

REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SCHOOL DISTRICT #6
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of School District Six was held at 6:00 P.M., Monday, September 8, 2025, in the Boardroom of the administration offices at 501 Sixth Avenue West, Columbia Falls, Montana.

PRESENT:

Jill Rocksund Board Chair
Megan Upton Trustee
Keri Hill Trustee
Heather Mumby Trustee
Amanda Pacheco Trustee
Casey Heupel Trustee
Cory Dziowgo Superintendent of Schools
Dustin Zuffelato Business Manager/Clerk

ABSENT:

Barb Riley Vice Chair
Justin Cheff Trustee

Call to order at 6:00 P.M. by Board Chair Rocksund.

Motion by Upton, second by Hill, to approve the agenda as presented.
Passed 6-0.

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

Approve August bills.
Approve the investment report.
Out-of-District Approval -- SY25-26
26-181
26-182
26-183
26-184
26-185
26-186
26-187
26-188
26-189
26-190
26-191
26-192
Passed 6-0.

Public Participation:

Approximately three (3) people participated in the meeting remotely via Google Meets.
Approximately ten (10) people attended the meeting in person.

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVE AGENDA

APPROVE CONSENT
AGENDA

PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION:

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No High School students were present, but wanted to share that homecoming is the following week and the theme for the parade will be "Lights, Claws, Action".

REPORTS:

Written Reports:

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

The Elementary School Principals (Penni Anello, Allison Hawes, and Ted Miller) provided the Board with written reports.

High School Principal, Josh Gibbs, provided the Board with a written report. Also sharing, that the cell phone policy change has worked well. Teachers are enjoying the absence of cell phones in the classrooms. The attendance policy still has the ten-day rule of absences each semester, if a student misses more than the ten days he/she may have to attend Saturday school to makeup missing work. The focus is the students that exceed the ten days that are not school sponsored and/or decide to skip school. The Saturday school will run as staff is available with a matrix from lunch detention, to Wednesday afternoon detention, to Saturday school.

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

Special Services Director, Michelle Swank, provided the Board with a written report. Mrs. Swank also noted that there is still a shortage of paraeducators, particularly in the High School. At the present time there are a couple employees floating from an elementary school in the morning to the high school to cover the afternoons, and the staff has been great about helping where needed.

Verbal Reports:

District Business Manager/Clerk provided the Board with a written report. Mr. Zuffelato also shared information regarding the High School Bond Election coming up in November. The Election office will not have a ballot drop off site in Columbia Falls. Ballots must be delivered to the County Election Department in Kalispell.

Superintendent Cory Dziowgo mentioned that this is the start of his third school year as Superintendent of Columbia Falls. Enrollment in the District is down to 2,137 students, equating to approximately 70 fewer as compared to last year. The District is continuing to meet weekly with Jackola Engineering regarding the Facility Enhancement Project. The District will be conducting various informational meetings/public forums to convey information regarding this general obligation bond levy election.

ACTION /
DISCUSSION ITEMS:

MOTION TO APPROVE
RESOLUTION #446

Action/Discussed Items:

Motion by Heupel, second by Upton, to approve Resolution #446 – Disposition of Abandoned, Obsolete and Undesirable Property.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 6-0.

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Motion by Heupel, second by Hill, to approve Policy 2150 – Suicide Awareness and Prevention on the second of three readings.

Public comment was requested and Community Member Joe O’Roarke asked if the information regarding suicide is gathered by providing students with a questionnaire or survey? Superintendent Dziowgo shared that the policy is addressing staff training on protecting students. Trainings will be a shorter in duration, but more frequently occurring.

Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #2150 ON 2ND
OF 3 READINGS

Motion by Heupel, second by Mumby, to approve Policy 2335 – Human Sexuality Instruction and Identity Instruction on the second of three readings.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #2335 ON 2ND
OF 3 READING

Motion by Upton, second by Pacheco, to approve Policy 3141 – Out-of-District Student Enrollment on the second of three readings.

Chair Rocksund commented that reading through the new policy, it says students have two windows to enroll in the District per year; May 1st and the second semester. There are special provisions when a student moves from the District or homeless, they have a thirty day grace period beginning at the change of residence. Superintendent Dziowgo recommended adding a paragraph regarding “extenuating circumstances” to the policy to cover parents who forget to enroll their students.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 6-0, with knowing that revisions will occur prior to the final reading.

MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #3141 ON 2ND
OF 3 READINGS

Motion by Mumby, second by Pacheco, to approve Policy 3655 – Student Protection on the second of three readings.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #3655 ON 2ND
OF 3 READINGS

Motion by Heupel, second by Upton, to approve Policy 8560 – Display of Flags and Banners on District Property on the second of three readings.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #8560 ON 2ND
OF 3 READINGS

Motion by Mumby, second by Hill, to approve Policy 5122 – Criminal Background Investigations on the second of three readings.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #5122 ON 2ND
OF 3 READINGS

Motion by Heupel, second by Upton, to approve Policy 5321 – Leave of Absence on the second of three readings.

