REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Held at: 45 E. Buena Vista Street
Highland Park, MI 48203-3322

Wednesday, October 14, 2026
6:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER –
The meeting was called to order by President Cheryl Sanford at 6:04 PM.

ROLL CALL –

Ms. Cheryl Sanford, President, Board of Education	☒Present	☐Absent
Ms. Famika Roberts, Vice President, Board of Education	☒Present	☐Absent
Ms. Yolanda Harrison, Secretary & Sergeant-at-Arms, Board of Education	☒Present	☐Absent
Ms. Cassandra Walker, Treasurer, Board of Education	☒Present	☐Absent
Ms. Doris Harris, Member, Board of Education	☒Present	☐Absent
Ms. Linda Wheeler, Member, Board of Education	☒Present	☐Absent
Ms. Janet Spight-White, Member, Board of Education	☒Present	☐Absent

QUORUM

COMMUNICATIONS

(1) HP Journal- Copies provided for the BOE and public

APPROVE MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: MEMBER HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE **OCTOBER 14, 2026** MEETING AGENDA
SUPPORT: VICE PRESIDENT ROBERTS SECONDED.
DISCUSSION:
☒AS PRESENTED.
☐WITH MODIFICATION, MOVING THE PRESENTATION OF THE AUDIT PRIOR TO THE PUBLIC COMMENTS.
ROLL CALL:

Ms. Cheryl Sanford, President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Famika Roberts, Vice President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Yolanda Harrison, Secretary & Sergeant-at-Arms, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Cassandra Walker, Treasurer, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Doris Harris, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Linda Wheeler, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Janet Spight-White, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENTS *(Agenda Items Only – 3 minutes only)*

- None

MOTION TO APPROVE SEPTEMBER 16, 2026, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: MEMBER HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE **SEPTEMBER 16, 2026** MEETING MINUTES
SUPPORT: SECRETARY HARRISON SECONDED.
DISCUSSION:
☐AS PRESENTED.
☒WITH CORRECTIONS,
ROLL CALL:

Ms. Cheryl Sanford, President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Famika Roberts, Vice President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Yolanda Harrison, Secretary & Sergeant-at-Arms, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Cassandra Walker, Treasurer, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Doris Harris, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Linda Wheeler, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Janet Spight-White, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

DISTRICT DEPARTMENT REPORTS AND INFORMATION

(1) FINANCE-ALAN C. YOUNG, PC. PRESENTED BY MR. PETTWAY (LUSKA GERMAN HAD ANOTHER ENGAGEMENT)-
Questions and Discussion by multiple Board meetings.

MOTION TO APPROVE SEPTEMBER 2026 FINANCIALS

MOTION: VICE PRESIDENT ROBERTS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE **SEPTEMBER 2026 FINANCIALS.**
SUPPORT: SECRETARY HARRISON SECONDED.
DISCUSSION:
ROLL CALL:

Ms. Cheryl Sanford, President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Famika Roberts, Vice President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Yolanda Harrison, Secretary & Sergeant-at-Arms, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Cassandra Walker, Treasurer, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Doris Harris, Member, Board of Education	☐Yes	☒No
Ms. Linda Wheeler, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Janet Spight-White, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No

MOTION CARRIED 6-1.

(2) BOARD GOVERNANCE/OVERSIGHT REPORT VANESSA GULLEY, PROVISION-Ms. Gulley Spoke on the handout she provided regarding the Summer Podcast series and what each episode was about. Ms. Wheeler asked about

the community participation numbers. Mr. Pettway answered her questions. Ms. Walker asked if we could share episode two again on the webpage. Ms. Roberts thanked Ms. Gulley for the handout. Ms. Sanford also thanked Ms. Gulley and discussed the importance of the podcast series.

