

**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 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administrative Offices of the School Corporation, 5275 Kentucky Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana on April 14, 2026.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Dr. Scott Collins, Superintendent  
Mr. Chris Gearlds, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Justin Dixson, Director of Operations  
Dr. Matthew McClendon, Director of Human Resources

**ADMINISTRATORS ABSENT:**

Mr. Kirk Farmer, Chief Financial Officer

**REGULAR MEETING**

**1. OPENING ITEMS**

1.01 Mr. Henson, Board President, called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All five board members were present.

1.02 Mr. Henson led in the pledge of allegiance.

1.03 There were no patron comments.

**2. DECATUR PROUD**

2.01 Mr. Gearlds announced it was National Assistant Principals Week and recognized our assistant principals and SLC directors for their work.

Mr. Gearlds was Decatur Proud to recognize two recipients of the Tomorrow Ready Award for this month:

- Adam Lane, Director of Sports Performance at Decatur Township Athletics – Goes above and beyond with his passion, professionalism, and dedication to our student-athletes.
- Doug Bagg, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher & Robotics Coach at Decatur High Ability Academy – Goes above and beyond by motivating and challenging students intellectually, while providing care and support.

2.02 Mr. Gearlds was Decatur Proud to recognize the following students:

- Decatur Central High School, Advanced Digital Marketing Class for earning 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Improvisational Challenge at the Destination Imagination Competition.
- Decatur Central High School, Boys' Varsity Basketball for earning 2025 Sectional & Regional Champs.
- Decatur Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Treble Choir for earning a Gold Rating in the Group IV Level at the Indiana State School Music Association Organizational Contest.

- Decatur Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band for earning a Gold Rating with Distinction at the Indiana State School Music Association Organizational Contest.

### 3. ACTION ITEMS

- 3.01 Mr. Taylor moved that the minutes for the March 10, 2026 regular meeting and executive session be approved. Mrs. Vandevanter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.02 Dr. McClendon presented the staff report for approval. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the staff report as presented. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.03 Dr. Collins presented claims in the amount of \$4,721,448.05 and payrolls in the amount of \$4,260,783.17 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 Dr. Collins asked Board approval of the iPad and MacBook refresh and a special purchase resolution authorizing the purchase. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the iPad and MacBook refresh and special purchase resolution as presented. Mrs. Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3.05 Dr. Collins presented a recommendation for school start/end times for the 2026-27 school year. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the new school start/end times for the 2026-27 school year as presented. Mrs. Vandevanter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### 4. REPORT

- 4.01 Dr. Collins presented a financial report for the Education Fund, Referendum Fund, Operations Fund, and Rainy-Day Fund.

### 5. OTHER

- 5.01 No items.

### 6. CLOSING ITEMS

6.01 **Dr. Collins** - Kelly is our new West Newton principal. She'll begin those duties effective in July, and she has someone to introduce here as her new assistant principal, who was approved tonight.

**Ms. McGuffey:**

"Good evening. I'm super Decatur Proud. There was a huge pool of candidates for assistant principal for West Newton because we all know how wonderful West Newton is. Going through all those people and finding the right fit was something brand new to me, but I'm so excited to introduce Ms. Haley Aus.

**Ms. Aus:**

"Thank you so much. I've fallen deeply in love with Decatur this past year, and I just could

not be any prouder to serve next to Kelly and to serve at West Newton this upcoming year. So thank you for the opportunity.”

Next, Dr. Schaffner, I just want to say congratulations. You will be a great addition to our team, stepping into a school with a great culture, so I’m confident you will love Valley Mills. Congratulations, and we’d like for you to share a few words.

**Dr. Schaffner:**

“Absolutely. Thank you to the board for the approval this evening. I greatly appreciate it, and I’m really looking forward to being a part of this wonderful district here.”

**Dr. Collins:**

I also want to thank all the kids, our teachers, and our coaches who pour into our students. When half of our meeting is about celebration and celebrating our people, that’s what we are about, and it’s important that we do that. I appreciate our board for always being so open and wanting to celebrate our people because they are Decatur Proud.

