

OFFICIAL MINUTES: AUSTIN SCHOOL BOARD

STUDY SESSION

Independent School District No. 492

Monday, March 23, 2026 4:00 pm

District Office Conference Room

401 Third Avenue NW, Austin, MN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carolyn Dube
Robert Hartman
Cece Kroc
Don Leathers (4:05 pm)

Carol McAlister
Peggy Young
Dan Zielke
Superintendent Dr. Joey Page

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

MEETING CALLED

TO ORDER: Chairperson Dube called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in the District Office Conference Room at Austin High School.

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

BUDGET DISCUSSION: Superintendent Dr. Joey Page reviewed the right sizing plan, detailing types of reductions due to anticipated enrollment decline and a reduction in compensatory aid. Discussion followed. Our budget will continue to be reviewed as more information becomes available from the state. The deadline to approve the district’s FY27 budget is June 30, 2026.

WESCOTT TRACK UPDATE:

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg provided the track project timeline and recent bids received for the resurfacing of the track at the Wescott Athletic Complex. The bids to resurface the track with the existing Mondo product were higher than anticipated, prompting research into an alternative gel-pour system. Discussion followed on product quality and lifespan, financing options, and next steps. A recommendation to proceed with awarding the bid to Ulland Brothers for the resurfacing of the track using the Mondo product will be brought forward at the April 13 board meeting.

FIRST READING OF NEW POLICY 625:

New policy 625 – Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence was reviewed by the board with additional guidance from Technology Director Amy Thuesen. The policy will be presented for approval at the April meeting.

(A COPY OF THE PROPOSED NEW POLICY IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

REVISED POLICIES PRESENTED FOR FIRST READING:

Revised policies 410 – Family and Medical Leave; 515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records; 520 – Immunizations; 615 – Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students; and 701 – Establishment and Adoption of School District Budget were presented for first reading. Policies will be brought forward for approval at the April meeting.

(A COPY OF EACH PROPOSED REVISED POLICY IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

**SCHOOL BOARD
MEMBER SCHOOL
ASSIGNMENTS:**

Discussion held on having each school board member assigned as an ambassador for a particular school each year in hopes of being more visible and getting to know the schools better to allow for more informed decision making. The 2026 assignments include Dan Zielke at Community Learning Center, Carolyn Dube at Banfield Elementary; Carol McAlister at Neveln Elementary and the SPED Cooperative; Cece Kroc at Southgate Elementary and Austin High School; Bob Hartman at Sumner Elementary and Austin High School; Don Leathers and IJ Holton Intermediate School and the Special Education Cooperative; and Peggy Young at Ellis.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Young, seconded by Zielke, and carried unanimously to adjourn at 5:39 pm.

Daniel Zielke, Clerk