

**AFSA PreK-12**  
**Work Session Agenda**  
**Elementary Cafeteria**

October 21, 2025

4:00 - 5:00 pm

AGENDA TOPICS

**Board Members Present: Julie Cox, Kerry Schulte, Melissa Farler, Kyra Warner, Leslie Scherer, Sam Wakefield**

**Board Members Absent: Kate Plaisance, Jennifer Cook, Matt Vinez, Dave Smith**

Called into session at 4:09pm

**A. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. Enrollment & Fundraising Action list updates: Update on the list created at the board retreat.
  - a. Signage: Yard signs were ordered and will be here by November 17th. We will start to hand out and deliver to families. We did order some extras to continue to sell.
  - b. Google/SEO: Kate's contact is going to reach out to school to help start improving that process.
  - c. School list: Sam and Leslie have a list going and are contacting them. Will make an email to send them to.
  - d. Pop-up on website, we talked about between events having the pop up on the website about enrollment. We have done this and will continue to utilize it.
  - e. Potato hug: we had someone come out after reaching out to local paper companies. It made it into the Vandais Heights paper.
  - f. Agriculture needs: would like a list so board can help cutting some of the high costs with our agriculture program. We are currently doing a poinsettia sale.
  - g. Building the gold, silver, bronze donations. This should be partnered with an event we host like a walk-a-thon. Something to start planning now for spring. Other schools have had success.
  - h. Elementary Sign: still have not found someone, looking for a quick fix that gets something out there now. We have approval from the city.
  - i. Grow Schools: We are meeting with grow schools next Tuesday to hear their offer to help in growing enrollment. Will update at the next board meeting.

**B. ADJOURN - Adjourned meeting at 4:59pm.**

**Finance Committee meeting 3:30 pm ELEM business office**  
**Regular board meeting to begin at 5:00 pm in ELEM Cafeteria**

**AFSA PreK-12**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**Elementary Cafeteria**

October 21, 2025

5:00 - 6:30 pm

**AGENDA**

**Board Members Present:** Julie Cox, Kerry Schulte, Melissa Farler, Kyra Warner, Leslie Sherer, Sam Wakefield

**Board Members Absent:** Kate Plaisance, Jennifer Cook, Matt Vinez, Dave Smith

**Guests:** Casey Orr, observing the board meeting for school.

**A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

1. Call to Order: Julie Cox called the meeting into order at 5:04 and read the mission, vision and honoring native people.

**Mission:** The Academy for Sciences and Agriculture (AFSA), a public charter school for grades PreK-12, engages learners in academically rigorous, student-centered, hands-on experiences and leadership opportunities within a science, environmental education, and agricultural context.

**Vision:** AFSA will develop lifelong learners who are curious, care for others and have high skill levels in applied sciences, and will be prepared for a future in a diverse, global and changing society

**Honoring Native Peoples:** We would like to acknowledge that this meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Dakota People and pay our respect to elders both past and present.

2. Determination of Quorum: We have a quorum with 5 voting board members present.

3. Determination of Conflict of Interest on any agenda items: There are no conflicts of interest.

4. Approve Agenda: Kyra moved to approve of the agenda, Leslie seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes: Kyra moved to approve the minutes from the October board meeting, Kerry seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

6. FY25 Financial Audit review - ABDO: Tyler from ABDO attended the board meeting and went through the FY25 audit. The board was able to follow along through the presentation.

- This report is the responsibility and opinion of the auditors. There were three findings of non-compliance.
  - Time-period of payment. Bills beyond the accepted late payment.
  - Bonds: Not up to date on bond payments.
  - Credit card receipts: during the pull there were missing receipts, enough to make it non-compliant. Sam explained how we will make sure this does not continue. We need to make sure staff understand the importance of receipts. Typically this

happens during O/J terms. None were high value amounts, but still needs to be addressed.

- Statutory operating debt: we are going to be in statutory debt. We will have to come up with a plan by January 31st, showing how we will get out of debt. MDE usually will contact you in December to come up with that plan.
- End of year was 391 ADM
- General fund was about -2.5% year end.

7. Approval of September Financial Report - Kerry Moved to approve the financial report, payment of invoices and acceptance of gifts, Leslie seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

- i. Payment of Invoices
- ii. Acceptance of Gifts
- iii. Sam went through the financial and Supplemental Reports.

