

School Board Meeting
January 8, 2026 5:30 PM
HJSHS Library

- I. Call to Order
- II. Swearing In - Oath of Office
- III. Roll Call
- IV. Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Legislative Representative
- V. Consent Agenda
 - A. November 2025 Bills
 - B. November 2025 Financial Report
 - C. November 6, 2025 Regular Board Meeting
 - D. December 2025 Bills
 - E. December 2025 Financial Report
- VI. Agenda Approval
- VII. Regular Agenda
 - A. 2026 Board Meeting Dates
 - B. Board Policy Update - 1st Reading
 - 1. 5.305 Family and Medical Leave
 - C. Superintendent's Report
 - 1. Personnel Report
 - 2. Threat Assessment Report
- VIII. Public Comment

"Individuals speaking to the Board shall address remarks to the chairman and may direct questions to individual board members or staff members only upon approval of the chairman. Each person speaking shall state his/her name, address (must be a resident of Humboldt, TN), and subject of presentation. Remarks will be limited to five (5) minutes unless time is extended by the Board." **The School Board cannot take action on input/request(s), but the School Board may place an item on the agenda of a subsequent meeting for action by notifying School Board Chair, Ms. Valeria Smith-Wedley at vswedley@icloud.com.**

- IX. Adjournment

School Board Meeting

November 6, 2025 5:30 PM
HJSHS Library

Attendance Taken at 5:30 PM.

Mr. Tommy Colvin: Present
Rev. Mark Hodge: Present
Mr. Terry Johnson: Present
Mr. Leon McNeal: Present
Ms. Valeria Wedley: Absent

Also present: Dr. Janice Epperson, Superintendent

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Consent Agenda

Motion passed: Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented passed with a motion by Rev. Mark Hodge and a second by Mr. Leon McNeal.

Mr. Tommy Colvin: Yea
Rev. Mark Hodge: Yea
Mr. Terry Johnson: Yea
Mr. Leon McNeal: Yea
Ms. Valeria Wedley: Absent
Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

A. October 2025 Bills

B. October 2025 Financial Report

C. October 16, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

IV. Agenda Approval

Motion passed: Motion to approve the agenda passed with a motion by Mr. Tommy Colvin and a second by Mr. Leon McNeal.

Mr. Tommy Colvin: Yea
Rev. Mark Hodge: Yea
Mr. Terry Johnson: Yea
Mr. Leon McNeal: Yea
Ms. Valeria Wedley: Absent
Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

V. Regular Agenda

A. School Compliance

Motion passed: Motion to approve the 2025 Compliance Report passed with a motion by Rev. Mark Hodge and a second by Mr. Leon McNeal.

Mr. Tommy Colvin: Yea
Rev. Mark Hodge: Yea

Mr. Terry Johnson: Yea
Mr. Leon McNeal: Yea
Ms. Valeria Wedley: Absent
Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

B. TISA Accountability (template)

Motion passed: Motion to approve passed with a motion by Rev. Mark Hodge and a second by Mr. Leon McNeal.

Mr. Tommy Colvin: Yea
Rev. Mark Hodge: Yea
Mr. Terry Johnson: Yea
Mr. Leon McNeal: Yea
Ms. Valeria Wedley: Absent
Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

C. December Board Meeting

Motion passed: Motion to approve cancelling the December Board Meeting passed with a motion by Rev. Mark Hodge and a second by Mr. Leon McNeal.

Mr. Tommy Colvin: Yea
Rev. Mark Hodge: Yea
Mr. Terry Johnson: Yea
Mr. Leon McNeal: Yea
Ms. Valeria Wedley: Absent
Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

D. Superintendent's Report

- Mission and Vision Statement
- October Attendance & Discipline Data
- Veteran's Day Program
- Trunk or Treat sponsored by Beta Club
- L.E.A.D.S. grant recipients
- National Principal's Month
- Resume Building Workshop
- Wax Museum at East for Hispanic Heritage Month
- Stigall Fall Fest
- HJSHS Blood Drive
- HJSHS Football Homecoming Court
- 2024-25 Educator Evaluation Composite & Overall Effectiveness Ratings
- Student PD Day on November 20th at the Medical Center
- PD Day for Staff on November 21st

1. Threat Assessment Report

VIII. Public Comment

"Individuals speaking to the Board shall address remarks to the chairman and may direct questions to individual board members or staff members only upon approval of the chairman. Each person speaking shall state his/her name, address (must be a resident of Humboldt, TN), and subject of presentation. Remarks will be limited to five (5) minutes unless time is extended by the Board." The School Board cannot take action on input/request(s), but the School Board may place an item on the agenda of a subsequent meeting for action by notifying School Board Chair, Ms. Valeria Smith-Wedley at vswedley@icloud.com.

