



# Board of Education Meeting

JANUARY 28, 2025



**ZION-BENTON**  
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT *126*  
COMMITTED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE





# ZB Pride Awards



**ZION-BENTON**  
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT *126*  
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# Board President Statement

District 126 is committed to an equitable, respectful learning environment where bullying, harassment, racism, sexism, and hate speech have no place; please partner with us in fostering a positive community.



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# Public Comment



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# Consent



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# Superintendent Report



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# Energy Transition Community Grant Program (CEJA)



## DOLLARS & SENSE MEETING

City of Zion Administrator David Knabel will discuss the recent amendment to the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) and how it will affect your property taxes. Everyone is welcome to attend and ask any questions you may have.



**6:00 PM**  
January 30, 2025



**Zion City Hall**  
2828 Sheridan Rd.  
Zion, IL 60099







## Joint Board Meeting



# JOINT BOARD MEETING

Feb 25 at 6:00 p.m.

Winthrop Harbor School District #1

**No Separate February BOE Meeting**

**ZBTHS Business at Joint Meeting**

Consent Only at the end of the  
meeting.





## Strategic Plan Update



## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Listening session about Strategic Plan update from the office of Leadership & Community Outreach and Superintendent of Schools.

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

- February 18
- March 10
- April 8

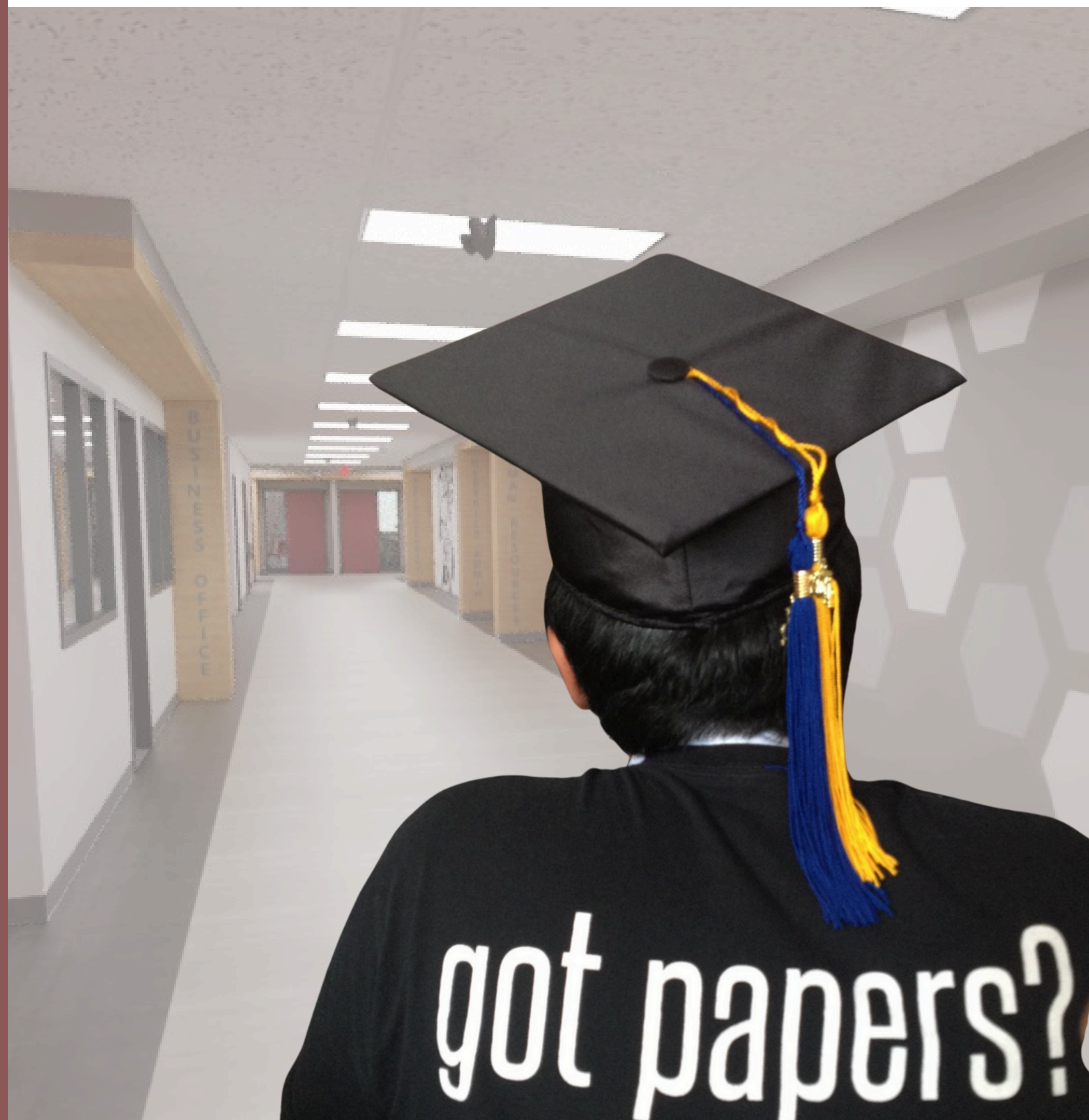
**Invited:** Faculty, community, district leaders, board members