(3) VICE PRESIDENT, ACCEL SCHOOLS-PAMELA FARRIS- Ms. Farris provided an update on Barber Prep. Ms. Walker asked whether a healthcare professional could visit the school to speak with the students. Dr. Farris explained that the school hosts a monthly guest speaker series, which would provide an excellent opportunity to arrange such a visit. Ms. Walker thanked Dr. Farris for the time, effort, and interest she has shown in the scholars. Ms. Wheeler inquired about PTO, and Dr. Farris explained the reason for its postponement. Ms. Roberts thanked Dr. Farris, congratulated her on six years at the school, and acknowledged several of the updates she had shared. Ms. Roberts then inquired about enrollment and Barber's plans moving forward. Dr. Farris provided an explanation. Ms. White asked whether Barber had reached its personnel hiring goals, and Dr. Farris provided additional clarification. President Sanford shared that the Education Committee had discussed the possibility of incentivizing students for achieving good grades. She also mentioned the possibility of hosting an i-Ready workshop in January or February.

(4) HPSD REPORT- MR. ISAIAH PETTWAY, CEO- Mr. Pettway discussed the importance of celebrating students monthly to recognize their achievements. He then provided an update on enrollment, referencing an article indicating that enrollment across the state has declined by approximately 20%. He also noted that a new enrollment formula would be implemented this year. Ms. White asked for clarification regarding the enrollment decline and the reasons behind it. Mr. Pettway explained that the decline reflects students who were previously enrolled in school but are no longer attending. Mr. Pettway provided updates on the elevator project and the request for new lockers. Ms. Harris asked why the lockers needed to be replaced, and Mr. Pettway explained the reasons for the proposed replacement. Mr. Pettway also announced that a new application would be submitted for a potential Board of Directors (BOD) member, Mr. Darthanian Nichols. Regarding ADA compliance, Mr. Pettway explained that the district is continuing to address accessibility improvements. G-Force assessed the curb and determined that it could not complete the necessary work. However, G-Force recommended another company, Hutch Pavement, which is expected to visit the district next week to provide a quote. Mr. Pettway then provided an update on the district's audit, including potential findings. He expressed optimism that the district would receive a clean audit with no material findings. He also announced that the Clairmont Group would attend the November meeting to present and explain its findings to the Board. Ms. Harris expressed her support for the potential addition of the new Board member, noting that his appointment would help bring the Board into compliance. Ms. White asked about the audit submission deadline, and Mr. Pettway explained the process and what would take place during the November meeting. Ms. Wheeler shared her support for Mr. Darthanian Nichols, stating that she believes he would be a good choice for the Board of Directors.

BOARD OF EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Executive Committee Report**-The committee met on October 6th. Vice President Roberts presented the Executive Committee report, stating that the committee met on October 7 to review outstanding matters, assess progress on district initiatives, and discuss upcoming priorities. Discussions focused on three primary areas: district operations, facilities, and governance. Regarding district operations, the committee reviewed initiatives to strengthen communication and transparency. These included enhancing the district's social media presence, continuing to promote the Highland Park Promise Initiative, and preparing for the November relaunch of Board member profiles in the HP Journal. The committee also discussed highlighting district accomplishments through video communications and upcoming community engagement activities, including Coffee and Conversation, scheduled for October 22nd. In

the area of Board development and governance, the committee discussed strategic planning, future professional development opportunities, and preparations for the transition to the incoming Board. Fall policy updates are anticipated in November. The district's five-episode series has also been completed. Regarding facilities, the committee reviewed outstanding accessibility and infrastructure concerns, including ADA compliance, the elevator project, metal detector installation, and related improvements. These matters will continue to require attention and follow-up. The committee also discussed improvements to the audio quality of Board meetings. Vice President Roberts thanked Mr. Tarver and Stephen for their work in making the improvements. Vice President Roberts concluded by emphasizing that, as the district approaches the end of the calendar year, the committee will remain focused on accountability, strengthening district operations, supporting effective governance, and ensuring that the district's work continues to serve its students, families, and the Highland Park community.