IX. Adjournment

Motion passed: Motion to adjourn passed with a motion by Mr. Leon McNeal and a second by Rev. Mark Hodge.

Mr. Tommy Colvin: Yea
Rev. Mark Hodge: Yea
Mr. Terry Johnson: Yea
Mr. Leon McNeal: Yea
Ms. Valeria Wedley: Absent
Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

Valeria Smith-Wedley, Chairman

Date

Dr. Janice Epperson, Superintendent

Date

HUMBOLDT CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
2026 School Board Meeting Dates
5:30 P.M.

Thursday	January 8, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	February 12, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	March 12, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	April 9, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	May 14, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	June 11, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	July 9, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	August 6, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	September 10, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	October 15, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	November 12, 2026	HJSHS Library
Thursday	December 10, 2026 (if needed)	HJSHS Library

Humboldt City Board of Education			
Monitoring: Review: Annually, in January	Descriptor Term: Family and Medical Leave	Descriptor Code: 5.305	Issued Date: Click here to enter a date.
		Rescinds:	Issued:

1 **ELIGIBILITY**

2 Anyone who has been employed for at least twelve (12) months by the school district and anyone who
 3 has at least 1,250 hours of service (hours used for leave, even FMLA leave, shall not be credited for
 4 service for purposes of FMLA eligibility¹) during the previous twelve (12) month period shall be
 5 eligible to use FMLA leave.²

6 **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

7 An eligible employee shall be granted, upon request, up to twelve (12) weeks unpaid leave during a
 8 fixed calendar year for the following reasons:

- 9 1. The birth of a child;
- 10 11 2. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- 12 13 3. A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the
 14 essential functions of his/her job position;
- 15 16 4. The care of a spouse, child, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition; and
- 17 18 5. Any qualifying circumstances arising out of the fact that a spouse, child, or parent of the
 19 employee is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to
 20 covered active duty in the Armed Forces.

21 An employee may substitute accrued paid leave for unpaid time. Use of accrued paid leave shall run
 22 concurrently with and be counted toward the employee's total period of FMLA leave.

23 **MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE**

- 24 1. *Relationship between FMLA leave and Tennessee Maternity Leave Act* – FMLA leave shall run
 25 concurrently with leave provided under the Tennessee Maternity Act, which affords eligible
 26 employees leave for a period not to exceed four (4) months for the adoption, pregnancy,
 27 childbirth, and nursing of a newborn child.³
- 28 29 2. *Teachers' Leave* – In accordance with state law, any teacher who goes on maternity or paternity
 30 leave shall be allowed to use all or a portion of the teacher's accumulated sick or annual leave
 31 for maternity leave purposes. In order to be eligible to use sick leave, written request of the

1 teacher accompanied by a statement from the teacher's physician verifying pregnancy shall be
2 submitted. Upon verification by a written statement from an adoption agency or other entity
3 handling an adoption, a teacher may also be allowed to use accumulated leave for adoption of a
4 child. If both adoptive parents are teachers employed by the district, however, only one (1)
5 parent is entitled to use such leave.⁴
6

- 7 3. Spouses who are both eligible employees of the school district are limited to a combined total
8 of twelve (12) workweeks of FMLA leave in a single twelve (12) month period if the leave is
9 taken for the birth and care of a newborn child, for the placement of a child for adoption or
10 foster care, or to care for a parent who has a serious health condition. Under certain
11 circumstances, spouses who share leave for the birth or adoption of a child may be eligible for
12 limited amounts of additional leave for other qualifying FMLA reasons.⁵
13

- 14 4. *Paid Parental Leave* – Under state law, an additional six (6) work weeks of paid leave is
15 available to eligible employees after a birth, stillbirth, or adoption of a newly placed minor
16 child.⁶ An eligible employee taking leave under this provision shall not be required to utilize
17 any other type of accrued leave during this period. Eligible employees include teachers,
18 principals, supervisors, or other individuals required by law to hold a valid license of
19 qualification for employment and who meet the following requirements:
20

