

**ORANGE SOUTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 8, 2025
6 PM at Brookfield Elementary School**

[Click Here](#) for a video recording of the meeting.

AGENDA

I. Opening (6:00 pm) – Called to order by Anne Kaplan, board chair, at 6:01

pm • Board Attendance: *Ensuring a quorum:*

Board attending: Anne Kaplan, Beverly Lauchner, Ryan Anderson, Aimil Parmelee, Rachel Gaidys, Martha Hafner, Rachel Fish. Administration: Michael Clark, Kyle Southworth, ORCA. Guest Presenters: Kayla Link, Sean Toohey. Public attending (virtually): Isabel Dreher, Herald of Randolph.

- Meeting Purpose: Board action re: Legislative and Policy Updates, Budget Planning and Communication, Board Development, and Legal Compliance
- Review and Accept Agenda: *Meeting purpose? Are these the right agenda items? Is the right amount of time allotted?* Agenda is accepted.

II. Ownership Linkage (6:05)

- Public Comment: *Board welcomes comment but is not able to take any action. Comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker.*
No public, no comments.
- Meet the Director of Student Support Services, Kayla Link, and learn about the special education process
Michael Clark introduced Kayla Link who discussed Section 504, IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act), FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education) and LRE (Least Restrictive Environment). Conversation around the makeup of the teams that determine what a satisfactory education was, how the role of SLPs in the district may have contributed to the decline in supported students (181 in 2021, 150 in 2025) Discussion of OT, early intervention, as well as how quickly students were able to access services.
- Update on Act 73 (H 454)
 - Meeting with White River Valley Board Recap
Michael Clark referred to the superintendent's report for detail. Small schools were discussed with the WRVSU, it was a good meeting and the OSSD board is at a place where a conversation could be had and/or a statement made. The OSSD board was one of the first in the state to reach out to other districts. December 1 is the redistricting task force deadline for having 3 maps to present to the legislature. Conversation around what a letter of intent to the task force would accomplish. Anne Kaplan comments about the process of unifying the district years ago, it was a year-long process. Rachel Fish is apprehensive that the process is moving too quickly without time to discuss concerns. Both the districts to the north and the south were welcoming, like minded and passionate about their communities, students and quality of education. The map the task force just released has proposed districts centered around technical centers. Discussion of public awareness, the logistics of getting three boards (north, south and central) together but if the map is acceptable, does the board need to do anything? Rachel Gaidys suggests a letter or statement of what the OSSD board wants, Ryan

Anderson says the board can be a voice of stability, and agrees with Martha Hafner's statement that a community conversation is probably the best opportunity. Conversation about standing up a whole new system in a very short period of time, and how that might look. Is there space to wait for more maps and see?

- Next Steps

Just one more meeting before the task force deadline, there are no further steps to take at this time.

- UP for Learning Project Update

Michael Clark updated the board on the Up for Learning event held at the Randolph campus of Vermont State University the end of September. Montpelier and White River both sent representatives, and there were about 25 people attending. The OSSD team meets weekly and plans to go to the public to see what they envision for the future of education in Vermont. Brief mention of the possibility that students may speak before the legislature about what their vision is.

- Budget Timeline and Process, communication plan for the public *Michael Clark informed the board there is a timeline in the superintendent's report and work has already begun with the cabinet on the expenditure budget. A draft budget will be presented at the November 12 regular board meeting at Randolph Union Middle and High School, numbers for the revenue budget should be available (from the state) mid-December. Discussion of citizen concerns on Front Porch Forum, the need to communicate regarding Vermont's challenging funding formula and the re-districting goal of having 4k-8k students. Michael Clark has drafted a letter for the Ownership Linkage Committee to consider that discussed what cuts were made in the 25-26 budget and projects ahead. Ryan Anderson expressed a desire to get a message out to the community before the next board meeting. The committee consists of Ryan Anderson, Sam Hooper and Beverly Lauchner.*

Aimil Parmelee moves to charge the Ownership Linkage Committee with drafting a brief introduction to the community letter detailing the budget process and timeline as presented by Michael Clark. Communication to be completed by Monday October 27 and published in the Herald of Randolph, Front Porch Forum and the OSSD website. Motion is seconded by Rachel Fish and passes unanimously.

III. Board Process (6:25)

- Support Staff Negotiations Update

The support staff committee (Anne Kaplan, Ryan Anderson, Rachel Gaidys and Martha Hafner) will organize strategy with Michael Clark.