# Safe Haven

## Immigration Policy Response

- 1/23 Communication Issued to the executive cabinet, staff, and families
- 1/24 Meeting with District & school leaders
- 1/28 Communication Issued to District staff and Faculty Meetings held with specific employee groups







# District 126 Electronic Device Policy Revision



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# Need for Revision

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- Reduce classroom distractions
  - Teachers should focus more on teaching and less on managing cell phone use
  - Teachers report that managing cell phones is a major problem they face daily
- Current policy is not being implemented consistently
  - Clear expectations with uniform implementation
  - A clear policy is needed that everyone understands and follows
- A policy should support student well-being and mental health by removing classroom distractions
- High schools throughout county and D126 foundational schools have recently revised cell phone policy to reduce distractions with uniform implementation



# Draft Policy Statement

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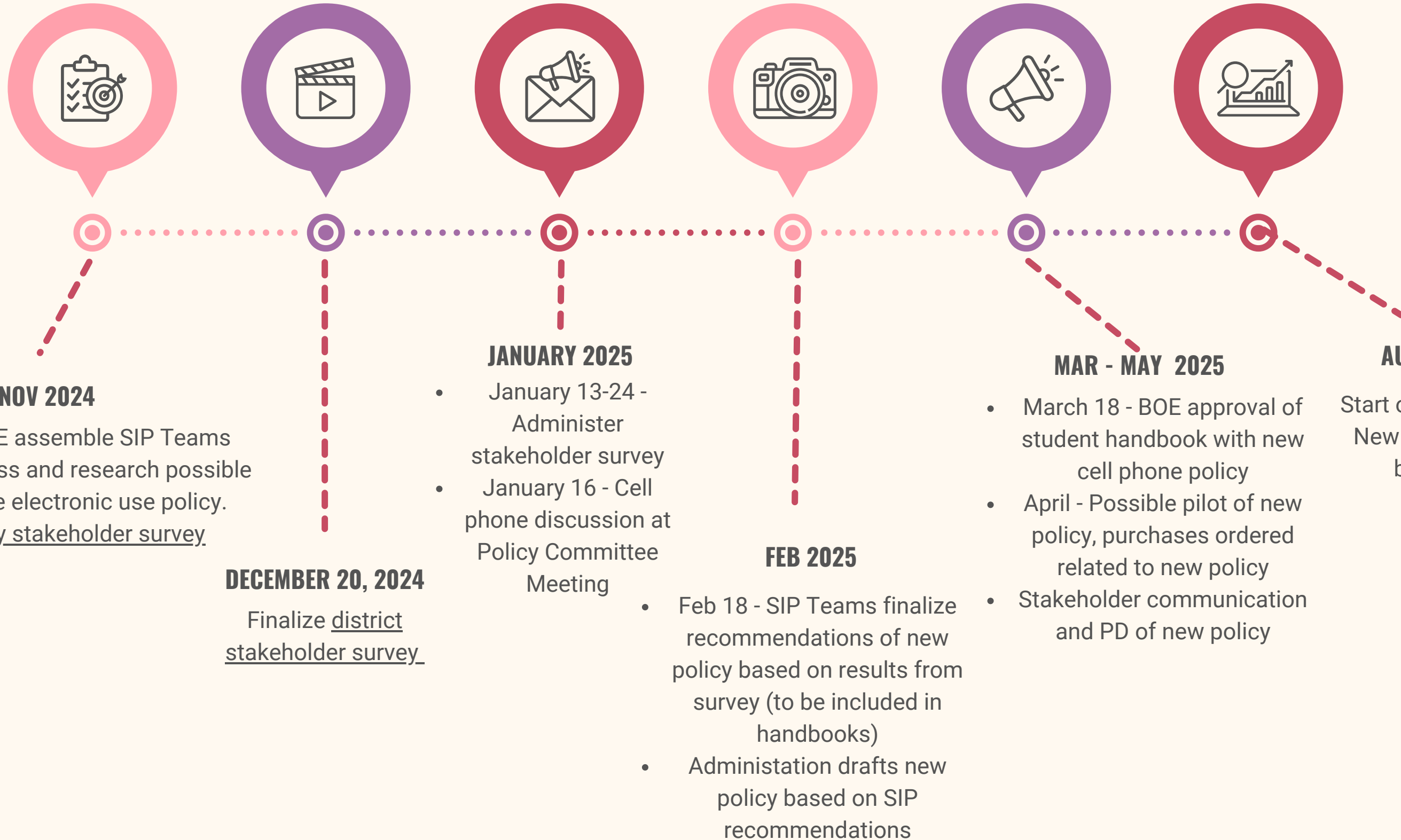
During instructional time, students are not permitted to use cell phones. *Instructional time* is defined as any time designated for teaching, learning, or assessment activities. All cell phones must be silenced and stored out of sight for the entire duration of each instructional period.



