

Minutes of the Regular Governing Board Meeting
Amphitheater Public Schools
Tuesday, February 3, 2026

A Regular public meeting of the Governing Board of Amphitheater Public Schools was held on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Wetmore Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road, Tucson, AZ 85705 in the Leadership and Professional Development Center.

Governing Board Members Present

Ms. Vicki Cox Golder, President
Mr. Matthew A. Kopec, Vice President
Ms. Deanna M. Day, M.Ed., Member
Dr. Michael Gemma, Member, Member
Ms. Susan Zibrat, Member

Superintendent's Cabinet Members

Mr. Todd A. Jaeger, J.D., Superintendent
Ms. Tassi Call, Associate Superintendent for Elementary Education
Mr. Matthew Munger, Associate Superintendent for Secondary Education
Mr. Scott Little, Chief Financial Officer
Mr. John Hastings, Director of Human Resources
Ms. Elizabeth Jacome, Director of Curriculum & Assessment
Ms. Kristin McGraw, Director of Student Services
Ms. Julie Valenzuela, Director of 21st Century Education
Ms. Michelle Valenzuela, Director of Communications

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Cox Golder called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Superintendent Jaeger asked Mr. Michael McConnell, Principal of Innovation Academy to introduce the students leading the Pledge this evening. Mr. McConnell introduced Ms. Pamela Barrett and Ms. Brenda Mendez who are the advisors of Innovation Academy's Girls Who Code Club. Ms. Mendez explained that their group teaches girls to code, explore computer science and AI. She shared that the club helps build confidence, skills, and friendship. Ms. Mendez introduced Jordan, Ana, Eliana, Skylar, and Jules. The students led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Zibrat thanked the students for attending the meeting and the students acknowledged their parents in the audience. She presented the students with certificates of recognition.

A picture was taken with the Governing Board, Superintendent Jaeger, Mr. McConnell, Ms. Mendez, Ms. Barrett and the Innovation Academy students to mark the occasion.

3. RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ART

Mr. McConnell introduced Art Teacher Ms. Melissa Samsel. Ms. Samsel explained that the art on display demonstrates not only the Arizona state standards for Art, but also incorporates STEM methodologies. She shared pieces from each grade level from preschool through 5th grade which encompassed lessons on architecture, the color wheel, high level patterns, self-portraits, proportion, perspective, and value.

Ms. Zibrat presented Ms. Samsel with a certificate of recognition. A picture was taken with the Governing Board, Superintendent Jaeger, Mr. McConnell, and Ms. Samsel to mark the occasion.

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT SPECIAL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

President Cox Golder stated the next Special Governing Board meeting will be Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. at the Wetmore Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road, Tucson AZ, 85705, in the Leadership and Professional Development Center.

5. RECOGNITIONS

A. Recognition of Amphitheater School District 2026 Spelling Bee Winners

Superintendent Jaeger shared that the annual Spelling Bee is one of his favorite events of the school year and this year's was as exciting as ever. He asked Ms. Susan Shoopman, Assistant Principal of Wilson K-8 and the organizer of this year's Bee to come forward.

Ms. Shoopman explained that 38 elementary and middle school students participated in the spelling bee and the top five finishers would be representing Amphitheater in the upcoming Pima County Spelling Bee. She introduced fifth place finisher Kyrie, second place finisher Brock, and first place finisher Carlin.

Mr. Kopec presented the students with certificates of recognition. A picture was taken of the Governing Board, Superintendent Jaeger, Ms. Shoopman, and the students to mark the occasion.

B. Recognition of the Amphitheater High School Superintendent's Student Advisory Council

For the Amphitheater High School Superintendent's Student Advisory PowerPoint, see Exhibit 1.

Superintendent Jaeger explained that he has a student advisory at each of the three high schools that meets recurringly during the school year and is comprised of four students from each grade level. He shared that their feedback about their school, classmates, and community is invaluable. He asked Mr. A.J. Malis, Principal of Amphitheater High School to come forward.

Mr. Malis stated that the students on the council are campus leaders and he appreciates their contributions to their school. He introduced students Mikayla, Zoe, Abigail, Sarah, Arianna, and Na'Jon. Mr. Malis spoke about each students' favorites classes, extracurricular activities, and plans after high school.

Vice President Kopec presented the students with certificates of recognition. A picture was taken with the Governing Board, Superintendent Jaeger, Ms. Malis and the students.

