

Charter Governance Board

Thursday, September 17, 2026 7:30 AM

Pines Community Meeting Room, 1700 Pleasure Island Road, Eagle River, WI 54521

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call, Establish A Quorum

IV. Open Meeting Verification

V. Approval of Agenda

VI. Public Participation Section of the Meeting

VII. Read & Approve Minutes of Past Meetings

VIII. Board Communication

IX. Finance Update

X. Administrators Report

XI. Discussion/Action Item

XI.A. Interview and approve new Board candidate
for SOAR MS parent representative open seat

XI.B. Board Book training

XI.C. Inservice and start of year update

XI.D. NPSD enrollment update

XI.E. Charter dashboard - discuss and update
annual goals

XI.F. 1st review of the 4K Early Admittance
Policy

XII. Adjournment

NPSD Charter Governance Annual Board Meeting Minutes

July 16, 2026

The annual meeting of the NPSD Charter Governance Board was called to order by Kari Kirschbaum at **7:30 a.m.** on **Thursday, July 16, 2026**, at Northland Pines Community meeting room. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present: Board members Kari Kirschbaum, Sara Owens-Keenan, Mike Wallner, Mandy Gingerich, and Jassica Baril.

A quorum was established.

Also present:

- Tony Duffek, District Administrator
 - Brooke Johnson, St. Germain Elementary & NPMLC Principal
 - Carie Nodine, Land O' Lakes Elementary & SOAR MS Principal
 - Harlan Leusink, Director of Technology and SOAR HS Principal
 - Michele Hotmar, Recording Secretary
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Open Meeting Verification

Kari Kirschbaum stated that the meeting had been duly called, with notices posted at the following locations:

1. Northland Pines High School and Middle School, Eagle River
 2. Northland Pines Elementary Schools in Eagle River, Land O' Lakes, and St. Germain
 3. Vilas County Courthouse, Eagle River
 4. Eagle River City Hall
 5. Vilas County News Review, Eagle River
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Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Sara Owens-Keenan to approve the agenda as presented and leave the order to the discretion of the Chair.

Second by Mike Wallner.

Voice vote: 5-0. Motion carried.

Public Participation – None

Minutes of Past Meetings

MOTION by Mandy Gingerich to dispense with the reading of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of June 18, 2026 and approve the minutes as presented.

Second by Sara Owens-Keenan.

Voice vote: 5-0. Motion carried.

Board Communication: The Board recognized Scott Foster on his retirement.

Administrative Reports

- **Tony Duffek – NPMLC:** Written report
 - **Carie Nodine – SOAR MS:** Written report
 - **Harlan Leusink – SOAR HS:** Written report
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Finance Update

Each charter school presented its current budget and expenditures.

Discussion/Action items:

11a) Election of Officers: Sara Owens-Keenan nominated **Kari Kirschbaum, President**, there were no other nominations. Kari Kirschbaum accepted nomination. Voice vote 5-0, motion carried. Mike Wallner nominated **Mandy Gingerich, Vice President**, there were no other nominations. Mandy Gingerich accepted nomination. Voice vote: 5-0, motion carried. Kari Kirschbaum nominated **Mike Wallner, Secretary**, there were no other nominations. Mike Wallner accepted nomination. Voice vote: 5-0, motion carried. Mandy Gingerich nominated **Sara Owens-Keenan, Treasurer**, there were no other nominations. Sara Owens-Keenan accepted nomination. Voice vote: 5-0, motion

11b) Interview SOAR MS parent representative open seat: There were no applicants to interview.

11c) Approve acceptance of new board member: There were no applicants.

11d) MOTION to approve 2026-2027 Northland Pines School District Governance Board Meeting Calendar as presented:

MOTION by Sara Owens-Keenan that the Board approves the 2026-2027 Northland Pines School District Governance Board Meeting Calendar as presented.

Second by Mike Wallner.

Voice vote: 5-0. Motion carried.

11e) District staffing update: Carie Nordine gave an update on Eagle Camp that starts July 20th and runs for 3 weeks. Interventions are being provided for literacy to some students with Personalized Learning Plans.

11f) District staffing update: Tony Duffek gave an update on staffing.

