

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Independent School District No. 820  
Sebeka, MN 56477  
Regular Meeting Monday, January 12, 2026

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:25 p.m. following the reorganizational meeting. The following members were in attendance: Jeannie Arthur, Kayla Frame, Rodney Huttunen, Cheri Kangas, Eric Nelson and JoAnn Olson. Absent Nate Erickson. Also present were Superintendent Dave Kerkvliet; Principal Amie Westberg; Business Manager Holly Paulson; staff member Melissa Koch; several 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents and Review Messenger Dave Hanson.

Arthur moved, Frame seconded to approve the agenda with the following additions: 7.5.1 Approve Resignation from Dan Doyle as Sr. High Knowledge Advisor; 7.5.2 Approve Assignment of Becca Pulju as Sr. High Knowledge Advisor; and 7.5.3 Accept Resignation of Facility Manager Jason Pierson. Motion carried unanimously.

Several 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents attended the meeting to see what changes have been made or will be made for the future in class structure and environment. Board member Nelson commented that as for changes being made, the class has been split up for art; recess time has been adjusted to maximize gym time, more para support in the classroom, opportunity to move students in smaller groups in different areas for learning and implemented different discipline standpoints with making individual discipline more of a priority and that they are looking at creative ideas to manage classes and class sizes for the next school year.

Mrs. Koch reviewed Homecoming activities noting Homecoming coronation will be held on Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> with alumni Knowledge Bowl, alumni volleyball and basketball and GBB/BBB on Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup> and school activities the week of January 26<sup>th</sup>.

Business Manager Holly Paulson reported that she has reconciled the final 2025 payroll and submitted for preparation of W-2's; Calendar year Flex Plans and HSA accounts have been set up for employees who want to participate for 2026; summarized Board Considerations for 2025 noting that Board Consideration money is contributed by the board members and Mr. Kerkvliet and is used for flowers for staff/family funerals; cake for Para Appreciation Week; retiree gifts; Education Appreciation Week, and Welcome Back Breakfast; working on required ACA reports for employees; and has set up the Minnesota Paid Leave Plan which is beginning January 1st.

Jon Lillquist's Activities Director report included information on the AAA Selection Committee meeting he attended on January 9th; attended a meeting on January 14th with Bound Scheduling Company to decide as conference if they should switch to Bound or transition to Arbiter Sports and noted that every conference in the state has to make a decision on which scheduling platform to use; and the following Spring sports coaches: Track: Head Coach Tom Smith, Assistants Ed Heltunen and Thor Johnson; Baseball: Head Coach Jeff Lake, Assistant Reggie Kiser, Jr. High Jason Steinke and Tanner Burgau; Softball: Co-Head Coaches Jerome Meyer and Jon Lillquist, Assistant Madison Kurzenberger, Jr. High Ryan Tuorila; and Golf: Head Coach Tim Wurdock, Assistants Becca Pulju and Josh Roiko.

Principal Westberg reported that due to the new READ Act requirements to assess all students in grades 4-12 for reading difficulties and dyslexia that students will begin to be assessed with the Fastbridge aReading test and noting that will determine if students need additional assessment of Capti ReadBasix and then once completed they can determine who needs interventions. She also reported that a decision has been made to go with STRIVE for the Phase 2 professional development; met with Thad, Mrs. Pulju, and Mr. Adams virtually with Canvas to determine if they will be a good fit for our LMS (learning management system) for the online school; Homecoming begins Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> with the coronation and dance and activities the week of January 26<sup>th</sup> and reviewed a tentative schedule for the staff development day on Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Superintendent Kerkvliet reviewed information regarding professional organization updates noting he has submitted the votes for MREA board candidates; will be attending the MSBA annual conference January 14th-16th and MASA has developed their legislative platform for the 2026 legislative session; noted that the Minnesota Department of Commerce sent a closeout letter stating that they have completed financial transfers of \$361,091 to support 60% of the solar project and the U.S Department of Energy sent an email that the "Low Income Adder" application was withdrawn due to insufficient Capacity Limitation in our category and will reapply when the window opens on February 2nd; heat in the 2nd grade classroom is being repaired on January 19th, door #1 locks have been repaired and Jeff Preuss, our Health

