

School District 197
West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools
Regular Meeting and Work Session
Monday, August 24, 2026
ISD 197 District Office, Mendota Heights, MN

A meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 197 was held on Monday, August 24, 2026 beginning at 5:00 p.m. pursuant to due notice.

The meeting was called to order by current School Board Chair Larsen at 5:00 p.m. The following School Board members were present: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz. School Board members absent: Sarah Larsen. Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog was present.

Also present for the meeting were: Peter Mau; Assistant Superintendent; Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Sara Lein, Director of Special Programs; Sara Blair, Director of Communications; Tye Michaels, Director of Human Resources; Brian Schultz, Director of Finance; Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education.

Agenda

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

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz
Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Consent Agenda

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

- Approval of the August 10, 2026 School Board Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Personnel Recommendations
- Approval of TRHS Boys' Soccer Field Trip
- Approval of TRHS Girls' Soccer Field Trip
- Approval of TRHS Girls' Swimming and Diving Field Trip
- Administrative Review of Policy 502, Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz
Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Comments to the School Board

There was one comment to the School Board expressing gratitude to the board and administration for their welcoming and informative session for candidates running for School Board seats.

Referendum Update

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented an update on the district's budget outlook, the proposed capital project levy, and the statewide Permanent School Fund constitutional amendment appearing on the November 3, 2026 ballot. Administration explained that the amendment would change the Permanent School Fund's annual distribution method from interest and dividend earnings to 4.5% of the fund's three-year average value, without

creating a new tax or revenue source, and is estimated to provide District 197 with a relatively modest increase in revenue. The Board also reviewed how the statewide amendment differs from the local capital project levy, including the amount of revenue generated, taxpayer impact, and voting requirements. Administration emphasized that the two ballot questions are separate and that passage of the Permanent School Fund amendment would not eliminate the district's projected structural budget gap or replace the need for the local levy question.

Approval of 2026-2027 School Board Goals

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the final draft of the 2026-2027 School Board Continuous Improvement Goals, which were developed by the Planning Committee and revised following Board input at the August 10, 2026 meeting. The goals focus on clarifying the school liaison role and related communication, conducting an evaluative review of the "197 School Board" webpage, and participating in educational sessions regarding the district's current use of technology. Each goal is aligned with district strategic priorities related to connection and trust, communication and collaboration, and innovation, with the intended outcomes of improving understanding, strengthening messaging, and increasing the Board's knowledge of technology use.

It was moved by Mr. Aune and seconded by Ms. Steele to approve the 2026-2027 School Board Goals as presented.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Approval of 2026-2027 Superintendent Goals

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the 2026-2027 Superintendent goals, which were developed in alignment with the district's strategic framework, prior evaluation feedback, stakeholder input, and the Minnesota School Boards Association Superintendent Evaluation System. The goals focus on implementation of the district's strategic plan, communication and planning related to the capital project levy and long-term fiscal stability, and increased staff engagement through one-on-one interviews and site-based listening sessions if additional budget reductions are required. Each goal is connected to specific MSBA competencies related to governance, financial management, communication, and culture of cooperation.

It was moved by Mr. Aune and seconded by Ms. Steele to approve the 2026-2027 School Board Goals as presented.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Schwab and seconded by Mr. Aune to adjourn the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz

Nay: none

The motion carried (6-0).

The next regularly scheduled School Board meeting of Independent School District 197 will be Monday, September 14, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. It will be held at the City of Mendota Heights Council Chambers, 1101

Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights, MN. *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