Adjournment

MOTION by Mike Wallner that the Board adjourn.

Second by Mandy Gingerich.

Voice vote: 5-0. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at **9:20 a.m.**

Northland Pines Montessori Learning Center

September 2026 Board Report

Staff Inservice & Team Building

MLC (& STG) staff began the 2026–2027 school year with a productive inservice focused on classroom preparation, professional learning, and strengthening our systems of support for students.

Districtwide, certified staff participated in sessions focused on the NPSPD Attendance Commitments Framework, Pines Instructional Framework, STG & MLC Playbook, and NPSPD Literacy Essentials. The Attendance Commitments Framework establishes a districtwide goal of 95% or higher attendance and emphasizes consistent practices, family engagement, data analysis, and supports to remove barriers to attendance. The Pines Instructional Framework centers our work on rigor, relevance, and relationships, with an emphasis on high-quality instruction, learner variability, authentic learning, and positive school culture. NPSPD Literacy Essentials provides a common, research-based approach to literacy instruction grounded in the Science of Reading and Gradual Release of Responsibility, with instruction designed to meet student needs through our Multi-Level System of Support. These frameworks provide important structures for consistent, high-quality practices and coordinated support for students across STG and MLC.

MLC Staff also participated in a Teacher Fun Poker Run, a team-building activity supported by seven local community businesses. The event provided an opportunity for staff to collaborate, build relationships, and enjoy some well-deserved fun and laughter. It was a successful way to strengthen our team as we begin the new school year. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and enthusiastic staff at STG/MLC.

Open House

Our MLC Open House was a great success, with a strong turnout of families coming together to start the school year with 95% of MLC families attending. Families had the opportunity to take photos at our photo booth, sign the 95% Attendance Pledge, and receive assistance completing their Annual Household Verification in Infinite Campus. The strong family participation helped create a welcoming start to the school year and reinforced our commitment to strong family-school partnerships.



First Day of School



The first day of school at MLC was a tremendous success! Students and staff returned with enthusiasm and excitement as teachers focused on building relationships, establishing and practicing routines and expectations, and getting to know their students.

To help create excitement for the new school year, students were greeted by NPSD football players as they arrived at school. It was a great way to welcome students and start the year with energy and school spirit.

One of the highlights of the day came during closing circle when a kindergarten student shared that the best part of her day was seeing her friends and spending time with her teacher. What a wonderful testament to the importance of relationships, and the impact our teachers can have on students from the very first day of school!



Building Goals

Our Building Goals this year are to continue strengthening literacy and mathematics achievement. Last fall, STG and MLC narrowly missed our goal of having 80% of students demonstrate proficiency in reading and math. This year, we are setting our sights higher, with a goal of meeting or exceeding 85% proficiency. To support this goal, staff will continue implementing research-based instructional practices and using student data to continually refine instruction and respond to student needs, especially during WIN time.

Our Family Engagement Goal is to strengthen the connection between school and home by promoting literacy at home. We are fortunate that the Reading Heroes Program supports this goal by encouraging and incentivizing students and families to make reading a regular part of their home routines. Together, our academic and family engagement goals provide a coordinated approach to improving student achievement and building strong partnerships with families.

Collaboration



A primary strength of STG & MLC is our deeply embedded culture of staff collaboration and community partnership. This year, our weekly Collaborative Team Meetings (CTMs) have been strategically structured to cross traditional school and grade-level boundaries. Key initiatives include:

- **Cross-School Intervention Alignment:** Joint St. Germain Elementary and Montessori Learning Center CTMs to coordinate 3rd and 4th grade "What I Need" (WIN) interventions.
- **Vertical Grade-Level Integration:** Cross-grade CTMs connecting Children's House and E1 staff.

By bringing educators together across grade levels and buildings, CTMs directly support targeted goals teachers have set for their students, elevate overall instructional practice, and create an environment that encourages the open exchange of innovative ideas. Ultimately, fostering a culture of continuous learning and interdisciplinary collaboration strengthens our entire school community and ensures every student receives the support they need to thrive.

New Staff

I am excited to introduce five new members of the Northland Pines Montessori Learning Center and St. Germain Elementary teams! Each of these individuals brings unique experiences, skills, and a genuine commitment to supporting our students and strengthening our school community.



