MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING AND WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION LAKE FOREST COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 115 300 SOUTH WAUKEGAN ROAD, LAKE FOREST, IL 60045 MAY 6, 2025

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Lake Forest Community High School District 115, County of Lake, State of Illinois, was held on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, and called to order at 4:36 p.m. by President John Noble.

PRESENT:
David Burns, Member
Sally Davis, Member
Dewey Winebrenner, Member
Anne Geraghty Helms, Member
Jenny Zinser, Vice - President
John Venson, Secretary
John Noble, President

ABSENT: None

CABINET PRESENT:

Matthew Montgomery, Superintendent
Renee Fitzsimmons, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching, Learning, and Accountability
Jennifer Hermes, Chief Operating Officer/CSBO
Melissa Oakley, Chief Communications Officer
Phil Georgia, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
Jordan Salus, Chief Technology Officer

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF PRESENT:

Tiana Tolver, Board Clerk
Patrick Sassen, Associate Principal
Andrea Serrato, World Language Department Chair

GUESTS:
Katherine Yakes, Student Body President
Simon Back, Student Body Vice-President
Tom Andreesen, Community Member

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board and members of the community recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Noble thanked the retiring Board members and the incoming Board members for their time and service.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the Recommendation to Restore the East Campus Historic Windows

Motion: Mr. Burns moved, seconded by Dr. Venson that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education, Lake Forest, Illinois approve the Recommendation to Restore the East Campus Historic Windows.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Aye: Winebrenner, Noble, Helms, Venson, Davis, Zinser, Burns
Nay:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Referendum Phase I Furniture Purchase

Motion: Mr. Winebrenner moved, seconded by Ms. Helms that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education, Lake Forest, Illinois approve the Referendum Phase I Furniture Purchase.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Aye: Davis, Zinser, Helms, Noble, Burns, Winebrenner, Venson
Nay:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Referendum Theater Lighting Upgrades

Motion: Dr. Venson moved, seconded by Ms. Helms that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education, Lake Forest, Illinois approve the Referendum Theater Lighting Upgrades.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Aye: Noble, Helms, Davis, Zinser, Venson, Burns, Winebrenner
Nay:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Resolution for Student Body President & Vice-President

***WHEREAS**, Katherine "Kat" Yakes and Simon Back have faithfully served as the 2024–2025 Student Body President and Vice President of Lake Forest High School, respectively, and as the first formal student representatives to the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education;*

***WHEREAS**, Kat Yakes and Simon Back have elevated the role of student voice within the District through monthly updates to the Board of Education, active involvement in Student Council leadership, and thoughtful collaboration with administrators, staff, and their peers;*

***WHEREAS,** Kat Yakes, a fourth-generation Scout, has brought creativity and heart to her leadership, launching "Special Guest Fridays" to morning announcements, expanding the Student Council executive*

board, mentoring younger students through Link Crew, actively participating in multiple clubs and sports, including Scout Buddies, and connecting families across communities through her annual holiday drive;

***WHEREAS,** Simon Back, an accomplished student-athlete, multilingual enthusiast, and TEDxLFHS speaker, has led with purpose, excelling in cross country, volleyball, and as a two-time state qualifying diver, while also mentoring English learners and modeling a spirit of teamwork through his wide-ranging involvement in clubs, including Scholastic Bowl and FCA;*

***WHEREAS**, Kat Yakes and Simon Back have each balanced rigorous academic schedules, extracurricular commitments, and service roles with integrity, courage, and a deep-rooted belief in the importance of community, kindness, and student advocacy;*

***WHEREAS,** the contributions of Kat Yakes and Simon Back to student life at Lake Forest High School are recognized and deeply appreciated by the District 115 Board of Education and the school community they have so faithfully served;*

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education expresses for itself as well as for the parents, guardians, students, staff, faculty, and citizens of Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, and Knollwood its gratitude to Kat Yakes and Simon Back for their steadfast work as Lake Forest High School student leaders.*

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the District 115 Board of Education wishes Kat Yakes and Simon Back only the best as they begin their college careers next fall at the University of Mississippi and Washington and Lee University, respectively.*