# ZION-BENTON DISTRICT 126 ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY REVISION TIMELINE



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*126*



# Details to be determined....

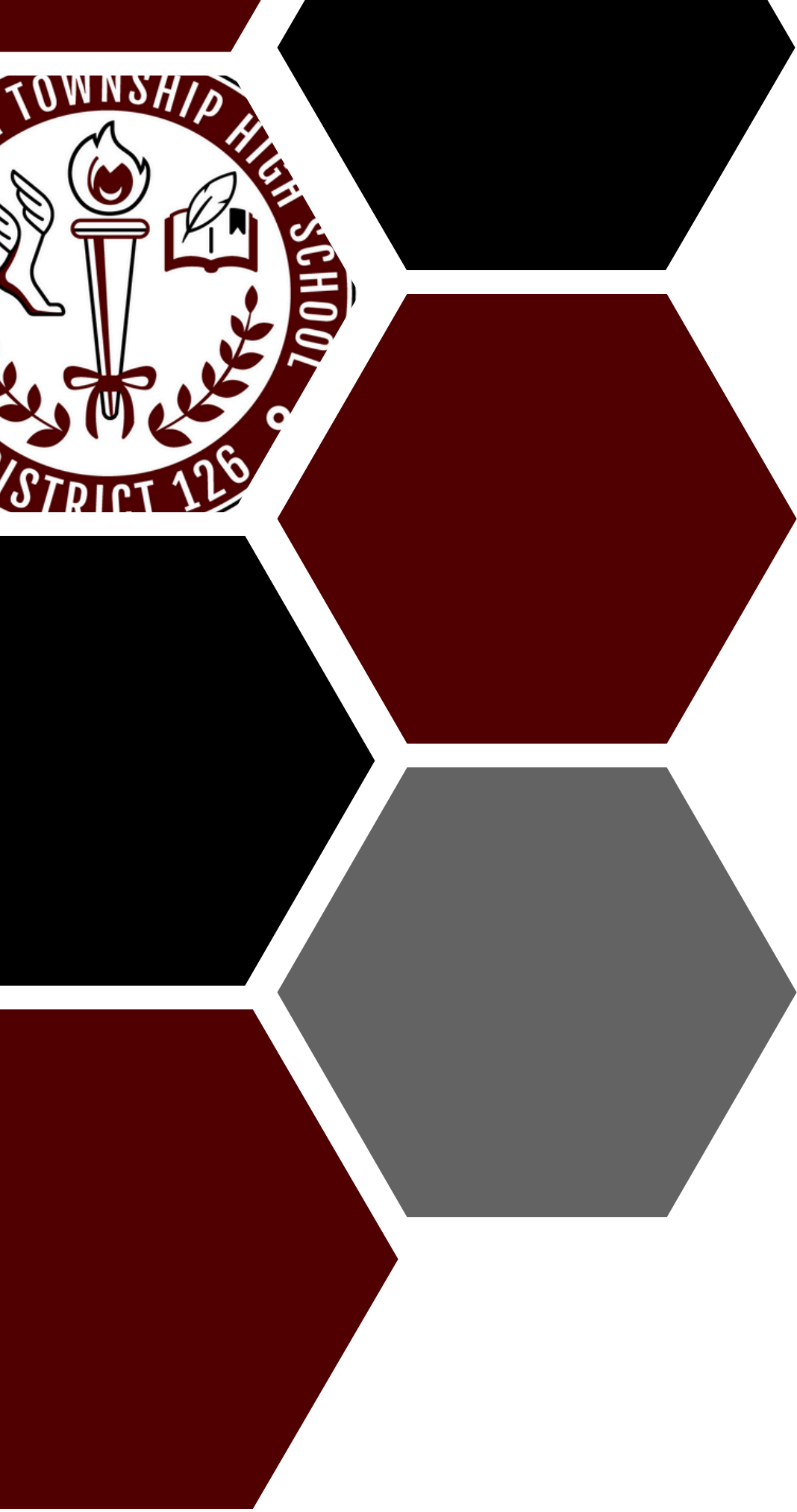
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- Policy regarding listening devices (headsets, earbuds, etc)
- Policy regarding smart watches or other devices that can connect to phone
- How, where, and when to store electronic devices
- Consequences for violation of policy

# Staff PD/ Communication

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- Staff Professional Development (April - August 2025)
  - Cell Phone management procedures
  - Student management within classrooms
- Communication leading up to implementation
  - Student and parent communication setting expectations and reasons for policy change
  - Ongoing social norm campaign promoting the importance of instructional time and eliminating electronic distractions in classrooms



# Reports & Discussion

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# ZBTHS

## Principal's Report Online

# ZION-BENTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL



HOME OF THE ZEE BEES

PRINCIPAL REPORT JANUARY 2025

**BONNIE FELSKE**

ZBTHS Principal  
bonnie.felske@zb126.org



## Instructional Updates

Throughout the school year advancing the district Strategic Plan goals has remained a priority. ZBTHS has developed a School Improvement Plan designed to support our district mission to decrease absenteeism and increase ELA and Math proficiency. The plan contains three goals centered around culture and climate, academic achievement and attendance. To support this work a ZBTHS SIP team was developed to examine barriers to learning, address distractions in the classroom and develop strategies to increase student attendance. The SIP team consists of 24 staff members representing all departments and both certified staff and administration. The collaborative effort has identified several learning distractions and has primarily remained focused on the disruption of cell phones in the classrooms. The committee will be bringing a recommendation in the upcoming months as to a district policy restricting cell phone use during instructional time. During institute day staff continue to revise their curriculum as they integrate ACT skills into daily lessons and engage in professional development to support student centered learning.

