

School District 197
West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools
Regular Meeting
Monday, April 7, 2025
Mendota Heights City Hall, Council Chambers

A meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 197 was held on Monday, April 7, 2025 beginning at 6:00 p.m. pursuant to due notice.

The meeting was called to order by current Chair Larsen at 6:00 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 also present. Student Representative Nawal Hassan was present and Patrick Bohmbach was absent.

Also present for the meeting were: Peter Mau, Assistant Superintendent; Sara Lein, Director of Special Education; Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Tye Michaels, Director of Human Resources; Dave Sandum, Director of Technology; Sara Blair, Director of Communications; and Lisa Grathen, Director of Community Education.

Agenda

It was moved by Ms. Steele and seconded by Mr. Schwab to approve the 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 Ms. Walz and seconded by Mr. Hill to approve the consent agenda items as presented:

- Approval of the March 17, 2025 School Board Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Personnel Recommendations
- Second Reading of Policy 506, Student Discipline
- Approval of December 2024 Accounts Payable Report
- Approval of December 2024 Treasurer's Report
- Approval of January 2025 Accounts Payable Report
- Approval of January 2025 Treasurer's Report
- Approval of January 2025 Wire Transfers Report
- Approval of Gifts to the District
- Approval of Field Trip for Two Rivers High School Robotics Students

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

The motion carried (7-0).

Listening Session Report

Board member Schwab stated that two individuals attended the Listening Session. Topics included strategic planning, voter fatigue, and funding. Appreciation was also expressed for the School Board.

Recognitions

Superintendent Olson-Skog introduced students being recognized for winter athletics and activities achievements. Two Rivers senior, Brianna Cannon, was recently named the 2025 Boys and Girls Club Minnesota Youth of the Year for her dedication to supporting teen mental health. With this award, Brianna receives a \$20,000 scholarship towards her college education. Brianna will compete for the Midwest Region Youth of the Year this summer. Two Rivers senior, Isabelle Kirchner, scored 1,000 points during the basketball season and was named an All-Conference award recipient. Coach Mason Young introduced three wrestlers that participated in the state tournament – Ziggy Harahan, Emiliano Carrillo and Jayden Kinsel Arredondo. The Two Rivers dance team were crowned Section champions in both Kick and Jazz, achieving double Section 3AAA titles in the same season. B-Squad, JV, and Varsity were undefeated in both Kick and Jazz throughout the season. The team placed 10th at the State Tournament. Dance Program Director, Molly Engle, was named Section Coach of the Year in Dance. Students included: Bridget Arnold; Vanessa Castillo; Charlotte Chandler; Maddy Churchill; Amelia Commerford; Hannah Corbett; Alejandra; Cubillan Cueto; Ryder Defiel-Omar; Kendyl Dodson; Emma Finne; Nola Fischer; Sada Gustafson; Ginger Hanson; Elena Heroff; Catalina Martinez; Allie Ostrem; Lila Rodriguez; Marissa Smookler; KyriaKi Tirokomos-Kontinakis; Lexi Tores; Kate Wedewer; and Savannah Wright. Coach Ben Geiger introduced Speech students who qualified for the Minnesota State High School League State Speech Tournament – Allie Karon took 3rd Place in Extemporaneous Reading; Andre Carreras Champion of Great Speeches; Aubrey McMahon 2nd Place Informative Speaking; Joshua Langemo 3rd Place Informative Speaking; and McKinley Cherrier qualified for nationals. Nick Smock participated on the Dakota Hawks United floor hockey team that competed in the state tournament.

Student Representative's Report

Student Representative Nawal Hassan presented the student report. At Mendota, families participated in a basketball game, a reading event and a PTA craft and bake sale. Students prepared for their 4th grade musical, *Finding Nemo Kids*. Music concerts were held. Talent show tryouts were held. At Somerset, parents came together to talk about how to help students learn and grow. A Book Character Parade was held where students dressed up as their favorite book characters and walked through the gym. At Pilot Knob, a book fair was held and conferences took place. The STEM Fair was held where students showed off their science and engineering projects. At Garlough, the school hosted a special event called “Dance Around the World” where students and families could enjoy music and dances from many cultures. Students in grades 5 and 8 participated in tests for reading, math, and science. At Friendly Hills Middle School, a Student Council meeting was held and invited 4th graders and their families to a Preview Night to get ready for middle school. At the high school, applications for ISD 197's School Board Student Representatives for the 2025 26 school year are being accepted through April 18. Prom will be hosted at Target field on April 19th and the theme is Golden Gala. Theater students are preparing for their spring musical, Mean Girls. Speech had a successful season with 4 students qualifying for the state tournament and 4 students qualifying for the national tournament in debate categories. The Digital Well-Being Club hosted a log-off lunch event. Pre ACT and MCA tests will be conducted tomorrow. Two Rivers is hosting the annual Teen Lit Con on April 26.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Olson-Skog presented his report. The district is celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the Early Learning Center and Family Resource Center (ELC). For the past decade, the ELC has provided a strong foundation for the area's youngest learners. Nearly 20 Two Rivers High School students in grades 11 and 12 earned college credit by passing the state-recognized Bilingual and Multilingual Seals Test in German and Spanish. This year, more students than ever achieved the prestigious Platinum Bilingual Seal, each earning four college credits. Garlough hosted their annual Dance Around the World event, a celebration of the school

community's cultural diversity through music and dance. Pilot Knob STEM Magnet School hosted their annual STEM Fair that showcases the creativity and ingenuity of students through their impressive projects. Moreland's annual musical, *Finding Nemo Kids*, gave 4th graders the opportunity to explore theater arts through acting, singing in the choir, and helping create the set. The last *Coffee with the Superintendent* of the school year will be on April 28 at Ze's Diner from 8am-9:30am. These informal gatherings are a great opportunity to connect, ask questions, and share feedback. Last week, every parent and guardian should have received an email with a link to the family survey. This is a chance to share valuable feedback about the schools and district.

