School District 197
West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools
Regular Meeting and Work Session
Monday, October 26, 2026
ISD 197 District Office, Mendota Heights, MN

A meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 197 was held on Monday, October 26, 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: Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz. School Board members absent: Tim Aune, Byron Schwab. School Board student representatives Aubrey McMahon and Clara Rebhan were present. Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog was present.

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

Agenda

It was moved by Mr. Vaupel and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the agenda as presented.

Aye: Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz
Nay: none

The motion carried (5-0).

Consent Agenda

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

- Approval of the October 12, 2026 School Board Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Personnel Recommendations
- Administrative Review of Policy 403: Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees
- Approval of Heritage Middle School Field Trip
- Approval of 2026-2027 READ Act Memorandum of Agreement between ISD 197 and the West St. Paul Federation of Teachers
- Approval of Joint Powers Agreement between Dakota County and School District 197 for Public Health-Related CAPS Program

Aye: Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz
Nay: none

The motion carried (5-0).

Comments to the School Board
There were no comments to the board.

First Reading of Policy 806: Crisis Management
Director of Operations Mark Fortman and Director of Special Services Sara Lein presented the first reading of Policy 806, Crisis Management, as part of the district's annual policy review process. The proposed revisions

incorporate a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan, as required by Minnesota statute beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, and include updates to the accompanying procedures and addendum formatting. The policy was reviewed using the district's Four-Way Equity Test to ensure crisis management procedures provide equitable protection and support for all students and staff.

Presentation of 2026-2027 Enrollment Update

Assistant Superintendent Peter Mau presented an enrollment update highlighting preliminary October 1 student counts, enrollment trends, and staffing adjustments for the 2026-2027 school year. Districtwide K-12 enrollment totaled 5,078 students, representing 27 fewer students than projected and a decrease of 66 students compared to October 1, 2025, with elementary enrollment exceeding projections while middle and high school enrollment fell below expectations. Enrollment-based staffing adjustments included reducing one kindergarten section, adding instructional paraprofessional support at Moreland Elementary, and using Title I funding for additional staffing at Garlough Environmental Magnet School and Pilot Knob STEM Magnet School. Historical enrollment data also highlighted changes in student demographics, increasing participation in special education services, and continued positive net open enrollment into the district.

Presentation of 2026-2027 Annual Plan

Assistant Superintendent Peter Mau, Director of Special Services Sara Lein, and Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Cari Jo Drewitz presented the district's 2026-2027 Strategic Framework Implementation Targets. The annual plan outlines priorities within the district's three strategic focus areas: social-emotional learning and support, equitable systems and supports, and career exploration and preparation. Key initiatives include strengthening student mental health and behavioral supports, expanding culturally responsive instructional practices, increasing student voice and family engagement, implementing curriculum improvements, and expanding career pathways and work-based learning opportunities. Administration also outlined the schedule for providing progress updates to the Board throughout the school year.

Presentation of Revised 2027-2028 Academic Calendar and 2028-2029 Academic Calendar Draft

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Cari Jo Drewitz presented the revised 2027-2028 and draft 2028-2029 academic calendars, developed in collaboration with the district's Meet and Confer Committee. The proposed 2027-2028 revision moves the October professional development day from October 1 to October 11, while the 2028-2029 draft places professional collaboration and development days consecutively on April 23 and 24. Both calendars maintain 169-170 student instructional days and 185 teacher days, with consideration given to instructional needs, staff collaboration, operational requirements, and religious and cultural observances.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Hill and seconded by Ms. Walz to adjourn the meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Aye: Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz
Nay: none

The motion carried (5-0).

The next regularly scheduled School Board meeting of Independent School District 197 will be Monday, November 9, 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.

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Sarah Larsen	Jon Vaupel
School Board Chair	School Board Clerk