

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT OF DECATUR TOWNSHIP
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

The Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township School Board convened at 7:05 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administrative Offices of the School Corporation, 5275 Kentucky Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana on January 13, 2026.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mrs. Estella Vandeventer
Mr. Chase Lyday
Mrs. Judith Collins
Mr. Larry Taylor

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Scott Collins, Superintendent
Mr. Chris Gearlds, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Kirk Farmer, Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Justin Dixon, Director of Operations

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Dale Henson

ADMINISTRATORS ABSENT:

Dr. Matthew McClendon, Director of Human Resources

REORGANIZATION

1. REORGANIZATION

0.01 Mrs. Vandeventer announced the first order of business would be the election of a Board President and asked for nominations. Mrs. Vandeventer nominated Mr. Henson for the office of President and Mr. Taylor seconded the nomination. The Board voted unanimously to approve Mr. Henson as President.

0.02 Since the newly elected President, Mr. Henson, is absent, former president, Mrs. Vandeventer asked for nominations for Vice President. Mrs. Vandeventer nominated Mr. Lyday as Vice President and Mrs. Collins seconded the nomination. The Board voted unanimously to approve Mr. Lyday as Vice President.

0.03 Mrs. Vandeventer asked for nominations for Secretary. Mrs. Vandeventer nominated Mrs. Collins as Secretary and Mr. Taylor seconded the nomination. The Board voted unanimously to approve Mr. Collins as Secretary.

0.04 Mrs. Vandeventer said the next order of business would be action on the following recommendations: Mr. Kirk Farmer as Treasurer, Mrs. Erin McSpadden as Deputy Treasurer, Mr. Lyday as Legislative Liaison, and Mr. Henson as the Education Foundation representative. Recommendations were also made that the regular monthly meetings continue to be scheduled the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., work sessions be scheduled on an as needed basis, board member compensation remain the same, and conflicts of interest be approved.

Mr. Taylor made a motion that Mr. Kirk Farmer serve as Treasurer and Mrs. Erin McSpadden serve as Deputy Treasurer. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Taylor made a motion that Mr. Lyday serve as Legislative Liaison. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Taylor made a motion that Mr. Henson serve as the Education Foundation representative. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Taylor made a motion that the regular monthly meetings continue to be scheduled the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and work sessions be scheduled on an as needed basis. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Taylor made a motion that board member compensation remain the same (\$1,900 per year). Mr. Lyday seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

School Board accepted and approved the conflict of interest statements.

REGULAR MEETING

1. OPENING ITEMS

1.01 Mrs. Vandeventer, Former Board President, called the regular meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. Four board members were present.

1.02 Mrs. Vandeventer led in the pledge of allegiance.

1.03 There were no patron comments.

2. DECATUR PROUD

2.01 Mr. Gearlds stated the Tomorrow Ready Award recognizes staff members (nominated by peers, supervisors, parents, or community members) for going above and beyond to exemplify our beliefs of equity, teamwork, and excellence, to positively impact our schools and students. He was Decatur Proud to recognize two recipients for this month:

- Timothy Reed, Music Teacher at Blue Academy Elementary School - exemplifies excellence in everything he does. He played the piano in the mornings to greet students in the most amazing way. He organizes school assemblies that include both students and staff. He is working with others to expand the musical program to reach more than Blue Academy students. He is poised, passionate, and professional. He is a fine example of a teacher and professional. The kids love him! I am Decatur Proud that our students get to experience music instruction through his lens.
- Officer Kentrell Harris, Decatur Township School Police - the right choice at the right time. He consistently goes above and beyond, and his dedication to our district and our students is evident in everything he does. A true self-starter, Officer Harris brings a high level of professionalism, and I am confident we will continue to see that same excellence reflected in his work alongside K-9 Hawk. Their service represents tremendous value to our district and provides yet another tool instrumental in keeping our students safe.

Mr. Gearlds, on behalf of the Decatur Township Staff, expressed heartfelt gratitude to our School Board for their dedication and service to our students, staff, and community, as their leadership and commitment play a vital role in fostering an environment where every learner

can thrive. As we celebrate School Board Appreciation Month, the Board was wished continued success and fulfillment in their efforts and was thanked for all they do to support education and elevate the future of Decatur Township.

