



## Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

Thursday, November 20, 2025 5:45 PM

Oakdale Middle School Room 230  
815 S. Oakdale Ave.  
Medford, OR 97501

Board members present: Kendell Ferguson, Erik Johnsen, Sandra LaNier McHenry, Sunny Spicer, Michael Williams, and Angela Zbikowski.

Board member absent: Lilia Caballero

*A video recording of the Board meeting can be found on the district website at [this link](#). The slide presentation can be viewed by clicking on Extras listed next to the meeting at [this link](#).*

### 1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance / Roll Call

Board Chair Kendell Ferguson called the meeting to order at 5:45 PM, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and confirmed a quorum through roll call. She welcomed attendees and read the district's vision statement.

### 2. Agenda Adjustments and Approval

**A motion was presented by Johnsen and seconded by Zbikowski to add Board Communication Training to the agenda as item 4.g.**

**Voice vote: All Ayes**

**Motion passed.**

### 3. Introductions: New MSD Leader

Director of Security and Emergency Management Kevin Plaisance was introduced. He expressed that he was pleased to join the district, shared a brief overview of his professional background, and noted that his work will focus on strengthening security and emergency management. He added that the district has a solid foundation in its emergency management strategies and that he plans to support continuous improvement and implement new processes where appropriate.

### 4. Items for Information & Discussion

#### 4.a. Interim Superintendent Report

Interim Superintendent Jeanne Grazioli provided follow-up on prior citizen comments regarding math curriculum and farm-to-table proposal, then presented results from the employee experience survey conducted September 23 – October 9. Participation was higher than normal, with questions focusing on job satisfaction, recognition, workplace environment, recommendation of the district as a workplace, and areas for improvement.

Board Directors inquired about follow-up, and Grazioli shared that principals and department leads are developing action plans to address identified needs. Directors requested the survey be repeated next year with the same questions for comparison, and asked for a follow-up report in 3–4 months on action plan progress and any changes in workplace satisfaction. They emphasized the importance of tracking trends, considering student behavior impacts, recognizing and celebrating contributions, and exploring dissatisfaction among classified staff. Board Directors expressed hope that satisfaction scores would improve and thanked the superintendent for her transparency.

#### **4.b. Student Report**

Student Representatives from South Medford (SMHS), North Medford (NMHS) and Innovation Academy (IA) high schools were present to share what's going well and what needs improvement at their respective schools.

**Brandon Fullenwider, SMHS Class President**, reported high student engagement at rallies and growing school spirit. He noted that inclusive clubs help students feel they belong and praised teachers for their encouragement. He shared that student leaders are focused on amplifying student voices and fostering a welcoming, collaborative environment.

**Max Barnard, NMHS Class President**, discussed challenges since the gym roof collapse, which has limited assemblies and pep rallies despite efforts to adapt. He shared students' appreciation for supportive staff but also their frustration with the lack of visible progress on the gym rebuild. He also mentioned needed upkeep to older buildings on campus.

**Kyelee Burkett, IA Class Secretary**, expressed gratitude for serving in student government and spoke about the school's strong sense of community and supportive teachers. She reflected on her own growth and hoped other students can experience similar success. She thanked the Board for supporting IA's mission and hands-on learning environment.

Board Directors expressed appreciation for the students' updates and acknowledged the frustration and disappointment caused by the loss of the gymnasium at NMHS. The Board then asked the students to share their experiences with the new cell phone policy this year.

Students reported that the policy has been very positive. They noted that it encourages more face-to-face interaction and helps them focus. However, they suggested allowing phone use during lunch and passing periods. They also noted challenges for student government communications: social media posts require permission to use phones, and email updates are less effective.

#### **4.c. Board Priority: Financial Stewardship**

Assistant Superintendent of Operations Brad Earl provided a financial update that included:

Oregon Department of Education (ODE) met with district leaders to review reduction scenarios. They remain cautiously optimistic that school funding cuts may be deferred until July 2026, with clarity expected by February. Proposed reductions include partial or full program cuts for most areas, while the State School Fund would see an initial reduction through carve-outs and fund balances, with further cuts outlined in increments.

Earl shared while some cuts are expected next year, they are manageable and largely focused on non-personnel areas, such as vacating the Biddle office. A community and staff study group is being formed to examine fiscal stability measures. Earl will provide a link to the ODE website for additional reference.

Questions were asked regarding the progress of transition from the Biddle office and the projected cost savings and transition cost.

#### **4.d. Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) Convention Share-out**

Board Director Erik Johnsen highlighted key takeaways from the conference, including the keynote on *Leading Through Complexity*, emphasizing vision, courage, collaboration, and the Board's role in guiding "what" versus administration determining "how." He also attended a fiscal session presented by Ashland School District on the importance of regular financial updates and monitoring.

Board Director Angela Zbikowski noted the winter session was particularly valuable, with in-depth, timely content. She highlighted sessions on the board-superintendent relationship, emphasizing trust, leveraging individual strengths, and assuming positive intent. She also shared insights on unfunded mandates, communication with legislators, and transparent community engagement, citing Corvallis School District's approach to school closures as a model for open communication.

#### **4.e. Superintendent Search Update**

McPherson & Jacobson, LLC consultants Steve Lowder and Mike Scott joined the meeting virtually. They presented decisions for the next steps in the superintendent

search process, including the superintendent salary range, advertising costs for targeted areas, scheduling stakeholder groups and public forums, identifying specific groups for stakeholder meetings, developing the superintendent profile (qualities and characteristics), and determining the duration of the online survey. The Board provided feedback and reached consensus on these process areas.

