

MINUTES
Pendleton School District 16R Board of Directors
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

January 12, 2026

6:00 p.m. | Sunridge Middle School | 700 SW Runnion Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801

Present: Beth Harrison, Board Chair
Ryan Lehnert
Jill Pace
Ryan DeGrofft
Mason Murphy
Anne Keeler, Vice Chair
Patrick Gregg
Kevin Dinning, Director of Human Resources
Michelle Jones, Director of Business Services
Ronda Thornburg, Executive Secretary
Michelle Jensen, PhD, Superintendent
Matt Yoshioka, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Julie Smith, Director of Special Programs

Absent:

The meeting was in person and offered virtually.

1. Opening and Call to Order *Board Chair*

Chair Harrison welcomed everyone and called the regular board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1.1. Pledge of Allegiance

The group stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.2. Meeting Audio and Video Recorded

Chair Harrison stated that this meeting is being audio and video recorded.

2. Approve Board Agenda *Board Chair*

Director Gregg motioned to approve the January 12, 2026, Regular Board Meeting agenda. Director Lehnert seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Consent Agenda *Board Chair*

3.1. Board Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2025 Work Session

December 8, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

3.2. December 31, 2025 Financial Report

Expenditures:

Expenditures for the month of December are within expectations.

Revenue:

Revenue for the month of December is within expectations.

3.3. Grants

Granting Agency	Recipient	Purpose	Amount
Pendleton City Club	PHS/Track & Field Team	Donation from PCC Youth Account	\$500.00
Ag West Farm Credit	PHS/Counseling Office	Operation Christmas Stockings (2026-27 SY)	\$6,400.00
Oregon Technology Student Association	PHS/TSA	TSA Grant from Amazon via OTSA	\$1,400.00
STCU	WES/Michelle Herburger	Classroom Supplies	\$200.00

A letter of appreciation will be sent to each donor.

3.4. Human Resources Report

NEW HIRE	Classified	Crystal Kirkie	TAPP Liaison	SMS
RETIREMENT	Certified	Laurie Cameron	Social Studies Teacher	SMS
		<i>(Effective 1/31/2026. Contract Back 2/1/26 - 6/8/26)</i>		
RESIGNATION	Certified	Crystal Umbarger	Special Education Teacher	SHE
TEMPORARY CONTRACT		Bailey Sorey	45 Day Case Management	MES
		<i>(Effective 1/5/26 - 6/5/26)</i>		
LEAVE OF ABSENCE	Classified	Brieann Baker	Student Teaching	SMS
		<i>(Tentative 1/27/26 - May 2026)</i>		
		Danielle Kobasa	Student Teaching	SMS
		<i>(Tentative 1/27/26 - May 2026)</i>		
EXTRA DUTY	Basketball	Ian Rivera	8A Girls Coach	SMS
		Brieann Baker	8B Girls Coach	SMS
		Bailey Weinke	7A Girls Coach	SMS
		Alesha Chandler	7B Girls Coach	SMS
	Wrestling	Michael Swanson	Head Coach	SMS
		Madison Parker	Assistant Coach	SMS
	Tennis	Curran Holdman	Girls Head Coach	PHS
	Track & Field	Luann Gorbett	Assistant Coach	PHS

Director Murphy motioned to approve the January 12, 2026, consent agenda as presented. Director Gregg seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Recognition & Good News *Superintendent*

4.1. Board Appreciation Month

Each January, the Oregon School Board Association designates School Board Recognition Month to honor the unpaid, elected volunteers who serve on Oregon's 197 local school boards, 19 education service district boards, and 17 community college boards. On behalf of our students, staff, families, and community, we extend our sincere appreciation to the Pendleton School Board for their dedication to public education and to the success of every learner we serve.

