

Unadopted Minutes
SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION
Albany Area Schools – ISD #745
District Office Board Room
April 23, 2025

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hansen at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Hansen, Sand, Dirkes, Henkelman, Ronning, Rueter, Sands

Late:

Absent:

3. Student School Board Representatives

Ryan Massmann and Madeline Ramler were in attendance. Mr. Okerlund asked whether the students felt included and heard when participating in various activities. Both Ryan and Madeline responded positively, sharing that they do feel included and valued—especially enjoying the "send-offs" organized for student athletes. Ryan noted that there is room for improvement in how other extracurriculars, beyond major sports like basketball and football, are highlighted. Madeline added that students would benefit from more information about the available clubs and activities, including what each one represents and what participation involves. Both students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve as representatives, stating they enjoyed learning more about the school administration, how decisions are made, and the work that happens behind the scenes. They also shared interest in receiving more direction or ideas from the board about what they should focus on or explore further with the student body.

4. Band and Choir Trip Presentations

Tabled for a future meeting.

5. Albany Elementary Principal's Update

Natalie Prasch, Principal of Albany Elementary, gave a presentation focused on fostering a positive school culture and encouraging collaboration across the district. She also emphasized the importance of preparing students for life beyond the classroom, including experiences and skills that will benefit them after elementary school.

6. Albany Middle School Principal's Update

Hannah Carlson, Principal of Albany Middle School, gave a presentation highlighting several key initiatives and updates. She spoke about the various field trips offered to students, noting that they are funded through a collaboration between the student council, the middle school, and the PTA. She also shared details about student incentive programs, including Student of the Quarter, monthly recognition events, student council-led activities, and the end-of-year picnic. Academically, she noted that the school offers an extended school year option for some students and recently hosted a local published author to speak with students. Additionally, a new 8th grade science curriculum will be introduced. Ms. Carlson emphasized the importance of fostering a sense of belonging, sharing that staff are actively working to identify students who are not currently involved in activities and encouraging them to participate. She also highlighted the recent middle school play, which saw participation from 40 students, and mentioned the 6th-grade classroom buddy program as another way to build community.

7. Climbing Wall Project Update

The Albany Area Education Foundation has already received nearly \$70,000 in donations for the project, which is scheduled to be presented for approval at the next board meeting. Installation is planned for June 30, 2025. The wall will be covered under the district's current insurance policy, so no additional coverage will be required.

8. Adjournment

Agenda completed at 7:40 p.m.

Amy Sand, Clerk