Motion: Mr. Winebrenner moved, seconded by Dr. Venson that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education, Lake Forest, Illinois adopt the Resolution for Student Body President, Katherine Yakes and Vice-President, Simon Back.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Aye: Zinser, Venson, Noble, Winebrenner, Helms, Davis, Burns
Nay:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

<u>Adoption of Resolutions for Retiring Board Members</u>

DR. JOHN VENSON

***WHEREAS**, Dr. John Venson has faithfully served the students, staff, and families of Lake Forest Community High School District 115 as a Board member from 2021 to 2025;*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Venson has served as Secretary of the Board of Education since 2023, and as a member of the Ed Committee from 2021-2024;*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Venson represented District 115 Board of Education on the TrueNorth Educational Cooperative 804 Leadership Council, working to support inclusive education and services for students with disabilities;*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Venson has used his decades of leadership experience in education to guide the Board's decision-making, always keeping the focus on student-centered policies and outcomes;*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Venson advocated for preparing students for a rapidly changing post-COVID world, where digital and virtual learning will continue to play a significant role in shaping educational experiences;*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Venson's dedication to supporting student outcomes, academic achievement, and the overall well-being of students has greatly contributed to the strength of District 115's educational programs;*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Venson has committed himself to giving back to the community that has shaped his family's life and ensuring that Lake Forest High School remains a top-tier institution for his grandchildren and future generations;*

***WHEREAS**, Dr. Venson's dedication to the work of the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education is sincerely appreciated;*

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education expresses for itself, as well as for the parents, guardians, students, staff, faculty, and residents of Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, and Knollwood, its deepest appreciation and gratitude to Dr. John Venson for his steadfast work to advance the quality of education, engagement, and inclusion for all students in our community;*

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be entered permanently into the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education minutes.*

DAVID BURNS

***WHEREAS**, Mr. David Burns has faithfully served the students, staff, and families of Lake Forest Community High School District 115 as a Board member from 2021 to 2025;*

***WHEREAS**, Mr. Burns has served as Chair of the Finance Committee since 2023;*

***WHEREAS**, Mr. Burns has been a member of the Policy Committee since 2023;*

***WHEREAS,** Mr. Burns joined the Board with a deep commitment to supporting all students and contributing meaningfully to the continued excellence of Lake Forest High School;*

***WHEREAS,** Mr. Burns has strengthened Board engagement with the broader community through his role as liaison to parent organizations, fostering open communication and collaborative problem-solving;*

WHEREAS, *Mr. Burns has been a passionate advocate for student well-being and has championed data-driven decision-making and long-term planning in support of student-centered policies and continuous improvement;*

WHEREAS, *Mr. Burns has served his community as an assistant scoutmaster, nonprofit board member, and member of the Lake Bluff Joint Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, reflecting a lifelong commitment to thoughtful leadership and civic involvement;*

WHEREAS*, Mr. Burns's dedication to the work of the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education is sincerely appreciated;*

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED *that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education expresses for itself, as well as for the parents, guardians, students, staff, faculty, and residents of Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, and Knollwood, its deepest appreciation and gratitude to Mr. David Burns for his steadfast work to advance the quality of education, engagement, and inclusion for all students in our community;*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED *that a copy of this resolution be entered permanently into the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education minutes.*

SALLY DAVIS

WHEREAS*, Ms. Sally Davis has faithfully served the students, staff, and families of Lake Forest Community High School District 115 as a Board member from 2015 to 2025;*

WHEREAS*, Ms. Davis has served as Board Vice President from 2019 to 2023;*

WHEREAS*, Ms. Davis has served as Chair of the Finance & Operations Committee from 2019 to 2021, and as a member of the Policy Committee since 2021;*

WHEREAS, *Ms. Davis has served as the Board's liaison to ED-RED, advocating on behalf of suburban school districts at the legislative level and championing the needs of public education in Springfield;*

WHEREAS, *Ms. Davis was recognized as a Master Board Member by the Illinois Association of School Boards, a testament to her excellence in governance and her deep investment in board development and continuous improvement;*

