

School District 197  
West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools  
Meeting and Work Session  
Monday, November 18, 2024  
ISD 197 District Office, Mendota Heights, MN

A meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 197 was held Monday, November 18, 2024, at the ISD 197 District Office, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights, MN, beginning at 5:00 p.m. pursuant to due notice.

Chair Larsen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The following School Board members were present: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, and Randi Walz. Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog was present. Student Representatives Patrick Bohmbach and Nawal Hassan were present.

Also present for the meeting was Peter Mau, Assistant Superintendent; Sara Lein, Director of Special Services; Jason Stegeman, Director of Finance; Tye Michaels, Director of Human Resources; Mark Fortman, Director of Operations; Sara Blair, Director of Communications; and Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education.

### **Agenda**

*It was moved by Mr. Schwab and seconded by Ms. Steele to approve the main agenda as presented.*

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz. Nay: none.*

*The motion carried (7-0).*

### **Consent Agenda**

*It was moved by Mr. Aune and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the consent agenda items as presented:*

- Approval of Minutes of the November 4, 2024 Regular School Board Meeting
- Approval of Personnel Recommendations
- Final Reading of Policy 512, School Sponsored Student Publications and Activities
- Final Reading of Policy 613, Graduation Requirements
- Final Reading of Policy 620, Credit for Learning
- Final Reading of Policy 624, Online Learning Options
- Administrative Review of Policy 801, Equal Access to Facilities
- Approval of Gifts to the District
- Approval of October 2024 Wire Transfers Report.

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz. Nay: none.*

*The motion carried (7-0).*

### **Comments to the School Board**

One resident provided comments to the School Board regarding the district's preschool fees and felt they were high compared to other school districts.

### **First Reading of Policy 419, Tobacco-Free Environment; Possession and Use of Tobacco; Tobacco-Related Devices and Electronic Delivery Devices; Vaping Awareness and Prevention Instruction**

Tye Michaels, Director of Human Resources, presented a first reading of Policy 419, Tobacco-Free Environment; Possession and Use of Tobacco; Tobacco-Related Devices and Electronic Delivery Devices; Vaping Awareness and Prevention Instruction. The current policy adheres to district processes and procedures that are currently in place. The current policy was reviewed against the MSBA model policy and continues to mostly match that language. This policy was last reviewed and approved in June of 2021. Based on the review, minor changes were recommended. Changes includes new language related to exceptions in Section IV and reflects changes for American Indian use of tobacco for religious, cultural or smudging purposes while on school district property. Minor grammar changes were made and those will be reflected in the second reading. This policy will be brought back to the December 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting for a second reading via the consent agenda.

### **American Indian Education Program Update**

Peter Mau, Assistant Superintendent; Kevin Sheridan, Educational Equity Coordinator; and Nell Barri, American Indian Cultural Liaison, presented an update on the American Indian Education Program. The goals of this program are to increase educational access and opportunity for the district's American Indian students in order to increase their academic achievement and graduation rates and to improve the school climate for PreK-12 American Indian students through intra and intercultural awareness and the cultural relevance of materials, programs and activities. Minnesota Statute requires all Minnesota school districts with 10 or more American Indian students to have an American Indian Parent Advisory Committee. A school district enrolling at least 20 American Indian students on October 1 of the previous school year is eligible for Indian Education Aid from the state. The 2024-2025 student count is 173 which qualifies the school district for \$116,500 in aid from the state.

Specific goals of the program include:

- Support postsecondary preparation for American Indian pupils with a goal of 50 students participating in at least one college readiness activity
- Support the academic achievement of American Indian pupils with a partnership between the high school BARR coordinator and the American Indian Education Coordinator to support students during their transition to high school
- Make curriculum relevant to the needs, interests and cultural heritage of American Indian pupils by increasing the scores on the FASTbridge aReading assessment
- Provide positive reinforcement of the self-image of American Indian pupils by establishing Native American Student Groups at all secondary sites and increasing their meeting opportunities
- Develop intercultural awareness among pupils, parents and staff

Some recent accomplishments of the program include:

- A tour of the University of Minnesota last spring
- A backpack distribution event over the summer
- Establishment of Native American student groups at the high school and both middle schools
- Providing support to Native students at all sites for the PD sessions

### **Review Proposed School Age Care and Early Learning Fee Increases**

Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education, and Missy McGinty, SAC Program Coordinator, presented information on proposed School Age Care (SAC) fee increases. The SAC program is a fee-based program. The administration recommended a 3% increase for the next two school years to address inflation in operating expenses. The fees remain within the range of comparison districts' fees for this year.

- The registration fee will remain at \$45.00 for 25-26 and 26-27
- The daily rate will increase from \$28.25 to \$29.25 in 25-26 and to \$30.25 in 26-27
- AM K-4 rates will increase from \$8.00 to \$8.25 in 25-26 and \$8.50 in 26-27
- AM 5-8 rates will increase from \$12.25 to \$12.75 in 25-26 and \$13.25 in 26-27
- PM K-4 rates will increase from \$20.25 to \$21.00 in 25-26 and \$21.75 in 26-27
- PM 5-8 rates will increase from \$16.00 to \$16.50 in 25-26 and \$17.00 in 26-27
- Non-school day rates will increase from \$54.00 to \$55.50 in 25-26 and \$57.25 in 26-27
- Summer daily rates will increase from \$44.00 to \$45.25 in 25-26 and \$46.50 in 26-27

If approved, these fees will be published in the School Age Care brochures and sent to homes in January. The administration believes this fee structure continues to allow for equitable access. The program has had a waitlist since August 2021 due to staff shortages. In June, the district began working with Radar Talent Solutions and were able to hire the necessary additional SAC paraprofessionals.

Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education, and Laurie Hume, Assistant Director of Early Learning, presented information on proposed Early Learning fee increases. The administration recommended a 3% increase for the next two school years, with one exception. Given market comparison and program costs, the administration proposes a larger increase for the extended school day program. These fees are more complicated than simply using a daily rate given holidays and other non-school days a particular program would not meet. The fees are determined based on the total number of programming days in a year.

- The registration fee will increase from \$55.00 to \$60.00 in 25-26 and remain at \$60.00 in 26-27
- Monthly rates will increase from:
  - 2 day: increase from \$176.00 to \$181.00 in 25-26 and \$186.50 in 26-27
  - 3 day: increase from \$246.00 to \$253.00 in 25-26 and \$261.00 in 26-27
  - 5 day: increase from \$396.00 to \$408.00 in 25-26 and \$420.00 in 26-27
  - All day: will remain at \$980.00 in 25-26 and in 26-27
- Extended day rates will increase from \$12.00/day to \$14.00/day in 25-26 and \$14.50/day in 26-27

If approved, all fees will be published in the community preschool brochures and mailed to homes in February. There are a variety of funding streams that provide financial support for families who want to participate in early learning preschool programming. Families apply for available funds, which are awarded on a sliding scale based on the family income or needs of a student. There are income limits to receive financial support. These two items will be brought back to the December 9 board meeting for recommended approval.

### **Approval of Proposed 2025-2026 District Academic Calendar and Review Proposed Draft 2026-2027 District Academic Calendar**

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented the proposed FY 2025-2026 and the draft 2026-2027 district academic calendars. The 2025-2026 school calendar includes the continuation of a transition day for students in the beginning grades of our elementary, middle, and high schools. The first day of school for students in Kindergarten, grade 5, and grade 9 will be the day after Labor Day, Tuesday, September 2. The first day of school for students in grades 1-4, 6-8, and 10-12 will be Wednesday, September 3. The last day of school is Thursday, June 4. The 2025-2026 school calendar includes the continuation of a transition day for students in the beginning grades of our elementary, middle, and high schools. The first day of school for students in Kindergarten, grade 5, and grade 9 will be the day after Labor Day, Tuesday, September 8. The first day of school for students in grades 1-4, 6-8, and 10-12 will be Wednesday, September 9. The last day of school is Thursday, June 10.

Both calendars include the same amount of professional development days for licensed staff and four grading days. Both calendars include 169 or 170 school days for students. The minimum number of days required by

MN state statute is 165 days. Licensed staff work 185 days. The school year consists of four quarters. The administration has tried to balance the number of days in total for quarters 1 and 2 with the number in quarters 3 and 4. This is important for the high school students who earn credits based on a semester (2 quarters). In an attempt to mitigate the impact on major religious holidays, the school administration has developed administrative procedures around school events and religious holidays.

*It was moved by Mr. Aune and seconded by Mr. Schwab to approve the 2025-2026 district academic calendar as presented.*

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz. Nay: none.*

*The motion carried (7-0).*

*It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Vaupel to approve a draft of the 2026-2027 district academic calendar given that changes could potentially be made before finalizing it a year from now.*

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz. Nay: none.*

*The motion carried (7-0).*

### **Review Updates to the School Board Roles, Standards and Expectations Document**

Board member Steele presented a draft of a revised “School Board Roles, Standards, and Expectations” document. At the October 21 meeting, board members reviewed a draft of the revised “School Board Roles, Standards, and Expectations” document. In response to community interest in serving on the school board, the district has prepared this guide to advise current and prospective school board candidates on the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the board. This guide is also meant to inform the community on how the board fulfills its role. The board results committee was given the task of making some updates to the document. Information about the board stipend has been added along with additional clarification on committee assignment and roles and school visits. Several questions were asked at that meeting, and it was decided that further work would be done on the document at a board development session held on November 11. The changes were reviewed and expanded upon. This item will be brought back to the December 9 board meeting for recommended approval with the additional changes.

### **Adjournment**

*It was moved by Mr. Schwab and seconded by Mr. Hill to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m.*

*Aye: Tim Aune, Marcus Hill, Sarah Larsen, Byron Schwab, Morgan Steele, Jon Vaupel, Randi Walz. Nay: none.*

*The motion carried (7-0).*

The next regularly scheduled School Board meeting of Independent School District 197 will be on Monday, December 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. It will be held at the City of Mendota Heights Council Chambers, 1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights, MN.

Upon approval by the School Board, official minutes will be available at the District Office, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights, and on the district website. The full meeting materials are available for public inspection at the administrative offices of the school district and on the district website.

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Sarah Larsen  
School Board Chair

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Jon Vaupel  
School Board Clerk