

GRESHAM-BARLOW SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10 JT.
Minutes of Regular Board Work Session

Thursday, June 18, 2026

The Gresham-Barlow School District Board of Directors met in regular session on Thursday, June 18, 2026 in the large conference room of the Public Safety and Schools Building, 1331 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham, OR. A meeting link was provided for virtual meeting attendance.

Board Members present:

Heather Coleman-Cox, Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Erasto Sedda.

Cabinet Members present:

Dr. Tracy Klinger, Superintendent
John Koch, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Sara Deboy, Assistant Superintendent
Athena Vadnais, Director of Communications and Community Engagement
Pete Bejarano, Director of Finance

Opening Items

1. Call to Order (6:00 p.m.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the board chair, Blake Petersen.

2. Roll Call (6:00 p.m.)

Director Riegelmann was absent from the meeting. A quorum of the board was in attendance.

3. Approve Meeting Agenda (6:00 p.m.)

MOTION 99: Move to approve the meeting agenda as presented. This motion was made by Shawn Farrens and seconded by Kris Howatt.

AMENDMENT to MOTION 99: Move to amend tonight's agenda to add a discussion item regarding a strategic stability bridge proposal to preserve part-time music, elementary music instruction for 26-27 that has not been previously presented to this board and is responsive to significant community interest in the opportunity to consider a strategic approach that supports continuity for students while long-term solutions are explored by the policy committee. This amendment was made by Heather Coleman-Cox and seconded by Erasto Sedda.

Chair Petersen asked if there was any discussion about adding this item to the meeting agenda. Some board members noted the amendment felt in-depth and expressed concern that they may not have enough information to make a decision. It feels like it has a lot of implications to it. Other board members noted they were opposed to adding the item because they were made aware of the statewide reconciliation, it was brought to the board, and they added it to instruction. Now this discussion is about where they are going to put it. Some members argued that this is a different discussion, because the district's position is that music isn't sustained with an additional \$1 million. This is a strategic stability bridge to allow them to remain open to what the community has asked for part time music. It also allows for the policy committee to understand how they can possibly save music for 12 months.

Vote on Amendment:

Aye: Heather Coleman-Cox, Erasto Sedda

No: Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh

Aye: 2, No: 4, Absent: 1
Amendment fails

ORIGINAL MOTION 99: Move to approve the meeting agenda as presented. This motion, made by Shawn Farrens and seconded by Kris Howatt, Carried.

Aye: Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Erasto Sedda

No: Heather Coleman-Cox

Aye: 5, No: 1, Absent: 1

Action Items

4. Policy Review: First Reading (6:08 p.m.)

Mr. Koch provided an overview of updated policies being presented to the board for review. The updates to Policy DBEA - Budget Committee reflect a change in law stating that a member of the District Equity Committee (DEC) must also serve on the Budget Committee. The board has already been following this requirement, but they need to update the language in policy so it matches the law. They struck language that refers to preparing a biennium budget because the district prepares annual budgets. The board discussed striking the language on page 2, bullet 5 that says they will reappoint a current member of the committee. With those changes, the board will bring this forward to the consent agenda for approval in July.

Mr. Bejarano shared that Policy DID - Fixed Asset Control has a simple change that changes the dollar amount threshold from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This is in alignment with ODE, the new PBAM guidance, and the GFAO nationwide body that advises on this. This does not change anything operationally. It is how things are reported in financial statements. They will bring this policy forward to the consent agenda in July.

Mr. Koch shared that the policy committee reconsidered Policy FF - Naming of New Facilities. It includes added language in green. They struck language stating that names of living persons will not be considered as well as names of persons living or deceased for less than three years will not be considered. They also changed it from a 5-year to 10-year cycle. Plaques have a 5-year term with one 4-year extension. A plaque is more what the superintendent approves, while the naming of school spaces like a gym or library is what the board approves or not. Mr. Koch noted the challenge with these changes is coming up with a system. There wasn't a process for naming school spaces before, this brings a process to it. Board members noted they might want to add language that a naming can be revoked before that time. Something along the lines that the board has the right to change the name of the facility at any time, and include a qualifier that it would be if there is a negative reason. The board thinks it would be helpful to bring all the currently named facilities and a recommendation on whether to retain the names or not. This way they could come up with a timeline and starting point for the review cycle.