and Safety Director did a routine safety inspection and identified seven minor issues that have been addressed; compressor broke down in the walk-in cooler in the kitchen over break and will have to replace the compressor at a cost of approximately \$8,500; met in Menahga with Anni Olson and the Menahga Transportation Director and Superintendent and the Transportation Security Administration on December 22nd regarding training options for school bus safety noting

that the TSA will provide training at no cost; administrative team met with Andrea Rusk from Sourcewell for their monthly meeting; attended a Freshwater legislative day meeting at Sourcewell, a CESO (Center for Effective School Operations) meeting and a S&P Global Ratings Management Call meeting with Holly and Ehlers; applied and received an Astera Foundation Grant in the amount of \$1,010 that will cover the cost of an adaptive swing for the playground; noted that the Sebeka Foundation will launch their official start during homecoming and viewed their video; and awarded Jeannie Arthur a certificate from MSBA for completing Phases I, II III and IV school board training and noted that she will be recognized at the MSBA awards banquet.

Under Discussion Items, Principal Westberg reviewed an update on the online school planning process and noted that Option 3: Late Start (Once a week, every other week) would be what they are looking at with teachers teach 6 in-person classes; teachers teach 1-3 online classes; Every other week (this can be adjusted) on Wednesday, 7-12 start at 10:15; buses run their normal schedule; Prek-6 start school at 8:15 (like normal); students in 7-12 will have a study hall or open gym; all students will need to come at the beginning of the year; 11th and 12th (possibly 10th) graders can “earn” the privilege of coming in at 10:15 a.m.; teachers have scheduled 2 hours, every other week, for online time; and teachers who are not teaching online classes help to supervise the study hall or open gym; noting that this option would be the least disruption for all students; students will earn the right to come in late by having good attendance, grades and behavior and 7-12 would have a study hall or interventions and Superintendent Kerkvliet noted that he attended a meeting with CESO along with Superintendent Kjos from Menahga to form a plan that focuses on each school’s transportation departments and looks for combined ideas for savings and also compares FTE’s of school districts in similar size and noted that Sourcewell will be funding this study and noted that three board members and himself would be attending this conference and reviewed final details for transportation, hotel registration, conference registration, etc.

Huttunen moved, Frame seconded to approve the following consent agenda items: Truth in Taxation and regular meeting minutes of December 8<sup>th</sup>; Treasurer and Investment report for January; monthly bills at \$716,172.29; resignation of Dan Doyle as Senior High Knowledge Advisor; assignment of Becca Pulju as Senior High Knowledge Advisor; resignation of Jason Pierson as Facility Manager; and K-12 Enrollment at 412 students. Motion carried unanimously.

Frame moved, Olson seconded to approve the second reading of the 2025-2026 EMS Seniority List as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Huttunen moved, Arthur seconded to approve the second reading of the 2025-2026 budget revisions presented showing revised revenues of \$7,916,335 and revised expenditures of \$8,8,100,2737 and a revised budget deficit of \$183,938 for FY2026 and noting that this is an early budget revision knowing it will be adjusted when completed again in May. Motion carried unanimously.

Kangas moved, Olson seconded to approve the following donations: 1. \$250 TV and mount from Jake Carr; 2. High-top table with 4 purple chairs valued at \$1750 and 3 TV’s and mounts from Carr’s Tree Service; and 3. \$1,010 from Astera Health for the purchase of an adaptive swing. The following members voted in favor: Arthur, Frame, Huttunen, Kangas, Nelson, Olson; against: none; absent: Erickson; therefore, the resolution was duly adopted.

Olson moved, Nelson seconded to approve Option 3 of the online school plan as presented by Mrs. Westberg in the Discussion Items. Motion carried unanimously.

Kangas moved, Frame seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.