

SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SCHOOL DISTRICT #6
JUNE 9, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of School District Six was held at 6:00 P.M., Monday, June 9, 2025, in the Boardroom of the administration offices at 501 Sixth Avenue West, Columbia Falls, Montana.

PRESENT:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Jill Rocksund..... | Board Chair | Arrived 6:27 P.M. |
| Barbara Riley | Vice Chair | |
| Megan Upton..... | Trustee | |
| Justin Cheff..... | Trustee | |
| Keri Hill | Trustee | |
| Heather Mumby | Trustee | Via Google Meets |
| Wayne Jacobsmeyer | Trustee | |
| Casey Huepel | Trustee | |
| Cory Dziowgo | Superintendent of Schools | |
| Dustin Zuffelato | Business Manager/ Clerk | |

Vice Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Motion by Heupel, second by Cheff, to approve the agenda as presented.

APPROVE AGENDA

There were no comments, questions or discussions.

Passed 7-0.

Motion by Upton, second by Pacheco, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

APPROVE CONSENT
AGENDA

Approve May Board Meeting Minutes

Approve May bills.

Approve the investment report.

Activity Account Transfer

Out-of-District student attendance Approval 2025/26 school year.

There were no comments, questions, or discussions.

Passed 7-0.

Public Participation:

PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION:

Approximately sixteen (16) people participated in the meeting remotely via Google Meets.

Approximately twenty (20) people attended the meeting in person.

Leslie Dimaio, Junior High Teacher and President of CFEA, came in front of the Board as a teacher and president of the union stating that teachers deserve salaries that are not so far behind the other schools in the valley.

Jane Dews, Glacier Gateway Teacher, addressed the Board describing how hard teachers work for the District and asked the Board to support the union and its teachers.

Autumn Mansfield, Ruder Teacher, asked for consideration of using the STARS Act money to support teacher salaries. Ms. Mansfield described the difficulty to buy a house in the Flathead Valley.

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Ben Caudill, Junior High Teacher, shared that one year ago he had a total of 265 band students. Mr. Caudill wanted the Board to know that when a teacher is struggling financially, it is difficult to be an effective teacher. Mr. Caudill also shared what he would be making more if he taught in the Kalispell district.

Josiah Osborne, High School Teacher, acknowledged that he knows that the STARS Act was intended for starting teachers, but he would also like to see all teachers receive increased compensation.

Nia Vestal, High School Teacher, thanked the Board for the support this year, especially with the roof construction issues. Ms. Vestal urged the Board to contribute to the overall health of the teachers. She feels that the hiring pool is shallower compared to other districts.

Jessica Schwaderer, Junior High Teacher, shared from home via Google Meets. Ms. Schwaderer feels that the District is at a disadvantage with recruiting and retaining teachers compared to other districts.

Sarah Briggs, Glacier Gateway Teacher, agreed with everyone else who has shared their beliefs and stories. Ms. Briggs sees that there is a significant wage gap from other districts. She asked the Board to use the STARS Act to increase wages for the teachers.

Vice Chair Riley shared that the District is meeting with the Certified Negotiations Team in August. Until that time the District Negotiations Committee will work on how to improve the District's ability to work with the constraints given to employees who work and live in Columbia Falls. The District's has always valued the employees, and is focused on the goal to give everyone the best possibly wages within the budget constraints.

Trustee Mumby, Negotiations Team Member, agreed with what all have said and the hope is that the District and the Union can come together to make the budget sustainable while retaining qualified educators.

Aericka Butler, Junior High Teacher, wanted to thank the Board for approving the ASHA Stipend and the opportunity of attending the ASHA Convention in Seattle. This was the first year the stipend was awarded to speech language pathologists. Ms. Butler also shared how childcare increases has provided financial stress to teachers.

REPORTS:

Written Reports:

The Elementary School Principals provided the Board with written reports.

High School Principal, Josh Gibbs, provided the Board with a written report.

Curriculum Director, Mark McCord, provided the Board with a written report.

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Special Education Director, Michelle Swank, provided the Board with a written report.

Board Standing Committees' reports are located on the District's Website.

