

## REGULAR MEETING

March 11, 2025

6:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Baker School Board was called to order by Chairperson Karen Wang at 6pm in the Boardroom of Baker High School. Trustees Dalon Dyke, Cody Strandbakke, and Jay Quenzer were in attendance; Trustee Jodi Varner was absent. Also present were Superintendent Aaron Skogen, Principals Dominick Vergara and Erin Nevers, Associate Principal/AD Bill Brist, District Clerk Jennifer Mettler, Technology Director Scott Anderson, and Head Custodian Jason Cornwell; Associate Elementary Principal BreElle Wacker was absent. Guests were Rebecca LaCroix, Keeja Cook, Trinity Herman, Amanda Tunby, Mollee Stenberg, Linda Rost, Kaydee Dyke, Cathy Frye, Kim Lesh, Maranda Hastig, and Abby Tolzien.

### **Consent Items:**

The bills, investment report, activity account report, journal adjustments, and minutes were reviewed by the trustees; claim checks 59887 to 59947 were reviewed and approved. There being no objections, Chairperson Wang approves the consent items as presented.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mrs. Tunby asks if the board is considering opening the vacancy of Mrs. Hadley at the elementary for technology. Mr. Skogen stated they have advertised for Business Education for now and will evaluate the positions if the position is filled.

### **EDUCATION REPORT – KAYDEE DYKE**

Kaydee Dyke presented to the board her science research project; she also went to Utah in February to present at the regional symposium.

### **NON ACTION ITEMS**

#### **FFA LEADERSHIP, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mrs. Abby Wolenetz submitted to the board the information; this year we had four Baker FFA members (Jaxyn Lyson, Casey Koenigsfeld, Morgan Hurley, Kennedy Lyson) who were recognized as outstanding FFA members and given the opportunity to attend the Washington Leadership Conference this summer in Washington DC in July 8-11, 2025.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **CONTINENTAL GRANT APPLICATION REQUEST**

Mr. Skogen stated the district has a couple of staff that would like to apply for the Continental Grant for this year. Mrs. Rebecca LaCroix would like to apply for up to \$1,000 to purchase ukuleles and other items for the elementary music department. Mrs. Keeja Cook is requesting shelving and some alternative seating for her classroom; we will try to request the whole grant but we will plan to request approximately \$2500. Mr. Dyke asks maybe try to request the rest of the grant to replace the drum set as well.

Mrs. Cook states she is requesting the shelving because wanting to start Building Culture Through Reading and have a place to store the books but would like to increase her library of books in her classroom with this grant, however, she was told the books can't be purchased until it is reviewed and approved by the board. Discussion followed; Chairperson Wang requested that due to the discussion on this agenda item, the staff need to visit with their Building Principal to discuss the process of getting books in the classroom and not during the board meeting.

Jay Quenzer moved to approve the grant as presented. Dalon Dyke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

#### **CERTIFIED HIRING CONSIDERATION(S)**

Mr. Skogen presented to the board the recommendation for hire; Mrs. Megan Peters interviewed for the elementary teacher position for the 2025-26 school year.

Dalon Dyke moved to hire Mrs. Megan Peters as an elementary teacher for the 2025-26 school year, pending the results of a background check. Cody Strandbakke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

#### **CLASSIFIED HIRING CONSIDERATION(S)**

Mr. Skogen presented to the board the recommendation for hire; following interviews it is recommended to hire Mrs. Amanda Lorbiecke as a part-time kitchen aide and part-time custodian for the remainder of the 2024-25 school year.

Jay Quenzer moved to hire Amanda Lorbiecke as a part-time kitchen aide and part-time custodian. Dalon Dyke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

#### **BOARD POLICY REVISION – BP 3650**

Mr. Skogen presented to the board the revisions to board policy. It is required and necessary to comply with the provisions of the Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Protection Act, 20-7-13 MCA.

Additionally, BP 3650F is being recommended which ensures compliance through a signed Montana Digital Privacy Agreement.

