

School Board Meeting
Monday, April 20, 2026 6:30 PM Central

Aitkin Public Schools - Media Center
306 Second Street NW
Aitkin, MN 56431

Jen Burgos: Present
Roland Hill: Present
Cindi Hills: Absent
Rev. Dawn Houser: Present
Brian Leitinger: Present
Holly Mindrum: Present
Kassie Peterson: Present
Present: 6, Absent: 1.

1. Call meeting to order by the chairperson

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

4. *Comments from visitors

4.A.

- Comments from visitors must be in relation to Aitkin Public Schools and/or to agenda items.
- We recommend that you sign up at the comment table if you wish to speak. You will be called up in order as listed on the sign-up sheet. When you come forward to comment, please be seated at the comment table facing the Board Members. State your name prior to your comment. Comments will be limited to 5 minutes.
- The Board will not engage in any discussion or debate during this comment session. The Board will take the information and find answers as appropriate.
- As part of Board protocol, it is unacceptable for any speaker to slander or engage in character assassination at a public board meeting.

5. Approval of agenda - revise or remove as needed

Motion to approve the agenda as presented. This motion, made by Rev. Dawn Houser and seconded by Holly Mindrum, Passed.

5.A. Scheduled Presentations (Max 10 Minutes)

5.B. Student Council Reports

SP Goal 10

High School Student Council members provided updates on the current events.

5.B.1. Elementary Student Council

Rippleside student council members presented on events and happenings.

6. Old Business:

6.A. Approve the following policies 2nd reading:

Motion to approve the 2nd reading of policies as presented. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Jen Burgos, Passed.

6.A.1. Policy 625 Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence

6.A.2. Policy 510.4 Scholastic Eligibility

7. New business:

7.A. Approve consent agenda items as follows:

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. This motion, made by Rev. Dawn Houser and seconded by Holly Mindrum, Passed.

7.A.1. Approve the following School Board Meeting Minutes:

School Board Meeting: March 16, 2026

Special School Board Meeting: March 24, 2026

Special School Board Meeting: March 25, 2026

Special School Board Meeting: March 26, 2026

7.A.2. Approve financials for the month of March, 2026:

- Office receipts in the amount of \$1,805,434.03
- Report of expenditures, including \$686,548.32 for bills and \$1,053,971.47 for payroll and district contribution to PERA, TRA, OASDI/Medicare and 403(b).
- Donations in the amount of \$7,211.00
- Wire transfers in the amount of \$1,750,000.00.
- Employee reimbursements.

7.A.3. Approve Resignations

7.A.3.a. Amy Field-Para Ripppleside

7.A.3.b. Matt Nix-Full time bus driver

7.A.3.c. Olivia Kamien-Lamke-Bus Rider

7.A.3.d. Sue Jorgensen-Bus Para

7.A.4. Consider and approve extra curricular volunteer positions

7.A.4.a. Cole Oslin-Volunteer Track coach

7.A.4.b. Nicole Visnovec-Volunteer Track coach

7.A.5. Approve Extra Curricular Activities

7.A.5.a. Jason Henke-Robotics Team Head Coach 2026

7.A.5.b. Heather Pearson-Musical/Frozen Services

7.A.5.c. Amy Borash-Choreography Musical Frozen

7.A.5.d. Rachael Kline-Musical/Frozen Services

7.A.6. Coach Non-Renewals

7.A.6.a. Dan Krier - Assistant wrestling coach

7.A.6.b. Kaija Davies - Head girls basketball coach

7.A.7. Approve Hirings:

7.A.7.a. Augustine Sanford-Tier 3 Special Education teacher - 2026-27 school year

7.A.8. Jacob Mehr-Unpaid Leave of Absence

7.A.9. Approve Northern Pines Mental Health Center contract for 2026-27 school year

7.A.10. Approve Youth Service Grants

Band/Choir - \$1000 for transportation for trip

Kindergarten - \$288 for manipulatives

Prom - \$350 for decorations

Senior Class Trip \$1000 for Senior Skip Day

Yearbook - fund up to \$500 depending on how many are needed (they will need to submit how much is needed and pay for them up to the \$500.)

7.A.11. Superintendent Contract - 2026-2027, 2027-2028, 2028-2029

7.B. Discussion Items:

7.B.1. Certify the April 14, 2026 Special Election:

7.B.1.a. Approve the Resolution Canvassing Returns of Votes of the School District Special Election

Motion to approve the Resolution Canvassing Returns of Votes of the School District Special Election. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Kassie Peterson, Passed.

7.B.2. Rippleside Staffing

Motion to table Rippleside Staffing until the May board meeting. This motion, made by Jen Burgos and seconded by Rev. Dawn Houser, Passed.

Cindi Hills: Absent, Holly Mindrum: Nay, Jen Burgos: Yea, Roland Hill: Yea, Rev. Dawn Houser: Yea, Brian Leitinger: Yea, Kassie Peterson: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 1, Absent: 1

Holly Mindrum: Nay

Mr. Stifter and the board engaged in staffing discussions.

7.B.3. Consider and approve the Superintendent and Project Oversight Committee to execute a Professional Services Contract with the Districts' professional services consultant (design and program/construction management) ICS, Inc. (ICS) for the implementation of the identified improvements

Motion to approve the Superintendent and Project Oversight Committee to execute of Professional Services Contract with the Districts' professional services consultant ICS, Inc. (ICS) for the implementation of the identified improvements. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Rev. Dawn Houser, Passed.

7.B.4.

1. Authorize the Superintendent and Project Oversight Committee to work with the financial advisor, Ehlers, to proceed with financial services regarding the funding for identified improvements

Authorize the Superintendent and Project Oversight Committee to work with the financial advisor, Ehlers, to proceed with financial services regarding the funding for identified improvements. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Rev. Dawn Houser, Passed.

7.B.5. Referendum review and next steps
Mr. Stifter and the board discussed next steps.

8. Administrative reports:

8.A. Board Members Reports:

8.B. Committee Reports:

8.B.1. Policy Committee Meeting, April 8, 2026 - 1st Reading

8.B.1.a. Policy 533 - Wellness

8.C. Principal's Report:

Mr. Karelis, Rippleside Elementary School

Ms. DeMars, Aitkin High School

SP Goal 10

8.D. Community Education - Nedra Henline

SP Goal 10

8.E. Superintendent's report:

8.E.1. Enrollment Update

8.E.2. Other:

8.F. Upcoming meetings:

Personnel Meeting-April 29, 2026-3:45 PM- 4:45 pm Media Center

Finance Meeting-May 21, 2026-3:45pm - 4:45 pm District Office

School Board Meeting – May 18, 2026 – 6:30 pm- Media Center

School Board Meeting-June 15, 2026 - 6:30pm Media Center

9. Other:

10. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Kassie Peterson,
Passed.

Recorded by Heather Hipp

Kassie Peterson

Dated: 5/18/26