## Operational Updates

Upon returning for second semester, a few operational changes were implemented to ensure efficient, effective and safe operations. On January 9 2025, I hosted grade level meeting in the PAC to speak directly to all students about the procedural changes that were made regarding student entry into the building, attendance, Epass, tardies, lunch and advisory. The student handbook was shared with all students ensuring clear communication of school expectations regarding attendance, academics and behavior. Working with the Safety Department, a new late arrival procedure was implemented in which all outside doors will remain locked after 7:50 and students may only enter through the main school entrance. This change has been a great success as we are now able to track students more effectively and get them to class more efficiently.



## Celebrations

### ZB World Language Fair

Our World Language students made culture come alive by sharing their research through fun and interactive activities. They explored new cultures, shared what they learned, and had a great time doing it!



### Super BPAC Community Event

ZB was proud to host this years super BPAC event. There was inspirational performances including our ZB Band and Choir. This was a wonderful event allowing out our community to celebrate together.



Microsoft





# ZBE

## Principal's Report Online

# Z·B·E PRINCIPAL'S REPORT



MR. KEVIN WILAND ZION-BENTON EAST PRINCIPAL kevin.wiland@zb126.org

## January 28, 2025

### Instructional Updates

Students at Zion-Benton East returned from winter break on January 7th to a new semester. Students were encouraged to welcome 2025 with renewed commitment to making good choices, be passionate about their desire to excel, and remain focused on their limitless future. They were encouraged to:

- Actively engage in every class, every day.
- Put forth their best effort on all assignments.
- Ask insightful questions and seek feedback before major assignments are due.
- Take advantage of extra help during advisory time or after school.
- Prepare thoroughly for tests and assessments, including studying for the ACT

At Zion-Benton East, we remain fully committed to District 126's "Pathway to Proficiency," a key element of our Strategic Plan. In the coming months, staff meetings will provide teachers with dedicated time to incorporate ACT practice items into their lessons. Our educators have also participated in professional development focused on the effective and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in education.

ZBE is proud to report that as of January 17th, our attendance rate stands at 93.03%. Additionally, we are thrilled to share that 98% of our 9th-grade students are on track at the end of semester 1, a testament to their hard work and determination.

### Celebrations

Zion-Benton East has a lot to look forward to this coming month, including:

- February 6th 8:00pm - Semester 1 Honor Roll Celebration
- February 10-11 - School Spirit Assemblies
- February 13th 5:30pm - Family Fun Night

### Operational Updates

The process of developing a 10-year Facility Master Plan for Zion-Benton East continues to move forward with valuable contributions from our community. This month, we've gathered feedback from one of our most important stakeholder groups—our students! Their insightful ideas and suggestions are helping us shape the future of our facilities to better serve the needs of tomorrow's learners.

In an effort to foster ongoing communication with our students, Zion-Benton East has introduced a regular forum for gathering student input. Beginning this month, we've revitalized the Principal Advisory Committee, selecting a diverse group of 24 students to represent their peers. This committee will meet regularly with Principal Wiland for lunch and meaningful discussions on topics that matter to the ZB East community.

Zion-Benton East is also excited to welcome the Class of 2029! We have successfully hosted four engaging evening events for incoming families, including a presentation, campus tour, scavenger hunt, and a parent Q&A session. We encourage all families of incoming freshmen to explore everything our school has to offer and visit our website at <https://zbeinfo.wixsite.com/zbeast>. Applications are due by January 31.

Additionally, this month we launched an Electronic Device Survey to gather input from all of our stakeholders regarding the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices in classrooms. Over the next month, SIP teams at each school will carefully review the feedback and make recommendations for revisions to the student handbook for the 2025-26 school year.





# Committee Report

**Business, Bid, Finance**

**Committee**



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# Committee Report

## Curriculum Committee



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# Committee Report

## Policy Committee



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# Committee Report

## Personnel Committee



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# New Business



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# Bond Tax Exempt Compliance Report



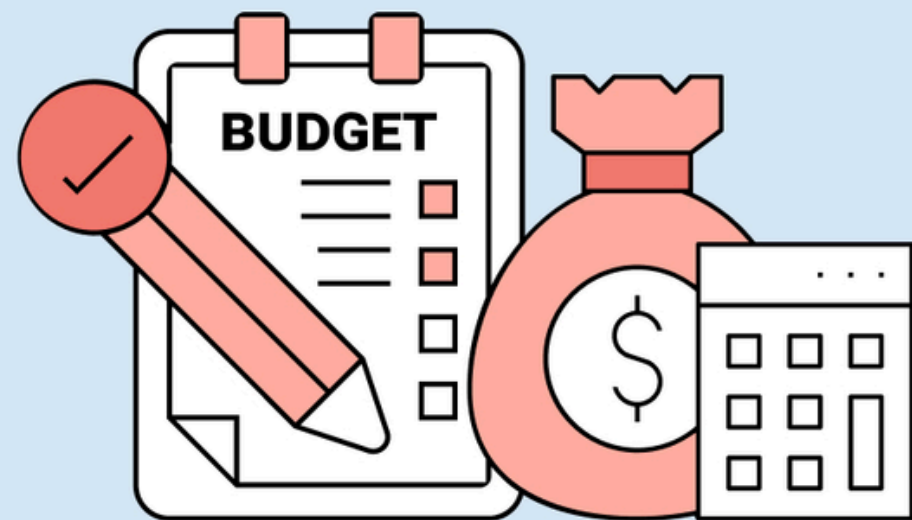
On an annual basis, the District must file a compliance report document pertaining to our bonds and tax collections. The compliance letter is attached for your review. The following is a summary of the related items:

