



**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

J.B Pritzker
Governor

Robert D. Vickery
Acting Director

**Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice School District #428
Board of Education Meeting Minutes
Minutes -July18th, 2025**

- CALL TO ORDER** 1.0 The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Acting Director, Robert Vickery on Friday, July 18th at 9:38 a.m. at the IDJJ Chicago Office.
- ROLL CALL** 1.1 The following Board Members were present: President, Robert Vickery, Board Member Lamont Holifield, Board Member Briana Morales, Board Member Kristian May Stewart and Board Member David Green.
- Others present: Tresa D. Dunbar, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kimberly Kimbrough, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh, Assistant Superintendent of Extended Educational Services, Melissa Cory, Director of Special Education, Noah Boudreau, CTE Director, Dominique Newman, Chief of Communication and Michael Walter, IDJJ Attorney.
- CONSENT AGENDA** 2.0 As follows.
- APPROVAL OF AGENDA** 2.1 Quorum was confirmed. Board Member Lamont Holifield motioned for approval of agenda. Board Member David Green second the motion. Motioned passed.
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 2025 MEETING** 2.2 Quorum was confirmed. Board Member Kristian May Stewart motioned for approval. Board Member David Green second the motion. Motioned passed.
- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** 3.0 Ms. Maleka Ingram of Adler University presented a partnership proposal to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ), aimed at enhancing mental health training and professional development for educators across the department.
- The proposed training follows a three-phase approach:
- Phase I: Introductory Learning Self-paced online courses focused on foundational mental health concepts and individual reflection.
 - Phase II: Interactive Practice In-person sessions featuring role-playing, collaborative exercises, and whole-group learning.

- Phase III: Implementation & Communication Launching in March 2026, this phase will support integration of mental health strategies into daily practice and school culture.

Upon completion of Phases I and II, educators will receive a digital certificate of completion. Participation is voluntary and offered as part of the department's broader professional development efforts.

Adler University brings a strong commitment to serving under-resourced communities and advancing mental health equity—making this partnership a meaningful step toward supporting both staff and students.

We're pleased to welcome several new leaders to our educational community:

- Kristian May Stewart has been officially introduced as a new Board Member, bringing fresh perspective and commitment to our shared mission.
- Dr. Kimberly Kimbrough joins the team as the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, where she will lead instructional strategy and support academic excellence across the district.
- Ms. Traci Knisley has been named the new Principal of Monarch Youth Center.

These appointments reflect our continued investment in strong leadership and collaborative growth. We look forward to the contributions each will bring to their respective roles.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- 4.0** The Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice is proud to announce the upcoming opening of the Monarch Youth Center, a new facility designed to support growth, healing, and opportunity for young people. The center is expected to begin serving youth in mid-September, following its grand opening celebration on September 4.

Named after the Monarch butterfly—Illinois' state insect and a powerful symbol of transformation—the facility reflects the department's commitment to moving away from correctional language and toward developmentally appropriate environments that foster positive change.

Over forty staff members have been onboarded and are currently undergoing training. The nearly completed facility was designed with a trauma-informed approach, featuring natural light, bright spaces, and a layout that is both secure and welcoming.

The Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice has expanded and now serves young adults in Department of Corrections custody who are entitled to a high school education. Led by Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leistchuh, Assistant

Superintendent of Extended Educational Services, the program currently supports 89 students with a dedicated team of six educators.

Following an electrical fire in July 2024, the Warrenville campus underwent a full renovation and is expected to reopen this fall. The updated facility will continue to serve youth with renewed infrastructure and enhanced safety features.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT**

5.0 As follows.

**SCHOOL
DISTRICT #428**

5.1 Information was shared in the President's report.

*School Updates-
Monarch Youth Center
Maya Angelou*

DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR

**SCHOOL
DISTRICT #428**

5.2 Our schools are entering the next phase of strategic planning, with teams beginning to develop their 2026–2028 goals. This collaborative process continues to center on student growth, instructional excellence, and equity. The focused has been on:

2026-2028 Strategic Plan

DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR

- Technology integration to foster 21st-century learning
- Targeted support in math and reading for students needing additional instructional support
- Expanded professional development

These initiatives have laid important groundwork—and as we plan forward, we'll continue to build on what's working while exploring new strategies to meet the needs of all learners.

