

Truth in Taxation followed by School
Board Meeting
Monday, December 15, 2025 6:00 PM Central

Aitkin Public Schools - Media Center
306 Second Street NW
Aitkin, MN 56431

Jen Burgos: Present
Roland Hill: Absent
Cindi Hills: Present
Rev. Dawn Houser: Present
Brian Leitingner: Present
Holly Mindrum: Present
Kassie Peterson: Present

Present: 6, Absent: 1.

Roland Hill: Present

Present: 7.

1. Call meeting to order by the chairperson

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

4. Approval of agenda - revise or remove as needed

Motion to approve the agenda as presented. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Brian Leitingner, Passed.

5. Truth in Taxation Presentation - Heather Hipp

5.A. Comments from Community

5.B. Approve 2025 payable 2026 Levy Certification

Motion to certify the levy at \$3,277,769.72. This motion, made by Rev. Dawn Houser and seconded by Holly Mindrum, Passed.

6. *Comments from visitors

6.A.

- Comments from visitors must be in relation to Aitkin Public Schools and/or to agenda items.
- We recommend that you sign up at the comment table if you wish to speak. You will be called up in order as listed on the sign-up sheet. When you come forward to comment, please be seated at the comment table facing the Board Members. State your name prior to your comment. Comments will be limited to 5 minutes.
- The Board will not engage in any discussion or debate during this comment session. The Board will take the information and find answers as appropriate.

- As part of Board protocol, it is unacceptable for any speaker to slander or engage in character assassination at a public board meeting.

7. Scheduled presentations: (Max. 10 Minutes)

7.A. RAMS - Paul Peltier

7.B. Student Council Report- Will Henline, Eliot Christensen presenting
SP Goal 10

8. New business:

8.A. Approve consent agenda items as follows:

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. This motion, made by Rev. Dawn Houser and seconded by Holly Mindrum, Passed.

8.A.1. Approve the following School Board Meeting Minutes:

November 17, 2025 - School Board Meeting

November 17, 2025- Board Work Session

December 3, 2025- Board Work Session

8.A.2. Approve financials for the month of November, 2025:

- Office receipts in the amount of \$437,633.38
- Report of expenditures, including \$418,515.41 for bills and \$1,006,985.48 for payroll and district contribution to PERA, TRA, OASDI/Medicare and 403(b).
- Donations in the amount of \$23,429.95
- Wire transfers in the amount of \$1,500,000.00
- Employee reimbursements.

8.A.3. Approve Resignations

8.A.3.a. Cheryl Hannah - Food Service Rippleside Elementary

8.A.3.b. Kim Chalich - Media Technician

8.A.4. Approve Hirings:

8.A.4.a. Tia Doble - Rippleside Para Professional

8.A.5. Approve Youth In Philanthropy Grants

9th Grade Field Trip Water Park - \$1000 - fully funded

5th Grade DARE Graduation Celebration — Adventure Zone Duluth — \$1000 fully funded

Grad Blast - 2026 - \$500 - fully funded

8.A.6. Approve the Education Minnesota - Aitkin Teachers Master Agreement: 2025-2027

8.A.7. Approve the Aitkin Education Support Staff Master Agreement - 2025-2027

8.A.8. Approve Transportation Supervisor Contract - 2025-2026 & 2026-2027

8.A.9. Approve Food Service Contract 2025-2027

8.A.10. Teachers Seniority List 2025-2026

8.A.11. Jake Mehr - Leave of absence

8.A.12. Approve EMA MOU - School Nurse

8.B. Discussion Items:

8.B.1. Resolution to approve the submission of the Review and Comment for the potential April election.

Resolution to approve the submission of the Review and Comment for the potential April election. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Brian Leitinger, Passed.

8.B.2. Discuss and approve Costin Lobby Group proposal for 2026

Motion to approve the Costin Lobby Group Proposal for 2026. This motion, made by Rev. Dawn Houser and seconded by Kassie Peterson, Passed.

8.B.3. Discuss and approve ICS Professional Services Contract

Motion to approve ICS Professional Services Contract. This motion, made by Rev. Dawn Houser and seconded by Roland Hill, Passed.

