TENTATIVE MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOX ELDER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tentative minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education, Box Elder County School District, held Wednesday evening October 14, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at Independent Life Skills Center, 960 S. Main St., Brigham City, UT 84302.

Those in attendance at the meeting included Board President Tiffani Summers, Karen Cronin, Julie Taylor, Wade Hyde, Stephanie DeFilippis, and Bryan Smith. Board Vice President Danielle Wright was excused. Also, present were Superintendent Keith Mecham, Assistant Superintendent Heidi Jo West, Business Administrator Neil Stevens, District employees, representatives of the press, and interested citizens.

President Summers welcomed those in attendance and conducted the business of the meeting. After the reverence, which was offered by Karen Cronin, Stephanie DeFilippis, Board Member, led the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

Recognitions

Jamie Kent, Public Information Officer, presented the 5 Cs recognitions for connections, communication, collaboration, contribution and career readiness.

Connections: Megan Loveless, Principal Admin Asst. at ACHI - for caring communication and support to students and staff at Harris.

Communication: Brandon Nelson, Asst. Principal at BEMS - for passion, fairness, and commitment to student success at Box Elder Middle School.

Collaboration: Box Elder Middle School ELA department (Kali Phister, Kierstyn Saunders, Talia Scholes, Carleen Ramirez, Marguerite Smoot) for collaboration leading to three years of ~5% proficiency improvement.

Contribution: Sharon Williams (Box Elder HS Class of 1965) for community contributions, donations, volunteer work supporting schools, seniors, and veterans.

Career Readiness: TJ Rhodes, CTE teacher at BRHS - for extensive effort in career readiness programs and after-school commitments.

Approval of Agenda

Wade Hyde made the motion to approve the agenda. Bryan Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis – Yes

Bryan Smith – Yes

Swear in Student Board Member, Allie Sorensen, BRHS
Neil Stevens, Business Administrator, administered the oath of office to the new Student Board Member, Allie Sorensen, from Bear River High School.

Public Comment

The Box Elder High School Theater Department spoke about the coming theater performance of Mary Poppins at the Box Elder High School.

Kristen Riley, Principal at Century Elementary, spoke about the new playground at Century and of the P.E. equipment that was provided. The new playground and equipment have made a big difference in the students' experience during recess time. She presented a thank you letter written by the students to the Board.

Ben Soholt offered public comment concerning the District finances. He would like to see the 37% tax increase from 2025 repealed. He contends that with declining enrollment, that costs should also be reduced. He also questioned the reasonableness of moving the softball field and the costs associated with the move.

Mikell Harrop, Lake View Elementary PTA Member, presented an update on the events at Lake View Elementary. Through PTA Fundraisers, every student and employee at Lake View Elementary was provided with a school shirt. Also, a book vending machine was installed at the school. Students can earn tokens in their classrooms and can use the tokens in the book vending machine.

Action Items

Stephanie DeFilippis made a motion to postpone Approval of Sunrise Community Council Exemption to after item F.4., Approval of Construction Project for Bear River High School Parking/Softball Field Adjustments to allow the presenter time to arrive. Bryan Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis – Yes
Bryan Smith – Yes

Approval of Comprehensive Prevention Plans

Ben Wiley, CTE Director, on behalf of Megan Bushnell, Student Service Director, presented the 2026-27 Comprehensive Prevention plans. Yearly, the Board is required to review and approve a positive behavior intervention plan for each school. The plan must have specific goals. This year every school has a goal for student attendance.

Karen Cronin motioned to recommend the Box Elder School District Board of Education approve the Comprehensive Prevention Plans as submitted. Stephanie DeFilippis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis –Yes
Bryan Smith – Yes

Approval of Construction Contract for Salt Creek Elementary

Neil Stevens, Business Administrator, presented the construction contract for Salt Creek Elementary. The final contract price is $35,089,443 and the estimated time to construct the building is 18 months. The school is scheduled to open for the 2028-29 school year.

Bryan Smith motioned to recommend the Box Elder School District Board of Education approve the construction contract with DWA Construction to build the Salt Creek Elementary School. Stephanie DeFilippis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis –Yes
Bryan Smith - Yes

Approval of Construction Project for Bear River High School Parking/Softball Field Adjustments

Neil Stevens, Business Administrator, presented the construction contract for the Bear River High School parking and softball field adjustments.