- (a) **Records**
- (b) **Arbitrage Rebate Liability**
- (c) **Contract Review**
- (d) **IRS Examinations or Inquiries**





## 2025- 2026 Tentative Budget



On an annual basis, the administration requests that the Board authorize the Superintendent to prepare the tentative budget for the next fiscal year.

The 2025-2026 Tentative Budget will be presented at the June 24, 2025 regular Board of Education meeting.



# Approval

Summer 2026

## Improvement Proposal



### Scope of work the project will include the following components

- Backup generators for Zion Benton High School
- Electric bus charging stations at the transportation bus lot
- Reconfiguration of the transportation bus lot
- Repaving of the south parking lot
- Exterior light improvements at the south parking lot





# Approval

## Appointment of Authorized Agent



As a matter of routine, when a new individual is hired to replace the existing IMRF agent, IMRF requires that a new agent be appointed as the primary point of contact for a school district for all things IMRF related.

Dr. Woell has taken over for Dr. Wilkinson, who was the appointed IMRF agent. As a result, the Board needs to pass a resolution appointing Dr. Woell as the new IMRF agent.





# Approval

Press Plus 117 Policy  
Update - 1st Reading



## Press Plus 117

- 2:105 Ethics and Gift Ban
- 2:120 Board Member Development
- 4:30 Revenue and Investments
- 4:60 Purchases and Contracts
- 4:150 Facility Management and Building Programs
- 4:170 Safety
- 5:90 Abused and Neglected Child Reporting
- 5:120 Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest
- 5:125 Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct
- 5:230 Maintaining Student Discipline
- 6:60 Curriculum Content
- 6:135 Accelerated Placement Program
- 6:270 Guidance and Counseling Program
- 7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities
- 7:100 Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students
- 7:160 Student Appearance
- 7:200 Suspension Procedures

# Release 117

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

### 2:105 Ethics and Gift Ban

- No intentional use of [district] property or resources in connection with any political activity
- Exception: Travel expenses for a meeting to discuss DISTRICT business

### 2:120 Board Member Development

- Enumeraion of PD
- Open Meetings Act (OMA)
- Adding: Improving Student Learning & Trauma-responsive learning environments



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# Release 117

## OPERATIONAL SERVICES

### 4:30 Revenue and Investments

- allow for investment of public funds in other instruments not specifically listed in the Public Funds Investment Act provided those investments comply with: (1) any other law that authorizes a board to invest funds, and (2) the investment policy adopted by the Board. There is uncertainty regarding the potential breadth and scope of this provision and procedural requirements for implementation. The board attorney and district financial advisor(s) should be consulted before adding instruments to the list of authorized investments in this policy and the board's investment portfolio in accordance with 30 ILCS 235/2(k).

### 4:60 Purchases and Contracts - renumerated

### 4:150 Facility Management and Building Programs -

- Prior Board approval is needed for all renovations or permanent alterations to buildings or grounds when the total cost will exceed \$17,500 used to be 12,500 (half the 35,000 bidding minimum)

### 4:170 Safety

- At least one automated external defibrillator (AED) shall be present in each District attendance center during the school day and during any District-sponsored extracurricular activity on school grounds



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# Release 117

## GENERAL PURPOSE

### 5:90 Abused and Neglected Child Reporting -

- removing the requirement for mandated reporters to confirm their oral reports in writing to the DCFS field office.

### 5:120 Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest

- changing the term guidance counselor to school counselor
- School counselor Travel - Any costs paid for by the institution of higher education may not exceed the per diem rates for travel, gift, and car expenses set by the Internal Revenue Service

### 5:125 Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct

- Social Media: Twitter to X, added Threads & Discord
- Personal Technology - added smartwatches

### 5:230 Maintaining Student Discipline

- Legal Reference Updated



# Release 117

## INSTRUCTION

### 6:60 Curriculum Content

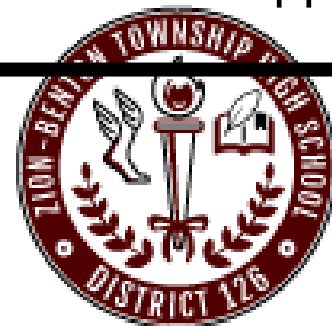
- Drivers ED updated to include instruction on worker safety in highway construction zones
- Health including: (a) proper nutrition, (b) physical fitness, (c) personal health habits
- CTE - Advisory -
  - In grades 9-12, students engage in career exploration and career development activities to prepare them to make informed plans and decisions about their future education and career goals.
  - In grades 9-12, a College and Career Pathway Endorsement is awarded to students who meet the requirements
  - Science In all schools, environmental education including instruction on: (a) the current problems and needs in the conservation of natural resources, and (b) beginning in the fall of 2026, instruction on climate change

### 6:135 Accelerated Placement Program

- Provide parent/guardian written notification of accelerated courses
- SY28-29 - Potential to strick or exeedes from meets or exceeds
- Waiver of a course completion requirement under Board policy 6:300, Graduation Requirements, if the District determines that the student has demonstrated mastery of or competency in the content of the course or unit of instruction.