Mr. Koch noted that Policy JOA - Directory Information has some challenges. The policy committee forwarded the policy and it was adopted by the board. There were changes in the law for limiting information that could be gathered. They are no longer allowed to include grade level and most recent school attended. The policy committee didn't feel that made sense, and opted to include it in the policy. It was sent back by OSBA saying it was illegal. This means they can no longer include grades in yearbooks, or tell what school students are from for athletics. Mr. Koch is researching with the technology department to see if there is the potential for parents to opt out for grade level and current school. This would be similar to the media opt out where everyone is opted in unless they check the box to be excluded. They discussed whether this policy needed to come back for further discussion. Mr. Koch confirmed that the current version the board was reviewing meets legal requirements. They would like to include it on the July agenda as a separate item for discussion instead of including it in the consent agenda.

Policy BHD - Board Member Stipends and Reimbursements was being brought back again for further discussion. Superintendent Klinger shared that the bulk of conversation last time was the green language for option 1 and option 2. Board members expressed frustration that legislators don't have to declare a conflict of interest when they approve a budget paying their salaries, but board members do for a stipend. Board members asked if they would be able to donate the stipend money to a school or program. It was clarified that they would have to receive the money and then donate it so they have all the tax paperwork. The board had extensive conversation around the optics of approving this policy during a time when they have just made huge cuts. There might be future years when this is an option, but during lean years it doesn't feel right for them to pay themselves when they are cutting programs and teachers. They would rather the money go to teachers, educational assistants (EA's), and counselors. Other board members pointed out that school board members are the only elected officials that do not receive any compensation. It has become more involved over the years and there is a cost to being on the board from missed work time, transportation, child care, and missing their own children's activities. They feel that they are limiting the pool of candidates to only those that can afford to be on the board. Chair Petersen suggested circling back to this policy following their discussion of the board budget later in the agenda.

After having the Board Budget Overview, the board discussed tabling Policy BHD for now. It is an optional policy so they don't need to make these changes. The board would like the committee to review the policy again in December, and bring it to the board at their January work session to revisit as they head into the budget season.

5. Date, Time, and Place of 2026-27 Board Meetings (6:48 p.m.)

Chair Petersen shared that they have drafted two schedules for board feedback. They have shuffled between Wednesdays and Thursdays for their meetings over the last five years. At the July business meeting there will be a calendar presented to adopt.

The board asked if staff have noticed a difference in preparing materials for the board depending on what day of the week they hold meetings. They noted that to some degree it is more the staff presenting items to the board, and whether they have other commitments for Thursday or Wednesday. Superintendent Klinger shared that overall, what made last year difficult was the change, and then having to communicate with principals about what days to hold activities. In thinking about solutions, she asked if the board would ever consider moving the business meetings up to a 6:00 p.m. start instead of 7:00 p.m. Board members liked this idea, but noted that they sometimes have a work session before the business meeting. There was discussion about holding work sessions at 5:00 p.m. prior to the business meeting, with the flexibility to hold it after the business meeting if needed.

Chair Petersen noted that due to the 4th of July holiday, they had talked about holding their July meeting on July 1, 2026 for people's availability regardless of which day is selected. In terms of which day to move forward, several board members preferred Wednesdays, while others said that they are flexible and can make either day work. Some have found it difficult on Thursdays due to work responsibilities. Board members confirmed they would like to try holding the business meetings at 6:00 p.m. next year.

Superintendent Klinger shared that right now they have budget committee meetings taking place at CAL. She wondered if they want to see about moving those meetings to the council chambers. Board members like this idea to allow it to be more open for public input.

6. Personnel Report: Employee Contracts (7:00 p.m.)

Superintendent Klinger shared that this report is for their two new principals they hired at the elementary schools.

MOTION 100: Move to approve the administrator new hires recommended for hire in 2026-2027 as presented.