IV. Board Education (6:35)

- Reminder: Policy Governance Virtual Training Thursday 6pm October 16, 2025
- Reminder: VSBA Conference Double Tree in Burlington. Board members should connect with Kyle to register.
 - Wednesday October 29: Board Officials Meeting & Dinner Banquet 3-8pm
 - Thursday October: Partnership in Action 30 8-4 pm

Anne Kaplan informs the Board that that if there is any interest in having a

member on the VSBA board, one can be delegated. The annual meeting is October 23.

- Open Meeting Law Review with Lynn, Lynn, Blackman and Toohey Law partner Sean Toohey discussed open meeting law with the board, outlining what constitutes a quorum, what information can be shared between members outside of a public meeting (scheduling, organizing or material distribution), the rights of the public and the proper use of executive session. Discussion of not curtailing the type of public comment, whether favorable or unfavorable, having rules for public comment in place (time limits, etc.) and that rules must be applied consistently.
- Policy Governance Virtual Training Debrief
Board discussed very briefly.

V. Monitoring the Organization (6:40).

- Review EL 2.1 & 2.2 (BMD 3.4.5) First Read
Michael Clark notes this was his first executive limitation one year ago. The board reviewed, second read will be at the November meeting.
- Financials (EL 2.3 Financial Conditions)
Board was advised the auditors were coming October 21, and the budget is still on track. Martha Hafner asks who should be contacted if there are questions on the finances? Michael Clark responds he would be the first point of contact, if necessary, he will connect with additional resources.

VI. Policy Decisions for District Governance (6:50)

- Review/Discuss Updated Ends Policy 2nd Read
Brief discussion of how the process works and what the board's role is.
Motion made by Rachel Gaidys to accept the ENDS as presented, seconded by Beverly Lauchner. The motion passes with 6 votes. Martha Hafner abstains.

VII. Monitoring the Board (7:30)

- Board Self-Evaluation: *Monitoring compliance with Board Governance Process and Board Management Delegation Policies.*
- GP 4.0 Global Governance Commitment– Self Evaluation
Board discussed evaluation.

VIII. Consent Agenda (7:30)

- Vote on acceptance of Consent Agenda: *Items that the Board has previously delegated to the Superintendent, but that an external authority requires the Board to approve. The entire Consent Agenda is adopted by one motion, without discussion. However, an item can be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion with a majority vote GP 4.3.4.*
- Approve Minutes from September 10, 2025 and September 23, 2025 Special Meeting
- New Hires
Motion made by Aimil Parmelee to accept the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Ryan Anderson. The motion passes unanimously.

IX. Closing/Incidental Information (7:35)

- Superintendent's Report

- ACT 73 (H454) Update
- Review of White River Valley Supervisory Union Meeting
- Substance Abuse Prevention Programs

Michael Clark speaks to Martha Hafner's question about what substance abuse programming is available in the district. Substance abuse prevention is covered in health class, available in all buildings starting at grade 3. The high school works programming through Advisory in addition to health classes, with in-depth programming for seventh and tenth grades. Student services works through high school English classes about consent. There is a zero indifference policy, any contraband is handed over to the police for investigation. Nurses are trained to recognize any student under the influence. Offenders are required to attend 3 sessions with SAP, no sports or extra-curriculars until that is complete. RTCC follows similar protocol, using Wayfinder and reporting offenders to their sending schools.

- Budget Timeline

- Action Item Recap

X. Executive Session

Legal update.

Two Motions Required

- *First: Ryan Anderson moved to find that premature general public knowledge regarding civil litigation in which the OSSD is named as a party clearly places the board at a disadvantage because the board risks disclosing its litigation strategy if it discussed the litigation in public. Motion is seconded by Aimil Parmelee and passes unanimously.*
- *Second: Aimil Parmelee moved to enter executive session with the superintendent present for the purpose of discussing litigation to which the OSSD is a named party under Title 1 Section 313 (a)(1). Motion is seconded by Ryan Anderson and passes unanimously.*

With no further business, the board adjourns the regular meeting at 8:23 pm and moves to Executive Session.

Future Meetings

- Agenda Planning Meeting: Monday September 29
- Regular Board Meeting: Wednesday, Nov. 12 @ 6 p.m., RUMHS Media Center following RTCC RAB Meeting at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kyle M Southworth

Kyle M Southworth 10/9/2025
Administrative Assistant

Executive Session Minutes Form

Name of Board : Orange Southwest School District

Date of Meeting: 10/8/25

Continuation of minutes provided by: Martha Hefner

Executive Session

8:23 p.m. A motion was made by Aimil Parmalee ^{KHS} and seconded by Ryan Anderson to enter Executive Session to discuss

with/without the Superintendent present.

Vote Passed/Failed _____ - _____ unanimously. ^{KHS}

_____ p.m. The board exited Executive Session.

As a result of the Executive Session:

no action was taken

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by _____ and seconded by

_____ to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Martha Hefner