusion of 5th graders in junior high softball to bolster roster sizes and smooth transitions, emphasizing player safety, skill-level considerations, and proper coaching oversight. Arguments include: Benefits of early exposure to junior high athletics for confidence-building and relationship development. Assurance that playing time and participation will be appropriate to the athlete's capabilities. Safety and readiness will guide coaching decisions. Opposing views emphasize developmental stages, risks of overmatching younger players against much older competitors, and potential negative impacts on confidence and retention. The argument stresses that development should be gradual, not rushed by placing young athletes in full competition prematurely. Safety concerns are highlighted given physical disparities. Some speakers underscore the value of maintaining strong partnerships with PORTA to support long-term district stability, especially in light of potential reorganization. Concerns are raised about focusing solely on PORTA without considering other neighboring districts like Plains or Virginia, noting that student choices and district boundaries could become complex if reorganization occurs. The board discusses the existing high school co-op with PORTA, acknowledging it has provided opportunities but also faced challenges, including recent feasibility study demands. Members express varying opinions on whether the study represents a threat or a step toward strengthening partnerships. Enrollment trends showing significant decline add urgency to these decisions. The conversation touches on the role of community involvement in growing the student population, with some members distinguishing between school board responsibilities and municipal governance roles.

<u>Old Business (action expected)</u>
Myers/Martin- Motion to approve the Clean Impact quote in the amount of $17,000 for a deep clean of the Ashland MS/HS building and the District Office, as presented. Roll Call: Cosner voted ay along with Myers and Martin, Fanning, Edge and Petefish voted nay. Motion is lost due to tie.

Myers- Motion to approve Clean Impact quote for bank of hours as presented. Motion dies due to lack of a second motion.

Myers/Edge- Motion to approve to conduct a Feasibility Study with the PORTA Board of Education and split all costs above and beyond any State reimbursement equally between the two districts as presented. Fanning and Petefish voted nay, all other members present voted aye. Motion carried.

New Business (discussion only)

Student Resource Officer- the board discusses the potential addition of a Student Resource Officer (SRO) for safety and community engagement. Highlights include: Interest in flexible scheduling for the SRO, potentially sharing the officer with other schools or the county to reduce costs. Suggestions for the SRO to engage with younger students through brief, regular visits to elementary schools to build positive relationships. Recognition that presence of an SRO can enhance safety and community confidence. The board plans to pursue this option further, including possible grant funding and resource sharing discussions with neighboring districts.

First reading of Press Policy- Curtis asked if anyone had any questions. No questions were asked.

New Business (action expected)

Myers/Edge- Motion to approve the intermittent unpaid medical leave for 3 non-certified employees for the remainder of 25-26 school year as presented. Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Fanning/Martin- Motion to approve the 2026-2027 IESA registration in the amount of $1,440.00, as presented. Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Myers/Fanning- Motion to approve the purchase of 59 Lenovo 100E Chromebooks with Lenovo protection for $28,127.07 as presented. Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Edge/Myers- Motion to approve the 8th grade trip to Six Flags in Eureka, MO on May 8th, 2026 as presented. Roll Call: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Board Member or Visitor Requests for Future Business Items (info/discussion)

Adjournment (action expected)

Petefish/Edge- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m. Voice vote: All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

President – Curtis Cosner

Kara Martin

Secretary – Kara Martin