

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200
April 23, 2025

The Committee of the Whole meeting for the month of April of the Board of Education of Community Unit School District 200, DuPage County, Illinois, was called to order at the School Service Center, 130 W Park Ave, Wheaton, IL, by Board President Rob Hanlon, on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Upon the roll being called, the following were present:

Board Members: Mr. Rob Hanlon
 Ms. Julie Kulovits
 Mr. Dave Long
 Ms. Angela Blatner
 Mr. Erik Hjerpe
 Mr. Brad Paulsen
 Mr. John Rutledge

Also in Attendance: Dr. Jeff Schuler, Superintendent
 Ms. Alyssa Barry
 Ms. Melissa Murphy
 Dr. Brian O’Keeffe
 Dr. Chris Silagi
 Mr. Jason Spencer

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Member Brad Paulsen led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

SUSPEND THE RULES AND ADJOURN TO A WORKSHOP SETTING

MOTION

Member Hjerpe moved, Member Kulovits seconded to suspend the rules and adjourn to a workshop setting. Upon a roll call vote being taken the vote was: AYE 7, NAY 0.

The motion carried 7-0.

Instruction

Vision 2026 Update on College and Career Readiness

The Vision 2026 Strategic Plan aims to prepare all students for diverse postsecondary opportunities. This includes providing a strong academic foundation and career-connected learning to empower students to make informed career decisions. To achieve this, CUSD 200 is developing comprehensive Career Pathways. Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Ms. Melissa Murphy, provided an update on the work with college and career readiness, including Career Pathways, and the plans for next year. The PowerPoint presentation included information on the following:

- Purpose for Tonight - Provide an update of several key topics related to the college and career readiness work, including:
 - College and Career Readiness - providing students with strong academic skills and practical, career-focused learning experiences
 - Career Pathways - structured educational programs that link classroom learning to real-world career opportunities
 - Career-Connected Learning - developing skills and abilities that enable students to make informed decisions about their future careers
 - Future Plans - specific action items to be included in the 2025-26 work plan
- Five Guiding Questions
 - 1) What Does it Mean to be College and Career Ready?
 - 2) What is a Career Pathway?
 - 3) What are CUSD 200's Priority Career Pathways?
 - 4) What is Career-Connected Learning?
 - 5) What are the Next Steps for this Work?

What Does it Mean to be College and Career Ready?

- College Readiness
 - Involves being prepared to enroll in and successfully complete entry-level, credit-bearing, academic programs at two- and four-year postsecondary schools, as well as being equipped with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to transition successfully
 - CUSD 200 English and Math proficiency indicators on the Vision 2026 dashboard define the academic criteria to enroll in credit-bearing postsecondary coursework (includes course and exam score requirements)
 - CUSD 200 values opportunities for students to take advanced coursework. Earning a "C" or better in an advanced course are likely to have better postsecondary outcomes
 - Percentage of seniors earning a "C" or better in an advanced course during Vision 2026: 73 (2022), 75 (2023), and 81 (2024)
 - Number of advanced courses > AP - 24 (24-25), 25 (25-26); Dual Credit - 17 (24-25), 19 (25-26)
 - The Accelerated Placement Act went into effect in 2024-25; "Accelerated Placement" means the placement of a student in an educational setting with curriculum that is usually reserved for students who are older or in higher grades than the student; Students who meet or exceed the State standards in English, math or science will be automatically enrolled in the next level of advanced coursework
- Key Outcomes for CUSD 200
 - Minimal GPA Impact by grade level (+0.1 for 9th and 12th grades and -0.1 for 10th and 11th grades)
 - Freshman On-Track > Zero 9th grade failures (where state recommendation was higher than teacher recommendation)
 - 2x Black and Hispanic representation in A-Level classes due to state recommendations; increased equity with no academic penalty
- Career Readiness
 - Includes core academic skills, employability skills, and technical, job-specific skills connected to a specific career pathway

What is a Career Pathway?

- Components of a Complete Career Pathway
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement, Career-Connected Learning, Sequence of Courses (would follow a progression of being an orientation

opportunity, skill development and capstone), Early College Coursework (you must have six hours of early college coursework - Dual Credit or AP), Work-Based Learning (must have 60 hours), Industry Credentials (not a state requirement but valued locally), Co-Curriculars (not a state requirement but valued locally)

- College and Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE)
 - To earn a CCPE on a high school diploma/transcript, a student must complete an individualized learning plan, engage in a career-focused instructional sequence (including early college credit), participate in work-based learning, and demonstrate readiness for college-level reading and math
 - Number of CUSD 200 Students and Number of Illinois State Students Earning a CCPE for 2021 - 2024

What are CUSD 200's Priority Career Pathways?

