

**MILAN AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, August 13, 2025
MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Milan Area Schools Board of Education was called to order in the District Office Boardroom located at 100 Big Red Drive, Milan MI, 48160, by President Cislo at 7:00 p.m. on August 13, 2025.

Board Members Present: Cislo, Burdette, Faro, Gutierrez, Heikka, Meray and Prior

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Ryan McMahon, Jen Bookout, Margarette Durkee and Sara Beckman

Guests Present: None

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comments: None

Motion by Burdette supported by Meray to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of July 24, 2025. All Ayes. Carried 7-0.

Motion by Prior supported by Faro to approve the bills/reimbursement of expenses. All Ayes. Carried 7-0.

Motion by Meray supported by Faro to approve Abaigeal Collins as an ECSE Teacher effective for the 2025-2026 school year. All Ayes. Carried 7-0.

Motion by Prior supported by Gutierrez to approve Noah Penrose as an 8th Grade Math Teacher effective for the 2025-2026 school year. All Ayes. Carried 7-0.

Motion by Faro supported by Burdette to approve Joshua Nowak as a 6th Grade ELA Teacher effective for the 2025-2026 school year. All Ayes. Carried 7-0.

Motion by Gutierrez supported by Prior to approve Thomas Wall as a First Grade Teacher effective for the 2025-2026 school year. All Ayes. Carried 7-0.

Public Comments: None

Assistant Superintendent Comments

- Benchmark Achievement Goals.
- 35M Literacy Grant - Award received and will cover the majority of CLKA over five years.

Superintendent Comments:

- The Administrative Team has been conducting interviews and now able to report that MAS is fully staffed.
- MAS Administrative retreat at ISD.
- Thank you to Paddock staff for Young Fives and Kindergarten Orientation.
- Superintendent retreat - focus on CTE millage.
- Thanks to MAS staff for all of the work done this summer for the upcoming school year.

Board Member Comments

- Prior shared that fall sports started this week and highlighted the MHS Equestrian Team events, encouraging the community to support them. She noted that Milan Elementary PTO is looking for a treasurer and the MHS Sunshine Club is looking for donations for classroom snacks. She then urged all stakeholders to contact state legislators about passing the state education budget. She closed by sharing about the upcoming CTE county-wide millage on the November ballot, and that GMACF is starting a scholarship for students continuing education in the skilled trades.
- Heikka criticized the lack of a state education budget, and expressed deep concern regarding the possibility of a state government shut down. She urged stakeholders to call Speaker Matt Hall at 517-373-1784, and Governor Whitmer at 517-335-7858. She emphasized the urgency to pass a budget, and shared concerns about the misleading nature and potential impacts of the Republican budget proposal, highlighting critical areas that would be cut. She further noted the unfairness that staff are returning to work for a new school year without a new contract due to the budget delay.
- Faro echoed the frustration about the state budget shared by Ms. Heikka, and noted a specific concern regarding funding for the free lunch program, which ends on September 30th. He reiterated that stakeholders should contact all representatives. He also welcomed David Middlin as the new Milan Middle School principal, and praised the new district website. He thanked all those who worked on its development. Finally, he noted the process for selecting Student Board Representatives, and thanked Sara Beckman for her hard work and professionalism.
- Burdette also echoed the call for stakeholders to contact legislators regarding the state budget. He also added that although fall sports have started, it's not too late for students to join. Students who are interested in participating should contact the Athletic Director or coaches.
- Gutierrez thanked Ms. Heikka for her comments regarding the budget, and added that regardless of party, the budget impacts all of our children and our whole community. She shared praise and specifically thanked Mr. McMahon and Ms. Bookout for their work on the new district website. She highlighted the "Popsicles on the Playground with the Principal at Paddock" event on 8/14, as well as the dates for all building Open Houses scheduled within the next few weeks. She closed by reminding families that building offices are open if any support or information is needed.

- Meray thanked Ms. Heikka for serving as acting secretary for the two meetings she missed, and apologized for her absences. She further thanked the entire staff at every level for all of the hard work this summer in preparing for the upcoming school year. She welcomed and thanked Mr. McMahon and Ms. Bookout for their leadership, and welcomed all of our new building administrators. She echoed praises for the new district website, and thanked the District Communications Committee for their efforts in the process. She concluded by echoing Ms. Heikka's concerns and criticisms of both the state and federal education budget crises, and implored the community to please call representatives.
- Cislo reminded the community of the Big Red Board Chat on Tuesday, September 23rd at Symons Elementary. The topic will likely be the state budget. He noted that Ms. Virginia Heikka will continue serving as a student board representative, and that he will be working with Mr. Shinn to seek a second student representative. He shared that Andrea Bennink and Sarah Norton will continue to represent Milan Area Schools on the WISD PAC, and will share their updates with the board throughout the year. He also reiterated thanks to our staff for their efforts with hiring, maintaining the buildings, and preparing for the year. He shared excitement for the new year, despite challenges. He closed by urging the community to call state representatives.

Motion by Faro supported by Heikka to enter into closed session pursuant to Section 8(1)(c) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act for Negotiation Strategies. All Ayes. Carried 7-0.

Time entered closed session 7:42 p.m.

Time returned to open session 9:46 p.m.

VII. Adjournment - Time of Adjournment 9:46 p.m.