- **Mrs. Jody Kalata — Title I Interventionist:** Mrs. Kalata brings extensive classroom teaching and intervention experience to MLC. Her background in literacy and academic support will be a valuable resource as we continue to provide targeted instruction and ensure that every student has the opportunity to grow and succeed.
- **Mrs. Brittany Prailes — Special Education Paraprofessional:** Mrs. Prailes is already a familiar and valued member of our MLC community as a parent. She brings experience working with students with special needs, along with a strong understanding of and connection to our school community. We are excited to have her bring that experience and perspective to our staff.
- **Mrs. Jaimie Pockat — Instructional Paraprofessional:** Mrs. Pockat is also a familiar face in our MLC community as a parent. She brings hands-on experience providing academic support and interventions and is passionate about helping students build confidence and make meaningful academic progress.
- **Ms. Kyra Klessig — Special Education Paraprofessional:** Ms. Klessig joins our team with several years of experience as a nanny. Her love of working with children, patience, and enthusiasm will be wonderful assets as she supports our students, particularly those with special needs.
- **Mrs. Kaylee Heitz — Speech and Language Pathologist:** Mrs. Heitz joins MLC with previous experience in speech and language therapy. She brings a strong commitment to helping students develop their communication skills and the enthusiasm and expertise to support students in reaching their full potential.

We are thrilled to welcome Mrs. Kalata, Mrs. Prailes, Mrs. Pockat, Ms. Klessig, and Mrs. Heitz to the team. Each brings something unique to our school, and we look forward to the positive impact they will have on our students, families, and learning community. We are fortunate to have them as part of the MLC family!

Up and Coming

Sept 8-17- Districtwide Aimsweb+ Literacy and Math Testing- *More on this next month!*

September 18- Homecoming Mini-Parade at MS/HS Football Field

September 24- PTO Sponsored Family Night 5pm-7pm - *Feel free to join us!*

**Board Report
SOAR High School
September 2026**

- SOAR HS currently has 71 students enrolled. This includes 13 Freshman, 13 Sophomores, 18 Juniors, and 27 Seniors.
- During the first few weeks of school, Mr. Strong has been leading our students in a poetry challenge. Students have activities to complete each day centered around creating and structuring a poem. Ultimately, this will lead to larger discussions about things like sentence structure and punctuation.
- On September 9th, Mr. Strong took a group of students to Silver Lake to learn how to operate our underwater drones. Each student got an opportunity to drive and problem-solve together.
- Our new Social Studies teacher, Mr. Klatt organized a “Day of Service” on 9/11. He led several lessons and discussions with students over the course of the week to learn more about 9/11 and the sacrifices that those who responded made. Mr. Klatt led community service events at several community locations on 9/11.
- Mrs. Perry has started a project with a group of our students which they have called “The Incredible Underwater Experiment.” Students did some initial research and learning about the Great Lakes and the incredible depths reached in some of the lakes. Students picked objects for their experiment and made some initial observations and measurements of those objects. Next, the objects will be taken on a boat and submerged over 1,000 feet in Lake Superior. When we get the objects back, students will compare their new observations and measurements.
- Along with the rest of the district, SOAR HS has a goal of 95% for student attendance. After two weeks, we are sitting at 97%.



SOAR MIDDLE SCHOOL

SOAR MS FRIDAY UPDATE: [CLICK HERE](#)

BOOT CAMP



Our new SOAR and PLP students kicked off the year with a special Boot Camp Day—a chance to practice routines, build connections, and get comfortable before the school year officially began. Students jumped right into team-building challenges, worked together to design and build marble tracks, and even collaborated to prepare their own pizza lunch! It was a fun, hands-on day focused on teamwork, problem-solving, independence, and starting the year with confidence.

BUILDING COMMUNITY



The first days of school at SOAR have been all about building community and creating connections. Students are working, building, and learning together—including harvesting apples from our school garden, peeling them, and turning them into something delicious to share! These experiences are especially important as we bring together about 30 full-time, in-person students with our 17 Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) students, whose schedules look different for every learner. Some join us one or two days a week, some come primarily for field studies and special experiences, and others learn completely at home. No matter what their schedule looks like, they are all part of SOAR, and these shared experiences help build relationships and a true sense of belonging.