Strategic Framework Social Emotional Learning Implementation Target Update

Sara Lein, Director of Special Services, and Sarah Orman, Garlough Elementary School Counselor, presented an update on the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Implementation Target of the district's Strategic Framework. An initial update of this topic for this school year was provided at the December 9, 2024, board meeting. A district-wide system of SEL integrates academic, social, and emotional learning across all school contexts. This approach provides a learning environment that infuses SEL into all aspects of instruction and promotes equitable outcomes for all students. The 2024-2025 learning actions in this area include:

- SEL instruction – provides students with consistent opportunities to practice competencies that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive.
- Integrated SEL with academic instruction – integrates into instructional content and teaching strategies
- Youth voice and engagement – elevates student perspectives and experiences
- Supportive school and classroom climate – creates learning environments that are supportive, culturally responsive and focused on building relationships and community
- Focus on adult SEL – provides staff with consistent opportunities to collaborate and build relationships
- Supportive discipline – creates practices that are appropriate and equitably applied
- A continuum of integrated supports – ensures that SEL is integrated into the continuum of supports to ensure that all student needs are met
- Authentic family partnerships – provides families and staff with regular opportunities to build relationships and collaborate
- Aligned community partnerships – ensures that staff and community partners are aligned on common language
- Systems for continuous improvement – ensures outcome data are used to continuously improve all SEL related systems

Curriculum Advisory Committee Update

Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, and Miles Lawson, Secondary Curriculum and Gifted and Talented Coordinator presented an update on the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC). According to Minnesota statute, school districts must establish an advisory committee to ensure active community participation in all phases of planning and improving the instruction and curriculum affecting state and district academic standards. The committee includes teachers, parents, support staff, students and other community residents who make decisions regarding implementation of the Minnesota Academic Standards and high academic achievement for all standards. Additionally, there is a high school student advisory CAC subcommittee who provide student voice and perspective on various topics.

There was a new legislative requirement enacted in the spring of 2023 that states the CAC must also recommend strategies to ensure the curriculum is rigorous, accurate, anti-racist, culturally sustaining, and reflects the diversity of the student population; and strategies to ensure that curriculum and learning and work environments validate, affirm, embrace, and integrate the cultural and community strengths of all racial and ethnic groups. So far this year, the committee has reviewed and advised on the district's annual report; legislative requirement changes; new course proposals at Two Rivers; middle school schedule implementation; district-wide grant installations; Read Act implementation; the district's Strategic Framework; and the local literacy plan. They also conducted curriculum reviews for K-12 Math Resource; Secondary World Language;

Personal Learning Plan; and the Foundational Literacy Plan. Next year, the committee will review and advise on the Annual Report; legislative changes; new course proposals at Two Rivers High School; Middle School Schedule implementation; Read Act implementation; district's Strategic Framework; local literacy plan; and implementation of district-wide grants. They will also conduct a curriculum review for Secondary World Language, K-12 Mathematics and the Foundational Literacy Review.

Gifted Talented Advisory Committee Update

Cari Jo Drewitz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, and Miles Lawson, Secondary Curriculum and Gifted and Talented Coordinator presented an update on the Gifted Talented Advisory Committee (GTAC). The mission of this committee is to promote and enhance the goals and objectives of gifted education programming, and to build positive partnerships among schools, teachers, gifted education staff, administration, parents, and the community to support gifted education services and to advocate for future programming needs.

This year, the committee has reviewed and advised on GT specific areas including subject/grade acceleration process; enrichment opportunities and resources; identification process; and improvements towards the self-identified GT program goal areas. They also reviewed and advised on curriculum related topics: district-wide grant installations; legislative updates; Strategic Framework; and new courses at Two Rivers for 25-26. They also reviewed and advised on topics within the curriculum review process: personal learning plan review; K-12 Math Resource review; and Secondary World Language. Next year, the committee will continue to review and advise on GT specific areas including improvements towards the self-identified GT program goal areas; grade-wide enrichment; GT identification process and approach; and middle and high school GT programming. They will review and advise on curriculum related topics including the annual report; legislative requirement changes; new course proposals at Two Rivers; middle school schedule implementation; Read Act implementation; Strategic Framework; local literacy plan; and implementation of district-wide grants. They will also advise within the curriculum review process for Secondary World Language; K-12 Mathematics and the foundational literacy review.

Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Schwab and seconded by Mr. Hill to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 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 Monday, April 21, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. It will be held in the School District 197 District Office Training Room, 1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights. *Please refer to the district website for possible changes to any meeting times/locations.*

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.

Sarah Larsen
School Board Chair

Jon Vaupel
School Board Clerk