As part of this project, the softball field will be moved to the field area in between the natatorium and the middle school. The old softball field area will then become practice field space for athletic teams. The current practice field area north of the baseball field will become a parking lot with approximately 230 parking spaces. This multi-step plan will remove students from parking on the road surrounding the school and will improve student safety by having a dedicated parking space for students on the school campus.

The District has selected Tarkett Sports to construct the softball field. Tarkett Sports is a state approved contractor that has already participated in a competitive public solicitation to provide these services to other state entities. The final contract price is $1,977,290.64.

This project was previously approved as part of the FY27 Budget, but under District purchasing guidelines the contract must be approved by the Board due to the cost exceeding $150,000.

Karen Cronin stated, “A couple years ago the Board approved buying land to the north for parking. By putting the softball field there, over by the Nat and by the middle school, would that in any way limit us building another middle school in that spot if at some point we wanted to do that?”

Keith Mecham and Neil Stevens responded that it would not limit that option.

Julie Taylor motioned to recommend that the Box Elder School District Board of Education approve the construction contract with Tarkett Sports to construct the new Bear River High School softball field. Wade Hyde seconded the motion, which passed 5-1.

Karen commented after the motion, “I just want to make a note that I still think we could use the parking to the north and save the money for others.”

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – No
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis –Yes
Bryan Smith - Yes

Approval of Sunrise High School Community Council Exemption

Randall Rasmussen, Principal at Sunrise High School, presented the request to exempt the school from the school community council requirements. The school qualifies annually for exemption due to small enrollment. Each year the school makes an extensive effort to reach out to parents to participate in the school community council. This outreach has yielded zero volunteers over three years. The school serves 110–120 students with six-week intake/graduation cycles. All factors make it difficult to have a community council.

Karen Cronin motioned to recommend the Box Elder School District Board of Education approve the school community council exemption for the 2026-27 school year. Wade Hyde seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis –Yes
Bryan Smith – Yes

Information Items

October 1 Enrollment

Keith Mecham, Superintendent, presented the October 1 student count report.

He noted that the unofficial tentative count is 11,738 students, which is down about 600 students since 2022. Some of the drivers of lower counts included lower birth rates starting in 2020, smaller family sizes, and increased homeschooling. Recent 5-year trends show growth in northern schools and declines in several southern schools. The District is exploring several solutions including evaluating expanded K–8 online options and re-joining Utah Fits All as an approved vendor starting in November for 2nd trimester for grades 6–12.

The District has a 3-year contract with MGT to study demographic trends. Demographer, Marcy Horner, is preparing updated student forecasts and boundary realignment recommendations for November.

Neil Stevens, Business Administrator, added that students are funded on average daily membership or days enrolled. The decrease in students this year would be partially offset with increased enrollments in restricted programs such as special education and CTE. The District is expecting at least a $1,000,000 decrease in state funding in FY28 due to this decrease in enrollment.

Keith Mecham, Superintendent, stated that in preparation for next year, the District will begin evaluating staffing changes in January and February. There will be no staffing changes this year because of the declining enrollment.

Literacy and Math Goals Update

Ashlee Nelson, Director of Instructional Support, and Jamie Kent, Director of Public Information and Math Specialist, presented an update of literacy and math goals.

The kindergarten Acadience reading reached 92% at or above benchmark in 2025–2026, well exceeding the state average of 78.8%. An aggressive 95% proficiency target established based on research-backed early literacy benchmarks. Kindergarten math scored 83%, compared to the state average of 68.9, with an 86% goal. The standardization of Tier 3 math interventions and increased paraprofessional training have been deployed across all elementary campuses.

First-grade reading improved 7% over recent years, setting an 82% benchmark goal, compared to the state average of 65.9%. First-grade math continues a positive performance trajectory.

Second-grade reading dipped slightly after peaking at 77%; upcoming ELA adoption will address second-grade curriculum gaps to reach the 80% goal. Second-grade math remains steady at 78–79%, with challenges due to cumulative skill-building. Tier 3 interventions will aim to address foundational skill gaps, with an 81% goal. Second-grade math remains steady at 78–79%, compared to the state average of 66.3%, targeting 81% with Tier 3 intervention support.

Third grade met the state 2030 reading goal of 80% on Acadience; RISE scores remain at 45–46%, slightly below state averages.

The disparity between Acadience (fluency/accuracy) and RISE (complex synthesis/writing) is being addressed through comprehension-focused PD and upcoming ELA adoption.