- Illinois' Career Pathway Clusters
 - ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education) has seven endorsement areas.
 - Within these seven areas, there are multiple career pathways.
- Priority Career Pathway: Communications
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement > Arts and Communication, Sequence of Courses, Early College Coursework, Work-Based Learning, Industry Credentials, and Co-curriculars
 - Internships - Axiom Media Group, Greentree Studios, City of Warrenville Parks & Recreation Department, City of Wheaton Public Information Department
- Priority Career Pathway: Entrepreneurship
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement > Finance and Business Services, Sequence of Courses, Early College Coursework, Work-Based Learning, Industry Credentials, and Co-curriculars
- Priority Career Pathway: Marketing
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement > Finance and Business Services, Sequence of Courses, Early College Coursework, Work-Based Learning, Industry Credentials, and Co-curriculars
- Priority Career Pathway: Culinary
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement > Financial Business Services, Sequence of Courses, Early College Coursework, Work-Based Learning, Industry Credentials, and Co-curriculars
- Career Pathway: Education
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement > Human and Public Services, Sequence of Courses, Early College Coursework, Work-Based Learning, Industry Credentials, and Co-curriculars
- Career Pathway Expansion: Nursing
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement > Health Science, Sequence of Courses, Early College Coursework, Work-Based Learning, Industry Credentials, and Co-curriculars
- Career Pathway Expansion: Engineering
 - ISBE College and Career Pathway Endorsement > Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology and Trades, Sequence of Courses, Early College Coursework, Work-Based Learning, Industry Credentials, and Co-curriculars

What is Career-Connected Learning?

- Career-Connected Learning
 - Types of experiences and information a student should have in order to make the most informed decisions about college and career planning, beginning in middle school and continuing through high school

- Core Purposes of Career-Connected Learning
 - Expose participants to a world of work
 - Expose participants to a career field
 - Strengthen and practice academic learning
 - Enhance professional and/or career-track skills
 - Provide a temporary or permanent job
- Career-Connected Learning Committee
 - 34 members + Student Ambassadors from grades 6-12
 - To do this work, the committee engaged in the following topics: Exemplar districts examples of Career-Connected Learning, Best practices and research, Learning from our Ambassadors
- Career-Connected Guiding Principles
 - The seven guiding principles include: Comprehensive Career Education and Readiness, Programs Based on Student Needs and Feedback, Develop Portrait of a Graduate Skills, Teacher Involvement and Professional Development, Intentional Promotion and Marketing, Strong Community and Business Partnerships, and Dedicated Staffing and Program Infrastructure
- Career Connected Learning Framework
 - Career Awareness (Grades 6-12)
 - Career Exploration (Grades 6-12)
 - Career Preparation (Grades 9-12)
 - Career Training (Grades 10-12)
 - What students should be exposed to and be supported to at various grade levels

What are the Next Steps for this Work?

- 2025-26 Work Plan
 - Continue to Develop Complete Career Pathways
 - Comprehensive Career Exploration and Readiness
 - Develop Portrait of a Graduate Skills
 - Teacher Involvement and Professional Development
 - Dedicated Staffing and Program Infrastructure
- Career Pathways Advisory Council
 - The purpose of the advisory council is to bring in business partners to advise our work with Career Pathways and Career-Connected Learning activities
 - The council should include, but will not be limited to, business partners that represent the seven pathways that are developed or in development in the district: Education, Entrepreneurship, Nursing, Marketing, Broadcast Media, Culinary, and Engineering
 - 2025-26 Meeting Dates: August 28, October 23, January 15, April 16
- Discussion

There was additional information/comments on the following:

- CUSD 200's Vision 2026 dashboard outlines the criteria for proficiency that align to ISBE's definition of College and Career Readiness. This criteria allows students to enter into credit-bearing coursework.
- Celebration - there has been a steady increase in the number of students earning a "C" or better in advanced coursework.
- Due to the Accelerated Placement Act, this year, the District has a higher number of students enrolled in advanced coursework.