C. Presentation of Distinguished Service Awards

Superintendant Jaeger explained that each month a classified and certificated staff member is recognized with a Distinguished Service Award. He asked Ms. Hayley Gotlieb, Assistant Principal of Amphitheater High School to come forward to introduce the classified recipient.

Ms. Gotlieb introduced Ruben Robles, Maintenance Technician II as the heart of Amphi High in terms of the campus' care. She spoke about Mr. Robles' professionalism, kindness, helpfulness, and dedication. Ms. Gotlieb said Mr. Robles is a great problem solver and often identifies issues before they become bigger problems. She shared that the impact he makes on the campus is felt by everyone, everyday.

A video presentation was shown highlighting Mr. Robles' contributions to the District.

Dr. Gemma presented Mr. Robles with a certificate of recognition from the Governing Board, a Distinguished Service Award and a gift card donated by the Amphi Foundation.

Superintendent Jaeger asked Ms. Stephanie Hayes, Principal at Harelson Elementary to introduce the certificated recipient.

Ms. Hayes introduced Harelson's Counselor, Ms. Christine Petersen. She explained the various roles Ms. Petersen has had at Harelson over the years and how she goes above and beyond for the students. Ms. Hayes spoke about the welcoming environment Ms. Petersen has created in the "Bobcat Den" where she conducts lessons and groups with students each week. She explained Ms. Petersen runs student council, E-Crew, Chess

Club, the yearbook, and the school's PBIS program. Ms. Hayes praised Ms. Petersen's compassion, leadership, and dedication.

A video presentation was shown highlighting Ms. Petersen's contributions to the District.

Dr. Gemma presented Ms. Petersen with a certificate of recognition from the Governing Board, a Distinguished Service Award and a gift card donated by the Amphi Foundation.

A picture was taken with the Governing Board, Superintendent Jaeger, Ms. Gotlieb, Mr. Robles, Ms. Hayes, and Ms. Petersen to mark the occasion.

6. INFORMATION

A. Superintendent's Report

For the Superintendent's Report PowerPoint see Exhibit 2.

Superintendent Jaeger shared highlights of recent events in the District:

- Canyon del Oro High School Sports Medicine and Early Childhood Education programs hosted a Teddy Bear clinic for the school's youngest learners to feel more comfortable with doctor visits and the students gained practice working with small children
- Painted Sky Elementary hosted their annual T-Bird Trot which was well-attended
- Amphi Middle School students packed meals as part of a service-learning projects for Feed My Starving Children in cooperation with Panatano Christian Church and the Mighty Mentors
- Musical ensembles from Amphitheater High School visited La Cima Middle School to showcase the future opportunities available to students in high school within the Fine Arts
- Coronado K-8 hosted Cougar Day to allow current 5th graders to explore programs awaiting them in middle school
- Ironwood Ridge High School hosted 8th graders for a "This is High School" event complete with hands-on experiences and an exciting preview of what awaits them next year
- Schools across the District celebrated the 100th day of school dressing like 100 year olds and reflecting on how much they have learned in the last 100 days
- Canyon del Oro's Academic Decathlon team reclaimed the Regional Champion title they held from 2002 through 2024 and have qualified to compete in the upcoming state championship in March
- Amphitheater hosted its first "Voices of Support: Navigating Special Education as a Team" event with presentations to assist families in utilizing resources for their special needs students

Superintendent Jaeger offered to answer any questions about his report. There were none.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Harlan Huelle is the parent of a previous student and expressed his concern about bullying and retaliation at Ironwood Ridge High School. He spoke about the experience his student had last year on a sports team and felt the incidents were not fully investigated and if they had been, current staff would not have been retained for the current year. Mr. Huelle expressed frustration about his son being removed from an online team roster as well as the previous coach. He stated he ultimately holds the school's administrative team responsible for the issues.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Details of agenda items, supporting documents, and presentations are available in the electronic Board Book by clicking on the hyperlink below.

[Amphitheater Public Schools Public View - BoardBook Premier](#)

President Cox Golder asked if any items needed to be removed for further discussion or comment. Dr. Gemma asked to comment on item 8.I.

Dr. Gemma stated he had questions about the new courses being presented for approval and Mr. Munger was very responsive in answering them. He commented on how much the curriculum has matured over the years and it was his opinion the curriculum in Amphitheater rivals that of any charter or private school. Dr. Gemma stated he believes it serves all students and he thanked the staff who are constantly working to improve the curriculum and offerings for students.

