

Columbia Heights Public Schools
Minutes of the
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
February 11, 2025

Chair Granlund called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Clerk Pettway called roll.

Members present: Granlund, Houle, Palmer, Pettway, Smith. Rude, Anwar and Superintendent Stenvik

Members absent: Medearis

Motion by Palmer, seconded by Houle, to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor. Motion Carried

Announcements

- Feb 17 No School, District Center Closed
- Feb 18 Flex Learning Day
- Feb 18, 5:30 p.m. School Board Work Session, Community Room
- Feb 25, 6:00 p.m. Regular School Board Meeting, Community Room
- Feb 27, 5:00 p.m. Board Retreat, Community Room

COMMUNICATION TO THE BOARD – Laurel Deneen, new Columbia Heights City Council Member, Columbia Heights School District liaison. Introduced herself.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Houle, seconded by Pettway, to approve the action required to implement the items on the consent agenda. **Personal Report: Support – Conditional\Laura Mustazza:** AP Proctor, DW/CHHS, new hire, effective 2024-2025 school year (the conditional offer of employment is subject to successful completion of a criminal background check). **Support Amaris Siner:** EA, CA, new hire, effective 1/29/25. **Laurie Nelson:** Change to: LDM/Mini Adventures Assistant, NP/EC, current employee, effective 2/10/25. **Coach/Advisor/Additional Assignment Tessa Williams:** Head Girls Lacrosse Coach, CHHS, current employee, effective 2024-2025 school year. **Blair Eckstrom:** Head Boys Swimming Coach/Diving Coach, CHHS, rehire, effective 2024-2025 school year. **Manny Alvarez:** Assistant Wrestling Coach, CHHS, rehire, effective 2024-2025 school year (the conditional offer of employment is subject to successful completion of a criminal background check). **Leaves Samantha Willems-Strobush:** Elem Teacher, HL, requests Statutory Extended Leave of Absence for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years. **Kristen Sinicariello:** Teacher, CHHS, requests FMLA from 3/3/25 for up to 12 weeks. **Barb Terrell:** Custodian, CHHS, requests FMLA (intermittent) from 1/15/25 for up to 6 weeks. **Resignations/Terminations Teresa Small:** Teacher, HL, effective 6/12/25. Reason: Retirement. **Jesse Baker:** Custodian, HL, effective 1/27/25. Reason: Termination. **Chris Mason:** Teacher, CHHS, effective 6/12/25. Reason: Retirement. **Kevin Ventura Solano:** EL EA, DW, effective 2/3/25. Reason: Termination. **School Board Minutes** January 28 Work Session and January 28 Regular Meeting. **The Treasury Report** November 2024 and December 2024. All in Favor. The motion carried.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS RESOLUTION

Member Palmer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS RESOLUTION:

Minnesota Statute 123B.02 permits school boards to “...receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose and apply the same to the purpose designated. On that behalf, the board may act as trustee of any trust created for the benefit of the district and for the benefit of pupils thereof.” Therefore, the School Board of Columbia Heights Public Schools, Independent School District No. 13, resolves to accept with appreciation the \$6,430 monetary contributions detailed in the background.

DETAILED BACKGROUND:

Monetary

- Wells Fargo donated \$150 to Valley View for student use.
- James R. and Patricia Hemak Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation donated \$5,780 to Columbia Heights Public Schools for Support of Junior Achievement activity.
- Maureen Reilly donated \$500 to Valley View Elementary

In-Kind

- Falldin American Legion Post 555 donated Honeybear Apples valued at \$100 to Highland Elementary.
- Knights of Columbus Council #9905 donated 16 new winter coats, hats, mittens, and gloves valued at \$400.00 to Highland Elementary.
- Donors Choose donated art supplies valued at \$125 to Mrs. Lunders's classroom at Highland.
- Donors Choose donated Blick Art Materials valued at \$113.94 to Mrs. Lunders' classroom at Highland.

The total fiscal year 2024-2025 monetary contributions to date: \$63,183

Member Houle duly seconded the motion for the adoption of the preceding resolution, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

Granlund –Aye, Houle-Aye, Palmer-Aye, Pettway-Aye, Smith-Aye

The following voted against the same: None

Thereupon, the said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Granlund toured the schools with Smith and attended the Minnesota State Committee meeting for Education and Culture night at Valley View. Columbia Heights Central Avenue construction planning meeting. Held phone calls with different members of the Board and Superintendent Stenvik and attended the Chair meeting and Subcommittee on Policy.

Pettway attended the BIPOC family advisory meeting at North Park, the Snow Blast, and the subcommittee on Community Engagement meeting.

Houle attended the Feb 10 Fridley City Council meeting, providing a district update and policy subcommittee meeting.

Palmer attended the 916 Board Meeting, learned that Metro Heights is moving to a new location that can accommodate the growing population, and attended a meeting with my mentee, the chair meeting, and the subcommittee on community engagement.

Smith attended the MSBA Leadership Conference, talked to my mentor and board members, and toured Highland, Early Childhood Center, Valley View, and Columbia Academy.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

I attended a presentation by the MN Department of Education on Compensatory Aid. I spoke to our union leaders about the major shortfall our district could face if the Legislature moves forward with the new method of calculating this aid. There is no real need to change the way Compensatory aid is calculated and we are urging legislators to allow both the direct certification and the paper forms.

Last week, ACCESS testing started across the district. Columbia Academy students experienced serious glitches on their screens during the test. A district team met with the Department of Education, and they agreed to resolve the issue so that students who had invalid data would have the chance to retake the assessment.

I have visited each of our schools, and I'm really blown away by the dedication of our staff. Seeing our students thrive in many different areas makes me so incredibly proud.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Rude attended two GSA meetings, competed in the two speech tournaments, and volunteered in the concession stand.

Anwar attended the Student Council meeting, the Snow Blast, two girls' basketball games, a Boys' basketball game, the dance team's performance at halftime, the cheer team's performance during the game, and the subcommittee on community engagement.

ACHIEVEMENT AND INTEGRATION BUDGET

Assistant Superintendent Nyembwe presented information on the summary of the achievement and integration budget, a timeline of reports, and the 2025 Budget. The programs added with these funds are from the Minnesota State Department of Education.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Palmer, seconded by Houle, to Move to a closed session at 6:46 to discuss Superintendent Stenvik's mid-year evaluation.

RETURN TO OPEN MEETING

The Board returned to an open meeting at 7:24

BOARD TOPICS

Rude- Speech tournament February 21, Choir concert February 20.

Granlund- The hard edition of the Heights Harold will be out this week.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed all of the items on the regular agenda, Chair Granlund adjourned the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

Date minutes approved: 2/25/2025

Michelle Pettway, Board of Education.
Independent School District 13