4.2. National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

January 19 is Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. Our School Resources Officer, Lance Zaugg, does far more than ensure safety on our campuses. He is a daily, trusted presence in the hallways, classrooms, playgrounds, and gyms. He takes the time to connect, listen, and build trust, helping students feel safe, seen, and supported. On behalf of our students, families, staff, and board, thank you for the work you do every day and for the relationships you build that make our schools stronger.

4.3. **Sunridge Middle School Chamber Choir Performance** *Carly Walker*

The Sunridge Middle School Chamber Choir, directed by Carly Walker, is performing tonight to celebrate the strong, intentional K-12 music program that nurtures creativity, discipline, collaboration, and belonging. Music education teaches students to listen deeply, work together, and strive for excellence, which are skills that will serve them well far beyond the stage or classroom.

5. **Board Communications** *Board Chair*

5.1. **Pendleton Association of Teachers** *PAT Representative*

Amy Pitner did not have a report.

5.2. **Oregon School Employees Association** *Tammy Hillmick*

Nothing to report.

5.3. **PL974/Indian Education** *Kendall Rosario*

No report.

6. **Public Comment** *Board Chair*

No comments.

7. **Superintendent's Report**

Goal #2 – Be Responsive to the Needs of All Students

The Access & Opportunity Committee, which serves as Pendleton School District's Equity Committee under state law. The purpose of the committee is to elevate community voice and advise district leadership on access, opportunity, and the student experience. Volunteers and nominees are currently being gathered and will be fully operational before Fall 2026.

Goal #3 – Innovative & Emerging Practices: AI Policy & Practice

Pendleton School District is collaborating with IMESD and La Grande School District. PSD is reviewing model AI policy Language, gathering regional feedback, and best practices. The next step is to develop the PSD AI policy, implementation, and staff learning plan.

8. **Reports & Discussion**

8.1. **2024-25 Audit Report** *Kylie McClintock*

Cockburn & McClintock, LLC audited the modified cash basis financial statements of the governmental activities, the discretely presented component unit, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Pendleton School District 16R, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2025, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the District's basic financial statements. The audit is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Financial highlights include that at the close of the current fiscal year, the District's governmental funds reported a combined ending fund balance of \$20.2 million, an increase of \$1.6 million from the previous year. The District's total debt obligations decreased by \$4.6 million during the current fiscal year.

The District's General Fund Net Position is impacted by the issuance in the 2002-2003 fiscal year of two Limited Tax Pension Bonds to pay the District's Unfunded Actuarial Liability (UAL) for pension obligations in PERS (Public Employees Retirement System). The debt incurred was \$25.6 million, which reduces the net position by that amount. The net position is reduced because the UAL is not considered debt, although it is the District's obligation to pay the UAL of its retirees.

This method of incurring debt obligations to pay the PERS UAL obligation results in the District reporting a Total Unrestricted Position of \$9.4 million due to the PERS bond obligation of \$8.1 million. The District's Net Position was reduced once this debt was issued. If the bonds had not been issued, the District would have reported an Unrestricted Net Position of \$17.5 million on June 30, 2025.

No findings were noted for the financial statement audit for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Mrs. McClintock was available for questions.

9. **Board Business – Action Items**

9.1. **Superintendent** *Michelle Jensen*

9.1.1. **Policy – Second Reading and Adoption**

OSBA requires/recommends the following policy to be adopted by local school boards.

BCF – Advisory Committees to the Board

Director Pace moved to approve the above-listed policy as presented. Director Gregg seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

9.2. **Business Services** *Michelle Jones*

9.2.1. **Approve 2024-25 Audit**

Director Murphy moved to approve the 2024-25 audit of the Pendleton School District as presented. Director Gregg seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Murphy thanked Michelle Jones for all her hard work.

10. **Board Member Comments** *Board Chair*

Chair Harrison appreciates the opportunity to serve on the board and is respectful of each other.

11. **Adjournment** *Board Chair*

With no further business brought forward for the good of the order, the meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Beth Harrison, Board Chair

Michelle Jensen, PhD, Superintendent

Ronda Thornburg, Executive Secretary

Date