3. ACTION ITEMS

- 3.01 Mr. Taylor moved that the minutes for the December 9, 2025 executive session and regular meeting be approved. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.02 Mr. Gearlds presented the staff report and addendum for approval. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the staff report and addendum as presented. Mrs. Vandeventer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.03 Mr. Farmer presented claims in the amount of \$11,677,157.95 and payrolls in the amount of \$4,689,996.46 for approval. Mr. Taylor made a motion that the claims and payrolls be accepted as listed. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.04 Mr. Farmer presented Year End Appropriation Transfers for approval. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the Year End Appropriation Transfers as presented. Mrs. Vandeventer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.05 Mr. Farmer recommended approval of the Education and Operation Fund Transfer Resolution. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.06 Mr. Farmer recommended approval of the Rainy-Day Fund Transfer Resolution. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented. Mr. Lyday seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.07 Mr. Gearlds asked approval of new/revised NEOLA Board Policies that presented for first reading at the December meeting. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the policies upon second reading as presented. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.
- 3.08 Mr. Dixon asked approval of an overnight trip request by DCHS Theatre students inducted/eligible for induction into the International Thespian Society to the State Thespians Conference at Avon High School on January 23-25, 2026 and asked approval of the overnight trip request by DCHS Wrestling Team did compete in a two-day state-wide wrestling tournament during winter break at Connersville High School on December 30-31, 2025. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the trip request as presented. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.09 Mr. Dixon recommended that MSD Decatur Township Schools purchase two Type A buses for the MSD Decatur Township Schools Work Based Learning program for the 2026-27 school year, as specified in the Tomorrow Ready Project funded by the Lilly Endowment Marion County K-12 Public School Initiative.

Through the CIESC cooperative price bidding process Type “A” activity buses cost \$120,823.00 each from Kerlin (Thomas) with our specs; Blue Bird price each is \$137,463.00 and Collins/IC would be \$126,947.00 each.

This price includes Bus wrapping, Zonar GPS, CB radio, embroidery DC logo in bucket seats, USB ports, Gatekeeper camera system and luggage racks for storage.

Total cost for these two Type “A” Thomas buses from Kerlin will be \$241,646.00. Kerlin has these buses and we can have them by March 2026 if we purchase them this month.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the trip request as presented. Mrs. Vandeventer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORT

4.01 Mr. Farmer presented a financial report for the Education Fund, Referendum Fund, Debt Service Fund, Operations Fund, and Rainy-Day Fund.

5. OTHER

5.01 No items.

6. CLOSING ITEMS

6.01 Dr. Collins - Before we close, a quick reminder that our Board of Finance meeting will take place immediately following this meeting. I also want to take a moment to recognize our Board of Education for their dedication and unwavering support of our students, our staff, and our schools across Decatur Township. Their commitment shows in everything we do. A special acknowledgment to Desiree Rose for her work with the Lilly Endowment—your efforts continue to open doors and create opportunities for our district. Our boys wrestling team had a strong showing this weekend, finishing 2–1 with victories over Hobart and Brownsburg. Congratulations to our athletes and coaches for representing Decatur with pride. We continue to celebrate our 94% graduation rate, a district-wide achievement that truly begins at Lynwood in preschool and carries through every building, every staff member, every family, and every administrator. This is a Pre-K through 12 accomplishment, and it belongs to all of us.

A quick look ahead:

- Work Sessions
- January 27: Elementary
- February 3: Secondary & Athletics
- Public Hearing: February 17 at 9:00 a.m.

6.02 Mr. Taylor - Thank you, everybody, for coming back and helping us finish out the year strong. A special thank-you to Harris and Reed for all the work they do behind the scenes—your efforts make a real difference. And to our Board and everyone in the audience tonight, thank you for everything you do to support our students, our staff, and our community. We couldn’t do this without you.

Mrs. Collins - Ditto everything Larry just said. I also want to congratulate Desiree Rosa. The Lilly Endowment helps us identify additional funding opportunities and supports the financial functions that keep our district moving forward. Just a big congratulations on her four-year scholarship. That is an outstanding achievement, and we are incredibly proud.

Mr. Lyday - We continue to build a culture in our schools that reflects who we are—people who love what they do and show up every day for our students. I’m grateful for every employee who helps shape that culture across Decatur Township. A special thank-you to Chief Harris for bringing in the dog-training program focused on ballistics and

drug-detection control. This work strengthens our safety efforts and supports a secure learning environment for all students and staff. I also want to congratulate our district on an outstanding 94% graduation rate. That number doesn't need to fluctuate—it shows real growth, real commitment, and the impact of our work from preschool through grade 12. And finally, Happy New Year to everyone. I'm excited for what we will accomplish together in the months ahead.

Mr. Henson – absent

Mrs. Vandeventer - Ditto to all the appreciation already shared tonight. Thank you to everyone across our schools as we move into the final stretch of the school year. Your commitment shows in every building, every classroom, and every student we serve. A special thank-you to Reed and Harris for your leadership and the way you continue to guide and support our district. We're grateful for the work you do and the example you set.

- 6.03 Mr. Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dale Henson, President

Mr. Chase Lyday, Vice President

Mrs. Judith Collins, Secretary

Mr. Larry Taylor, Member

Mrs. Estella Vandeventer, Member