Buckeye Union High School District #201

Minutes of the Combined Public Hearing and Regular Board Meeting

July 13, 2026

A combined public hearing and regular meeting of the Buckeye Union High School District No. 201 Governing Board convened on Monday, July 13, at 6:00 p.m. in the A-Wing Board Room located at 902 East Eason Avenue. Members of the Governing Board present were Mr. Brian Turner, President; Mr. Maggie Lara, Clerk; Mr. Nathan Madden, Member; Mr. Brandon Shelton, Member; and Mr. Dave Sousa, Member. Administrators, Directors, Coordinators, and others present were Kristin McClellan, Deb Sawyer, Brian Wright, Nick Gonzales, Jayme Arrieta, Lancelott Page, Laurie Colbert, Scott Acton, Biju Padmanabhan, Kelley Smalley, Matt Roberson, and Patrick Massara. Also present were Dr. Steve Bebee, Superintendent; Dr. Leslie Standerfer, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Jason Stuewe, Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Ryan Pletnick, Associate Superintendent, and Mrs. MaryLou Martinez, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Governing Board Secretary, and Mr. Nathan Schott (legal counsel).

1. **Convene**

   1.1 Call to Order
   Mr. Brian Turner called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

   1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

   1.3 Roll Call
   Members of the Board present were Mr. Brian Turner, Mr. Maggie Lara (phoned in), Mr. Nathan Madden, Mr. Brandon Shelton (phoned in), and Mr. Dave Sousa.

2. **Preliminary Items**

   2.1 Approval of Agenda
   Motion to approve the agenda as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Brandon Shelton, Carried.
   Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

   2.2 Approval of Minutes - Regular Board Meeting and an Executive Session, June 15, 2026
   Motion to approve as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
   Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

3. **Reports and Presentations**

3.1 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bebee provided the Superintendent's Report and highlighted the following:

- Officially welcomed Dr. Ryan Pletnick to his first Governing Board meeting as a member of the district leadership team.
- Introduced Mr. Patrick Massara, recommended for appointment as Assistant Principal for Student Services at Buckeye Union High School for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Announced that Buckeye Union High School District received national recognition from the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), earning seven awards for communications and public relations excellence:
    - Award of Excellence - 2024-2025 BUHSD Annual Report
    - Award of Merit - Bond 2025 Proven Efficiency Infographic
    - Award of Merit - Hawks in Focus: Blowing Bubbles, Building Bonds Photography
    - Award of Merit - Civic Lessons Under the Lights Photography
    - Award of Merit - Cheyenne Blair, Goodyear Youth of the Year Writing
    - Honorable Mention - Curiosity Leaves Its Mark Photography
    - Honorable Mention - National Principals Month Reel Series
- Congratulations were extended to Mr. Lancelott Page and the district communications team for their efforts in promoting and highlighting district programs, students, and staff.
- Dr. Bebee publicly thanked the Arizona Ridge Riders and Hensel Phelps for partnering to donate 40 fully stocked backpacks for students in need throughout the district's schools. This marks the second consecutive year the Arizona Ridge Riders have provided this donation to the district.

3.2 Summer School Update

Dr. Standerfer provided a summary of the district's 2026 Summer School Program, which operated from June 1 through June 30, 2026.

- Summer school enrollment totaled 168 students, reflecting a return to pre-pandemic participation levels.
- Due to concerns regarding academic integrity and the increasing use of technology and artificial intelligence tools, the district continued requiring students in online courses to complete midterm and final examinations in person, with a minimum passing score requirement.
- Summer school enrollment was limited to students needing credit recovery or credit deficiency remediation and did not include opportunities for credit advancement.
- Approximately 83% of participants chose the remote learning option, while 79% were enrolled in courses they had previously failed.
- Mathematics courses, particularly Algebra I and Algebra II, were the most frequently taken classes, followed by English courses.
- Eleventh-grade students represented the largest enrollment group, reflecting efforts by counselors to assist students in getting back on track before their senior year.
- Students earned a combined 84.5 credits during the summer session.

- The most frequently completed courses were Algebra II, English III, and ISP.
- Administration reported that 10 students from the Class of 2026 who were unable to graduate in May successfully completed graduation requirements through summer school and earned their diplomas.
- Appreciation was extended to summer school coordinators Ms. Stephanie Fox, Ms. Marissa Lees, teachers, and staff for their contributions to the program's success.

4. **Public Comment**

4.1 Call to the Public - (3 minutes maximum per individual) (30 minutes maximum time allotted)

- There were no citizen's comments.

