

North Boone Community Unit School District No. 200
Minutes of the Business Services Committee Meeting
District Office
6248 North Boone School Road
Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065
Tuesday, July 8, 2025
6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mrs. Judy Hutchinson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The following Committee Members were present: Mrs. Hutchinson, Mr. O'Donnell, Mrs. Schilling, Dr. Cascio, Treasurer Randy Steen, Elaine Ahrens, Marc Eckmann, Cindy Kastning, Andrea Sowers, Rob Wessel, and William Randall.

Members absent were: Holly Houk, Heather Walsh, and Brad Crull.

AUDIENCE TO VISITOR

(none)

2025/2026 SUBSTITUTE RATES

Discussion was held in regard to setting substitute teacher pay rates for the 2025/2026 school year. Key points discussed included:

- Current rates and comparisons: Last year's rates were reviewed along with area rate comparisons.
- Competitive positioning: An agreement was made that rates should be raised to remain competitive, attract retired teachers, and reduce reliance on internal teachers covering classes, which can cause burnout and inconsistency for students.
- Retired teacher considerations: Higher pay was initially considered for "North Boone retired teachers," but most members agreed to expand it to all retired teachers to avoid discouraging experienced candidates from other districts. It was also discussed adding the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) equivalent to retired teachers' pay since they do not contribute to TRS.
- Long-term versus daily rates: Long-term substitutes do more work (e.g. planning, grading) and should earn more than \$10/day over daily rates. A bigger separation was suggested to incentivize long-term commitments.
- Final proposed rates:
 - Daily Certified Sub: \$150
 - Long-term Certified Sub: \$200
 - Retired Teacher Daily: \$180
 - Retired Teacher Long-Term: \$220

IMPACT FEES

Dr. Cascio started a discussion about impact fees, which are charges on new housing developments intended to offset the cost of added infrastructure and services, including schools.

Key points discussed included:

- Background: In Poplar Grove, impact fees previously existed but were removed approximately 6-8 years ago. When they existed, the Village held the funds before passing them to the School District. Boone County currently does not support reintroducing them, but Poplar Grove's Village President is open to bringing them back.
- Differing perspectives: For impact fees, it helps fund school needs from new housing developments; different market conditions in Poplar Grove vs. Boone County might make them viable. Against impact fees, the District is currently overbuilt (extra classroom capacity from 2008 construction), so new students can be accommodated without expansion; removing fees could encourage faster housing development, boosting long-term property tax revenue.
- Financial trade-off: Impact fees are a one-time payment and may not cover large capital costs, whereas property taxes from new homes provide ongoing revenue. High fees could also discourage developers and slow the growth.
- Next steps: topic will remain on the agenda for ongoing updates.

COPY PAPER DISCUSSION

Dr. Cascio stated that he is hoping to find ways to reduce costs on copy paper purchases. Currently, paper is ordered by each building individually, not in bulk, due to a lack of storage space. Prices currently vary depending on timing and vendor. Secretaries often compare prices and share the good deals with each other. Bulk purchasing was ruled out because stored paper in poor climate conditions can degrade and damage copiers.

An idea came from Belvidere's model: They use an on-demand ordering contract (through Office Pro) at a set price of \$33.90 per case. That district commits to a total annual quantity but has the paper shipped to individual schools as needed, avoiding storage problems. Deliveries are made within 48 hours of a request.

The following steps were agreed upon:

- Gather data to determine the District's total annual paper use and spending by school.
- Contact vendors – Reach out to at least three companies (including Office Pro) to see if they can provide on-demand service at competitive rates.
- Avoid disruption – Continue the current ordering process until a contract is ready.
- Timeline – Bring vendor quotes and paper usage info to the August business meeting, with potential board approval to follow.

LUNCH FOR ALL

The Committee discussed whether the District could qualify for the "Lunch for All" program, which would provide free lunch (and potentially breakfast) to all students.

During COVID, all students received free lunch; currently, neighboring districts like Belvidere and Harvard have the program, but our district does not. To be eligible, the District would be required to meet a specific percentage threshold (approximately 60%) for qualifying students under federal guidelines. Determination involves more than just free/reduced lunch application numbers; detailed documentation is required. The application window opens on April 1 and closes in June.

The challenges are that the process is data-heavy and must be prepared well before April. Someone must be designated to manage the application, collect and verify data, and follow the official calculation method.

The next steps involve gathering information and attending a seminar, hosted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), which explains the process and strategies for qualifying. This will be a topic added to the September 16th meeting for an update. It is recommended to begin intensive preparation in February to ensure eligibility by the April deadline.

OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

The committee discussed increasing student exposure to trades and career certifications as alternatives to the “college-only” pathway. Key points included:

- Community desire: Parents want more hands-on trade opportunities (carpentry, electrical, welding, etc.) with the possibility of students graduating with industry certifications and direct-to-work readiness.
- Current exposure methods: Some students attend off-site programs (e.g., auto, ag, business, family consumer science) with the possibility of students graduating with industry certifications and direct-to-work readiness. There are two annual job fairs already that include trade employers. There are also field trips to industry sites and events like the trades expo through the local EFE (Education for Employment) partnership. Rock Valley courses and some regional programs are available, but carpentry/electrical/welding options are limited.

Some ideas for expansion included:

- Starting a Trades Club to build interest and connections.
- Partner with local businesses, the Boone County Chamber, and Empower Boone for workforce-aligned programs.
- Explore grants or business sponsorship for equipment/facilities (e.g., a welding shop).
- Create pipelines with local employers (e.g., alumni-owned companies) to keep students in-district for training instead of sending them to other schools.

The long-term vision is to develop in-district programs that could also attract students from other schools. The use of tools such as Xello to identify student interests, then align offerings. And possibly build a small facility addition to house hands-on programs. This will be a discussion to move into the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Committee for structured planning.

An update on the Business Manager hiring was requested. Dr. Cascio stated that so far a couple of candidates have completed applications and there is one still in progress. The process has been slow but not stagnant. The position will be posted for 3-4 weeks. Dr. Cascio has reached out to IASBO for potential interim CSBO candidates.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(none)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Submitted by:

Judy Hutchinson, Vice-Chair

Russell O'Donnell, Vice-Chair