### 6:270 Guidance and Counseling Program - updated language

school counselors or licensed educators with a school support personnel endorsement in the area of school counseling



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# Release 117

## STUDENTS

### 7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities

- Updated language and protections based on - national origin, military status, unfavorable military discharge, reproductive health decisions
- Students may file sex discrimination using Title IX Grievance Procedures

### 7:100 Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students

- Removes requirement to inform about meningococcal vaccines (we still will do this)

### 7:160 Student Appearance

- updates language on protecting hairstyles

### 7:200 Suspension Procedures

- Changes supports needed for suspensions of 4 days from 5 days.



**ZION-BENTON**  
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT **126**  
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# Approval

7-151 Safe Haven Policy  
1st Reading



The Board of Education is required to educate all students residing within School District boundaries and **we do not ask for, nor track student immigration status.**

Accordingly, School District employees shall **refuse access to immigration officials** or other law enforcement personnel to its schools, property, and activities for the purpose of enforcing immigration laws **unless required by law and in accordance with the administrative procedures adopted pursuant to this policy.**

# SAFE HAVEN POLICY

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## 7-151 Safe Haven Policy

Immigration enforcement activities in and around the School District may be disruptive to the educational environment of all students. Moreover, the Board of Education is required to educate all students residing within School District boundaries and is not authorized to enforce immigration laws. Accordingly, School District employees shall refuse access to immigration officials or other law enforcement personnel to its schools, property, and activities for the purpose of enforcing immigration laws, unless required by law and in accordance with the administrative procedures adopted pursuant to this policy.

The Superintendent is authorized to adopt administrative procedures to implement this policy and shall also ensure that all teachers, school administrators, and staff will be appropriately and adequately trained in the implementations of this policy and the administrative procedures adopted pursuant to this policy.

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99.1 et. seq. 105 ILCS 10/1 et seq.; 23 Ill. Adm. Code 375.10 et seq. 105 ILCS 5/22-85 CROSS REF.: 7-130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities); 7-140 (Search and Seizure); 7-150 (Law Enforcement Agencies, School Resource Officers, and School Security Personnel Interviews); 7-150- AP (Administrative Procedure - Law Enforcement Agencies, School Resource Officers, and School Security Personnel Interviews); 7-151 AP (Immigration Enforcement Protocols); 7-340 (Student Records); 7-340-AP1 (Administrative Procedure – School Student Records Procedures)



**ZION-BENTON**  
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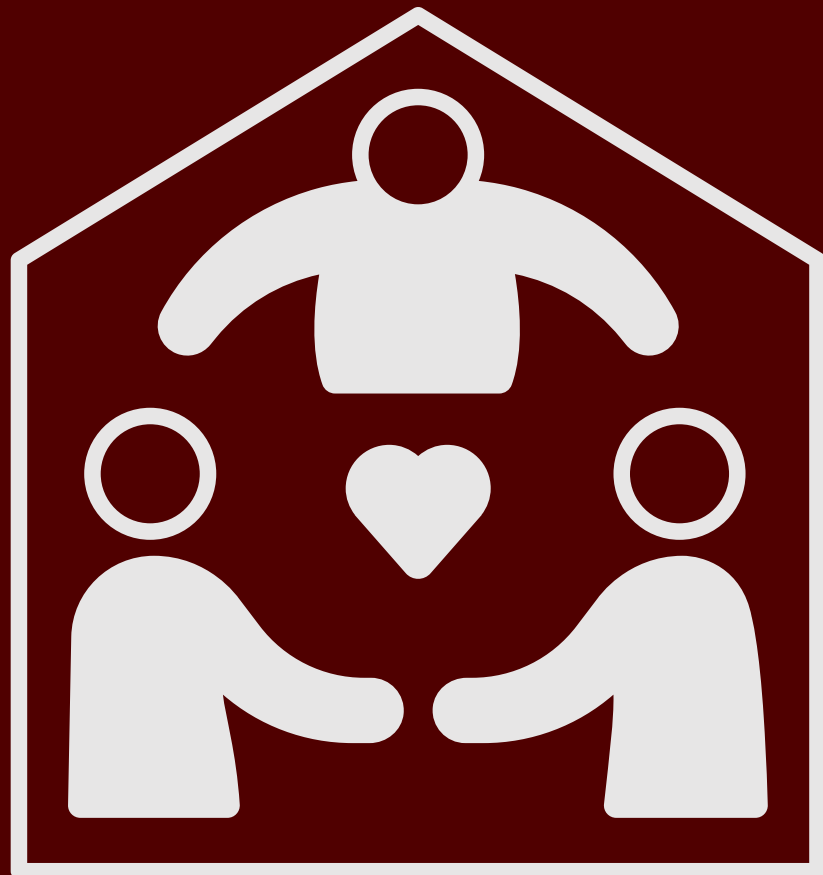
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*Approval*

Safe Haven Resolution



RESOLUTION  
DECLARING  
ZION-BENTON TOWNSHIP  
HIGH SCHOOL  
DISTRICT NO. 126  
A SAFE HAVEN SCHOOL  
DISTRICT





# Approval

## Approval of 2025-2026 School Calendar



### Zion-Benton Township High School District 126 2025-2026 School Calendar

ZBTHS: Monday-Friday 7:50 a.m.- 2:38 p.m.