This motion, made by Kris Howatt and seconded by Shawn Farrens, Carried.

Aye: Shawn Farrens, Kris Howatt, Blake Petersen, Brenna Puderbaugh, Erasto Sedda

Abstain: Heather Coleman-Cox

Aye: 5, No: 0, Absent: 1, Abstain: 1

Following the motion, there were questions from the board. They asked if these are principals that have been involved with the district. Superintendent Klinger shared that they have not been working in the district, but have experience and strong skills that they bring to the table. Board members asked about seeing interview materials and it was clarified that the interviews are confidential. The board noted that they trust the district in the process, but it goes without saying the principals are the faces of the school, and they hear about it when things are going wrong. They like knowing what their strengths are and asked if the email announcements could include a couple sentences about why they stood out as the candidate of choice. Other board members noted they have to make decisions about things in the blind, and they want more information, especially when it comes to personnel matters.

Discussion Items

7. Board Budget Overview (7:04 p.m.)

Superintendent Klinger provided a handout to the board with a breakdown of the general fund function 2310 for the board of education. She shared that this is the high level, bigger buckets of money that are part of the board function. The first two columns are audited numbers for 2023-24 and 2024-25. In yellow it shows what has been spent year to date. This is on the low side because there are still invoices that will be coming in this time of year. The blue column is what was budgeted for next year. She provided an overview of the line items listed and showed where things like associated payroll costs, Chartwells catering, and travel costs fall in the budget.

Mr. Bejarano share information about audit and legal fees. They get a separate financial audit from their audit firm every year, and there is a 2-year cycle for their actuarial study. This is very difficult to predict because it tries to forecast costs about how long people are going to live and how sick they will get. The math involved is incredibly complex, and causes a substantial and significant cost every other year. It is also a significant reporting requirement. It is required due to a change in law from about 10 years ago. Superintendent Klinger added that their legal fees each year continue to increase. They chose to put more flexibility in that legal fees line item so it can be moved around based on the superintendent and board's discretion. The board asked if an investigation of a staff member in a school comes out of this line item. Mr. Bejarano confirmed it does, and it can come out of other areas as well. There is a determination to see if it is a legal fee that is in totality for the entire district, or if it is more specific to another area. A lot of it is really connected to board work.

Superintendent Klinger noted that other purchased services has increased, and the plan is that a chunk of the strategic plan would come from here. The dues and fees line is mostly related to OSBA. Every other year there is a special election that costs the district more money. Board members asked about the cost for teacher's printing, and it was clarified that this only covers the board. None of the teacher items are in here. When they are talking about travel this would be for board members to get reimbursed. There was discussion about where similar, simplified information can be found in the budget book for other functions. The purpose of this overview was to answer questions around meals for next year, what they want to do about travel, and what they want to do about stipends. There is some discretion to move things around. Some questions the administration had for the board were do they want to approve all local travel for OSBA conferences and do they want to provide meals for next year.

Board members suggested having additional training on the budget, either in small groups or one on one meetings with the superintendent. They would like something beyond Budget 101. Mr. Bejarano shared that this is what they want to

do by changing the monthly financial reports to give the board more salient information. He would love to have more collaboration to create a monthly report so they see the one-pager, and the things that are the most important to the board and community. Superintendent Klinger noted that they have talked about having Mr. Bejarano mock up one from a previous month and showing the updated version so they can determine what pieces make sense and what is still missing for the board. They are going to have big changes coming in how they budget per the accountability laws that are in place.

Chair Petersen shared that some of this discussion stemmed out of the stipend conversation, and questions about how much they spend on training and meals. He asked if there are changes the board wants to entertain or if there is information that would be more helpful. This is the first time they've reviewed the function for the board budget. Board members expressed they would like to see it included on the monthly report so they can track it a bit closer. Mr. Koch noted the board is operating on a bare bones budget. Things like the auditing and legal fees, which are mandatory, can't be adjusted. There is not a lot they can play with. The board noted the only non-fixed cost would be the travel budget, which includes food and attending OSBA conferences. They think it is important that they continue to get educated in their roles. OSBA is one avenue for that, and they also suggested attending the COSA Law Conference in December. Others agreed noting they are a firm proponent of training, and prefer to go in person. There was discussion around the different types of training available in state through OSBA, and through national conferences like NSBA and CUBE.