- A reminder that a complete Career Pathway has multiple components that can culminate in earning an endorsement on a transcript.
- CUSD 200 had 19 students from the class of 2023 earn the ISBE Career Pathway Endorsement in Education last year.
- District 200 has added College and Career Pathway endorsements to our dashboard.
- CUSD 200 has developed or is developing pathways for 5 out of 7 ISBE endorsement areas. These priority pathways require significant effort and comprehensive work to develop.
- ISBE's Agriculture cluster has been challenging, as the District currently has limited coursework in this area.
- IT (Information Technology) pathway cluster and the challenges with staffing in this area. There has also been limited student interest in this pathway.
- Entrepreneurship Pathway includes both the Business INCubator and new Social Media Marketing courses. This ISBE endorsement will be new this year.
- Marketing Pathway - working to secure business partners, similar to what was done for Broadcast Media.
- Culinary Pathway - noted TCD (Technology Center of DuPage) has internship opportunities and there are multiple industry credentials with this program.
- Education Pathway - will reach close to 200 students taking the dual credit classes at the conclusion of this year.
- Nursing Pathway Expansion - in addition to multiple courses in our buildings, the TCD nursing program offers students an opportunity to earn up to 13 hours of dual credit, and they engage in clinical hours.
- Engineering Pathway Expansion is just getting started; a new course will be rolled out, emphasizing the need to explore early college coursework options and work-based learning.
- The Career-Connected Learning Committee includes representation from grades 6-12, as well as from DAOES and ROE.
- Student Ambassadors joined the Career-Connected Learning Committee for a meeting and conducted interviews with CUSD 200 students who engaged in work-based learning as well as got information from the broader student body. The information was used to serve on a panel. It was noted that there will be a focus on developing more student internship opportunities.
- The Career-Connected Learning Framework is comprised of four sections: Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation, and Training.
- There are many more features of Schoolinks - focus on expanding opportunities there.

There were questions and/or additional discussion on the following:

- Advanced coursework - how many students have been bumped up as a result of the shift in policy? Scalewise, the number of A (A-level) versus I (I-level). Noted that the section numbers have flip-flopped.
- Freshman on Track definition - earning credits in core classes with no more than one failure. If a student or parent does not want the student to be in the course they have been automatically enrolled in or recommended, there is a procedure in place for parents to notify the school so they can change it.
- The Career Interest Inventory, taken by eighth-grade students, identifies where students' interests lie in relation to the various pathways.
- What particular challenges are being faced with the IT pathway and staffing? And what other ways can we create opportunities to spark that interest in students who are interested in this? Is there an opportunity within the district for existing staff to get the necessary credentials? Interest in the computer programming side, and jobs are exploding on the network and hardware side of things. Credentialing - not many applicants have the necessary

endorsements. An opportunity for conversations with DAOES to see if this is an area that could be explored collectively.

- Career Pathways and the role that COD (College of DuPage) could play, and the ISBE steps to make this happen.
- The education pathway and the cost of obtaining the degree and certifications to become a teacher could be significantly lower than what most families expect. Is this also true for other pathways? It's worth future conversation.
- Student interest in the trades. How do we support those students? Rely on our partnership with TCD. Approximately 200 students from our two high schools are registered for TCD next year.
- Providing information for students and families about the education levels required for different careers based on their intended postsecondary studies and potential earnings in various fields. Utilizing Schoolinks, integrating this into the financial literacy course, and incorporating relevant information into MS electives. SEL and POG (Portrait of a Graduate) need to be a critical part of the strategy to help some students connect and identify a spark.
- District 200 and COD - exploring student access to on-campus classes. Expanding dual credit opportunities that will transfer to COD and will provide an advantage in that first year. The Education Pathway and the 1+2+1 program - making students aware of what this and other opportunities are at COD.
- The opportunity for the District and its educators to help some students discover their passion and identify a career path where they can turn that into a living wage.
- Utilize National Clearinghouse and its data to verify student enrollment and graduation from most colleges and universities.
- Expanding the Nursing Pathway to Health Sciences to cast a broader net.
- COD summer catalog - so much good programming; getting our kids at CUSD 200 exposed to all of that.
- The role of the high school counselors vs. high school teachers in terms of promoting opportunities for students and connections to businesses. It should really be all staff. The number of counselors we have in the District; the expansion of staff to coordinate internships; the idea of internship coordinators at both of the high schools.
- Internships - local, regional, and state level. Forming partnerships with different entities; Ms. Murphy's role on the DAOES board to further conversations on internships.
- In addition to SEL, the role of learning acceleration in the College and Career Pathways work is emphasized. It is not limited to college-level courses; for instance, trade-level apprenticeship manuals require extensive reading. The efforts of all quadrants in the strategic plan come into play here.
- The workforce development role of "Choose DuPage" might warrant further exploration.
- Dr. Schuler joined the Wheaton Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors; the importance of maintaining the District's connection to community resources.
- The importance of addressing some basics that need to happen before defining a specific path for students.

