

**Multnomah ESD Board of Directors'
Board Regular Session Minutes
Tuesday, March 17, 2026**

2022-2028
Areas of Focus

#1 – Create a high quality learning environment for all

#2 – Operationalizing systems that engage and empower communities

#3 – Build a culturally responsive workforce

MESD Board Equity Lens- <https://www.multnomahesd.org/board-equity.html>

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Board Chair Katrina Doughty called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, in accordance with the agenda and public notice of the meeting.

Board Members Present: Renee Anderson
Jessica Arzate
Katrina Doughty-Chair
Susie Jones
Denyse Peterson
Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie-Vice-Chair

Board Members Absent: Danny Cage

Administrative Staff Present: Dr. Paul Coakley, Superintendent
Sascha Perrins, Assistant Superintendent
Doana Anderson, Chief Financial Officer
Angela Hubbs, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Bernadette Adeniran, Director of Human Resources
Marifer Sager, Director of Strategic Engagement & Public Affairs
Heather Severns, Board Secretary

Guests: Geof Garner, TRIO Program Director

1. Call to Order

Chair Katrina Doughty called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

3. Opening Acknowledgements

A. Land Acknowledgement & Educational Opportunity

Chair Katrina delivered the land acknowledgement, recognizing the Indigenous peoples and tribes of the region and emphasizing the importance of supporting Indigenous communities and movements such as Land Back.

B. Women’s History Month Recognition

Chair Katrina highlighted Women’s History Month, recognizing the contributions of women—particularly Indigenous and global leaders—who have advanced justice, education, and equity.

C. Additional Acknowledgement

Board member Renee Anderson recognized three women who have held top leadership roles in Oregon education:

- Norma Paulus
 - Susan Castillo
 - Dr. Charlene Williams
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4. Resolution

Classified Employee Appreciation Week

Chair Katrina presented the resolution proclaiming **March 2–6, 2026 as Classified Employee Appreciation Week**, recognizing the vital contributions of classified staff.

5. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

6. Reports to the Board

A. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Paul Coakley:

- Recognized and thanked classified employees for their essential contributions across MESD.
- Highlighted Women’s History Month and the leadership of women across the organization.

Legislative Update:

- The 2026 legislative session adjourned March 6.
- Over 60 education bills were tracked.
- K–12 funding largely remained stable due to advocacy efforts.
- The projected \$700M funding gap was reduced to approximately \$100M.
- Key funds (State School Fund, SSA) were preserved, though some programs (outdoor school, school meals, Grow Your Own) were not fully restored.
- Districts continue to face financial pressures from PERS, special education costs, and declining enrollment.

Additional Updates:

- MESD will assess budget impacts after Local Service Plan (LSP) selections are finalized.
- Superintendent Coakley announced his election as **OAESD President-Elect (2026–2027)**.

B. Program Report – TRIO Programs

Geof Garner, TRIO Program Administrator, provided a comprehensive overview of MESD’s TRIO programs, highlighting their history, scope, impact, and future direction.

Program Overview

- MESD TRIO programs have operated since **1998**, beginning with the Talent Search grant.
- TRIO programs originated from the **1964 War on Poverty**, designed to support **low-income and first-generation students** in accessing and completing higher education.
- MESD currently operates two primary TRIO programs:
 - **Talent Search** – serves approximately **500 students annually**

- **Upward Bound** – serves **60 students annually** with more intensive, individualized support

Mr. Garner noted that while both programs receive similar levels of funding (approximately \$300,000 annually), Upward Bound serves fewer students in order to provide deeper, more comprehensive services. However, MESD strives to ensure that Talent Search students also receive access to high-quality programming.

Partner Schools and Service Sites

TRIO programs currently serve students at multiple partner sites, including:

- Alliance High School
- Helensview School
- New Avenues for Youth
- Open School
- Portland Youth Builders
- Reynolds Learning Academy
- Rosemary Anderson High School (POIC)

Additional partnerships are being explored to expand services to more students.

Student Experiences & Programming

Mr. Garner described several key program components:

- **Summer Residential Programs:**
 - Students participate in immersive experiences at **Portland State University**, living in dorms and earning academic credit.
 - Recent programming has focused on **Vanport history**, including displacement, redlining, and community resilience.
- **College Exposure & Credit Opportunities:**

- Students earn college credits through partnerships with institutions such as **Portland State University** and **Pacific University**.
 - Some students participate in **international learning experiences**, including travel to Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia.
 - **Career and Leadership Development:**
 - Students engage with community leaders, professors, and mentors.
 - Alumni of TRIO programs are now returning as staff and leaders, demonstrating long-term program impact.
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Program Outcomes and Data

MESD TRIO Outcomes:

- **Upward Bound:**
 - Student retention: **98%**
 - Graduation rate: **~85%**
 - College enrollment: **53%**
 - FAFSA completion: **85%+**
- **Talent Search:**
 - Student persistence: **82%**
 - Graduation rate: **90%**
 - College enrollment: **38%**
 - FAFSA completion: **80%**
 - Six-year college completion rate (cohort): **25%**

Mr. Garner emphasized that these outcomes significantly exceed national benchmarks for similar student populations. For example, foster youth nationally have approximately a **4% college completion rate**, highlighting the strong impact of TRIO programming.

