

OFFICIAL MINUTES: AUSTIN SCHOOL BOARD**REGULAR MEETING**

Independent School District No. 492

Monday, April 14, 2025 5:30 pm

Annex Recital Hall

205 4th Street NW, Austin, Minnesota

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carolyn Dube
Robert Hartman
Cece Kroc
Don Leathers
Carol McAlister
Peggy Young
Daniel Zielke
Superintendent Dr. Joey Page

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

MEETING CALLED

TO ORDER: Chairperson Dube called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Annex Recital Hall followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVED: A motion was made by Leathers, seconded by Young and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

WINTER SPORTS RECAP: Activities Director Katie Carter and representatives from each of the winter sports teams provided an overview of their season highlights.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT:**

Superintendent Page noted several staff and student recognitions and highlighted recent and upcoming events.

**SCHOOL BOARD
REPORTS:**

Board members each provided highlights of various events/committee meetings they have been part of throughout the past month. In addition, Zielke, Leathers and Kroc shared their reflections on recent communications from community and staff members regarding staffing changes at Banfield Elementary.

MINUTES APPROVED: Kroc made a motion, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the regular meeting minutes of 3/10/25 and study session minutes of 3/24/25 as printed.

(A COMPLETE COPY OF THE MINUTES IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK AND POSTED ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE.)

**PERSONNEL REPORT
APPROVED:**

Kroc made a motion, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the following personnel items.

Certified Staff:

Contracts – Grace Bobby, phy ed teacher, effective 8/11/25; Brandi Bordelon, kindergarten teacher, effective 8/11/25; Maisy Bothun, grade 2 teacher, effective 8/11/25; Emily Braaten, grade 5 teacher, effective 8/11/25; Lee Costley, SPED teacher, effective 8/11/25; Kristina Durham, SPED teacher, effective 8/11/25; Patrick Hemann Murphy, science specialist, effective 8/11/25; Abigail Ignaszewski, science teacher, effective 8/11/25; Jill Louters, summer school teacher, effective 6/2/25-7/24/25; David Ruiz, ABE EL teacher, effective 8/11/25; Kali Uphus, grade 5 teacher, effective 8/11/25; and Judith Villar Lopez, grade 1 teacher, effective 8/11/25

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Requests for Leave – Jessica Bernand, SPED teacher, effective 4/7/25-4/28/25; Sarah Bunge, SPED teacher, effective 3/31/25-5/30/25; Christine Halsey, instructional coach, effective 4/1/25-4/28/25; Frances Heilman, ECSE teacher, effective 4/28/25-5/30/25; and Kate Holmes, art teacher, effective 8/11/25-10/31/25

Resignations – Bethany Aaker, SPED/vision teacher, effective 5/30/25; Claire Hagstrom, grade 4 teacher, effective 5/30/25; Kendra Hotchkiss, counselor, effective 5/30/25; Jenni Linnett, mental health supervisor, effective 5/30/25; and Emily Whiteis, SPED teacher, effective 3/21/25

Non-certified Staff:

Contracts for Approval – Pam Anfinson, SPED supervisor, effective 7/1/25; Candace Miller, food service helper, 3.75 hrs/day, effective 3/27/25; and Anna Pilcher, SPED para, 6.5 hrs/day, effective 4/28/25

Change in Assignment – Marlys Lerum, food service helper, 3.5 hrs/day at Woodson to 5 hrs/day at Ellis, effective 4/7/25

Requests for Leave – Santino Deng, success coach, effective 2/25/25-4/4/25; Kimberly Maki, SPED para, effective 2/4/25-3/4/25; Alicia Ree, SPED para, effective 9/12/25-12/5/25; and Michelle Stehlik, SPED para, effective 4/4/25-5/2/25

Resignations – Christina Beyer Fink, SPED para, effective 3/21/25; Breanna Feifarek, ECFE asst, effective 3/28/25; Amanda Fisher, SPED para, effective 5/30/25; Alan Kazic, SPED para, effective 2/20/25; Casey McGill, security para, effective 4/7/25; Julia Moldenhauer, ECFE asst, effective 3/28/25; Tamra Naatz, nurse, effective 4/7/25; and Sandra Sanchez, food service helper, effective 4/4/25

Terminations – Berenice Alvarado, SPED para, effective 3/17/25 and Breanna Zelfel, SPED para, effective 3/18/25

BILLS APPROVED:

A motion was made by Kroc, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the bills for payment as of 4/14/25.

(A COPY OF THE BILLS IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

TREASURER'S REPORT APPROVED:

A motion was made by Kroc, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the February 2025 treasurer's report.