The third-grade math focus will be on RISE to build higher-order skill alignment, setting a 52% proficiency target. The District is monitoring state discussions regarding assessment standards for Acadience versus RISE across K–5. Third graders will not be assessed on Acadience math.

Fourth-grade Acadience is limited only to students below 3rd-grade benchmark; grade-level goal for RISE is set at 49%. The differentiated intervention model utilizes Acadience for below-level remediation while on-level students receive comprehension extensions. The fourth-grade RISE goal is established at 58%, while the fifth-grade ELA transitions entirely to RISE.

Fifth-grade ELA achieved a 6% increase, setting next year's RISE target at 58%. The fifth-grade math performance targets 49% for the upcoming cycle. The new instructional alignment to state core guides ensures deeper mastery rather than rote test preparation.

Individual Reading Plan (IRP) Update (SB241)

The survey response rates and general requirements for newly implemented Individualized Reading Plans (IRPs) were presented. The survey reviewed IRP rollout across elementary faculty and administrators.

Construction and Improvements Update

Jerry Jackman, Facilities Director, presented a construction and improvements update.

At the Discovery Elementary Addition, the ICF wall installation is beginning; sprinkler tie-ins scheduled for Thanksgiving/Christmas 2026 breaks.

At the Salt Creek Elementary project, the Excavation and surcharge soil compaction are underway; 18-month duration targeting completion March – June 2028.

Poured-in-place rubber surfacing and accessible swing sets completed across five elementary school sites.

At the Brigham City South Transportation, the Diesel fuel tank installation is underway.

The drainage and paving projects are advancing at Garland and McKinley. The Fielding parking lease agreement is still under review.

At Box Elder Middle School, the secure vestibule and decorative perimeter security fence will begin soon. The total cost is under $150,000, saving around $1.8M against original estimate

The high school theaters rigging and fire curtain replacements are continuing to be worked on at BEHS and BRHS.

The BRHS baseball turf is targeted for early November 2026 completion.

Monthly Financial Report

Neil Stevens, Business Administrator, presented the monthly financial report. The annual audit is in progress. Revenue and expenditure trends are on target. The annual audit part one was submitted to state on September 23, 2026. The final audit is due to be submitted by November 30th. The audit will be presented in the December Board Meeting.

The overall budget for 2025-26 is approximately $190M. The general fund expenditures are tracking on target at 18% YTD for $154–$156M total budget.

Allie Sorensen, Student Board Member, asked a question about school fees and how they were determined. Neil Stevens and Keith Mecham responded that the fee schedule is approved by the Board each year.

Board Committee Reports

Allie Sorensen, Student Board Member, highlighted the Box Elder High winter formal plan. She also discussed how the Bear River High club participation growth is happening during "Red Rush Week." Allie also introduced herself to the Board and public.

Employee Appreciation

School	Teacher	Support
BRHS	Marckee Belliston	Celeste Anderson
BRMS	Megan Cranmer	Jeniece Scott
ACHI	Karen Christiansen	Angel Zambrano
BEHS	Tyson Heaton	Keith Witt
BEMS	Staci Bishop	Angie Smoot
ACYI	Susan Thompson	Terri Nevarez
Sunrise	Jeremy Hammond	David Kraus
Century	Valerie Josephson	Read Marshall
Discovery	Crystal Bodily	Stephanie Smith
Fielding	Tina Gregory	Abby Hancock
Garland	Michaela Sutton	Jennifer Manning
Golden Spike	Gwen Larsen	Mindy Adams
Lake View	Nicole Jensen	Chelsye Saulsberry
McKinley	Leslie Brown	Lesly Castro
North Park	Mikellie Sorensen	Natalie Swain
Three Mile	Carol Pyle	Lori Morris
Willard	Mandy Stokes	Rhonda Call
Western	Hallie Kunzler	Maci Kunzler

Policy Review

First Reading

Policy 1020 Board Powers and Duties
Policy 1225 School Size - Elementary School
Policy 2229 Transportation: Route Planning
Policy 2231 Transportation: School Site Selection
Policy 2232 Transportation: Director of Transportation
Policy 2233 Transportation: Operators and Mechanics
Policy 2234 Transportation: Student Management
Policy 2235 Transportation: Lights and Railroad Crossings
Policy 2236 Transportation: Emergencies
Policy 3041 Educator Evaluation
Policy 4016 Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Material
Policy 4037 Reading Achievement for K-3
Policy 4068 Special Programs: Alternative Language Program
Policy 4077 Course Disclosure Statements - Secondary
Policy 4078 Class Disclosure Statements: Elementary
Policy 4105 Sex Education
Policy 4115 Grading: Course Grade Replacement
Policy 5321 Educational Field Trips
Policy 6018 Parental Involvement
Policy 6045 Board of Education Hotline
Policy 6050 Community Use of School Facilities