5. **Consent Agenda**

5.1 Overnight and/or Out-of-State Travel
Motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 5.1 through 5.5 as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

5.2 Payroll Vouchers
Motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items 5.1 through 5.5 as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

5.3 Accounts Payable Vouchers
Motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items 5.1 through 5.5 as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

5.4 Personnel Actions
Motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items 5.1 through 5.5 as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Brandon Shelton, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

5.5 Sole Source Vendors for FY 27
Motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items 5.1 through 5.5 as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

6. **Matters Reserved for Board Action**

6.1 Public Hearing for FY 27 Proposed Expenditure Budget and Truth in Taxation
Call for Public Hearing Pursuant to A.R.S. §15-905(D), Public Hearing to Present the Proposed Expenditure Budget and Truth in Taxation; motion to adjourn the regular meeting and enter public hearing at 6:09 p.m. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea
Motion to adjourn the Public Hearing and reconvene regular session at 6:11 p.m. This motion,

made by Nathan Madden and seconded by Dave Sousa, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

6.2 Discussion and Consideration for the Approval of the Truth in Taxation (Roll Call Vote)
Motion to approve as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea
Mr. Madden stated for the record that, although the item was presented as a Truth in Taxation action indicating an increase, the district is actually projecting an overall tax rate decrease of approximately three cents compared to the prior year.
Mr. Lara inquired about the purpose of the adjacent ways levy and the need to continue collecting funds when reserves are already available. Dr. Pletnick explained that, based on presentation and projections previously developed by Mr. Jeff Simmons, the district is building reserves to address future adjacent ways costs associated with the eventual construction of High School #4 and High School #5. Current estimates place those costs at approximately $8 million per school.
Administration further explained that the levy is part of the district's annual primary property tax process and is intended to maintain adequate reserves while allowing the overall tax rate to remain stable or decrease. It was noted that Maintenance and Operations (M&O), Capital, and Adjacent Ways comprise the primary tax rate, while Bonds and Overrides comprise the secondary tax rate.
Dr. Pletnick confirmed that the district's projected primary tax rate is three cents lower than the previous year. Mr. Lara asserted that maintaining or lowering the tax rate while continuing to build reserves for future adjacent ways needs was an appropriate approach.
A roll call vote was conducted on the Truth in Taxation levy.

6.3 Discussion and Consideration for the Adoption of the FY 27 Expenditure Budget
Motion we adopt as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea
Mr. Lara inquired about an increase of approximately $114,000 in Special Education expenditures, asking whether the increase was attributable solely to transportation costs. Dr. Pletnick explained that Special Education costs are increasing overall, including transportation expenses as well as the direct costs associated with providing educational services to special education students. He further noted that growth in the special education population contributes to these increased expenditures.
Mr. Lara also asked about an increase of approximately $78,000 in Food Services expenditures and whether those costs were fully funded through federal sources. Dr. Pletnick explained that while federal funding supports a significant portion of food service operations, the district is required to contribute certain local funds to meet maintenance-of-effort requirements associated with receiving grants and federal funding.
Dr. Pletnick explained that the document under consideration was an expenditure budget, which authorizes the district to spend up to the approved amounts and does not necessarily reflect the amount that will actually be spent during the fiscal year He noted that actual expenditures will be

reported in the district's Annual Financial Report, which will be presented to the Governing Board in October. Dr. Pletnick further explained that the budget is adopted using provisional figures and may be adjusted throughout the year as enrollment, funding, and expenditures change. Budget revisions may occur throughout the year, including planned reviews September, December, and May to reflect changing expenditures and funding adjustments.
Mr. Lara encouraged administration to remain within budget, and Dr. Pletnick acknowledged that remaining under budget is always the district's goal.

6.4 Discussion and Consideration for Approval of Authorized Signers for Bank Accounts
Motion to approve the item as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea
Dr. Bebee clarified that, in addition to district-level authorized signers, the district's site administrators are also authorized signers for applicable site accounts, which includes administrators who oversee athletics at their respective schools. Athletic directors generally serve in administrative roles

6.5 Discussion and Consideration for Approval of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Amendment Between BUHSD and Desert Choice Schools for 26-27
Motion to approve as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea
Mr. Madden inquired whether Desert Choice Schools serves as one of the district's special education service providers. Administration confirmed that Desert Choice Schools is one of the district's partners providing specialized educational services for students with special needs.
The Board member further noted that the agreement is related to some of the increased special education expenditures discussed during budget adoption considerations.

6.6 Discussion and Consideration of Approval of First Amendment to Easement Agreement - Anthemnet, Inc.
Motion to approve as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea
There was no discussion from the Board.

6.7 Reconsideration of Tabled Item - Discussion and Consideration for Approval of Student/Parent Handbook Revisions for 2026-27 SY
Move to accept the item with amendment that the changes to page 40 of the student handbook not be adopted. This motion, made by Nathan Madden and seconded by Brandon Shelton, Failed.
Brian Turner: Nay, Maggie Lara: Nay, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Nay
Motion to approve the item as presented in its original presentation. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Maggie Lara, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Nay, Brandon Shelton: Nay, Dave Sousa: Yea

Motion to approve the item as presented in its original presentation. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Maggie Lara, Carried.

Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Nay, Brandon Shelton: Nay, Dave Sousa: Yea

Administration explained that the item had been tabled at the previous meeting because the proposed revisions inadvertently omitted the district's existing Student Grievance Policy. Dr. Bebee clarified that the grievance policy does exist and had simply been omitted in the original draft.