It was asked if travel is budgeted per board member. Mr. Bejarano clarified that there is no assumption for a per person amount. It reflects previous practices by the board and what they have seen in past years. Superintendent Klinger added that if they did overspend travel it would likely be balanced out somewhere else. As long as the final number is not negative, they can move things around. She is comfortable that meals are something they can continue because the costs were lower than they thought and it builds community with the board. She is also comfortable with the funding to attend OSBA Conferences. When they are starting to build next year's budget, they will need to discuss stipends, strategic planning, and national conferences. The board discussed possibly attending the CUBE Conference instead of the NSBA National Conference, noting that they didn't feel the NSBA conference had as much pertinent information. They are curious how it could weave into strategic planning, adding that they could bring back advocacy models that could work in Oregon. The CUBE Conference in 2027 will be in Seattle September 17th-19th. This year it is in Chicago, and the NSBA Conference the next two years is in Washington D.C. Chair Petersen asked the board secretary to research registration deadlines and total costs and send this information to the board for individual board member awareness.

Recess / Reconvene

Board Recess (7:43 p.m.)

The meeting was recessed at 7:43 p.m. and reconvened at 7:49 p.m.

8. Local Option Tax Levy Introduction (7:49 p.m.)

Mr. Bejarano and Mrs. Vadnais provided an overview of the steps it takes to go out for a local option tax levy. The main questions they focused on included what is a local option levy and how does it work, how is the levy amount determined, what does community engagement look like, what does it cost to put a levy on the ballot, and what are possible next steps. He shared that the presentation slides and data were furnished for free by Piper Jaffrey, but there are some large caveats in terms of specifics for the district.

A levy is an alternative way to raise additional operating funds from taxes. They have a five-year limit, and can be a fixed dollar amount, or more commonly a rate per \$1,000. It is subject to majority voter approval at May or November elections, or other regular elections with 50% turnout. Measure 5 came into effect in 1990. It capped property taxes at \$15 per \$1,000 of Real Market Value (RMV). This is a hard cap on how much tax can be levied and is not under local control like it used to be. Measure 50 in 1997 was created by some motivated anti-tax organizers who wanted to create

an Assessed Value (AV), which is different than market value. It caps the assessed value growth at 3% a year no matter what happens. If home values went up 7% in a year, the difference in AV and RMV grew. Assessed values can only go up 3%. The average difference in market value and assessed value is almost double across the state. Even when market values drop, the assessed value continues to go up.

There are constitutional and statutory cap limits that apply to school district local option levies. Mr. Bejarano reviewed the different cap limits for schools. As soon as they hit any of the caps, that is the maximum tax amount. Equalization grants are provided by the state for low property value districts. Those are automatic, and if a district passes a levy that money comes on board automatically. They are available on a biennial basis, and the state reserves the right to take away equalization grants at any time. In 2025 Gresham-Barlow was eligible for a 45% match. Different property types can have very different gaps. The gap on residential property is often wider than other types. In some cases commercial and industrial property depreciate causing the RMV to decline. AV can never be greater than RMV. He shared a value comparison between a residential and commercial property.

When calculating a local option levy, they need to know the gaps for every single property in the district. This includes residential, commercial, industrial, if it was a house that existed before, and if it is taxable. Some properties may already be at the Measure 5 limit while others may be well below. Figuring out what the actual local option levy will be is difficult work. He provided a theoretical example of how AV impacts taxation. When RMV matches or is close to AV the property owner is going to pay zero. This would be the case for any major industrial or retail spaces, so things like Boeing and Microchip would not be contributing at all. New construction often makes deals with the city, county or state that determine when or how a property would be taxed. Of the 197 school districts in Oregon, only 20 currently have a levy. Compression loss is the delta between the RMV and the threshold caps that might get hit. Portland Public has by far the most loss, losing over 25% to compression, while Sisters has almost no compression loss at all. This is due to the types of properties in their community. The thing that costs money is figuring out the compression, and because the district is in two counties they will have more trouble figuring this out. They would pay a firm to do an in-depth tax levy study because compression is very unpredictable, and determines what type of levy might be generated from the levy.

