

OFFICIAL MINUTES: AUSTIN SCHOOL BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

Independent School District No. 492

Monday, February 9, 2026 5:30 pm

Annex Recital Hall

205 4th Street NW, Austin, Minnesota

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carolyn Dube
Robert Hartman
Cece Kroc
Don Leathers
Carol McAlister
Daniel Zielke
Superintendent Dr. Joey Page

MEMBERS ABSENT: Peggy Young

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Chairperson Dube called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Annex Recital Hall.

AGENDA APPROVED: A motion was made by Leathers, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as printed.

REBATE PRESENTATION: Representatives from InBylt, Austin Utilities, and RetroFit noted a total of \$282,666 in total rebates have been awarded to Austin Public Schools for their recent LED lighting project. In addition, the district will recognize \$177,737 in annual cost savings due to the new lighting.

PACKER PANTRY UPDATE:

CEO 2.0 students Makayla Dokpodjo and Michael Garry along with their advisor Emily Hovland provided an overview of updates made to the AHS Packer Pantry including their new online ordering and pick up process.

CEO INVITATION:

The Mower County CEO class of 2026 representatives Lucy Annis and Gracie Greenman provided highlights of their upcoming fundraising event.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Page noted several staff and student recognitions and highlighted recent and upcoming events.

SCHOOL BOARD

WELCOMING STATEMENT: Board member Don Leathers read a prepared Welcoming Statement on behalf of the full school board. The statement was issued to remind our students and the families we serve that we will continue to be a welcoming, safe and accepting place and to assure them the entire board takes their role of protecting their safety and security with utmost seriousness.

(THE COMPLETE WELCOMING STATEMENT IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK AND POSTED WITH THE ONLINE AGENDA.)

SCHOOL BOARD REPORTS:

McAlister provided an Apex Austin update and Hartman congratulated Austin Public Schools for being well represented in the recent Polar Plunge supporting The Hormel Institute and also recognized all the students who participated in the middle school solo/ensemble contest.

STUDENT REPORTS:

Student Representatives Michael Garry and Lydia Masara shared their reports on happenings at Austin High School.

MINUTES APPROVED:

Kroc made a motion, seconded by McAlister and carried unanimously to approve the regular meeting minutes of 1/12/26 and study session minutes of 1/26/26 as printed.

(A COMPLETE COPY OF THE MINUTES IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK AND POSTED ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE.)

**PERSONNEL REPORT
APPROVED:**

Kroc made a motion, seconded by McAlister and carried unanimously to approve the following personnel items.

Contracts for Approval – Tiffany Arett, para, effective 2/2/26; Amy Blackstad, noon supervisor, effective 1/16/26; Cheryl Flanders, noon supervisor, effective 1/12/26; Harley Hamlin, noon supervisor, effective date tbd, Katherine Huinker, SPED para, effective 2/3/26; Clarissa Madden, SPED para, effective 2/3/26; Emily Mix, SPED para, effective 1/14/26; Catherina Paul, Success Coach, effective 1/20/26; and Michelle Yanke, nurse, effective 3/23/26

Transfer/Contract Modification – Tim Donnelly, SPED teacher to building sub, effective 1/14/26

Resignations/Retirements – Kevin Anderson, school psychologist, effective 5/28/26; Fairy Apollohtoo, EL teacher, effective 5/28/26; Eric Bobak, SPED teacher, effective 5/28/26; Emma Brekke, ECSE Para, effective 1/22/26; Daniel Hardin, SPED para, effective 1/6/26; Janice Marquardt, noon supervisor, effective 1/16/26; Michelle Stehlik, SPED para, effective 1/27/26; Jeannett Sullivan, food service helper, retirement rescinded, Bryanna Vokoun, Kids Korner aide, effective 2/6/26; Nichole Wolfs, Kids Korner aide, effective 1/16/26; and Paula Ziems, SPED teacher, effective 5/28/26

Termination – Jeff Young, SPED para, effective 1/28/26

BILLS APPROVED:

Kroc made a motion, seconded by McAlister and carried unanimously to approve the bills for payment as of 2/9/26.

(A COPY OF THE BILLS IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

**TREASURER'S REPORT
APPROVED:**

A motion was made by Kroc, seconded by McAlister and carried unanimously to approve the December 2025 treasurer's report.

(A COPY OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

REPORTS:

Department/school updates from Superintendent Cabinet members and principals were available for review.

**MN YOUTH INSTITUTE
AND GLOBAL YOUTH
INSTITUTE RECAP:**

AP Human Geography teacher Lisa Sanders and students Ian Johnson and Aiden Sehon provided a recap of the MN Youth Institute and Global Youth Institute that they participated in. The students were provided an opportunity to learn more about global food security challenges and connect with experts in ag, nutrition, economics, and policy.

TASK FORCE UPDATES:

Derek Gustafson, Jill Rollie and Amanda Lee from the Substitute Task Force and Blake Henley, Rebecca Deyo and Jessica Cabeen from the Student Attendance Task Force provided updates of their ongoing work to the board.

OFFICIAL MINUTES: AUSTIN SCHOOL BOARD**REGULAR MEETING****DONATIONS:**

A motion was made by McAlister, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to approve the donations as presented by Executive Director of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg.

(A COMPLETE COPY OF DONATIONS IS ATTACHED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTE BOOK.)

MEETING REMINDER:

Chairperson Dube reminded School Board members of the study session scheduled for Monday, February 23, at 4 pm in the District Office Conference Room.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

A motion was made by Leathers, seconded by Zielke and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 pm.

Daniel Zielke, Clerk