Cody Strandbakke moved to approve BP 3650 & 3650F as presented. Dalon Dyke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**CERTIFIED REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Mr. Skogen presented to the board a leave of absence request from Mrs. Jessica Boggs; she has requested the leave in accordance with Section IV 4.3(B) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Jay Quenzer moved to approve Mrs. Boggs’ request for a leave of absence for the 2025-26 school year. Dalon Dyke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**2025-26 SCHOOL CALENDAR ADOPTION**

Mr. Skogen presented to the board the calendar for the 2025-26 school year. The calendar committee met a handful of times to come up with the proposed calendar and it meets or exceeds all State and District time requirements.

- 156 School Days
  - o 147 Regular School Days
    - Lincoln Elementary: 8:15 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.
    - Longfellow Elementary: 8:00 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.
    - Baker 7-12: 8:00 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.
  - o 9 Early Release School Days
    - All schools release at 2:00 p.m.
- Student Instructional Hours
  - o K-2: 913 hours (state requirement 720)
  - o 3<sup>rd</sup>: 1001 hours (state requirement 720)
  - o 4<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup>: 1081 hours (state requirement 1080)
- Workday
  - o Regular School Days
    - Certified Staff: 7:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
  - o Early Release Days
    - Certified Staff: 7:45 a.m. – 2:05 p.m.
  - o Contracted Days: 163 (max allowed 165)
  - o Contracted Hours: 1211 (max allowed 1225)

Discussion followed. This calendar is about 6 hours less than last year.

Jay Quenzer moved to approve the 2025-26 school calendar as presented. Cody Strandbakke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**2025-26 CERTIFIED CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS**

Administration has conducted evaluations and recommends the following teachers be renewed for the 2025-26 school year, along with the following teachers being recommended for tenure: MaKenzie Noseep, Abbey Wolenez, Kolleen Gustad, and Hailey Haan.

First Name	Last Name	Position	25-26	24-25
			CONTRACT GIVEN	CONTRACT GIVEN
LISA	BURDICK	Counselor	31	30
CATHY	FRYE	Counselor	6	5
KALLIE	BENTER	Elem Teacher	11	10
JENNIFER	DUKART	Elem Teacher	10	9
MARANDA	HASTIG	Elem Teacher	16	15
TRINITY	HERMAN	Elem Teacher	3	2
JODEE	HESS	Elem Teacher	11	10
VAL	JOHNSON	Elem Teacher	20	19
REBECCA	LACROIX	Elem Teacher	2	1
KIM	LESH	Elem Teacher	17	16
MAKENZIE	NOSEEP	Elem Teacher	4	3*
BREEANN	SHELL	Elem Teacher	13	12
SHAWNA	SCHILLINGER	Elem Teacher	27	26
JILL	SHELHAMER	Elem Teacher	11	10
MOLLEE	STENBERG	Elem Teacher	6	5
KARI	STRANDBAKKE	Elem Teacher	8	7
AMANDA	TUNBY	Elem Teacher	10	9
TIM	ROBINSON	Elem Teacher	34	33
MACY	VARNER	Elem Teacher	2	1
BO	LINGLE	HS Teacher	24	23
ALISHA	AFRANK	HS Teacher	3	2
MICHELLE	ANDERSON	HS Teacher	20	19
TOM	BREITBACH	HS Teacher	11	10
KEEJA	COOK	HS Teacher	2	1
ABBEY	DUNN	HS Teacher	4	3*
HILLARY	FRANK	HS Teacher	6	5
KOLLEEN	GUSTAD	HS Teacher	4	3*
HAILEY	HAAN	HS Teacher	4	3*
JAY	HOVERSLAND	HS Teacher	20	19
JOHN	NOWAK	HS Teacher	14	13
LINDA	ROST	HS Teacher	12	11
DERYK	VAN ZEE	HS Teacher	13	12
CHRISTINA	SCHMID	Special Education	2	1
BRITTANY	HOVERSLAND	Special Education	13	12
MARNIE	MOBERG	Special Education	2	1 *P/T*

\*TENURED CONTRACT BEING OFFERED

Cody Strandbakke moved to offer contracts to all certified staff as listed in grades K-12 for the 2025-26 school year and offer tenured contracts to Miss Noseep, Mrs. Wolenez, Miss Gustad, and Mrs. Haan. Dalon Dyke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SALARY SCHEDULE REVISION – ADMINISTRATIVE HANDBOOK**