**SCHOOL
DISTRICT #428**

5.3 The hiring process continues to move forward, with steady progress across our schools. We are currently projecting that by the end of Quarter 3 in Fiscal Year 2026, schools will be staffed at approximately 75% to 85% capacity. It's a meaningful step toward ensuring our classrooms are supported and our students are set up for success.

Human Resources Update

DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR

SCHOOL DISTRICT #428 <i>Board of Education Update</i> DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR	<p>5.4 Planning is underway for the annual training for board members, a required component of board service. This training ensures members are equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to fulfill their roles effectively and in alignment with district goals and governance standards.</p> <p>Details regarding scheduling, format, and content will be shared as planning progresses.</p>
SCHOOL DISTRICT #428 <i>Partnerships-Afterschool, BOE Liaison</i> DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR	<p>5.5 Starting this September, School District #428 will kick off its afterschool program, running Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:45 PM. It's a great opportunity to support students with extra learning time and enrichment.</p> <p>Board members have been encouraged to visit their assigned schools and connect with principals, fostering stronger relationships and deeper understanding of each school's unique strengths and needs.</p>
ASST. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE <i>Assistant Superintendent Summary June/July 2025</i> DR. BAMBI BETHEL-LEITSCHUH	<p>6.0 This school year will center around a district-wide transition to Google tools, recognizing the varied experience levels among educators. Training will be offered in three formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District-wide sessions • Building-based training • Demonstration-based learning <p>These efforts aim to build confidence and consistency in using Google platforms for instruction, collaboration, and blended learning.</p> <p>Similarly, the Department of Corrections will begin its own transition in December. Due to incompatibility with Windows 11, student desktops will be removed and replaced with Chromebooks.</p> <p>The DJJ/DOC Diploma Program will soon onboard its seventh teacher, expanding capacity across five locations, each hosting three instructional sessions. This growth supports continued access to high school education for youth in custody.</p> <p>As of now, the program proudly celebrates two graduates, with more expected as programming ramps up.</p> <p>Currently, 15 positions are posted and progressing through various hiring stages. Postings will continue across all eight facilities, with full programming expected to be operational by September or October.</p> <p>Weekly meetings with facility administrators and project management teams are underway, supported by Administrative Directives to guide implementation and consistency.</p>

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) will transition under the leadership of Dr. Kimberly Kimbrough, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum. During the annual discussion, a point person will be identified to help guide PLC efforts.

The focus will be on:

- Curriculum updates, including intensive writing and direct instruction
- Blended learning integration, especially through Google Classroom and Connexus courses

These changes reflect a strategic shift toward more personalized, rigorous, and tech-enabled instruction.

**DIRECTOR OF
SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

*Special Education Monthly Data
Summary/Narrative
April/May 2025*

MRS. MELISSA CORY

- 6.2** Approximately 50–60% of the student population in School District #428 is comprised of Special Education students, highlighting the importance of continued support and resources for individualized instruction.

**CTE/ VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION DIRECTOR**

*CTE/ Vocational
Education Summary
July 2025*

MR. NOAH BOUDREAU

- 7.0** A recent visit to Crete-Monee High School offered a firsthand look at the dynamic learning environments shaping student success. Some included the horticulture classroom, video production studio, and automotive program.

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department continues to play a vital role in supporting student achievement through innovative programming and industry partnerships.

The first cohort of the D&D Solar program has successfully completed its training, with three students preparing to graduate. Each graduate will be offered a position within the company, marking a powerful step toward postsecondary success and workforce integration. Graduation is scheduled for July 30th.

The next cohort is expected to grow, expanding access to this impactful opportunity.

Visit to Crete-Monee High School and had the opportunity to observe different areas within the building, such as the horticulture class, video making room and auto program.

The Career and Technical Education Department has been actively engaged in supporting student success.

A proposal for a new barbering program is expected by August.

**BOARD DISCUSSION
ITEMS**

- 8.0** A suggestion was raised to adjust board meeting times to better accommodate school staff participation. In response, the Director proposed a staff survey to determine whether a time change would be supported.

The Superintendent clarified that staff are welcome to attend board meetings at any time, provided they have approval from their principal and appropriate classroom coverage in place.

ADJOURNMENT

- 9.0** A motion to adjourn was made by Board Member David Green. Board Member Kristian May Stewart then followed with a second motion. The motion passed. No Objections. President Vickery concluded the meeting at 10:52 a.m.