Community Engagement

Communications and Community Engagement Workplan Update

On an annual basis, the Director of Community Engagement and Communications provides the board with an update on the workplan progress. The Director of Community Engagement and Communications, Ms. Alyssa Barry, provided the Board with an update on the workplan progress as part of the Vision 2026 Strategic Plan. The PowerPoint presentation included information on the following:

- Two Guiding Questions

- 1) How Does the District Communicate with Stakeholders?
- 2) How Does the District Engage Stakeholders/Community Partners?

How Does the District Communicate with Stakeholders?

- Regular Communication with Stakeholders
 - Includes Board Highlights, District Newsletter, School Newsletters, CUSD 200 App, Rooms (HS Athletics/Activities), Social Media, Website, Mailers
- Communications Audit
 - Vision 2026 Strategy
 - District audit completed in summer 2024 with CESO Communications
 - Internal building-level audit is ongoing
 - Newsletter audit: school newsletter survey to parents this spring, District newsletter survey to community this fall
- Two-Way Communications
 - Vision 2026 Strategy
 - Identify a tool that is SOPPA compliant and allows for two-way communication between staff, students, and parents
 - Rooms - integrated within existing CUSD 200 app, syncs with student information system (SIS); Pilot for high school athletics and activities during the 24-25 school year; Evaluating the future of Rooms - conducting feedback survey with staff, students, and parents, demo with multilingual and special education departments
- Crisis/Mass Communications
 - Alerts sent to families via email, call/text, website, CUSD 200 app, depending on the severity of the situation
 - Families may receive a communication when: there is a potential risk or threat to the safety and security of students and staff, there is a change or impact to normal school operations that will affect students/families, students may be impacted by a crisis situation in the classroom, school, bus or nearby vicinity
 - Community Resources: CUSD 200 Safety Website and SEL Website
 - Emergency/Crisis communications may be reviewed by: Director of Community Engagement and Communications, Principal, Local Law Enforcement/Public Information Officer (PIO), Superintendent, Senior Leadership Team Members

How Does the District Engage Stakeholders/Community Partners?

- CUSD 200 Engagement Opportunities
 - Community Engagement Opportunities include: State of Schools, Local Elected Officials Breakfast, Feedback/Input Community Engagement Sessions (e.g. facilities needs, boundary changes), Surveys (e.g. Rooms, Newsletter, 5Essentials, Staff Morale Survey)
 - School-Based PTAs and Boosters
 - District PTA Council
 - Student Ambassadors
 - Student Leadership Groups
 - Student Excellence Foundation
 - Curriculum Committees for Staff
 - Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
 - New - Parent Advisory Groups include: Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, Career Pathways Advisory Committee, School Safety and Student Wellness Advisory Council, Technology Education Committee
- Other Community Engagement/Partnerships

- Municipalities
- First Responders
- Municipal PIOs
- Chambers of Commerce
- Park Districts
- Libraries
- Service Clubs (Rotary & Lions)
- Free Mobile Food Pantry
- Christmas Sharing Programs
- Weekend Food Bags
- Annual School Supplies
- Local Business Partnerships
- Neighborhood Roll Calls
- Outreach
- And more...

There was additional information/comments on the following:

- The communications and community engagement work is connected to all of the different district departments and supports staff, students, and the community.
- District 200 newsletter - a new CUSD 200 newsletter was launched in March 2024 and is sent electronically every Thursday when the District does not have a Board meeting. During weeks with a meeting, the Board Highlights communication is sent electronically.
- The purpose of the district newsletter is to communicate with our staff, students, parents, and the community. We aim to share important information from the district, outline our district's work and priorities, highlight classroom activities, and celebrate our schools, staff, and students.
- Newsletter audit - spent time this past year with our building principals looking at how they communicate with both internal and external audiences through newsletters. Want to make sure the information that is being sent to both staff and community members is consumable for them, and that people are receiving the information that they need. Will be launching a newsletter survey for parents that will inquire about newsletter content, format, cadence, accessibility, etc. The feedback from the surveys will determine the priorities for next year.
- We are currently conducting a survey regarding the two-way communications tool, Rooms, with our staff, students, and parents who have been a part of this pilot to see how they feel about it and if it is a viable tool moving forward.
- We want our families to be informed whenever a crisis or emergency occurs. At the same time, the district adopts a comprehensive approach to communications, examining it through the lens of PREPaRE - understanding who is affected, how they will be affected, and identifying the communication needs. There are a lot of moving parts during an emergency situation.
- Whenever an emergency situation arises, there is a recap after the event to discuss what went well, how we can improve, and how to communicate more quickly. This involves working with our local law enforcement and our community public information officers to ensure there is a standard process and common language for communication with each other, with the community, etc.
- The support of our community and our community partners is essential for the district to accomplish its mission.
- Launching new parent advisory groups and increasing opportunities for parents and community members to collaborate and support the work of our district and our students.