Mr. Skogen presented to the board that following negotiations last year and preparing for the transition to the 4-day school week, we neglected to notice changes were not made to the administrative salary schedule

for the 2025-26 school year. The salary for administrators is outlined in the Administrative Handbook, which is based on the salary matrix negotiated by the teachers. Therefore, it is being recommended to insert the following language into the Administrative Handbook:

**Longevity/Retention**

*Effective with the 2025-26 school year, each teacher shall receive an additional 2% based on his/her contracted salary. This annual payment shall be treated as salary, with all contributions to state, federal and Montana Teachers Retirement as required by law. The payments will be included in the teacher's regular payroll.*

Jay Quenzer moved to add the longevity/retention language to the Administrative Handbook as presented. Dalon Dyke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**2025-26 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS**

Mr. Skogen presented to the board administrative contract renewals. It is recommended to renew administrative contracts for the following for the 2025-26 school year:

- Mr. Scott Anderson – Technology Director
- Mrs. Erin Nevers – K-6 Principal
- Ms. BreElle Wacker – K-6 Associate Principal
- Mr. Bill Brist – 7-12 Associate Principal/Activities Director

Dalon Dyke moved to offer contracts to the administration as presented for the 2025-26 school year in the positions presented. Jay Quenzer seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**NOTICE OF INCREASE NON-VOTED MILL LEVY RESOLUTION**

Mrs. Mettler presented to the board the notice to increase non voted mill levy resolution.

**BAKER SCHOOL DISTRICT #12  
NOTICE OF INTENT TO INCREASE NON VOTED LEVIES  
March 11, 2025**

The Baker School District is committed to financial transparency; 20-9-116, MCA requires school districts to provide notice of its intent to increase non-voted levies in the ensuing fiscal year. As a result, the proposed notice contains projections (estimates) for all of the District's non-voted levy supported funds:

Fund	2024-25 Actual Levies		2025-26 Projections		Change \$	Change Mills	Est. Annual Tax Impact \$100K home	Est. Annual Tax Impact \$200K home
	\$	Mills	\$	Mills				
General- BASE	\$ 1,387,894	30.87	\$ 1,412,318	31.29	\$ 24,514	0.42	\$ 0.57	\$ 1.14
General- OverBASE	\$ 815,849	18.08	\$ 861,874	19.10	\$ 46,025	1.02	\$ 1.38	\$ 2.76
Transportation	\$ 439,416	9.74	\$ 401,481	8.90	\$ (37,935)	(0.84)	\$ (1.13)	\$ (2.26)
Bus Depreciation	\$ -	0.00	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Tuition	\$ -	0.00	\$ 28,210	0.63	\$ 28,210	0.63	\$ 0.85	\$ 1.70
Adult Ed	\$ -	0.00	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Technology	\$ -	0.00	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Flexibility	\$ -	0.00	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Debt Service	\$ -	0.00	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Building Reserve Permissive	\$ -	0.00	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Building Reserve Voted	\$ -	0.00	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,643,079</b>	<b>58.69</b>	<b>\$ 2,703,883</b>	<b>59.92</b>	<b>\$ 60,813</b>	<b>1.23</b>	<b>\$ 1.82</b>	<b>\$ 3.34</b>

This notice must also document the District's expected use of its Building Reserve State Major Maintenance levies and associated funding. As of the date of this notice, the District does not intend to levy money in the Building Reserve Fund due to sufficient cash reserves for the coming years projects.

These estimates are the District's best estimates at the current time. They are based on the current year's taxable value as required by 20-9-116, MCA. If the District's taxable value increases as expected, the mill and taxpayer cost increases will be less than presented here. These estimates are preliminary and changes are expected before the final budgets are set in August. Please contact the District Business Office at (406) 778-2577 or [mettlerj@baker.k12.mt.us](mailto:mettlerj@baker.k12.mt.us) if you have any questions or need additional information.

Jay Quenzer moved to approve the resolution as presented and to be posted and advertised in the Fallon County Times. Cody Strandbakke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**REPORTS:**

**1. COMPLEX, Abby Tolzien**

Reports on membership and usage for the pool. The managers have been working on scrubbing the pool and cleaning. Like to get more involved with the complex with fitness classes, friendly competition and aquafit classes.