Bryan Smith motioned to approve policies on first reading. Stephanie DeFilippis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis - Yes
Bryan Smith – Yes

Second Reading

Policy 1071 Electronic Meetings
Policy 1072 Board Meetings: Notice Requirements
Policy 1074 Board Meetings: Closed Meetings
Policy 2031 Procurement of Construction: Construction Bonds and Security
Policy 2036 Procurement of Construction: Construction Management Methods
Policy 2181 District Emergency Plan
Policy 2182 School Safety
Policy 3007 Employment: Staff Code of Conduct
Policy 3010 Employee Bullying and Hazing
Policy 3038 Highly Needed Educator Salary Supplement
Policy 3047 Reemployment of Retirees
Policy 3070 Alcohol and Drug Abuse - Employees
Policy 3094 Reporting Student Drug Possession Offenses
Policy 4027 Special Programs: Dropout Prevention and Recovery
Policy 4028 Special Programs: Education of Youth in Care
Policy 4061 Curriculum: American Heritage
Policy 4066 Curriculum: Religious Neutrality
Policy 5005 Safe Schools - Student Discipline/Behavior
Policy 5010 Admissions Eligibility Requirements
Policy 5085 Services for Students Experiencing Homelessness
Policy 5270 Student Rights and Responsibilities Bullying, Cyberbullying, Hazing, and Abusive Conduct
Policy 6070 Electronic Submission of Information

Stephanie DeFilippis motioned to approve policies on second reading. Wade Hyde seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis – Yes
Bryan Smith - Yes

Consent Calendar

Karen Cronin noted that the minutes for September 9, 2026 inaccurately reflected her “Yes” vote on Consent Items.

Karen Cronin noted a discrepancy in the actual cost of the girls wrestling trip compared to the student costs. Keith Mecham responded that the difference between the two costs is made up by fundraising activities.

Wade Hyde moved to accept the consent items. The motion was seconded by Bryan Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis – Yes
Bryan Smith - Yes

The Consent Calendar included the following items:

Approval of the minutes of the regular meetings of September 9th, September 23rd and October 6th.

Approval of claims numbered: 57256 – 57827, 5091026, 7093026, 08093126, 80930226B, 101700 – 101716, 058286FM, 1108410 – 1108540, 599 – 619, 16800674 – 16800677, 30403335 – 30403351, 40403603 – 40403612, 40805032 – 40805054, 70416744 – 70416871, 7081771 – 70816840, 77800663 – 77800664, and school activity checks for the month of August 2026.

Personnel Items
As detailed in the agenda.

Exemption from Compulsory Attendance
As Detailed in the Agenda

150 Mile Trip
As detailed in the agenda

Club Requests
As detailed in the agenda

Approval of School Bus Purchases
As Detailed in the Agenda

Suggestions for Future Board Meetings

Bryan Smith suggested that the Board receive a report of how the District can offer flexibility to families for course enrollments.

Upcoming Events

The Utah Mammoth, mascot of the Utah NHL hockey team, will be coming to Fielding Elementary to teach students how to play street hockey.

BESD Foundation Jubilee of Trees at Box Elder County Fairgrounds, Home Arts Building November 6, 2026. Open to Public 12:00 to 8:00 pm

New Board Member Training - December 5, 2026 8:00 to 1:30, Provo Marriott

USBA Conference - January 7-9, 2026

Closed Session to Discuss the Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of an Individual

Bryan Smith motioned for the Board to move into closed session for the purpose of discussing the character professional competence or physical or mental health of an individual. Karen Cronin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis – Yes
Bryan Smith – Yes

Karen Cronin motioned for the Board to move out of closed session. Wade seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Tiffani Summers – Yes
Karen Cronin – Yes
Julie Taylor – Yes
Wade Hyde – Yes
Stephanie DeFilippis – Yes
Bryan Smith – Yes

Adjournment
With the announcement that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 11, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the Independent Life Skills Center, President Tiffani Summers adjourned the meeting at 10:38 pm.

APPROVED: _____

ATTESTED: _____ _____
School Business Administrator President, Board of Education
Box Elder School District