*The meeting was recessed for 5 minutes.*

#### **4.f. School Board Policies — *first reading***

Before beginning the discussion on proposed policy BBG, Chair Ferguson invited comments on the other policies in the packet for first reading. With no questions raised, she then opened the floor for discussion on policy BBG.

The Board acknowledged consensus on steps 1-3 of the policy and focused the discussion on step 4. Chair Ferguson highlighted the proposed language from Director Johnsen. Key points of discussion included:

- The potential for removing specific privileges instead of applying a universal action.
- Concerns about the language undermining mutual trust and respect.
- Fears that the language could be weaponized against Board members.
- The belief that the policy should address problematic behaviors, not discipline Board members.
- The preference to set aside this policy to focus on more urgent matters, such as the superintendent search and community engagement.
- Suggestions to create a small workgroup or sub-committee to refine the policy and bring back recommended language for full review.
- Concerns over the restrictive nature of the Board Operating Agreement (BOA) and the potential for conflicts or punitive actions.
- The need for transparency in discussions, avoiding executive sessions.

**A motion was presented by Williams and seconded by Johnsen to table the new wording on step 4 of policy BBG, to table policy BBG, and to table policy KL.**

Further discussion included support for forming a committee to finalize the policy, reviewing the final version with legal counsel (e.g., OSBA), and ensuring the policy and BOA were aligned with Board authority and public trust. Board members expressed a desire to ensure accountability without overstepping authority.

**Roll call vote: Johnsen: Nay, Zbikowski: Nay, Williams: Yea, Spicer: Nay, LaNier McHenry: Nay, Ferguson: Nay**

**Result: Motion failed (Yea: 1, Nay: 5, Absent: 1)**

Chair Ferguson announced that she would work with the Board Secretary to merge the new language as discussed, send it to OSBA for legal review, and bring the policy back for a future reading.

Chair Ferguson recommended pausing the discussion on policy KL and allow citizen comments to take place at this time (see #5 Citizen Comments).

*Following citizen comments, the Board continued the discussion on proposed revisions to policy KL.*

Chair Ferguson directed attention to the proposed revisions to Policy KL, presented by Board Director Michael Williams. Director Williams explained that the revisions were prompted by the previous year, during which the Board received numerous public complaints. These complaints highlighted the absence of a structured process for presenting matters to the Board in a public meeting, as well as a lack of conflict resolution procedures. Suggested revisions to the language were discussed, and it was agreed that any additional revisions would be submitted to the Board Secretary by 5:00 p.m. on December 2. Additionally, the Board reached a consensus that Chair Ferguson, along with Directors Williams and Johnsen, would form a working group to refine the language of Policy KL and bring it forward for an additional reading at a future meeting.

#### **4.g. Board Communication Training**

Director Johnsen encouraged fellow Board members to review their calendars to identify a suitable date for the board communication training. After a brief discussion, January 24 was agreed upon as the training date. Director Johnsen will follow up with the confirmed time and location.

### **5. Citizen Comments**

Chair Ferguson read the citizen comments guidelines.

#### **Sean Rogers, Parent and Teacher**

Expressed concerns about the placement of citizen comments on the agenda, noting that the long wait (up to 2.5 hours) is disrespectful. He suggested the Board allow citizen comments earlier in the meeting and extend the time allowed for speaking beyond 3 minutes.

#### **Eden Mitton, Student at NMHS (Student Government)**

Shared feedback on the new cell phone policy, describing it as overly strict and disruptive. He noted that the policy leads to confusion and disruption, especially with phone confiscations and referrals. He emphasized that using phones during lunch or passing periods is not disruptive and urged the Board to reconsider the policy.

**Collin Farris, Student at NMHS (Student Government)**

Thanked the Board and staff for their efforts and voiced concerns about the slow progress on rebuilding the gymnasium. He called for greater transparency about the timeline and plans for the project, urging the district to provide updates and move forward with construction soon, as the lack of a gym has caused ongoing inconvenience for students.

Chair Ferguson thanked the public for their comments and provided a rationale for moving citizen comments to follow after presentations that could be informative and provide answers.

**6. Board Action Items**

**6.a. Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) Elections**

Chair Ferguson opened the discussion for OSBA elections. The Board offered recommendations based on qualifications and preferences for the Legislative Policy Committee open position.

**A motion was presented by LaNier McHenry and seconded by Johnsen to elect Nathan Seable for OSBA LPC Position #5.**

**Roll call vote: LaNier McHenry Yea, Spicer: Yea, Williams: Abstain, Johnsen: Yea, Zbikowski: Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Caballero: Absent  
Result: Motion passed (Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1, Absent: 1)**

**6.b. School Board Policies — *second reading***

**A motion was presented by LaNier McHenry and seconded by Zbikowski to readopt the policies as presented in the November 20th policy packet.**

**Roll call vote: Johnsen: Yea, LaNier McHenry: Yea; Spicer: Yea, Williams: Yea, Zbikowski: Yea, Ferguson: Yea, Caballero: Absent  
Result: Motion passed (Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1)**

**7. Consent Agenda**

The following items were presented on the consent agenda:

- Staff Assignment Report
- Minutes from Previous Meeting

No objections were raised. The consent agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

**8. Announcements**

Chair Ferguson acknowledged the Board meeting scheduled for December 11 and noted there may be special meetings added before that time related to the superintendent search.

## **9. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

DRAFT