Mrs. Vadnais shared the communications and engagement that goes into a local option levy. They have to reach out to the community to make sure they understand what a levy is, how it is funded, and when they should vote. They essentially run two campaigns, an information campaign and a vote yes campaign. The information campaign is run and funded by the district to help the community understand. It includes public opinion polls, community engagement at civic clubs, holding forums, and communications such as one-pagers, videos, and FAQs. There will also be a website of information and a calculator to figure out how much someone would be paying. Alongside that is the vote yes campaign, which is run and funded by the Political Action Committee (PAC). It is run by volunteers and includes fundraising, vote yes communications, mailers, endorsements, outreach, and door knocking. One campaign is on the district side, and the other is on the community side. Superintendent Klinger clarified further by sharing that the district can only provide information, they cannot campaign for a yes vote. They need both campaigns for a levy to pass. There was conversation about how they would get a person to run the PAC, with board members noting it would need to be a professional or someone who has done it before.

Mrs. Vadnais shared a rough draft timeline for placing a levy on a November election. Typically, in January or February they would be engaging staff/parents/community, conducting a survey, and finalizing the levy proposal. Then in the spring they would start creating the communications for the district and individual schools. In May they would work with principals to develop school information campaigns for the fall. August to November they execute an informational campaign for communications and engagement, then the election is held in November. Usually, the campaigns start after Labor Day. She shared research from other districts noting that one district spent two years running their information campaign. During the first year they had to make sure the community understood how schools are funded.

This same thing happened when Gresham-Barlow did their school bond. They talked to people who had never voted on a bond or didn't know what it was. Extenuating circumstances can impact the election outcome. Things like the cost of gas, other finance measures on the ballot, and politicians or hot topics can affect the yes votes. They will want to determine which election date provides the most favorable conditions. Mr. Bejarano noted that when voting on taxes, timing is everything. During the recent May 2026 election in Oregon, existing levies passed while new levies were rejected. There tends to be a higher voter turnout during presidential election years, particularly for youth voters. They need to have more than 50% voter turnout due to Measure 50's "double majority" clause.

Mr. Bejarano shared some other questions for them to consider with a levy. This includes asking does the proposal have a chance of winning as measured by public opinion research; is there internal unity among the board administration, staff, families and key segments of the community; is the advocacy committee willing to develop and commit to a research-based campaign; and does the advocacy committee have the resources to execute a research-based campaign. Mr. Bejarano reviewed a rough estimate of levy costs noting that it can range from \$165,000 to \$310,000 for a campaign like this because multiple consultants are needed. The community cost for the PAC is anywhere from \$50,000 to \$1 million. The district cannot help with the PAC costs, it has to be from the community.

Mr. Bejarano reviewed options for next steps. The board would need to determine if they want to pursue more research and information regarding a Local Option Levy. They would need to consider how the levy fits with other long-term priorities or projects in the works such as strategic planning that are big projects that take a significant amount of time and money. If the board wants to continue with research, Piper-Sandler can come out for free and go into more detail and answer questions without the compression. If the board would like to hire them or another company to find that compression amount, that will cost approximately \$10,000. Mrs. Vadnais shared that Wright Public Affairs did their bond and Mt. Hood Community College's bond, and they have information about what is needed to get a bond to pass.

Following the presentation, there was extensive conversation by the board. It was noted that a big determining factor on whether it passes or not is the engagement from the board as individuals. They noted that this would have to be an investment, and passing something in this community is very difficult. When they passed the capital bond it had an end point for when they were finished with the work. With a levy it is on a 5-year cycle so they would have to be campaigning every five years. Mr. Koch noted that when they passed the bond, only 23% of households in the district had children in schools, and that is likely a lower percentage now. It is harder to convince people who don't have kids to invest in schools, or to tell an older community on fixed incomes to give more each month. Superintendent Klinger added with bonds they plan for something tangible like a new building. With a levy they can identify what positions they plan to hire, but depending on funding they may not be able to follow through on what they say. Board members noted that Portland Public has a levy but still had to make large cuts this year. A levy doesn't fix the ultimate problem that schools are vastly underfunded.