**B. SCHOOL GUEST SPEAKERS:** No guest speakers present.

**C. GUEST COMMENTS** (Three minutes per presenter) No guest comments.

#### **D. INFORMATION ITEMS**

1. School Activities Reports - Sam reported for both buildings

a. Elementary School:

- i. Academic: Conferences were great last week. We heard a lot from parents about why they love AFSA. Students celebrated Indigenous People's Day with class activities prior to or during Oterm. STAR testing will take place the first week of November for students grades 3-6.
- ii. Community/Culture: Oterm was last week. Terms included Fall Farm Frenzy, Apples, Pumpkins and Leaves, Science Spectacular, Act it Out, Down on the Farm, Wild Life, Treasure Hunters, Science of Fear, and Outdoors. Students visited farms, outdoor events, the science museum, went fishing, road bikes, and many more activities.
- iii. Enrollment: We had a new PreK student start this week. We also got a lead on a community that might need some school options. A parent came into the elementary and enrolled 3 students (prek, 3rd, and 6th).

b. High School:

- i. Academic: Same as Elementary. Warner is challenging Schulte for Field Trip Champion!
- ii. Community/Culture: We're looking forward to O-Term next week. Students will experience creation of infrastructure, Greek history, ceramics, the history of the Twin Cities, reading around the Twin Cities, hiking regional parks, FFA National Convention and Osprey Wilds overnight camp. Great AFSA Cup has started to reward staff and students for their positive contributions. We are currently developing our first full standings report.
- iii. Mission: Students will be completing activities in FOCUS to prepare for the College & Career Fair. FFA is creating and selling poinsettias and porch pots for the holidays!
- iv. Enrollment: We had two new students start this week, we have another one scheduled for this coming year. I have two pending tours for next year.

- v. Other: We are beginning the process of planning a trip to Ecuador for J-Term 2027! Information is starting to go out, there will be a presentation during the school day on November 4 followed by a parent meeting on November 13.

c. District:

- i. Liz and Sam are working with Amber Winter with being identified North Star school. It is from previous years but since we did not make gains we will work with her to come up with a common plan. Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI): Schools where one or more student groups are performing at or below thresholds for at least one indicator in each stage.

- ii. Events:

- 10/24 Vadnais Heights Halloween Party - AFSA booth
- 10/24 Zero Gravity Jump Night (Parent group event)
- 11/3 Parent & Family Group Chipotle Fundraiser
- 11/13 College & Career Day & Open House

d. Enrollment:

From last board meeting	2024 October	Current Students	Goal	Apps for 26-27
Prek	n/a	17 (+1)	18	3
KG	n/a	14	20	
1	n/a	11	22	1
2	n/a	7	22	
3	n/a	14	22	2
4	n/a	23	22	
5	n/a	13	30	
6	n/a	39 (+1)	30	1
Total	n/a	138	186	
7	36	31	35	
8	33	36	40	
9	50	38	60	
10	47	47	50	
11	45	39	50	
12	38	43	40	1
Total	249	234	275	

School Total		372	461	8
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2. Administrative Reports: No Reports.
3. Committee Reports
  - a. Election team - No reports.
  - b. Donations team - discussed in the working session. No reports.
  - c. Finance Committee: We need to hold a meeting to see what are options are for our current finance situation. Will need to see big picture options around our new school budget.
  - d. Exec Committee - No reports.
4. Training updates: Continue to update Kate P on your training progress. Kerry shared her latest training on Listen to Lead, we need to seek to understand and not to be understood. It is important for transparency.

## **E. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. OW Board Observation feedback: The board agreed that this feedback made sense and had some fair judgments. The board will address any feedback to make any necessary judgments.
2. Annual Report: Sam presented the annual report and gave time for the board to review. Most of the revisions were made when Liz Burkwald sent to the board for review. Only concerns were some scores were blank. Sam explained this is new this year on how we are compared to other schools. We were waiting to make sure our schools were correct and will be filled in. The board wanted to thank Liz for her hard work and believe the annual report looked good. Board mentioned they would like to have staff come in and explain low test scores, what is being done and some discussions on how we can improve.
3. Paid Family Leave cost distribution: Sam wanted the board to look at the new PFLA. The laws are changing around on how the cost is paid for. It will be around 32,500 for the school to make up the difference. We will be voting on this next board meeting to see if any of the cost will be made up from the employees. We discussed the pros and cons. If passed down to the employees, it could be burdensome as we increased health insurance coverages this year. The board will take time to review this month so we can come up with a decision in the November board meeting.
4. Capital Asset Policy: Melissa Farler went through the changes to this Capital Assess Policy. Previously the fixed asset policy.

## **F. ACTION ITEMS**

1. Annual Report - Julie moved to approve of the Annual Report, Kyra seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.
2. Financial Audit - Kerry moved to approve the Financial Audit, Leslie seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.
3. Capital Asset Policy - Kyra moved to approve the Capital Asset Policy, Melissa seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

## **G. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. Next meetings:

a. Regular meeting November 18, 2025 at 5 pm

**I. ADJOURNMENT** - Kyra moved to adjourn the board meeting, Kerry seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. Board meeting adjourned at 6:39pm