

School District 197
West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 10, 2026
ISD 197 District Office, Mendota Heights, MN

A meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 197 was held on Monday, August 10, 2026 beginning at 6:00 p.m. pursuant to due notice.

The meeting was called to order by current School Board Chair Larsen at 6:00 p.m. The following School Board members were present: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz. Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog was present.

Also present for the meeting were: Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Sara Lein, Director of Special Programs; Brian Schultz, Director of Finance; Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education; Sara Blair, Director of Communications; Mark Fortman, Director of Operations.

Agenda

It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Schwab to approve the agenda as presented.

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz
Nay: none*

The motion carried (6-0).

Consent Agenda

It was moved by Ms. Walz and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the consent agenda items as presented:

- Approval of the June 15, 2026 School Board Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Personnel Recommendations
- Approval of Gifts to the District
- Approval of May 2026 Accounts Payable Report
- Approval of May 2026 Treasurer's Report
- Approval of June 2026 Accounts Payable Report
- Approval of June 2026 Treasurer's Report
- Approval of June 2026 Wire Transfers Report
- Approval of July 2026 Wire Transfers Report
- Administrative Review of Policy 402, Disability Nondiscrimination
- Approval of 2026-2027 Girls' Hockey Co-Op Team
- Approval of 2026-2027 Non-Public Nursing Services for St. Thomas Academy

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz
Nay: none*

The motion carried (6-0).

Listening Session Report

There were no attendees to the listening session.

Recognitions

The School Board recognized Liam Sahli, a recent Friendly Hills Middle School graduate and incoming Two

Rivers High School ninth grader, for winning the national championship in extemporaneous speaking at the National Speech and Debate Association Middle School National Tournament in June. The Board congratulated Liam on this significant achievement and acknowledged his talent, hard work, and dedication. Coach Ben Geiger was also recognized for his guidance and support throughout Liam's journey.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented highlights of summer learning and enrichment opportunities across the district, including Summer STARS Academy, Minds in the Middle, Credit Recovery, Community Education programs, School-Age Care, and performances by the Two Rivers High School Marching Band and Winterguard. The Board also recognized Liam Sahli, an incoming Two Rivers High School ninth grader, for winning the national championship in extemporaneous speaking at the National Speech and Debate Association Middle School National Tournament. An update was provided on a new student-designed mural at Two Rivers High School depicting the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers and incorporating the district's land acknowledgment, with additional context to be provided through a plaque inside the school. The report concluded by noting preparations underway for the start of the new school year and the district's anticipation of welcoming staff, students, and families back in the coming weeks.

Approval of Resolution Relating to the Election of School Board Members and Calling the School District General Election

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented a resolution calling for the School District 197 general election to be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, in conjunction with the State General Election, for the purpose of electing three School Board members to four-year terms. The resolution authorizes the District Clerk to complete all statutory election requirements, including required notices, ballot preparation, and coordination with county and municipal election officials.

It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Schwab to approve the Resolution Calling the School District General Election as presented.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Approval of the School District Election Ballot Language for a Capital Project Levy

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the final ballot language and resolution for a proposed capital project levy to be placed before voters on November 3, 2026. The levy would equal 4.027% of the District's net tax capacity, generating approximately \$4.6 million annually for ten years beginning with taxes payable in 2027, with revenue supporting eligible costs including safety and security, textbooks and instructional materials, transportation, facility maintenance, cybersecurity, utilities, and other operating capital purposes. The Minnesota Department of Education issued a positive Review and Comment for the proposed projects, and the estimated tax impact for a \$400,000 home is approximately \$14 per month. The Board was asked to approve the final ballot resolution so the question may proceed to voters at the general election.

It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the Capital Project Levy Ballot Language as presented.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Presentation of 2026-2027 Board Committee and Building Assignments

School Board Chair Larsen presented the 2026-2027 Board Committee and Building Assignments as an informational resource for the school year ahead.

Presentation of 2026-2027 School Board Goals

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the 2026-2027 School Board Goals. After drafting and revising their goals between February 2026 and present, the School Board Planning Committee established a preliminary draft of the 2026-27 School Board Continuous Improvement Goals, which would guide the Board's work from September 2026 through June 2027. The proposed goals focus on clarifying the school liaison role and communication expectations, conducting an evaluative review of the "197 School Board" webpage, and participating in educational sessions regarding the district's current use of technology. The goals align with district strategic priorities related to connection and trust, communication and collaboration, and innovation, with desired outcomes that include clearer understanding of the liaison role, consistent and accurate Board communications, and increased Board understanding of technology use within the district. The Planning Committee requested input from the full Board and will use that feedback to prepare a final draft for future review and approval.

Presentation of Public Summary of 2025-2026 Superintendent Evaluation

Byron Schwab, Chair of the School Board Results Committee, presented a public summary of the School Board evaluation of Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog, conducted in closed session on June 15, 2026, as required by Minnesota law. The evaluation addressed three goals related to implementation of strategic plan priorities, long-term fiscal stability, and increased staff engagement, and the Board rated the Superintendent highly effective in each goal area. The Board also rated his overall performance highly effective, recognizing his steady leadership, transparent communication, fiscal planning, advocacy, and commitment to engaging staff and keeping district priorities moving forward. The Board expressed strong confidence in Superintendent Olson-Skog and appreciation for the stability, trust, and direction his leadership has provided across the district.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Schwab and seconded by Mr. Hill to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

The next regularly scheduled School Board meeting of Independent School District 197 will be Monday, August 24, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. It will be held in the School District 197 District Office Training Room, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights. *Please refer to the district website for possible changes to any meeting times/locations.*

Upon approval by the School Board, official minutes will be available at the District Office, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights, and on the district website. The full meeting materials are available for public inspection at the administrative offices of the school district and on the district website.

Sarah Larsen
School Board Chair

Jon Vaupel
School Board Clerk