Vice President Kopec moved for Consent Agenda Items 8. A.- J. be approved as presented. Dr. Gemma seconded the motion. Vote in favor – 5. President Cox Golder, Vice President Kopec, Ms. Day, Dr. Gemma, and Ms. Zibrat. Opposed – 0. Consent Agenda Items 8. A.-J. passed.

A. Approval of Appointment of Non-Administrative Personnel

The Governing Board approved Appointment of Non-Administrative Personnel as submitted in Exhibit 3.

B. Approval of Personnel Changes

The Governing Board approved Personnel Changes as submitted in Exhibit 4.

C. Approval of Leave(s) of Absence

The Governing Board approved Leave(s) of Absence as submitted in Exhibit 5.

D. Approval of Separation(s) and Termination(s)

The Governing Board approved Separation(s) and Termination(s) as submitted in Exhibit 6.

E. Approval of Stipend for Coaching Volunteers

The Governing Board approved Stipend for Coaching Volunteers as submitted in Exhibit 7.

F. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

The Governing Board approved minutes from the January 27, 2026 meeting as submitted in Exhibit 8.

G. Approval of Vouchers Totaling and Not Exceeding Approximately \$396,904.35

A copy of vouchers for goods and services received by the Amphitheater Public Schools and recommended for payment has been provided to the Governing Board. The following vouchers were approved as presented and payment authorized as submitted in Exhibit 9.

Voucher #	Amount	Voucher #	Amount	Voucher #	Amount
1202	\$40,365.05	1203	\$105,633.04	1204	\$18,822.54
1205	\$76,607.06	1206	\$106,467.87	1207	\$21,255.57
1208	\$27,503.93	2111	\$249.29		

H. Acceptance of Gifts

The Governing Board approved the Acceptance of Gifts as submitted in Exhibit 10.

I. Approval of New Courses for the 2026-2027 School Year

The Governing Board approved New Courses for the 2026-2027 School Year as submitted in Exhibit 11.

J. Approval of Out of State Travel

The Governing Board approved Out of State Travel as submitted in Exhibit 12.

9. STUDY

A. Review of the Auditor General's School District Financial Risk Analysis Report-January 2026
For the Auditor General's School District Financial Risk Analysis Report see Exhibit 13.

Superintendent Jaeger explained that this annual report prepared by the Auditor General describes the financial status of Districts in terms of risk in several categories. He commented that it is very telling to see

how many districts across the state are considered high risk at this point. He asked Mr. Scott Little, Chief Financial Officer, to summarize the results.

Mr. Little explained the report is best viewed online and that he has some concerns with how the data is presented as it tends to downplay the severity of the financial standings of districts. He outlined each of the measures in which Amphitheater is considered high risk:

- Change in Weighted Student Count-this results in lowered revenue and the four year decrease of -8.6% was compounded by the loss of enrollment during the pandemic.
- Budget Limit Reserve Operating Budget- budget reserves were higher in years' past due to the use of federal ESSER money which resulted in the ability to save state funds.
- Financial Position-General Fund operating margin ratio-this measure is affected by the carry forward balance being greatly reduced
- Financial Position-General Fund change in fund balance-Mr. Little explained the drop from 2023-2024 was \$5.1 million and for 2024-2025 it was \$6.7 million
- Capital monies redirected to operations-Mr. Little explained that \$2 million had to be moved from capital expenditures to maintenance and operations to balance the budget

Mr. Little went on to explain that the Auditor General understands the District is taking measures to reduce risk.

President Cox Golder asked what the implications of being "High Risk" are.

Mr. Little stated that the measures identify where the District has higher financial risk. He noted districts where enrollment is more stable are less affected but overall student enrollment is decreasing statewide which is why there are currently 19 districts considered high risk.

Superintendent Jaeger explained that although Amphitheater has measures where we are classified as high risk, we are not one of the 19 districts labeled high risk as a whole.

Mr. Little highlighted the high risk districts in Arizona and noted two are in receivership. There were no further questions.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

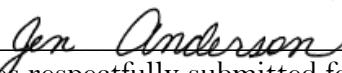
There was no public comment.

11. BOARD MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Day reiterated her request for an item on facility rentals. Superintendent Jaeger stated it would be on the March 10th agenda.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Kopec moved to adjourn. Dr. Gemma seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Voice vote in favor-5. President Cox Golder, Vice President Kopec, Ms. Day, Dr. Gemma, and Ms. Zibrat. Opposed-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:11pm.


Minutes respectfully submitted for Governing Board Approval
Jen Anderson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & Governing Board

February 5, 2026
Date

Vicki Cox Golder, Governing Board President

February 17, 2026
Date