Upon reconsideration of the item, Mr. Madden amended the motion to approve the handbook revisions with an amendment deleting the proposed changes to page 40, which addressed student search procedures. Mr. Madden expressed concern about the revised language, specifically language stating that parents would be notified "as soon as possible" rather than requiring notification prior to a search.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed search language. Mr. Scott Warner explained that current practice is generally to attempt to contact parents before a search, but that there are circumstances, such as safety concerns or multiple simultaneous searches, where immediate parental contact before the search may not be practical. It was also noted that parents are always notified of searches, even when notification occurs after the search rather than before it.

Mr. Madden stated that he believed the handbook should retain stronger language explicitly requiring parental notification before a search. Discussion followed regarding student privacy rights, parental communication, and the practical realities administrators face when conducing investigations on campus. Questions were raised regarding whether the school resource officer is involved in administrative searches, with administration clarifying that administrative searches are handled by school administrators using a reasonable suspicion standard, not by the School Resource Officer (SRO). Administration further explained that if a student is suspected of possessing contraband or a dangerous item, the district may conduct a search without parental consent or prior contact when safety concerns are present.

Mr. Madden questioned whether the handbook should explicitly preserve the stronger expectation of parental notification before a search, except in emergencies or safety-related situations. Mr. Warner responded that the proposed wording was intended to better reflect actual practice and operational realities, while still allowing for immediate action when necessary.

Mr. Nathan Schott (district's legal counsel) was consulted during the discussion and advised the Board that both the original language and the proposed revised language would be legally permissible, leaving the policy decision to the discretion of the Governing Board.

The motion to approve the handbook revisions with the amendment deleting the page 40 changes failed. The Board then made a second motion to approve the Student/Parent Handbook revisions as originally presented.

6.8 *Discussion and possible action regarding Governing Board Resolution Approving Land Exchange with City of Buckeye and delegating authority to Board President to execute any documents necessary to consummate transaction. [(*Possible executive session per A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3)

(advice from legal counsel) and 38-431.03(A)(7) (discussion or consultation with designated representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale, or lease of real property)]
Motion to approve as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea
Dr. Bebee presented an overview of the proposed land exchange agreement between the Buckeye Union High School District and the City of Buckeye, noting that the proposal had also been presented to the Buckeye City Council. He explained that the transaction is permitted under Arizona statute and is intended to provide long-term benefits for both the district and the city.
Administration explained that the district would exchange approximately 57 acres of land near the Learning Center, including Fillmore Street and associated water capacity rights, with a combined value of approximately $13.57 million. In return, the district would receive the A-Wing facility, the 620 Property, and related improvements and construction investments of equal value.
Dr. Bebee reviewed the history of the project and outlined the mutual benefits of the exchange. He stated that the agreement would provide the district with expanded administrative, training, meeting, and operational space needed to support continued district growth, while allowing the City of Buckeye to utilize the property in accordance with its long-term development plans.
Administration reviewed the valuation of the various assets involved in the exchange and noted that both parties would be exchanging assets of substantially equal value. The Board was also informed that the City Council had already approved funding necessary for the proposed improvements associated with the transaction.
Additional information was provided regarding plans for renovation of the A-Wing facility, including expanded training and meeting space, upgraded Board meeting accommodations, and additional operational space for district needs. Administration noted that the improvements would help address long-term facility needs without requiring future taxpayer funding for administrative space.
The Board also received information regarding the 620 Property, which is planned for future bus parking, employee parking, and other district operational needs. Administration explained that improvements would include appropriate landscaping and site enhancements.
Questions were raised regarding traffic flow and access to the 620 Property. Administration explained that access would continue to utilize the existing roadway serving Buckeye Union High School and would not require direct access from MC-85. Questions were also asked regarding nearby properties and future development plans, and administration clarified that future use of the exchanged land would be determined by the City of Buckeye.

6.9 Gifts and Donations
Motion to approve as presented. This motion, made by Dave Sousa and seconded by Nathan Madden, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

7. **Information / Discussion Items**

7.1 Monthly Financial Reports
There were no questions from the Board.

7.2 Auxiliary, Tax Credit & Student Funds Report
There were no questions from the Board.

7.3 Significant Capital Expenditures
There were no questions from the Board.

7.4 Governing Board - Conflict of Interest Awareness
There were no questions from the Board.

8. **Announcements and Date of Next Meeting**

8.1 Next Governing Board Meeting - August 10, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.
Dr. Bebee confirmed the date of the next Governing Board meeting and advised the Board that there would be no Student of the Month or Employee of the Month recognitions at that meeting.

9. **Adjournment**

9.1 Adjournment
Motion to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. This motion, made by Nathan Madden and seconded by Dave Sousa, Carried.
Brian Turner: Yea, Maggie Lara: Yea, Nathan Madden: Yea, Brandon Shelton: Yea, Dave Sousa: Yea

Governing Board Members

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Mr. Brian Turner, President

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Mr. Maggie Lara, Clerk

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Mr. Nathan Madden, Member

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Mr. Brandon Shelton, Member

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Mr. Dave Sousa, Member