**2. MAINTENANCE, Jason Cornwell**

Giving Thanks, Thank you to the Staff, Teachers, Maintenance Crew and Students. Everyone has done a Wonderful Job pitching in and getting us through these tight times. Finishing up the hard winter months, snow, ice, heating. Pep Sessions, AAU Wrestling, Spring Sports Meetings. Thank You to the Rec department for their relentless determination to scrub and clean the pool, slide, decks, and windows. Everything looks great! Preparing for the Spring Sporting Events, Complex, Stadium, Practice fields. Still Looking for 2 full time custodial positions to fill.

**3. TECHNOLOGY, Scott Anderson**

Just came home from State BPA but last week had a cyber event within the District. February 27<sup>th</sup> received a set of emails from the radio station, in turn were spam emails; 18 staff received the email and 3 staff clicked on the link which took them to a casino server.

#### 4. PRINCIPALS

a. **ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS, Erin Nevers & BreElle Wacker**

Shout-out to Staff - We want to give a special shout-out to our incredible custodial and kitchen staff. With ongoing staffing shortages, their workload and responsibilities have increased significantly, yet they continue to show up with dedication and resilience. Their hard work ensures that our schools remain clean, safe, and well-fed, creating a positive environment for students and staff. We are truly grateful for their commitment, adaptability, and the positivity they bring to our school community daily. Thank you Lloyd, Jason, Sheila, Edie, Sonya, Pat, and Rorie, for all you do—we appreciate you more than words can express!

Middle School Music Festival – Numerous 5th-8th grade students participated in the Music Festival hosted in Baker. They showcased their prepared pieces and received valuable feedback from the adjudicator. A big thank you to Mrs. Hess for her dedication and effort in preparing the students, as well as to Mrs. Frye and Mrs. LaCroix for serving as accompanists for many of the performances.

Middle School Academic Olympics – Several Longfellow sixth graders teamed up with middle school students to compete in the Academic Olympics in Miles City. Thank you to all the students and to coaches Kollen Gustad, Cathy Frye, and Dr. Linda Rost for your time and dedication in representing our school!

Semester 2 Attendance – Currently we have 92 (37%) elementary students with three or more absences since the start of the second semester on January 13, 2025. Of those, 15 (6%) students have 9 or more absences.

Teacher Evaluations – Throughout the last month, we have been working to complete teacher evaluations, completing classroom observations, and scheduling follow-up meetings. This year, tenured teachers were offered a self-reflection option.

Coverage – We are incredibly grateful for the amazing team that we have. Despite our lack of coverage due to tournaments and illnesses, we have not had to cancel many classes or make major scheduling adjustments. This is due solely to the fact that our team shows up! Thank you to the entire staff at Baker Elementary for being a part of this TEAM!

Friday Clubs – Our next 1:30 early release is scheduled for next Friday, March 21st. We will host Friday Clubs in the afternoon for our elementary students. We will have one more early release on April 11th, which will be the final time that we offer our Friday Club enrichment option.

February Students of the Month - Congratulations to our student of the month winners for February! Lincoln Students - Wren Hastig and Nathen Thomas; Longfellow Students - Luna Sonsalla and Jacob Ferrell.

b. **HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, Dom Vergara**

I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to Mrs. Burdick for her diligent work in organizing our mental health screener. This screening is designed to help the school better understand the needs of our students and provide support where necessary. I truly appreciate Mrs. Burdick's proactive approach to student mental health.

**We recently have addressed and/or focused on the various topics below:**

23-24 (7-12) Teacher Evaluation Process – Completed

'25 BHSU Education Fair - 65 Districts, 55 Graduates

National FFA Week

Updating Course Descriptions for 7-12 Class Offerings, Class Registration 25-26

State of Mind (March 25th-26th)

Scholarship Applications

Graduation Preparations

**February Spartans of the Month:**

(Reserved Parking Spot, Spartan T-Shirt, Lunch w/ Principal, Certificate, Facebook, Newspaper)

Brendon Reetz (HS Boy), Jocelyn Graham (HS Girl), Jackson Bartholomew (JH Boy), Maci James (JH Girl)