GROWING OUR GARDEN



Our 8th graders teamed up with our Land O Lakes Elementary kindergarten students for a special afternoon of apple picking in our school orchard! Together, they harvested apples, with our older students lending a helping

hand to some of our youngest learners. It was a simple but meaningful experience—building relationships across grade levels while enjoying the harvest from our own school grounds!

An article about our garden for the Fall 2026 Voice of the Pines: [VOTP Article 2026](#)

We continue to find ways to keep ‘Growing our School Garden’:



NPSD - 2026-2027 Enrollment Numbers as of 9/1/2026

EAGLE RIVER ELEMENTARY		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TEACHER</u>	<u># OF STUDENTS</u>
EC		4
K4	(BRENDAMIHL) (WARD) (DAVIS)	41
KDG	(OLSON) (LORENZ) (NIMSGERN)	37
1st grade	(STREJC) (LURVEY) (HOLMAN)	49
2nd grade	(BROUCH) (LEWANDOWSKI) (SALTENBERGER)	44
3rd grade	(JEFCIK) (LESLIE) (SIMAC)	50
4th grade	(ALLISON) (WEIDNER)(LECHLEITNER)	66
5th grade	(GAUTHIER) (KREMSREITER) (LIBBY) (RAMESH)	69
6th grade	(MUSIAL) (HALSEY) (SMITH)(LANGHOFF)	83
Total Students		443

LAND O'LAKES ELEMENTARY (3 Sections)		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TEACHER</u>	<u># OF STUDENTS</u>
EC		5
K4	BENECKE	5
K	BENECKE	7
1st grade	COKINOS	7
2nd grade	COKINOS	7
3rd grade	LAPP	12
4th grade	LAPP	9
Total Students		52

Northland Pines Middle/High School		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u># OF STUDENTS</u>	
7th gr	82	
8th gr	64	
Sub Total 7th-8th Grades	146	
9th Grade	86	
10th Grade	89	
11th Grade	82	
12th Grade	83	
SubTotal 9th-12th Grades	340	
Total Students 7th-12th Grades		486

NP Montessori Learning Center		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TEACHER</u>	<u># OF STUDENTS</u>
K4	Foster	13
KDG	Foster	11
1st grade	Hoffman	12
2nd grade	Hoffman	12
3rd grade	Rickman	11
4th grade	Rickman	11
Total Students		70

SOAR Middle School		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u># OF STUDENTS</u>
5th Grade	Fronk, Indermuehle, Libby	8
6th Grade	Fronk, Indermuehle, Libby	13
7th Grade	Fronk, Indermuehle, Libby	11
8th Grade	Fronk, Indermuehle, Libby	11
Total Students		43

SOAR High School		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u># OF STUDENTS</u>	
9th Grade	13	
10th Grade	13	
11th Grade	16	
12th Grade	27	
Total Students		69

St. Germain Elementary (5 Sections)		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TEACHER</u>	<u># OF STUDENTS</u>
EC		
K4	Brandner	10
KDG	Foster	14
1st grade	Stephens	10
2nd grade	Olson	21
3rd grade	Deditz	15
4th grade	Deditz	6
Total Students		76

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>ELEM Numbers</u>
EC grade	9
K4 grade	69
K grade	69
1st grade	78
2nd grade	84
3rd grade	88
4th grade	92
5th grade	77
6th grade	96
Total	662

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>MS/HS Numbers</u>
7th Grade	93
8th Grade	75
9th Grade	99
10th Grade	102
11th Grade	98
12th Grade	110
Total	577

<u>#PLP - DISTRICT</u>	
4K	
K	2
1st grade	
2nd grade	2
3rd grade	2
4th grade	2
5th grade	4
6th grade	2
7th grade	5
8th grade	5
9th grade	2
10th grade	3
11th grade	13
12th grade	12
Total PLP	54

Online Registration Forms not processed or included in above counts, waiting for approvals

Grade - School Student Name

Resident School

NPSD Total: 1239