- 21 a. Possess a valid license or an emergency credential issued by the Department of
22 Education per TCA 49-5-106, required for the position the employee holds;
23
24 b. Have been employed with the district full time for at least twelve (12) consecutive
25 months in a position for which the employee is required by law to hold the license or an
26 emergency credential referenced above at the time of the qualifying event; and
27
28 c. Have held a valid license or an emergency credential issued by the Department of
29 Education per TCA 49-5-106 for the entire twelve consecutive months of fulltime
30 employment.
31

32 Employees shall provide notice to the school district thirty (30) days prior to the intended use
33 of the leave. If the employee learns about the need for leave less than thirty (30) days in
34 advance, the employee shall give notice as soon as reasonably possible in order to be eligible
35 for the paid leave. This paid leave shall be either: (1) taken consecutively, except in extenuating
36 circumstances, as determined by the Director of Schools; or (2) taken nonconsecutively, but in
37 increments of no less than one (1) week. The paid leave shall be used within twelve (12)
38 months of the qualifying event and shall run concurrently with FMLA leave.⁷

39 **LEAVE FOR A SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION⁸**

40 Eligible employees, upon request, shall be granted up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave when
41 he/she is unable to work because of a serious health condition or to care for an immediate family
42 member with a serious health condition. Employees shall contact Human Resources to determine if the
43 reason for leave qualifies as FMLA leave. If the leave is foreseeable, the employee shall give thirty

1 (30) days' notice. If the leave is not foreseeable, the employee shall notify Human Resources as soon
2 as practicable, generally, either the same or next business day.

3 **LEAVE FOR MILITARY FAMILY MEMBERS**

4 1. *Qualifying Exigency Leave*⁹ - Eligible employees are entitled to up to twelve (12) workweeks
5 of leave because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, son,
6 daughter, or parent of the employee, as defined under the FMLA, is on active duty, or has been
7 notified of an impending call to active duty, or has been notified of an impending call to active
8 duty status in the Armed Forces. Qualifying exigencies may include:

- 9
- 10 a. Issues arising from the service member's short notice deployment;
 - 11 b. Military events and related activities (e.g., official ceremonies, support programs);
 - 12 c. Making or updating financial and legal arrangements;
 - 13 d. Attending counseling;
 - 14 e. Taking up to fifteen (15) days leave to spend time with a covered service member who
15 is on short-term rest and recuperation leave during deployment; or
 - 16 f. Attending post-deployment activities.
- 17

18 2. *Military Caregiver Leave*¹⁰ - An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or
19 next of kin of a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness is
20 entitled to up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave in a single twelve (12) month period. A
21 covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the
22 National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is
23 otherwise in out-patient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list for a
24 serious injury or illness.

25
26 A covered veteran is an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during
27 the period of five (5) years preceding the date of the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy
28 that has a serious injury or illness who is currently receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or
29 therapy.

30
31 The single twelve (12) month period for military caregiver leave begins on the first day the
32 employee takes leave for this reason and ends twelve (12) months later. An eligible employee is
33 limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave to provide care for a covered
34 service member. The maximum of twenty-six (26) workweeks may include no more than
35 twelve (12) workweeks of leave that is taken for the birth and care of a newborn child, for the
36 placement of a child for adoption or foster care, for care of a parent who has a serious health
37 condition, or for the employee's own serious health condition.

38 **INTERMITTENT LEAVE**¹¹

39 Eligible employees may take FMLA leave intermittently when medically necessary to care for a
40 seriously ill family member, because of the employee's own serious health condition, or for the care for
41 a newborn, a newly adopted child, or a newly placed foster care child. When an employee requests
42 foreseeable leave for planned medical treatment and the employee would be on leave for greater than
43 twenty percent (20%) of the total number of working days in the period during which the leave would

1 extend, the school district may require that such employee elect either to take the leave for periods of a
2 particular duration, not to exceed the duration of the planned medical treatment, or to transfer
3 temporarily to an available alternative position offered by the school district for which the employee is
4 qualified and that has equivalent pay and benefits and better accommodates recurring periods of leave.