Board members asked if staff are aware of any east county districts having these conversations. Superintendent Klinger has not heard about levies from other districts. Board members noted that for most communities a bond is attractive because it helps maintain facilities that are shared by the community. Selling the operational expense for a levy is a tougher sell. They wondered if a better use of funds would be joint advocacy from east county where they leverage the community to advocate with the legislature. All of east county is having struggles and is under-resourced compared to other parts of the county. There is more community voice to come together and try to change things for east county. Advocating for a change in state funding would also be an option. Mr. Bejarano shared that there is a Bonds, Ballots, and Buildings Conference held in March each year. The next conference is March 12, 2027 in Salem. Mr. Koch noted that they are not prepared enough for this November, and they wouldn't get the voter turnout they need in May. It was suggested that they look at the next November presidential election.

Chair Petersen pointed the board back to the suggested timeline and asked how they should move this conversation forward. They can have free presentations from Piper-Sandler and Wright Public Affairs to get more information. Board members noted that they heard from the community that they would like the board to at least consider it. Mr. Bejarano noted that Piper-Sandler could be ready by August. Superintendent Klinger confirmed that waiting until September means they are deciding they won't have this ready for the November 2026 election. The board agreed they couldn't have it ready by this November. Many strategic plans include a question in the survey asking if they would vote yes for a levy. They could include this, noting that if parents of students don't want a levy, it is unlikely voters without students would vote for it. Board members said it sounds like November 2028 would have the high voter turnout because it is a presidential election. That would at least give them a target.

9. Strategic Plan Proposals (8:46 p.m.)

Superintendent Klinger shared that they started talking about strategic planning at their February retreat. She will provide the board with information on where they are at in this process, and give them the opportunity to provide input. A Strategic Plan is a multi-year road map, usually about five years, that defines their goals and strategic thinking about where the district is headed in the next five years. A standard plan usually consists of four key pillars: Mission and Vision, Core Values, Strategic Goals, and Performance Indicators. The why around this is alignment and focus, financial stewardship, accountability to the community, and continuity through leadership changes. There is communication that happens on how they are meeting their milestones, and it can provide continuity by ensuring long-term projects don't fall by the wayside if there are leadership changes. In February they talked about what is already in place such as their mission and vision, portrait of a graduate, board conditions, core values, and instruction.

They moved forward with an RFQ to hire a facilitator had six proposals submitted. Superintendent Klinger shared that the cost is higher than anticipated. Considerations include that it provides a comprehensive update, it is a clear plan for five years, and knowing that it is resource intense in terms of time and funds. Superintendent Klinger has been reviewing submissions, checking references, and have follow up conversations with superintendents in other districts. She wants to gather input from the board on their goals and priorities for what they want to get out of this process. She also had Cabinet do this activity and they can share their thoughts. Her goal is that they would have an update and be trying to move forward in July, with sessions with the board this fall. She would like some of this work reflected in the integrated grant application that has to be submitted in April 2027. The strategic plan should have cohesion, clarity, and alignment with their school improvement plans.

Superintendent Klinger opened the conversation for input and feedback from the board. Board members expressed concern and frustration over the proposed costs of the strategic plan. They wondered if hiring a teacher for a classroom would be a better way to spend these funds. Board members asked how long has it been since they did the last strategic plan, and it was shared that the last one was completed in 2018. There are some repercussions to not having one. Superintendent Klinger shared that they will still have their strategic goals, and there are still state requirements they have to meet anyway. They could continue to do that work. Strategic planning brings into place other projects like the long-range facilities plan and is more about how to put all of the loose ends together. Board members noted when they talked about this in February and made a decision they allocated it in the budget. They aren't taking more from a teacher. Some board members argued that this was all done before they understood they had a \$10 million deficit. Superintendent Klinger clarified that they talked about the deficit in November, but the impact of those cuts is more concrete now. They also thought the proposals would be \$50,000-\$100,000 instead of \$100,000-\$200,000.

