Board Finance Committee

Thursday, September 10, 2026

2023-2028
Agency Goals

#1 – Creating a high-quality learning experience for all
#2 – Operationalizing systems that engage and empower communities
#3 – Building a culturally responsive workforce

MESD Board Equity Lens-https://www.multnomahesd.org/board-equity.html

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. p.m. on Thursday, September 10, 2026.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Present:	Susie Jones-Committee Chair Jessica Arzate, Board member
Absent:	None
Administration:	Doana Anderson- Chief Financial Officer Sara Bottomley-Budget Manager Heather Severns-Board Secretary
Guests:	None

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Susie Jones.

2. Finance Committee Working Agreement

The committee reviewed the **2026–2027 Finance Committee Working Agreement**. Members confirmed that the agreement is intended to guide the work of the Finance Committee and does not require formal Board action.

There were no objections to the working agreement, and committee members agreed to operate under the agreement for the 2026–2027 year.

Later in the meeting, two corrections to the agreement were identified:

- The reference to the **2024–2025 committee goals** should be updated to **2026–2027**.
- The reference to alignment with Strategic Plan Goals **1 and 4** should be corrected to Strategic Plan Goals **1 and 3**.

Heather Severns will make the corrections to the working agreement and include it with the Finance Committee materials on the upcoming Regular Session Board agenda.

3. Financial Report Review

The committee reviewed the **June Board Financial Update** and the **Unaudited Fourth Quarter Report**.

Chair Jones asked how closely the unaudited fourth-quarter figures reflect the district's anticipated final financial results. Doana Anderson reported that the figures are expected to be close to final, with only minor adjustments anticipated, primarily involving movement of revenue between accounts. No significant changes affecting fund balance or overall reporting are expected.

The committee also discussed the **Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)** and the audit process. Anderson reported that the district is ahead of schedule with the audit and that approximately 75% of the requested documentation had been accepted at the time of the meeting. While no firm timeline was provided, the ACFR could potentially be presented in October or November following completion of the audit.

Chair Jones asked about differences between projected and current year-to-date amounts in the fourth-quarter report. Staff explained that several factors can contribute to these differences, including:

- Funds that must remain budgeted at negotiated amounts, such as professional development funds.
- Timing of expenditures that may fall into one fiscal year or the next.
- Facilities projects for which the exact timing of expenditures is uncertain.
- The need to maintain sufficient appropriations because expenditures cannot exceed budget authority.

Staff noted that budget amendments are used to adjust projections as more information becomes available.

As an additional example, staff explained that approximately $1 million associated with a component district had to remain budgeted while the district determined whether it would use the funds. Final confirmation that the funds would not be used in FY2026 was not received until June.

4. Board Member Compensation and Expense Reimbursement Administrative Regulation

The committee reviewed proposed revisions to the administrative regulation governing **Board Member Compensation and Expense Reimbursement**.

Staff explained that the existing administrative regulation contains outdated reimbursement language. The revisions will align Board travel and reimbursement practices with those used for district staff, including reliance on applicable **GSA rates and IRS mileage rates** rather than fixed reimbursement amounts.

Because this is an administrative regulation, formal Board approval is generally not required. However, because the regulation directly affects Board members, staff brought the proposed changes to the Finance Committee for review and will notify the full Board once the revisions are finalized and approved by the Superintendent.

The committee discussed the importance of using safe and fiscally responsible travel options. It was also clarified that Board members are **not required to seek reimbursement** for eligible expenses.

Committee members expressed support for the proposed revisions.

5. Scholarship Timeline and Fundraising

The committee reviewed the proposed **scholarship timeline** and expressed support for the schedule.

Discussion focused on strengthening fundraising efforts for the scholarship program. Members noted that the previous scholarship cycle generated more qualified applicants than available scholarship funds.

Jessica Arzate suggested establishing fundraising milestones and considering ways to encourage Board members to help generate additional scholarship funding through personal networks, community contacts, businesses, and other potential donors.

The committee discussed its existing goal of **100% Board participation** in supporting the scholarship program. Rather than establishing a specific dollar amount that individual Board members would be expected to raise or contribute, Chair Jones supported keeping the scholarship program visible to the Board throughout the year and providing regular reminders and updates.

Heather Severns agreed to obtain updated information regarding funds generated through **BottleDrop**.

The committee also discussed highlighting the impact of the scholarship program by sharing photographs and information about previous scholarship recipients and where they are continuing their education.

The scholarship program and fundraising progress will remain a **standing item on the monthly Finance Committee agenda**.

6. Follow-Up Items

- Heather Severns will correct the Finance Committee Working Agreement to reference the **2026–2027 committee goals**.
- The Working Agreement will be corrected to reference **Strategic Plan Goals 1 and 3**.
- Heather Severns will include the updated Finance Committee Working Agreement with the Finance Committee materials on the upcoming Regular Session agenda.
- Staff will finalize the Board Member Compensation and Expense Reimbursement administrative regulation and notify the Board following Superintendent approval.

- Heather Severns will provide the committee with the most recent **BottleDrop scholarship fundraising balance/estimate**.
- Scholarship fundraising and progress will remain a **standing Finance Committee agenda item**.
- The Board will have an opportunity to see information highlighting previous scholarship recipients at the upcoming Board meeting.

7. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.