(A COPY OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION GRANT:

Kroc made a motion, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the \$2,642.78 grant from the MN Dept of Natural Resources No Child Left Inside Grant Program.

FP & M CURRICULUM APPROVED:

Kroc made a motion, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the purchase of Functional Phonics & Morphology to implement as our foundational reading program grades K-5.

OFFICIAL MINUTES: AUSTIN SCHOOL BOARD**REGULAR MEETING****REVISED POLICIES****APPROVED:**

A motion was made by Kroc, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the following revised policies:

413 – Harassment and Violence

512 – School-Sponsored Student Publications and Activities

704 – Development and Maintenance of an Inventory of Fixed Assets and a Fixed Asset Accounting System

The revised policies will be attached in the official minute book and available on the district website.

**GROW YOUR OWN
TEACHER PROGRAM****UPDATE:**

Teacher Mentorship Coordinator Andrea Malo, Future Teacher Coordinator Colleen Owens and Future Teacher Club Leader Monica Ocampo provided an update on the Grow Your Own Teacher Program Future Teacher Club. This year's future teacher signing event is scheduled for May 5 at 6 pm in the AHS Commons.

**OVERVIEW OF EARLY
CHILDHOOD****PROGRAMMING:**

Community Education Director Jennifer Lawhead and Early Childhood Coordinator Amy Goette provided an overview of the Early Childhood Program.

**WORK-BASED LEARNING
& TRANSITION****PROGRAMMING:**

Special Education Teachers Jason Vorlesck and Todd Husfeldt provided an overview of the work-based learning and transition programming for our special needs students ages 18-21.

ENERGY SAVINGS**PROJECT APPROVED:**

A motion was made by McAlister, seconded by Hartman and carried unanimously to approve the energy saving project including applying weatherization including weather-stripping at 9 school facilities, replacement of existing lighting with LED at 9 school facilities, and installation of destratification fans in specific areas at 5 school facilities. The net cost is estimated at \$2.5 million.

ENERGY SAVINGS**FUNDING APPROVED:**

Hartman made a motion, seconded by McAlister and carried unanimously to approve the resolution for PMA Securities to secure the funding for the General Obligation Capital Facilities Bonds, Series 2025B.

(A COPY OF THE COMPLETE RESOLUTION IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

TENNIS COURT**FUNDING APPROVED:**

A motion was made by Young, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to authorize PMA Securities to proceed with securing the funding for the tennis court renovation using the district's lease levy for the next 10 years.

(A COPY OF THE COMPLETE RESOLUTION IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

OFFICIAL MINUTES: AUSTIN SCHOOL BOARD**REGULAR MEETING****DONATIONS:**

A motion was made by Leathers, seconded by McAlister and carried unanimously to approve the donations as presented by Executive Director of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg.
(A COMPLETE COPY OF DONATIONS IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

**NON-RENEWAL OF
EIGHT PROBATIONARY
TEACHER CONTRACTS:**

A motion was made by Leathers, seconded by Kroc and carried unanimously to approve the resolution regarding the termination and non-renewal of the following eight probationary teaching contracts:

Fairy Apolo, English language teacher at Southgate Elementary;
Emilie Brouse, .76 FTE ABE English language teacher at Riverland;
Dylan Fyle, counselor at Banfield and Southgate;
Sharon Lee, language arts teacher at AHS;
Valerie Jorgensen-Lowe, grade 4 teacher at Southgate Elementary;
Jaret Olsen, special education teacher at AHS;
Steven Register, business education teacher at AHS; and
Samantha Wells, physical ed teacher at Oakland Education Center.

These termination/non-renewals are effective May 30, 2025.

DELEGATIONS:

Rachel Stange, Theron Hotchkiss, Lynn Keenan, Kyle Nelson, Ashley and Dan Blilie, Chad Donicht, Ellen Bang, Isaac Leyk, and Shirley Morgan addressed the board with concerns regarding staff resignations and involuntary staff transfers.

**REMINDER OF SCHOOL
BOARD STUDY SESSION:**

Chairperson Dube reminded board members of the study session scheduled for Monday, April 28, at 4 pm in the District Office Conference Room.

**BOARD ENTERS CLOSED
SESSION:**

A motion was made by Young, seconded by Hartman and carried unanimously to enter closed session at 8:34 pm for the purpose of a negotiations update. Seven board members, Superintendent Page, HR Director Sue Stark, Exec Director of Academics and Administrative Services Katie Baskin, and Executive Director of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg were present for the closed session.

**BOARD ENTERS OPEN
SESSION:**

Hartman made a motion, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to enter open session at 9:39 pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

Hartman made a motion, seconded by Young and carried unanimously to adjourn at 9:39 pm.

Cece Kroc, Clerk