Board members noted it felt easier to justify when the cost seemed lower. They asked if now is the right time to do a strategic plan. Mr. Koch shared that this is a structured way to get community input on what direction they want the district to go and what they need them to do. When they talk about community engagement and connecting pieces, this is also a way to save money. Superintendent Klinger noted that one of the things presented to her as a superintendent

candidate was about outcomes. The previous superintendent didn't feel like it was appropriate to do strategic planning coming out of COVID knowing he wasn't going to be here long term. If the board decides this isn't the right time, they can keep doing what they have been doing.

The board reviewed the three different tiers of engagement they had looked at in February. At the lowest level they would handle the strategic plan internally with limited engagement, the middle was utilizing a consultant to update current resources in place, and the highest level was a full comprehensive update. They noted that the endorsement of the strategic plan comes with a lot of expectation, because it would be crushing if they spent the money and it wasn't what they had in mind. Superintendent Klinger shared that they are behind schedule now because of the budget. They had hoped to launch it and have engagement with district staff in the summer, and then engage the board in August. It is fine if that gets pushed out. Board members shared that they haven't had a strategic plan since before COVID. They are hearing about a lot of topics in the community around AI reforming education, systemic funding gaps, and how much technology is in the classroom. Without a strategic plan, they don't have a clear path to have those conversations in a practical way. However, they were disappointed with the previous plan, and spending the money without getting the results would be worse than not going down this road.

There was additional conversation about the costs, and what happens if they spend money on a plan they can't follow due to the budgeting climate. Superintendent Klinger noted that strategic plans are often very aspirational, and they have to be paired with a budget plan. Part of a strategic plan could be how they fit in a levy. The district team has plenty of vision and ideas, but they won't be as cohesive, intentional, pulled together, and accessible to the community in terms of what we are trying to achieve without a plan. Part of hiring someone is to allow the team to engage in the process as participants, and bring those ideas together, rather than being the ones trying to facilitate and do the work. Some board members expressed that they don't feel like the team is reflecting what the community wants, and they need to get more input from the community. Mr. Koch clarified that is what a strategic plan does. It gathers input in a structured way. When they have fluctuations in revenue, then they have a plan to adjust from. Other board members added that their community is not just students and staff, it is the people who want to support them. The previous plan didn't focus on deliverables, it had a broad picture. Having an outside person can focus the work.

Board members expressed feeling torn between the cost and knowing that the strategic plan is something they need. They would be disappointed to spend and not get value for what they've spent. During the budget process they heard from different groups like music and school counselors, but there were other groups like immigrant and refugee communities that they didn't hear from, and they won't hear from those groups without going through this process. Several board members shared they were in favor of moving forward with it with trepidation around the cost. If they do move forward, they would hope the cost is closer to the \$100,000 end rather than \$200,000. One board member asked if hearing from the small number of people and communities they didn't hear from was really going to make a difference in what they think, and if they would change any type of decision based on what an immigrant or special education community says. Other board members confirmed it would because they listen to all people. They heard from a very vocal group during budgeting, and didn't hear from people about class size which was a big issue during the bond.

A board member claimed that they adopt this wording of "the community" and use it to manipulate a conversation or topic important to them, stating they are manipulating the conversation based on the way they feel and if they want to be fair they should use data they already have and make a decision based on that. Other board members pushed back on this assertion noting that they have many friends who have been affected and they made the difficult choice anyway. Superintendent Klinger acknowledged that it doesn't sound like they are ready to move forward. They have an opportunity to discuss what they want out of this process. She noted that if there are things they were disappointed in from the last process she would want to hear that. Board members asked for more information about what the previous plan was and what was not met with that plan. Other board members expressed that with the last plan it felt like they

produced the portrait of a graduate. It felt sort of aspirational, and instead of picking a clear path it felt scattered. Superintendent Klinger shared that she was in a building at that time and was involved in some of the conversations. Part of what happened with that plan was that it didn't get implemented, and then they shutdown for COVID. The person who also had the greatest vision and engagement with the plan left. The board asked about seeing the previous plan so they can compare it with what they have now. Superintendent Klinger shared it was more of a visual. It had the key things listed. What they didn't ever do was take those key concepts and make it into an actual plan to move students in that direction. A strategic plan tends to look more on what is listed in the instruction box. While they don't have a comprehensive plan, they've tried to connect those instructional things to the board conditions, mission and vision, and technology plan.