Verbal Reports:

Vice Chair Barbara Riley provided the Board with the recent proceedings of the Consortium of State School Board Associations (COSSBA) and the Montana School Board Association (MTSBA). Mrs. Riley shared that she was recently able to attend the annual meeting in Helena and participated in the "Edunomics" finance workshop presented by Dr. Marguerite Roza from Georgetown University. Also attending was a state legislative committee team who will be looking the school funding formula from the State. The focus of the workshop was on what is missing, what's the gaps, and how school funding will work going into the future. Mrs. Riley continues that all of Dr. Roza presentation was data driven analysis that asks what is the end product each school is looking for. When making an investment, every dollar has an expected outcome and every dollar should be connected to student growth. Montana funding structure is very rigid and hinders a district on how to grow when the state is only giving a 3% increase. There was no quorum for the annual meetings and no change for State Board Members. Mrs. Riley also shared that the Montana School Insurance Alliance has sent out RFPs to help build the new trust. In August or September, the group will start building plans for the districts around Montana. Additional presentations will be at the MASBO conference in Great Falls.

District Business Manager/Clerk provided the Board with a written report. Mr. Zuffelato updated on the High School restoration project and the last items will be finished during the summer months. The few items will include the flooring, elevator, and the replacement of hall lockers. The project is still within the voted levy budget and the contract parameters with Swank Enterprises. The insurance renewals for Property Liability and Workers Compensation are in with an increase. The MOD Factor, based on the number of workers comp claim experience throughout the year, went from 1.19 to 1.23. There is a six million dollar (\$6 million) new claim for the High School roof and the insurance premium increased by sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) for the next year. The national trend for insurance premiums seems to be decreasing, however, the District's adding more square footage as well as claim experience has contributed to the increase.

Superintendent Cory Dziowgo reflected on the Graduation ceremony conducted the previous Saturday with 143 students, 23 graduated with honors. The District finished the last of the (initial phase of) community meetings for the Facilities Enhancement Project. The focus was on 21st Century Learning. Jackola Engineering will be starting the work on planning the remodel of the High School using feedback from staff and community. All are hoping by August there will be a better understanding of the project scope.

Board Chair Jill Rocksund had nothing to add at this time.

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ACTION /
DISCUSSION ITEMS

Action/Discussed Items:

Mr. Zuffelato shared a presentation on the direct financial impact to SD6 of various Bills that passed in the 2025 State Legislative session. All information from the session and how each bill affects the District is on the website.

Mark McCord, Curriculum Director, shared the recommendation of adopting a new 6th-8th grade science curriculum. Amplify Science has been the current program for a number of years and the licensing has expired. Teachers felt that Amplify was not as engaging as they would have liked and that it was time to look into a different curriculum. A pilot team was formed and one teacher from each grade level taught a unit from the two top chosen programs Elevate Science and Open Science Ed. After meeting again in May, the choice to continue with Open Science Ed was made. A few positives for Open Science Ed are that it received the highest rating for effectiveness by EdReports, it is highly recommended by Montana OPI, was built to specifically address the New Generation Science Standards, the focus is on scientific thinking through student-led investigations and is an "open source" that is available to everyone free of charge. There will be an initial startup cost, but once the District has the materials the cost will decrease.

MOTION TO APPROVE
OPEN SCIENCE ED
6TH-8TH GRADE
SCIENCE
CURRICULUM

Motion by Pacheco, second by Upton, to approve Open Science Ed 6th-8th science curriculum adoption.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 7-0

MOTION TO APPROVE
THE FY2025 AUDIT
PROPOSAL WITH
NEXUS CPA GROUP

Motion by Riley, second by Heupel, to approve the FY2025 audit proposal with Nexus CPA Group.

Mr. Zuffelato shared that this is a one-year contract as advised by the Board of Trustees based on the uncertainty in the audit service marketplace.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 8-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
RESOLUTION #442

Motion by Heupel, second by Upton, to approve Resolution #442 -- Request for the Flathead County to conduct the 2026 annual school election.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 8-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
THE RENEWAL OF
AGREEMENT FOR
E-RATE CONSULTING
SERVICES

Motion by Cheff, second by Riley, to approve the renewal of agreement for E-rate Consulting Services -- BTU Consultants for 2025-2026.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 8-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
DISTRICT FUND
TRANSFER FROM BUS
DEPRECIATION TO
THE MULTI-DISTRICT
AGREEMENT

Motion by Riley, second by Cheff, to approve District Fund Transfer from Bus Depreciation to the Multi District Agreement.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 8-0.