I also want to recognize and commend our academic leaders in the Class of 2026 from Decatur Central: valedictorians Madeline Colbert and Jocelyn Vandeventer, and salutatorian Gavin Mould, who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to excellence. We’re very proud of them, so congratulations to those young people who represent us so well. Great futures ahead for them.

I also want to remind everyone that we have scheduled two meetings to talk about finances, referendum planning, and the future planning for the district. We will have these meetings in the boardroom at Central Office on May 4th at 5:30 p.m. and May 19th at 6:00 p.m. Emily is working on communicating that information out for us.

And finally, if you like Peter Pan, ‘Peter Pan and Wendy’ is going to be presented this weekend by our Decatur Central Theater Department — Friday and Saturday nights at 7:00 p.m., and a matinee performance at 2:00 p.m on Saturday. I’m planning to go Friday and am looking forward to that.

6.02     **Mrs. Vandeventer** - Welcoming new team members and team members that are moving into new positions — that’s so exciting.

I just want to recognize again our Tomorrow Ready Award winners, Coach Lane and Mr. Baggs. We’re just so, so grateful to work with tremendous leaders like them who are touching our children’s and students’ lives and changing them for the better.

Ms. Sandvold, you know, I will say our students are talented. I love that they did the reels. And I love that they were so involved with it and presented that with you all, and the experience that gives them. I just love having that involvement with our students.

And I’d be remiss not to say that we got to acknowledge and celebrate our academic leaders in the township from our senior class. I’m just super proud of all of the students from that evening and so excited that we get to celebrate with them.

**Mr. Taylor** - Thank you to everybody for showing up. Congratulations to all the winners and all the people who are here.

Nice job by our basketball team to bring us our first-ever regional championship and go on to the semi-state. They did a really great job. Everybody really works hard, and as you can tell by the teachers, staff, and students, they all were crying at the same time. So, you know there's a lot of work and a lot of time spent with these students by our teachers. It's nice to see that kind of connection.

Congratulations again to everybody who came up from the middle school — nice job on that side. It's great to have the middle school here, the high school, and everybody together.

Again, it's great to be a part of a team, and this group up here has really worked hard to be sure everybody gets what they need. I commend these administrators for working so hard.

**Mrs. Collins** - Congrats to everybody that we recognized tonight.

I'll just say the basketball team was fun to watch this year. I was at most of their — I can't say I was at all of them — but I was at most of their games, and they were just fun to watch.

And as far as academics, you probably all know I'm on the academic side as well with Dollars for Scholars — it used to be Dollars for Scholars, it's now the Decatur Township Scholarship Association.

On May 3rd, we're going to give out a bunch of scholarships to deserving seniors that are getting ready to go to college and continue their careers.

Thanks to everybody that's donated to that. We really appreciate it.

**Mr. Lyday** - I love starting out our meeting celebrating excellence. What Coach Lane does is — he's said that a few times — just knowing the difference in what he does and the world that he lives in, he is just elite.

I'm so incredibly proud of our basketball team.

And then certainly our fine arts departments as well. I love, love seeing our bands and choirs compete and show excellence at an early age, even in middle school.

And then I love celebrating our educators who do an incredible job — the most important profession in the world.

**Mr. Henson** - I'd be remiss not to mention Coach Lane, Mr. Bragg, and Jessica from our middle school fine arts department. They did a great job.

Mrs. Aus and Dr. Schaffner, congratulations and welcome to our team.

I also attended the academic dinner the other night with our top 40 seniors, and I want to congratulate Estella and her daughter Jocelyn for being co-valedictorians, so congratulations.

And two last things: We are going to have a work session on May 11th that will start at 4:00 o'clock at Central Office in the boardroom.

Also, make a note of this: September 8th is Labor Day, and we — teachers and kiddos — get a four-day weekend, so we have moved our board meeting to September 15th at 5:30 p.m. That will also be at Central Office — Dr. Collins' office for the executive session, and then the regular board meeting at 7:00 p.m.

With that, I entertain a motion to adjourn. Again, thanks for coming tonight. Meeting adjourned.

- 6.03 Mr. Vandeventer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lyday seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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Mr. Dale Henson, President

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Mr. Chase Lyday, Vice President

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Mrs. Judith Collins, Secretary

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Mr. Larry Taylor, Member

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Mrs. Estella Vandeventer, Member