Chair Petersen specified that the decision hasn't been made on moving forward with the strategic plan. He asked the board how they would like to deliberate that, what role they want the superintendent to have in that discussion, and what information would be useful to have. He also asked if they want to hear from the superintendent what she wants to get out of the strategic plan and if they want to discuss what they want from the plan. Board members shared that they felt like Superintendent Klinger did that for them in February and they asked a lot of questions then. They think the discussion now is more about the sticker shock of the cost. Board members noted it seems like they all agree they should move forward with a strategic plan, it is more the financial aspect. They wondered if it is more option 2 they should go with instead of option 1 so it is less expensive. Other board members shared they would like to hear the superintendent's pitch and see the current plan for comparison. They don't think they should make a decision tonight. Superintendent Klinger shared that the document from February provides a lot of links with examples of strategic plans from other districts. Their last plan is a 47-page document with the portrait of a graduate as a visual. Now plans are much more user friendly for the community to view. Board members expressed that it could be detrimental if they wait too long, noting that the future matters and there is power in having everyone going the same direction toward the same common goal.

The board would like the information from February redistributed, and they would also like the input and thoughts from cabinet shared. Chair Petersen asked that the board spend time in their own reflection of what they would want the strategic plan to be. In the February meeting when they were briefed on this, in each of those tiers there were examples of what the deliverables might look like. He asked them to do some individual reflection on what they would want to see and how they are feeling about it. This delays it to the fall and they will need to figure out how to have that conversation again. It was noted that this might be a core part of their strategic retreat. Board members felt like this was a starting point. Superintendent Klinger noted she could also share the proposal she is leaning towards.

10. Future Board Agenda Topics (9:40 p.m.)

Chair Petersen shared that board leadership will work on incorporating topic requests on future board agendas.

Closing Items

11. Announcements (9:41 p.m.)

Chair Petersen reviewed announcements included in the board agenda packet. A meeting link for virtual meeting attendance will be provided for upcoming meetings. He shared that tomorrow is Juneteenth, and Director Coleman-Cox has been incredibly involved in the Portland community in elevating awareness of the holiday. He asked her to share some of the background and history of Juneteenth with the board.

Director Coleman-Cox shared that Juneteenth is a play on two words, June and nineteen. As a strategy to win the civil war, President Lincoln put out an executive order for the Emancipation Proclamation to end slavery in confederate states. Lots of people think it freed the slaves, but that came with the 13th Amendment. When the executive order was meant to take place, some slaves were being freed, but in Galveston, Texas 2 million people were still enslaved. On June

19, 1865 Union Major General Gordon Granger issued General Order No. 3 to let slaves in the area know they were free, and had been freed for two and a half years. There are all types of speculation about why over two years passed. One thought is they wanted to keep their free labor. When Major General Granger arrived there it took him months to go from plantation to plantation sharing that they were free. When they found out they were free, a lot of slaves decided to become share croppers and stay to work the land. They were still enslaved because they had to pay out this debt, and only received about 10 cents on the dollar. With the Emancipation Proclamation there were five states allowed to keep slaves because they agreed to remain with the Union and not join the Confederate States. These were Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and West Virginia. Then the 13th amendment was ratified December 6, 1865, and that is truly the date when all slaves were freed.

July 1, 2026: Regular Board Business Meeting - 6 p.m.
Council Chambers
Public Safety and Schools Building

12. Adjournment (9:46 p.m.)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Submitted by: _____

Sarah Avery
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and
Board of Directors

Note: These minutes were approved by the board on _____:sa