

Park Ridge-Niles School District 64
Board of Education - Education Committee
District Office - Plimpton Conference Room
8182 Greendale Ave, Niles, IL 60714
Minutes of the Meeting
September 10, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

Committee Members in attendance:

Monica Milligan, Committee Chair
Rachel Georgakis, Committee Member
Beth Rankin, Committee Member (Remote)
Dr. Samantha Alaimo, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning and Committee Member

MEETING CONVENES

Committee Chair Milligan called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m. Member Rankin joined the meeting remotely. Also in attendance were Dr. Ben Collins, Superintendent, Mr. Chris Lilly, Director of Communications and Christine Bednarek, Assistant to the Superintendent. There were no members of the public present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Milligan led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

OPENING REMARKS

There were no opening remarks

A-1 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT UPDATE

Dr. Collins stated with the change we are trying to do with the Committee of the Whole Meetings the board is going to have more updates throughout the year. We are trying this new format of the Student Achievement report. We wanted to share it with you, talk through it, get feedback and move forward from there.

Dr. Alaimo presented the redesigned, more accessible annual report intended to replace the traditional lengthy September student-achievement presentation.

Key objectives:

- Provide the community with a clear, digestible overview of student performance and growth.
- Align goals and targets with the new strategic plan and building-level priorities.
- Present achievement data, growth data, assessment context, and areas of celebration or concern.
- Serve as a resource that can be updated or supplemented when state report card information becomes available.

The proposed report includes:

- Background, purpose, and explanation of why student achievement data matters.
- Early learning, preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade assessment data.
- MAP reading and mathematics data for grades 2–8.
- Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) results.
- Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) results.
- Strategic plan priorities and performance goals.

The committee members generally supported the redesigned report and found it substantially more readable and useful than a traditional PowerPoint presentation.

Their recommended revisions included:

- Add a one-page executive summary at the beginning with:
 1. What the report is.
 2. Why is it being shared?
 3. The major performance highlights.
 4. Areas where goals were or were not met.
 5. Key actions being taken in response.
- Condense the introductory/background material so readers reach the data quickly.

- Use plain, parent-friendly language rather than education-specific terminology.
- Clearly explain terms such as:
 1. Percentile.
 2. Tier 1.
 3. Growth target.
 4. Curriculum-based measures.
 5. Other assessment terminology unfamiliar to the general public.
- Organize the report around the questions the community is trying to answer, rather than primarily around individual assessments:
 1. Are students meeting performance/proficiency expectations?
 2. Are students growing at the expected rate?
- Use a consistent presentation format across MAP and IAR data.
- Consider presenting both district-level and school-level information, while keeping the public report concise.
- Consider including only spring/end-of-year data where appropriate rather than fall and winter results.
- Clearly state whether goals were met, preferably with an easily recognizable visual indicator.
- Explain the significance of the 40th-percentile benchmark and growth targets.
- Consider adding state report card results in November as a natural supplement/update, potentially with links or QR codes to individual school report cards.
- Consider renaming the report to better align with strategic-plan language, such as Student Learning or Academic Performance, rather than simply Student Achievement.

The committee discussed the district's current benchmarks, including:

- At least 80% of students meeting the identified performance benchmark.
- MAP growth targets of approximately 60%, increasing to 65% for middle school and 70% for elementary in the following year.
- IAR proficiency currently targeted at 60%.
- ISA proficiency targeted at 70%.

The committee requested future consideration of whether the 40th-percentile MAP benchmark remains the most appropriate districtwide measure of proficiency. Discussion centered on whether the benchmark should be more directly connected to meaningful outcomes such as IAR performance, ACT performance, graduation, postsecondary attainment, or other long-term student outcomes.

No immediate change to the 40th-percentile benchmark was requested for this report.

The committee discussed whether preschool should have formal goals.

Staff explained that preschool data is affected by student mobility and students entering programs at different points during the year, making year-to-year comparisons more variable.

The consensus was to:

- Continue sharing preschool information.
- Explain why a formal preschool goal is not currently established.
- Avoid creating a retroactive goal simply because data is being reported.

The committee asked for clearer explanations of areas where performance targets were not met and what the district is doing in response.

Middle school ELA growth

- Performance has improved significantly from prior years.
- Eighth-grade ELA growth increased from approximately 37% to 50% of students meeting growth targets.
- The district provided more than 30 hours of targeted professional development last year focused on questioning, discussion, learning targets, and planning.
- This year, the district will continue monitoring implementation through walkthroughs, department meetings, and professional learning.

K-1 Literacy

- FastBridge results were described as concerning and relatively stagnant.
- Staff are examining implementation of the Foundations phonics program and whether it is being implemented with sufficient fidelity.
- Initial Foundations training was substantially longer than the training currently provided to new staff, raising a potential professional-development issue.
- Staff will further investigate implementation, training, and instructional factors.

Dr. Alaimo noted that students with IEPs show a growth discrepancy compared with the general education population. This work will continue as part of the strategic plan, including examining students with reading or math goals in co-taught settings and how instructional practices affect growth.

The committee agreed that this type of detailed subgroup information may be more appropriate for internal Board monitoring rather than the public-facing annual report.

The committee emphasized that the report should:

- Accessible to families without an education or research background.
- Clearly communicate both successes and areas needing improvement.
- Avoid creating unintended school-to-school comparisons while still providing appropriate transparency.
- Give principals and teachers an opportunity to review and prepare for public discussion of school or grade-level areas of concern.

The committee viewed the report as a significant improvement in communicating student performance and supported making the information publicly available.

Next Steps

- Revise the annual report based on committee feedback.
- Develop an executive summary and clearer explanations of goals, growth, proficiency, and assessment terminology.
- Simplify and standardize data displays.
- Clarify district-level versus school-level reporting.
- Review whether the 40th-percentile MAP benchmark remains appropriate for future years.
- Further investigate K-1 literacy performance and Foundations implementation/training.
- Prepare the revised report for Board review and potential public release.
- Provide a brief overview of the report during the September Board meeting.
- Determine timing and method for posting/sharing the report publicly.

Committee of the Whole / Performance Monitoring

The meeting also included a preview of the upcoming Committee of the Whole training.

The training will address:

- The district's performance-monitoring process.
- Roles and responsibilities.
- The strategic-plan cycle of inquiry/logic model.
- How Board, district, building, and eventually classroom-level monitoring connect.
- Current priorities and goals.
- What the district is not prioritizing or doing as part of the current work.
- How principals and assistant principals will participate in performance monitoring.
- Expectations for Committee of the Whole discussions.

Dr. Collins acknowledged that the new process is still being developed and that administrators are learning how to operate within it.

A major focus will be building trust, confidence, consistency, and accountability among principals and assistant principals as they take on greater responsibility for leading and monitoring performance.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 p.m. Member Georgakis had the motion 2nd Milligan which was unanimously approved by voice vote.