- The integral role that our other community engagement partnerships play in our district and community is significant.
- Sharing information on the great kids and their achievements, the great educators in the district, and more of the storytelling and achievements.
- Solicit community involvement through a mailer detailing ways to engage and opportunities to support our students, as well as providing information on how to help.

There were questions and/or additional discussion on the following:

- Feedback on the Rooms tool concerning the inability of parents to initiate communications.
- Common language - important to define in the communication the language that is being used (secure and teach, lockdown, etc.). Discussions on developing a document for front office staff and others answering calls/questions to ensure they are fully knowledgeable on what the different safety protocols are. Also working with principals to incorporate this into any outgoing communication.
- The Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee has been active for a number of years, and the Special Education Advisory Council was formed earlier this year. The other three parent advisory groups (Career Pathways Advisory Council, School Safety and School Wellness Advisory Council, and the Technology Education Committee) are new.
- Supporting these new committees and the staff's bandwidth to support them - noted that these will be quarterly, and the intent is to divide them among the leadership team. These new committees are intended to be administrative advisory committees vs. CAC (which is authorized by Board charter and complies with the Open Meetings Act).
- Introduced the new committees to CAC, noting the goal is to broaden the net and not have CAC members be a part of multiple committees. CAC received 33 applications with five open seats. This will open opportunities for the applicants of CAC.
- District newsletters - data on how the community has responded: Since March 2024, we have maintained an open rate of approximately 65-75% for the newsletter. This is slightly higher than the rates observed for the Board highlights. The newsletter is sent to staff, high school students, parents, and any community members who have filled out the form on the website indicating their desire to receive the district newsletter.
- Neighborhood roll calls are with the local police departments. More information will be coming soon.
- District newsletter - dedicating a segment of the newsletter to businesses and community partners, as well as to parents of students who have graduated within the last five years.
- Consider looking at print newsletters, potentially twice a year. This could be a Career Pathways opportunity for the Marketing Pathway. Additionally, it may be beneficial to dedicate a segment of the newsletter to community partners and parents of recent graduates.
- Important to communicate the progress on the middle school projects and big milestones associated with the projects. Noted that the page on the website that was dedicated to the referendum is now dedicated to providing regular updates on the plans and progress of the facilities work at Franklin, Edison, and Monroe as a result of the passed referendum.
- We will be welcoming a student intern who will help follow the middle school projects and help us capture them.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Agenda Items & Non-Agenda Items

In accordance with Board Policy 2.230, members of the public wishing to offer public comment had the opportunity to do so. A public comment sign-up sheet was made available until 7:00 p.m. at the meeting site. The Board Meeting was available for viewing via live stream on the District's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/communityunitschooldistrict200.

Per Board Policy, the Board may shorten the time allocation for each person to less than three minutes to allow the maximum number of people the opportunity to speak. The Board did not shorten the time allocation for each person to speak due to the number of speakers.

Speaker

Topic

Emily Walker

HB2827

CLOSED SESSION

The Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees, Specific Individuals who Serve as Independent Contractors in a Park, Recreational, or Educational Setting, or Specific Volunteers of the Public Body or Legal Counsel for the Public Body, including Hearing Testimony on a Complaint Lodged Against an Employee, a Specific Individual who Serves as an Independent Contractor in a Park, Recreational, or Educational Setting, or a Volunteer of the Public Body or Against Legal Counsel for the Public Body to Determine its Validity 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1)

MOTION

Member Kulovits moved, Member Paulsen seconded to adjourn the meeting to closed session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1). Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was AYE 7, NAY 0.

The motion carried 7-0. No action was expected following the closed session.

The meeting adjourned to Closed Session at 8:34 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

There being no further business to come before the Board in Open Session, Member Paulsen moved, Member Rutledge seconded to adjourn the meeting. Upon a voice call being taken, all were in favor. **The motion carried 7-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 PM.

Dave Long, Secretary

Rob Hanlon, President