5 **RESTRICTIONS**

6 1. Notice Requirements

- 7
- 8 a. *Employee Notice*¹²- For foreseeable leave, the employee shall provide the Director of
9 Schools with at least thirty (30) days written notice before the beginning of the
10 anticipated leave.
- 11
- 12 b. *District Notice* - Once it has been established that the leave requested qualifies for
13 FMLA, the Director of Schools/designee shall notify the employee within three (3)
14 business days (absent extenuating circumstances) that any leave taken pursuant to state
15 leave statutes (paid vacation leave, personal leave, sick leave, or workers'
16 compensation) shall run concurrently with FMLA leave.¹³ The notice may be given
17 orally or in writing. If the notice is oral, it shall be confirmed in writing, no later than
18 the following pay day.¹⁴

19 2. Certification Requirement¹⁵

- 20
- 21
- 22 a. The Director of Schools may require that a request for leave be supported by
23 certification issued by a health care provider with the following information:
- 24
- 25 i. The date on which the serious health condition commenced;
- 26 ii. The probable duration of the condition;
- 27 iii. The appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider
28 regarding the condition; and
- 29 iv. A statement that the eligible employee is needed to care for the son, daughter,
30 spouse, or parent and an estimate of the amount of time that such employee is
31 needed.
- 32
- 33 b. If there is any reason to doubt the validity of the certification provided, the Director of
34 Schools may require, at the expense of the school district, an opinion of a second health
35 care provider.

36 3. Period Near the End of an Academic Term (Professional Employees)¹⁶

- 37
- 38
- 39 a. If leave is taken more than five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Director of
40 Schools may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if
41 the leave is at least three (3) weeks of duration and the return of employment would
42 occur during the three (3) week period before the end of the term.
- 43
- 44 b. If the leave is taken five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Director of Schools
45 may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave

1 is greater than two (2) weeks duration and the return to employment would occur during
 2 the two (2) week period before the end of the term.

3 **REQUIREMENTS OF THE BOARD**¹⁷

- 4 1. The employee shall be restored to the same position of employment or an equivalent position
 5 with no loss of benefits, pay, or other terms of employment.
- 6 2. The employee shall be kept under any group health plan for the duration of the leave.
- 7 3. The Board may recover the premium paid under the following conditions:
 8
- 9 a. The employee fails to return from leave after the period of leave has expired; and
 - 10 b. The employee fails to return to work for a reason other than the continuation,
 11 recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or other circumstances beyond the
 12 control of the employee.
 13

Legal References

1. [Hinson v. Tecumseh Products Co., 2000 U.S. App. LEXIS 26778, at *1—10 \(6th Cir. Oct. 17, 2000\)](#)
2. [29 USCA § 2601, 2611—2619](#)
3. [TCA 49-5-702; TCA 4-21-408](#)
4. [TCA 49-5-710\(a\)\(2\); TCA 8-50-802\(a\)\(4\)](#)
5. [29 CFR § 825.120\(a\)\(3\)](#)
6. [Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 163](#)
7. [TCA 8-50-814; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 235](#)
8. [29 CFR § 825.113](#)
9. [29 CFR § 825.126](#)
10. [29 CFR § 825.124; 29 CFR § 825.127](#)
11. [29 CFR § 825.202](#)
12. [29 CFR § 825.302-825.304](#)
13. [29 CFR § 825.207](#)
14. [OP Tenn. Atty Gen 94-006 \(Jan 13, 1994\); Plant v. Morton International, Inc., 212 F. 3d 929, 932 \(6th Cir. 2000\)](#)
15. [29 CFR § 825.305-825.313](#)
16. [29 CFR § 825.602](#)
17. [29 USCA § 2614](#)

Cross References

- Sick Leave 5.302
 Long-Term Leaves of Absence 5.304

New Hires

James Armour – HJHS School & Career Counselor
Ethel Brown – Stigall Social Worker
Kierra Thomas – HJSH Special Ed. Asst.
Randall Bennett – HJSH 8th Math
Kaitlyn Starks – East 3rd Grade
Tonya Twyman – East RTI

Resignations

Demitria Leach – East 3rd Grade
Brian Smith – HJSH 8th Math
Desiree Wade – Stigall Social Worker
Zundra Beard – HJSH Special Ed. Asst.
Teona Doaks – HJSH Special Ed. Asst.

Retirements

Michelle Lewis – Academic Instruction Supervisor
Sheri Moon – East RTI