WHEREAS, *Ms. Davis served as a member of the 2021 Joint Superintendent Selection Committee and has supported the District by lending her professional legal expertise to Board policy development and played a key role in multiple contract negotiations, where she consistently balanced fiscal responsibility with fairness;*

WHEREAS, *Ms. Davis has extended her commitment to student growth and school engagement by supporting LFHS Applause, mentoring young entrepreneurs through the LFHS Business Incubator, and fostering leadership as Advancement Chair for Boy Scout Troop 46;*

WHEREAS*, Ms. Davis's dedication to the work of the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education is sincerely appreciated;*

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED *that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education expresses for itself, as well as for the parents, guardians, students, staff, faculty, and residents of Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, and Knollwood, its deepest appreciation and gratitude to Ms. Sally Davis for her steadfast work to advance the quality of education, engagement, and inclusion for all students in our community;*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED *that a copy of this resolution be entered permanently into the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education minutes.*

Signed this Sixth Day of May, Two-Thousand and Twenty-Five.

Motion: Mr. Winebrenner moved, seconded by Ms. Zinser that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education, Lake Forest, Illinois adopt the Resolutions for Retiring Board Members: Dr. John Venson, David Burns, and Sally Davis.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Aye: Venson, Davis, Helms, Burns, Winebrenner, Noble, Zinser
Nay:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Retiring board members Venson, Burns, and Davis shared reflections on their experiences serving on the board.

No members of the community provided comments.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA*

1. Approval of Disbursements, Payrolls, and Financial Statements, March 2025
2. Approval of Human Resources Report
    - Hires
    - Resignations
    - Retirements
    - Leaves of Absence
    - Change of Assignments
    - Stipends | Activities | Additional Assignments
3. Approval of 2025-2026 District Consolidated District Plan
4. Minutes of a Regular Meeting and Workshop, April 16, 2025
5. Minutes of an Executive Session, April 16, 2025

**Any item may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of a Board Member.*

Motion: Ms. Davis moved, seconded by Dr. Venson that the Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education, Lake Forest, Illinois approve the Consent Agenda Items, as presented.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:

Aye: Helms, Winebrenner, Noble, Venson, Zinser, Davis, Burns
Nay:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Acknowledgement Of Receipt Of Lake County Election Results Regarding School Board Election
President Noble stated "The Lake Forest Community High School District 115 Board of Education acknowledges receipt of the certified election results from the County Clerk of Lake County, Illinois for the Board of Education elections. Based on these results four candidates shall be seated with four-year terms: Amy Connell-Donohue, Gail Gamrath, Anne Geraghty Helms, and Robert Silvay."

Oath of Office
Newly elected members of the Board took the District 115 Board of Education's Oath of Office by reading the following aloud:

*I, **Robert Silvay, Anne Geraghty Helms, Amy Connell-Donohue, and Gail Gamrath**, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of member of the Board of Education of The Lake Forest Community High School District 115, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and the laws of the State of Illinois, to the best of my ability.*

I further swear (or affirm) that:

I shall respect taxpayer interests by serving as a faithful protector of the school district's assets;

I shall encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow board members and others who seek a hearing before the Board, while respecting the privacy of students and employees;

I shall recognize that a Board Member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a public board meeting; and

I shall abide by majority decisions of the board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels;

As part of the Board of Education, I shall accept the responsibility for my role in the equitable and quality education of every student in the School District;

I shall foster with the Board extensive participation of the community, formulate goals, define outcomes and set the course for Lake Forest Community High School District 115;

I shall assist in establishing a structure and an environment designed to ensure all students have the opportunity to attain their maximum potential through a sound organizational framework;

I shall strive to ensure a continuous assessment of student achievement and all conditions affecting the education of our children, in compliance with State law;

I shall serve as education's key advocate on behalf of students and our community's schools to advance the vision for Lake Forest Community High School District 115; and

I shall strive to work together with the District Superintendent to lead the School District toward fulfilling the vision the Board has created, fostering excellence for every student in the areas of academic skills, knowledge, citizenship, and personal development.