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Motion by Upton, second by Cheff, to approve the 2025-2026 Board Standing Committee assignments.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 8-0.

Personnel:

The Board acknowledged the following resignations previously accepted by the Superintendent: Rhonda Thornberry – Junior High Life Skills Paraeducator; Derek Andrews – Junior High Boys’ Basketball Coach; Ellie Green – Junior High Girls’ and Boys’ Basketball Coach; Catherine Ellman – Bus Route Driver; Raylee LaRocque – Hot Lunch Floater; Karen Taylor – Hot Lunch Lead; Patrick Morgan – Custodian; Desiree Riley – Student Support Specialist; Shelby Stephens – High School Special Education Paraeducator; Wendy Bruce – High School Special Education Paraeducator; Ashleigh Zinkgraf – High School Science Teacher; Shelby Forke – High School Art Club Advisor.

Motion by Riley, second by Cheff, to approve the termination of Kyndra Hines – Hot Lunch Floater.

Passed 8-0.

Motion by Cheff, second by Upton, to approve the following Elementary District hiring recommendations: John Cox – Junior High Science Teacher; Alon Golan – Glacier Gateway .5 FTE PE/HE Teacher; Heidi Freeman – Junior High Volleyball Coach; Anthony Correa – Junior High Football Coach.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 7-0.

Motion by Pacheco, second by Cheff, to approve the following High School/District Wide hiring recommendations: Y. Alejandro Hurtado Regalado – Custodian; Yonder Amara Zapata – Custodian; Kyle Currier – Mechanic; Brandon Christensen – Mechanic; Wendi Wanner – Occupational Therapist; Kate Daniels – High School Art Club Advisor.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 8-0.

Motion by Cheff, second by Heupel, to approve the following High School/District Wide temporary summer hiring recommendations: Cindy Powell – Summer Food Service; Kayla Thompson – Summer Food Service; Karamya Henderson – Summer IT Support; Abigail Fort – Summer IT Support; Deidra Enos – Summer IT Support; Heidi Wolf – Summer IT Support.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 8-0.

Motion by Upton, second by Pacheco, to approve the following Elementary District temporary summer hiring recommendations: Alyssa Morales – Summer School Paraeduca-

MOTION TO APPROVE
BOARD STANDING
COMMITTEE
ASSIGNMENTS

PERSONNEL:

MOTION TO APPROVE
TERMINATION

MOTION TO APPROVE
ELEMENTARY HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

MOTION TO APPROVE
HS AND DISTRICT-
WIDE HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

MOTION TO APPROVE
HS AND DISTRICT-
WIDE SUMMER
HIRING RECOMMEN-
DATIONS

MOTION TO APPROVE
ELEMENTARY
SUMMER HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

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tor; Shirley Vickery – Summer School Paraeducator; Jessica Burns – Summer School Paraeducator; Melinda Deneault – Summer School Paraeducator; Tammy Coleman – Junior High Summer School Teacher; Kathy Wetsch – Junior High Summer School Teacher; Kent Blair – Junior High Summer School Teacher.
Public comment was requested and there was none.
Passed 7-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL
REQUEST

Motion by Upton, second by Riley, to approve the following out-of-state travel request:
Peregrine Frissell – University of Colorado-Boulder – Teacher East Asia – July 19-24, 2025 – Paid through Professional Development.
Public comment was requested and there was none.
Passed 7-0.

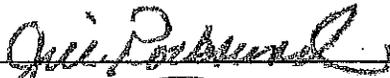
MISCELLANEOUS
AND FUTURE
PLANNING

Miscellaneous and Future Planning:

Long Range Planning Committee – High School Facility Enhancement Project – June 23, 2025 – 5:00 P.M.
Tentative Classified Negotiations Meeting – June 18, 2025 – 3:00 P.M.

MEETING
ADJOURNED

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Chair Rocksund adjourned the meeting at 7:36 P.M.



Board Chair


Business Manager/Clerk