Public comment was requested and there was none.

Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #5321 ON 2ND
OF 3 READINGS

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MOTION TO APPROVE
POLICY #8111 ON 2ND
OF 3 READINGS

Motion by Upton, second by Heupel, to approve Policy 8111 – Transportation of Students with Disabilities on the second of three readings.
Public comment was requested and there was none.
Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
SCHOOL BASED
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
CENTER AGREEMENT
BETWEEN LOGAN
HEALTH AND SD#6

Motion by Mumby, second by Heupel, to approve the School Based Behavioral Health Center Agreement between Logan Health and School District #6.
Mr. Zuffelato mentioned that the square footage was changed, which reduced the lease rental revenue to be paid to the District.
Public comment was requested and Community Member Joe O’Roake asked the Board if this is a space rental agreement and is there a discussion on services available to School District students? Chair Rocksund mentioned that the District rents the facility to Logan Health and they provide Mental Health Services from an out-patient clinic billed to either Medicaid or private insurances.
Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO AUTHOR-
IZE ADMINISTRATION
TO APPLY FOR AP-
PROVAL OF A TRADES-
ORIENTED CHARTER
SCHOOL WITH BOARD
OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Motion by Mumby, second by Pacheco, to authorize and direct the administration to apply for approval of a trades-oriented charter school with the Board of Public Education.
The application shall be aligned with the District’s integrated strategic action plan and the Portrait of a Learner framework.
Superintendent Dziowgo mentioned that this opportunity will provide needs to students so they are more empowered and prepared for the trades industry. The charter school enrollment is anticipated to be approximately Forty students. October is the deadline for the application to OPI and approval is January 2026. The District’s anticipated start date is August 2027. The Charter School will continue to utilize the District’s resources for Special Education needs, 504 plans, and the Gifted/Talented program.
Public comment was requested and Community Member Joe O’Roake asked if this is authorized under the bill passed in the last state legislature session, and his understanding is that it needs to have state approval? Chair Rocksund answered that the approval in January 2026 is meeting the requirements.
Passed 6-0.

PERSONNEL:

Personnel:

The Board acknowledged the following resignations previously accepted by the Superintendent: Amber Little – High School Paraeducator; Thomas Walker – Ruder Paraeducator; Koahl Deshazer – Junior High Paraeducator; Zachary Baker – Junior High Custodian; Christopher Harvey – Bus Driver; Elton Kauffman – Bus Driver; Emily Houston – High School Paraeducator; Shannon Freiheit – High School Paraeducator; Niels Getts – High School Assistant Tennis Coach

MOTION TO APPROVE
RECOMMENDATION
TO TERMINATE WITH-
OUT CAUSE

Motion by Mumby, second by Hill, to approve the termination of Brandon Christensen, District Mechanic, without cause during the probationary period.
Passed 6-0.

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Motion by Upton, second by Pacheco, to approve the following Elementary District hiring recommendations: Terri Eckel – Glacier Gateway Pre-K Paraeducator; Anthony Correa – Junior High Boys' Basketball Coach; Naomi Barnett – Glacier Gateway Kindergarten Paraeducator; Lisa Davis – Glacier Gateway Special Education Paraeducator; McKenna Rensel – Junior High Volleyball Coach; Megan Blackman – Ruder Special Education Para.
Passed 5-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
ELEMENTARY HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

Motion by Heupel, second by Pacheco, to approve the following High School/District-wide Hiring Recommendations: Megan Blackman – High School Special Education Paraeducator; Jennifer O'Brien – High School Special Education Paraeducator; Jessica Stevenson – Hot Lunch Helper/Floater; Kole Cordier – High School Assistant Football Coach; Jacob Babcock – High School Assistant Football Coach; Cassandra Eshom – High School Special Education Paraeducator; Dillon Wanner – Non-CDL Activity Bus Driver
Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
HS AND DISTRICT-
WIDE HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

Motion by Upton, second by Heupel, to approve the substitute hires.
Passed 6-0.

MOTION TO APPROVE
SUBSTITUTE HIRES

Miscellaneous and Future Planning:

MISCELLANEOUS
AND FUTURE
PLANNING:

Long-Range Planning Committee – Conference Room - September 8, 2025 – 5:00 P.M.
Negotiations Committee Meeting (Certified) – Conference Room – September 10, 2025 – 4:00 P.M.

Transportation Committee may need to meet with the West Glacier District.
Insurance Committee is waiting on obtaining a proposal from Bridged Health Alliance.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Chair Rocksund adjourned the meeting at 6:45 P.M.

MEETING
ADJOURNED



Board Chair



Business Manager/Clerk