8.B.4. Approve Combined Polling Place - Aitkin Public Library

Motion to approve the combined polling place for 2026 - Aitkin Public Library. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Jen Burgos, Passed.

8.B.5. Approve Community Education Annual Report 2024-2025

Motion to approve the 2024-2025 Community Education Annual Report. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Rev. Dawn Houser, Passed.

8.B.6. Discuss and approve World's Best Workforce - New Name - CACR- Comprehensive Achievement and Civil Readiness assessment

Motion to approve the Comprehensive Achievement and Civil Readiness assessment (CACR). This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Brian Leitinger, Passed.

Mr. Stifter, Mr. Dokken and Ms. DeMars reviewed the test scores with the Board.

8.B.7. Discuss January and February 2026 Regular Meeting Dates

January 12, 2026 and February 9, 2026.

8.B.8. MREA Board of Director's election

8.B.9. Paul Grams- Long Term Substitute - Resignation

Motion to approve Paul Grams resignation December 19, 2025. This motion, made by Holly Mindrum and seconded by Rev. Dawn Houser, Passed.

8.B.10. Dan Stifter- Superintendent - Resignation

Motion to approve Dan Stifter - Superintendent June 30, 2026. This motion, made by Roland Hill and seconded by Holly Mindrum, Passed.

9. Administrative reports:

9.A. Board Members Reports:

9.B. Committee Reports:

9.B.1. Personnel Committee Meeting, December 2, 2025

9.C. Principal's Report:

Mr. Dokken, Rippleside Elementary School

Ms. DeMars, Aitkin High School

SP Goal 10

9.D. Community Education - Nedra Henline

SP Goal 10

9.E. Superintendent's report:

9.E.1. Enrollment Update

9.E.2. Other:

9.F. Upcoming meetings:

December 31, 2025 - Personnel Committee Meeting - 3:45 PM AHS Media Center

January 12, 2026 – School Board Meeting- AHS Media Center 6:30 PM

February 9, 2026 – School Board Meeting – AHS Media Center 6:30 PM

10. Other:

11. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. This motion, made by Rev. Dawn Houser and seconded by Holly Mindrum, Passed.

Recorded by Heather Hipp

Jen Burgos

Dated: 1/12/26



CONSULTANT AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT, by and between COSTIN GROUP MINNESOTA, INC. hereinafter referred to as "Consultant," and the Aitkin Public Schools ISD#1, a school district in the State of Minnesota, hereinafter referred to as "APS".

1. **Scope of Services:** Consultant shall perform government relations, public relations, and related services directed and approved by the Superintendent of APS. This scope of service will include:

- Representation at the Minnesota Legislature and before its committees;
- Representation before the Administration of State government, the Office of Governor and additionally all constitutional offices along with departments, boards, and commissions;
- Assistance to promote the mission of APS;
- Assistance with the APS construction project.

2. **Compensation to Consultant:** In consideration of the services to be performed by consultant pursuant to this Agreement, APS agrees to make payment to Consultant at the rate of \$ 2,500 per month retainer. Consultant shall bill APS not less frequently than quarterly for retainer incurred pursuant to this Agreement. Payment shall be made upon approval of APS according to its internal approval process following receipt of Consultant's billing.

3. **Conditions of Payment:** All services provided by consultant pursuant to this Agreement shall be performed by Jeff Anderson and/or Gary Cerkenik personally, unless APS has given advance approval for services to be performed by another representative of consultant. All services provided shall be performed to the satisfaction of APS, and in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations.

All items of work to be performed by the consultant shall be done in accordance with the requirements and recommendations of, and subject to the approval of, APS. Consultant shall be responsible for the professional quality, technical accuracy and the coordination of all services furnished by consultant under this Agreement. Consultant shall, without additional compensation, correct or revise any errors or deficiencies in consultant's final work product or services.

APS shall not be obligated to pay for, nor shall consultant claim for, any services not specifically authorized pursuant to the terms of this Agreement, except upon advance