State and National Context

- Oregon has **58 TRIO programs** serving approximately **12,500 students**, with about **\$18 million in funding**.
 - Nationally, TRIO includes over **3,100 programs**, serving nearly **1 million students** with approximately **\$1.19 billion in funding**.
 - TRIO programs received **flat funding** in the most recent federal budget, which was considered a positive outcome given broader funding uncertainties.
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Alignment with MESD Strategic Priorities

Mr. Garner noted that TRIO programs strongly align with MESD strategic goals, including:

- Expanding equitable access to education
 - Supporting future-ready learning pathways
 - Building regional partnerships and leadership capacity
 - Promoting student success across diverse and historically underserved populations
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Expansion and Future Opportunities

- MESD is pursuing additional grant opportunities, including an **Education Opportunity Center (EOC)** grant to serve up to **1,000 incarcerated individuals**, supporting college access during and after incarceration.
 - A new **Talent Search grant cycle** has opened, and staff are actively preparing an application.
 - Continued collaboration with regional and national TRIO networks supports program growth and sustainability.
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Board Discussion

Board members expressed strong appreciation for the program's impact, particularly:

- The high success rates among students
- The resilience of students navigating barriers, including the impacts of COVID
- The importance of continued investment in college access programs

Questions were asked regarding:

- The difference between **Talent Search and Upward Bound**, with clarification that Upward Bound provides more intensive services to a smaller group of highly motivated students.
 - How students are selected, noting that interest, engagement, and demonstrated motivation are key factors.
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Closing

Mr. Garner thanked the Board and MESD leadership for their ongoing support and emphasized the transformative impact of TRIO programs on students' lives.

7. Consent Agenda

- 7.A.1. Approval of February 17, 2026 Board Regular Session Minutes
- 7.A.2. Resolution 26-016-Approval of March 2026 Personnel Recommendations
- 7.A.4. Resolution 26-017-Approval of 2026-2027 Non-TSPC Contract Renewals for Staff and Supervisors
- 7.A.5. Resolution 26-018-Approval of Amended Board Policy JGA-Corporal Punishment
- 7.A.6. Resolution 26-019-Approval of Amended Board Policy JFCA-Student Dress and Grooming
- 7.A.7 Resolution 26-020-Approval of Amended Board Policy JN-Student Fees, Fines and Charges

Motion: Director Renee Anderson moved to approve the Consent Agenda.
Director Denyse Peterson seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Action: The motion carried with Directors Anderson, Arzate, Doughty, Jones, Peterson, and Squiemphen-Yazzie voting aye. Motion passed 6-0.

8. Board Reports

A. Finance Committee Report

Susie reported:

- Financial reports were reviewed and found to be straightforward.
 - The MESD scholarship fund currently holds approximately **\$1,500+**.
 - The committee is encouraging **100% board participation** in fundraising efforts.
 - Contributions may include direct donations, BottleDrop collections, or outreach.
 - Scholarship criteria are under development, with the goal of awarding multiple scholarships.
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B. OSBA Update

Chair Katrina reported:

- OSBA is undergoing a comprehensive review of governance structures and representation.
 - Feedback will be gathered from districts of varying sizes.
 - The goal is to improve effectiveness and equity across the organization.
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9. Executive Session

The Board entered executive session pursuant to **ORS 192.660**-To review and evaluate the employment-related performance of the chief executive officer, employee or staff member who does not request an open hearing.

No decisions were made during the executive session.

10. Return to Open Session

The Board reconvened in open session.

11. Activity Calendar

- March 23-27-Spring Break, MESD Schools and Programs Closed
- April 9, 12:00 p.m.-Board Policy Committee meeting (Virtual via Zoom)
- April 9, 1:00 p.m.-Board Policy Committee meeting (Virtual via Zoom)
- April 21, 6:00 p.m.-Board Regular Session meeting (Virtual via Zoom)

12. Board Business / Announcements

- Efforts continue to schedule the **summer board retreat**.
- Board members were asked to respond promptly to scheduling communications.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m. The next Board meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2026.

Heather Severns
Executive Assistant/Board Secretary