ZBE: Monday - Wednesday & Friday 7:30 a.m. - 2:24 p.m., Thursday 7:30 a.m. - 1:35 p.m.



**WEBSITE:**  
www.zb126.org

**ZBTHS**  
3901 W 21st St  
Zion, IL 60099  
847.731.9300

**Attendance (Fresh/Senior):**  
847.731.9330

**Attendance (Soph/Junior):**  
847.731.9461

**ZBE**  
1634 23rd St  
Zion, IL 60099  
847.731.9800  
**Attendance:**  
847.731.9813

**Calendar Legend**

<span style="background-color: #00aaff; color: white;"> </span>	Institute Day - No Students
<span style="background-color: #ffff00; color: black;"> </span>	Holiday - Buildings Closed
<span style="background-color: #ffcccc; color: black;"> </span>	Non-Attendance Day
<span style="background-color: #90ee90; color: black;"> </span>	SIP Dismissal - ZBTHS
<span style="background-color: #d8bfd8; color: black;"> </span>	Parent/Teacher Conferences
<span style="background-color: #ffcc99; color: black;"> </span>	Other Early Dismissal
<span style="background-color: #e0e0ff; color: black;"> </span>	Assessment or Final Exam Day

**Quarters**

1 - Aug. 11 - Oct. 10 = 44 Days
2 - Oct. 14 - Dec. 19 = 45 Days
3 - Jan. 5 - Mar. 13 = 46 Days
4 - Mar. 16 - May 22 = 45 Days

**Dismissal Times**

	ZBTHS	ZBE
Regular	7:50-2:38	7:30-2:24
SIP	7:50-12:40	7:30-1:35
Other	7:50-1:51	7:30-1:35
Sep 10	7:50-11:15	7:30-11:00
Sep 25	7:50-12:40	7:30-12:26
Dec. 17	7:50-1:20	7:30-1:05
Dec. 18	7:50-1:20	7:30-1:05
Dec. 19	7:50-11:45	7:30-11:30
Jan. 14	7:50-11:15	7:30-11:00
Apr. 15 (F/So)	7:50-11:00	7:30-10:45
Apr. 15 (Jun)	7:50-12:00	7:30-11:45
May 19	7:50-1:20	7:30-1:05
May 20	7:50-1:20	7:30-1:05
May 21	7:50-11:45	7:30-11:30

August 2025						
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31						

September 2025						
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31						

October 2025						
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November 2025						
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December 2025						
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January 2026						
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February 2026						
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March 2026						
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29	30	31				

April 2026						
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May 2026						
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31						

June 2026						
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28	29	30				

July 2026						
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

**Important Dates**

Aug. 13	Freshman Zero Day- Freshmen Only	Jan. 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - No School
Aug. 14	First Day of School - All Students	Feb. 5	Parent-Teacher Conferences
Sep. 1	Labor Day - No School	Feb. 6	Early Dismissal
Sep. 10	Fall Assessment Day - Early Dismissal	Feb. 11	SIP Day- Early Dismissal
Sep. 25	Parent-Teacher Conferences - Early Dismissal	Feb. 16	Presidents' Day- No School
Sep. 26	Early Dismissal	Mar. 2	Casimir Pulaski Day - No School
Oct. 13	Indigenous People's Day - No School	Mar. 11	SIP Day - Early Dismissal
Oct. 15	SIP Day - Early Dismissal	Mar. 20	Early Dismissal
Nov. 11	Veterans' Day - School in Session	Mar. 23 - Mar 27	Spring Break
Nov. 12	SIP Day - Early Dismissal	Apr. 3 & April 6	No School (Buildings Closed 4/3)
Nov. 25	Early Dismissal	Apr. 15	Spring Assessment Day - Early Dismissal (9th, 10th, 11th)
Nov. 26 - Nov. 28	Thanksgiving Break (Buildings Closed)	May 6	SIP Day - Early Dismissal
Dec. 10	SIP Day - Early Dismissal	May 17	Graduation - 12:00 p.m. (ZBE) and 3:00 p.m. (ZBTHS)
Dec. 17-19	Final Exams	May 19 - May 21	Final Exams
Dec. 22 - Jan. 2	Winter Break (Buildings Closed 12/24, 12/25, 1/1)	May 25	Memorial Day - No School
Jan. 6	Class Resumes	June 18	Observance of Juneteenth - No School
Jan. 14	Winter Assessment Day - Early Dismissal	July 6	Observance of Independence Day - No School





# Approval

## Sub Rate Increase



	Current	Proposed
Daily Sub Rate (Sub Lic.)	\$135/day	\$175
Daily Sub Rate (Teacher Lic.)	\$145/day	\$185
Daily Sub Rate (D126 Retired Teachers)	\$150/day	\$200
Long Term Assignment Minimum 4 weeks (Sub Lic.)	\$150/day	\$200
Long Term Assignment Minimum 4 weeks (Teacher Lic.)	\$170/day	\$220
Instructional Aide/Attendant Sub Rate	\$112.50/day	\$150





# Other Business



**ZION-BENTON**  
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT *126*  
COMMITTED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE





# Capital Improvements Update



Over Winter Break the fire shutter at the ELS suite was installed. Additional MagSafe door release locks were installed.