2. **Finance Committee Report-** The Finance Committee reported that, based on the financial information provided by Ms. Luska, revenues and expenditures are tracking in accordance with the approved budget. The committee also reviewed whether any significant variances required explanation and confirmed that there were none. Additionally, no areas were identified as trending over or under budget. The committee emphasized the importance of continued financial oversight and monitoring of district expenditures. An additional clarification was provided regarding the bond redemption approved by the Board at the previous month's meeting and scheduled to take place in October. It was explained that, as a result of the redemption, the district's bond debt, which was originally scheduled to be paid off in 2032, will now be fully paid off in 2027, five years ahead of schedule.
3. **Educational Expansion Committee Report-** President Sanford opened the discussion by expressing her appreciation to district leadership and staff for the positive updates shared throughout the meeting, particularly regarding the audit, facilities, and district programming. The committee discussed Incentive plan for students. They discussed site visits and Ms. Sanford suggested going to the high performing charter schools, such as The school at Marygrove and Hope of Detroit. They are still working on convening with Wayne County Community College for a meeting to move on with those plans. There was also a review of a charter application for a school and they will be sharing this with the board. Ms. White asked if they have a building or if they are looking at Ford school. Ms. Wheeler asked for the name and Mr. Pettway explained it is the Robert J Young Promise School.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

NEW BUSINESS

(1) Memorandum of Understanding Early Childhood Resources

Motion to Approve Memorandum of Understanding Early Childhood Resources

MOTION: MEMBER HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCES SUPPORT: VICE PRESIDENT ROBERTS SECONDED.

DISCUSSION:

ROLL CALL:

Ms. Cheryl Sanford, President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Famika Roberts, Vice President, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Yolanda Harrison, Secretary & Sergeant-at-Arms, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Cassandra Walker, Treasurer, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Doris Harris, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Linda Wheeler, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No
Ms. Janet Spight-White, Member, Board of Education	☒Yes	☐No

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Mr. Pettway clarifies his conversation with the community regarding Ford school and there were some concerns that he wanted to address prior to that day. President explained that Mr. Pettway did speak with her and she agreed with him and

didn't think a special meeting was needed.

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENTS *(3 minutes only)*
Keshonna Powell- Spoke about the Ford school clean up and voiced questions and concerns that she had.

BOARD OF EDUCATION AFFAIRS & COMMENTS
Cheryl Sanford-Addressed the Ford school clean up and how Mr. Pettway is the person who implements the policies and was the designated spokesperson not board members.
Linda Wheeler- Thanks seeing the community people at the meeting and explained that there is not a lot of community involvement. She explained that there are procedures.
Cassandra Walker- Explained that she is thankful for the community being involved and there is a right way of doing things. She then ended that the way you do somethings is the way you do all things.
Janet Spight-White- Explained that she had wanted to attend the previously scheduled meeting but had a prior commitment. She expressed her support for the school district and the city, noting that she was pleased with the completed brick painting and felt it looked very good.
Doris Harris-NONE
Yolanda Harrison- Thanked the volunteers for taking the initiative to help improve the school and community. She commended their efforts and encouraged them to continue participating in future projects, emphasizing the importance of following established procedures and working collaboratively with the district to ensure transparency and shared success.
Famika Roberts- Expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet and thanked the individual and Mr. Pettway for their collaboration. They emphasized the importance of following established policies and procedures, embracing new approaches, and remaining focused on student success. They also noted that disagreements should serve as opportunities for growth and learning rather than obstacles to progress.

CONFIRMATION OF THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday, November 10th, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 8:18 PM
MOTION: MEMBER WHEELER MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT **8:10PM**
SUPPORT: VICE PRESIDENT ROBERTS SECONDED.
MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Respectfully submitted by:

Yolanda Harrison — 11/10/2026

Yolanda Harrison, HPBOE Secretary — Date

Signature: Yolanda Harrison (Nov 17, 2026 05:29:24 EST)
Email: harrisony@hipark.org

School District of the City of Highland Park

Final Audit Report 2026-11-17

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