**Upcoming Events/Meetings:** Baker Jam (Looking for high school groups to help with clean up), Knights Ball (March 27th).

c. **ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL/ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR, Bill Brist**

High School Basketball Post Season

The Boys and Girls Basketball teams competed at the 3B District Tournament (Worden) with the Girls winning the 3B Tournament title and the Boys finishing their season. At the Southern B Divisional Tournament (Billings) the Lady Spartans finished in 2nd to earn a spot in the State B Tournament (Missoula – 3/13-15). Both the Cheer Squad and the Pep Band has performed throughout the post season and will also travel to perform at the Adams Center on the U of M's Campus during the tournament.

Wrestlers earn post season honors – Girls Team wins 2nd State Title: The Spartan wrestling teams wrapped up their seasons at the Metra in Billings with the MHS All Class State Championship Tournament (2/13-15). The boys’ team had four wrestlers earn All-State Honors (Steel Smith – 6th, Tucker Miller – 5th, Chris Brawley – 5th and Logan Sherman – 6th) and placed 12th with 51 points. The girls’ team had three wrestlers earn All-State (Emmalyn Miller – 5th, Kylie Schwartz – 4th and Jayda Harbaugh – 1st- State Champion) and won their second straight State Team Championship with a score of 96.5 points.

Spartan BPA Team wrap up Season at the State Leadership Conference in Billings: Spartan BPA students participated in the State Leadership Conference, held from March 11-13 in Billings.

Although results for team members are not available, Scott Anderson earned the Award for BPA Advisor the year.

FFA prepares for State Convention: The FFA team will travel to Bozeman (April 1-5th) for the Annual FFA State Convention. The team looks to improve upon its success of last season with students competing for places in a multitude of individual and team events. MS and HS Academic Olympic Teams compete in Miles City Spartan Academic Olympic teams participated in the Southeast Montana Region Academic Olympics held at Miles Community College with the MS participants competing on March 3rd and the HS participants competing on March 4th. A number of Baker participants earned ribbons for their placing within a number of individual and team categories.

Music Department hosts Elementary Music Festival: The Baker Music Departments hosted an elementary music festival on March 14 & 15th with both the MS and grade school musicians performing for guest adjudicators.

The Baker Science Club to attend Billings Science Expo: The Baker Science Club will have 10 students traveling to participate in science competition at the Billings Science Expo on March 14-15th. In addition to this group, several other club members will be attending the Expo virtually; Linda Rost will be accompanying the group to Billings.

Spring Sports begin practice – Tennis, Golf and Track & Field: The High School Spring sports programs have opened their practice for the season and look toward competition at the end of the month. Golf and Tennis have their first competitions on March 28th and Track & Field will open competition on April 1st. The Middle School Track & Field program will begin their practice on March 24th and will open with their first competition on April 8th. Early participation numbers for the HS Spring Sports include - Golf: 7 Boys and 2 girls, for Tennis: 19 girls, and for Track & Field: 15 boys and 10 girls.

#### 5. SUPERINTENDENT, Aaron Skogen

**Current Openings:**HS Mathematics, Business Education, Anticipated Applicant, Industrial Arts (Interview Scheduled), Special Education, Elementary, 7-12 Principal (Four (4) Applicants), Elementary Paraprofessionals, Lunch Aid, Custodian (2X).

**Resignations:** Mrs. Josi Hadley, Business Education/Elementary TECH, Mr. Dom Vergara, 7-12 Principal, Mrs. Katy Vergara, Elementary Teacher, Ms. McKinnon Little, Elementary Teacher, Mrs. Leida Swarts, Custodian.

**House Bill 252–STARS Act:** Passed from House (2.22.25), Senate Committee (Hearing 3.18.25 @ 3:00 p.m.), Education and Cultural Resources, MTSBA Webinar (Wednesday, 3.12.25 @ 12:00 p.m.).

**Facilities Committee Meeting** in next couple of weeks and **Complex Committee Meeting** in next couple of weeks as well.

Next scheduled board meeting is April 9, 2025 at 6 pm.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 7:44 pm.

*s/ Jennifer Mettler*

Clerk

*s/ Karen Wang*

Chairman