On 1/20/2025 the translucent film was installed on the upper mezzanine Library walls and also on the MTSS office arera glass.

We are anticipating the replacement of the ad center NW doors during Spring Break and the locking hardware on the Library doors is still in question as are the 10 firelight sidelight glass panels.





# Capital Improvements Update





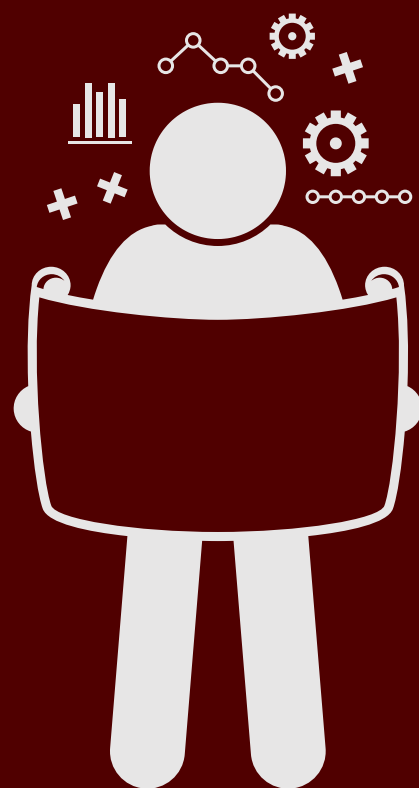
# Capital Improvements Update





# Facilities Master Plan Update

January 15



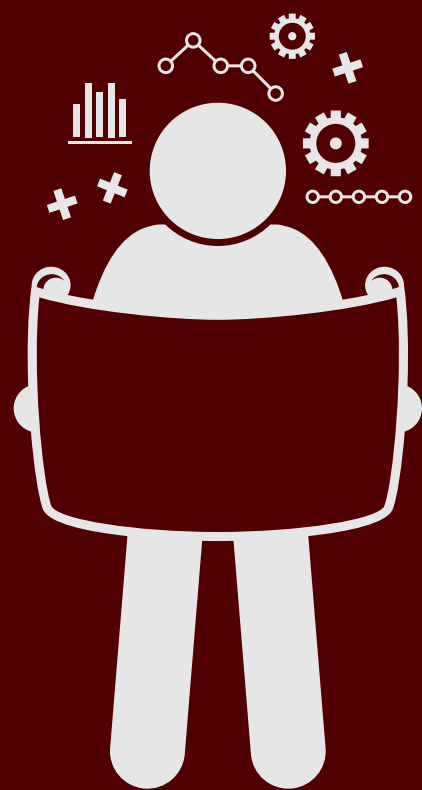
## Meeting Summary

- PHASE I: Needs Assessment
- PHASE II: Establish criteria to address needs assessment
- Emerging Themes: Learning environments, restroom upgrades, building flow, student spaces, and student and staff management space reorganization.
- Priority Items: Key areas: drainage, security, infrastructure, student support, and restroom upgrades.
- Next Steps: Conduct student focus groups by January 2025, review survey feedback, and conduct Town Hall meetings.





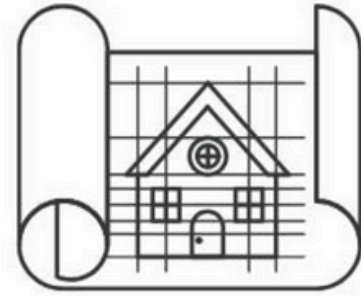
# Facilities Master Plan Update



## Upcoming Dates:

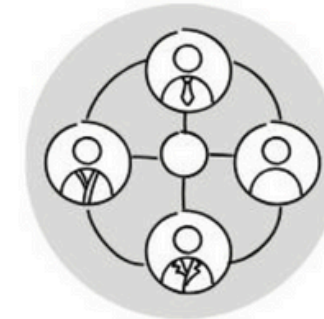
- February 18 BBF Meeting: FMP Draft presented
- March 10 BBF Meeting: Updated Draft presented
- March 18 presented to the Board of Education

# Mark Your Calendar!



## Town Hall

# Meetings



Facility Master Planning

**Join us to help shape the future of our school facilities—come share your ideas and collaborate at our Facilities Master Plan Community Town Hall!**

**Dec 3 @ ZBTHS**

**Dec 5 @ ZB East**

**Feb 3 @ ZBTHS**

**Feb 4 @ ZB East**

**5:30- 7:00 pm**



**ZION-BENTON**  
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT *126*  
COMMITTED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE



# Closed Session



**ZION-BENTON**  
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT *126*  
COMMITTED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