Seating of New Board Members

The newly elected board members formally assumed their seats at the front with the existing board, while the outgoing members vacated their positions.

Election/Appointment of Officers

Election of President

Motion: Ms. Zinser nominated John Noble, seconded by Mr. Winebrenner that the Board of Education of Lake Forest Community High School District 115, Lake Forest, Illinois, elect John Noble to the office of President.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Ayes: Winebrenner, Noble, Silvay, Gamrath, Connell-Donohue, Zinser, Helms
Nays:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Election of Vice-President

Motion: Mr. Noble nominated Anne Geraghty-Helms, seconded by Ms. Zinser that the Board of Education of Lake Forest Community High School District 115, Lake Forest, Illinois, elect Anne Geraghty-Helms to the office of Vice-President.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Ayes: Helms, Silvay, Zinser, Connell-Donohue, Winebrenner, Noble, Gamrath
Nays:

Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Election of Secretary

Motion: Mr. Noble nominated Amy Connell-Donohue, seconded by Mr. Winebrenner that the Board of Education of Lake Forest Community High School District 115, Lake Forest, Illinois, elect Amy Connell-Donohue to the office of Secretary.

Votes were taken by roll call. Votes were cast as follows:
Ayes: Zinser, Winebrenner, Gamrath, Noble, Silvay, Helms, Connell-Donohue
Nays:
Absent:

The motion carried unanimously.

Committee Member | Liaison Assignments

The following members will be appointed as follows:
Policy Committee: Annie Geraghty Helms, Robert Silvay, and Gail Gamrath
TrueNorth Cooperative: Amy Connell Donohue
Ed-Red: John Noble

LFHS Updates

Kat Yakes gave an update on student events at the high school. Some recent and upcoming events are Continuing the Journeyday, Rotisserie Chicken Eat Off, Prom, Wellness Walk, Pitch Night, and Senior Sunrise.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF A WHOLE

One Lake Forest Update

Drea Serrato provided an update on the One Lake Forest High School Action Committee. The mission of the committee is fostering an inclusive environment; exploration of multiple identities and multiple perspectives; students are validated, recognized, and appreciated; create an environment that maximizes the possibility for each student's growth; eliminate barriers, systems, and practices that maintain or contribute to disparities, inequities, discrimination, and intolerance of any kind; embrace and value the diversity; and expose students to diverse learning experiences and perspectives.

She provided an update on what is happening to align with the mission such as activity bus, say my name correctly, cultural fair, WL testing fees, investigating fees, KTIs, and EdCamp.

Members of the Board asked questions and discussion ensued.

2025-2026 Planning Exercise

Dr. Patrick Sassen led a planning exercise. He asked for feedback on the first year of the committee of a whole format. Members of the Board shared their thoughts on the structure and what they would like to have covered in the upcoming school year. Dr. Sassen will take the feedback and work with Dr. Lenart, a follow up will be provided in an upcoming meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT | ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORT

Dr. Montgomery in collaboration with Drs. Lenart and Fitzsimmons reported on Educational Insights, New School Finance Resources, LFHS Phase 1 Construction Update, Student Achievement, Scout Voices, Math and English Articulation, Mandarin Follow Up, LFHS Spring Musical, LFHS Foundation Luncheon, Prim 2025, Summer School, and Graduation .

The full presentation can be found on the District website.

FOIA REQUESTS

Heather Heiden | 1 of 1 | Completed

**FOIA Requests will not be made available on the website until completed*

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Friday, May 30, 2025	Transitions Graduation
Tuesday, June 3, 2025	Finance Committee of a Whole - 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 3, 2025	**Board of Education Meeting - 7:00 p.m.** **LFHS West Campus Board Room**
Thursday, June 5, 2025	Last Day of School
Saturday, June 7, 2025	LFHS Graduation

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Winebrenner seconded by Ms. Zinser to adjourn the meeting.

On Voice Vote, motion carried.

President Noble declared the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

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John Noble, President Date Amy Connell-Donohue, Secretary Date