

January 12, 2026 Agenda Board Questions and Responses

(Agenda item numbers are based on the [1.12.26 draft agenda](#).)

E.4 Lakeshore Equipment Amendment

1. What specific instructional materials are being purchased with this increase, and how much classroom instructional time will they replace or add?

Items being purchased for English language development and Dual Language classrooms include visuals, anchor charts, realia, and manipulatives to provide additional resources to enhance the ELD and DL core curricula by creating a more language-rich learning environment. As they are used in conjunction with the current ELD and DL curricula, no instructional time will be impacted.

2. How will we know at the end of the year whether this purchase improved literacy outcomes for multilingual learners, as opposed to simply expanding materials?

Our English language proficiency scores were the highest marks the district achieved on the 2025 Oklahoma State Report Card due to our effective instructional practices in English language development and Dual Language. Simultaneously, our student outcomes in this area must continue to advance in order to fully prepare our students for full multilingualism and success in English language content areas of math, science, social studies, and English language arts. We will monitor the effectiveness of these tools based on our continued growth of student outcomes on the annual English language proficiency assessment. Lakeshore is a district-wide approved vendor for curricular supplies and was selected based on its competitive pricing and overall value to the district.

3. What alternatives were considered before increasing the cap mid-year?

This purchase fulfills a commitment in the 2021 bond to purchase classroom instructional materials for English language development and Dual Language classrooms to supplement core instructional resources with visuals, anchor charts, realia, and manipulatives to support classroom instruction and student learning.

E.6 Scholastic Books

4. How does this purchase align with our adopted literacy curriculum, and what guardrails are in place to prevent curriculum fragmentation across sites?

The purchase of Scholastic books is intended to support our district-adopted curriculum by providing students with access to additional, appropriately leveled reading materials. Having books that match students' Lexile levels helps strengthen fluency, comprehension, and overall reading growth, which are core goals of our adopted curriculum. To avoid

curriculum fragmentations, these books are used only as supplemental resources to support core instructional programming across all sites.

E.8 Thirdline

5. Has the TPS internal auditor been engaged in or consulted regarding this software, including familiarity with its functionality and controls?

This agenda item reflects a renewal and has been updated to clarify that it is not a new contract. Thirdline was implemented in the district in FY24, before the establishment of an internal audit position. Current staff are well acquainted with the platform and its functionality.

6. Additionally, does the proposed cost include implementation and training, or are those services expected to be provided separately?

Yes, this cost includes training. There is not an implementation expense since this is a renewal contract.

E.13 and E.14 Adjunct Certified Teachers and Adjunct Aspiring Teachers

7. Is adjunct and aspiring educator retention improving, declining, or staying the same?

Current retention for the 2024–2025 cohort is 80% and remains steady. The 2025–2026 cohort retention is 93%, reflecting a slight 3% decrease due to an educator's resignation over winter break. Overall, retention for aspiring educators is 87%.

8. How does their retention compare to that of traditionally certified teachers?

Last year, the retention rate for certified teachers was 83.9%, while the current overall retention rate for aspiring educators is 87%.

9. What supports are in place to ensure adjunct teachers are classroom-ready?

Aspiring Educators are supported through a structured system designed to ensure classroom readiness. Each aspiring educator is paired with an instructional mentor who provides coaching and ongoing support, as well as a site-based mentor for day-to-day guidance. In addition, aspiring educators are required to complete the Science of Reading training, Tulsa Way Academy, and 14 hours of Tulsa Way Saturdays before and during their teaching experience.

E.15 Arkansas State University Amendment

10. Do we give universities feedback if university-prepared interns are unprepared for classroom realities?

Student teacher interns are evaluated throughout the semester by both the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor through observations, ongoing feedback, and mid- and end-of-semester evaluations. These measures inform whether an intern is recommended for teaching. When an intern appears underprepared for the realities of the classroom, that feedback is typically communicated to the university through the supervisor or established partnership contacts—either during the placement or at the conclusion of the semester—to support continuous improvement of preparation programs.

11. Do we know which universities send the best interns?

We do have insight into which universities consistently send strong student teacher interns. The majority of our interns come from Northeastern State University, the University of Tulsa, and Oral Roberts University, and many have completed either Pre-1 and Pre-2 experiences in our schools, providing them with additional exposure to our classrooms and district expectations. As a result, these interns often arrive with extensive teaching experience and have been a strong asset to our recruitment efforts as we identify and hire high-quality new teachers.

E.17 Opioid Abatement Grant

12. How much instructional time is being used for this program, and what academic content is being displaced?

The board approved participation in the Opioid Abatement grant with a joint application with the City of Tulsa. This Opioid Abatement grant was first approved for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and each year of the grant requires the District to renew the agreement and thus multiple agenda items for this grant. It is difficult to calculate the exact hours of instructional time that would be used for this grant, as the implementation of the grant is flexible depending on the needs of the school. Middle schools and high schools have participated in different ways, such as drug prevention assemblies, student council awareness campaigns, and parent information sessions. The grant has sponsored other evening events, including sharing information at athletic events and poster contests for students as well.

13. If we didn't have this grant, is there any expectation that the district would sustain this program with general funds?

No

E. 18 SpEd Specialized Services Amendment

14. Help me understand this mid-year change. Did we have specialized staff leave that we were paying via the general fund, and now we need to replace them with contractors?

This amendment is requesting approval to add an additional funding source to the original item that was approved by the Board on June 9, 2025. The original agenda item in June was to approve the listed contractors to provide therapeutic services or specialized staffing services to ensure that the district can meet our students' diverse and evolving needs as the District continues to recruit for vacant specialized positions.

E.24 Guardrail Reports – GR 2.1, 2.2, 2.3

Interim Guardrail 2.1: Timely Evaluation and Eligibility Determination Within 45 School Days

15. What specific operational, staffing, and procedural factors contributed to the decline from 94.0 percent in 2024 to 86.8 percent in 2025, despite prior improvement trends, and how is the district addressing evaluator capacity, scheduling bottlenecks, consent processing delays, and school-level compliance monitoring to reliably achieve and sustain the 95 percent target by June 2026?

The decline from 94.0% to 86.8% resulted primarily from an unexpected loss of evaluation staff during summer 2024—from 33 qualified evaluators to 14—while referrals remained high and legally mandated timelines did not change. The district moved quickly to contract with outside evaluation agencies, though procurement and onboarding took longer than anticipated.

Certain evaluations, such as those for autism or emotional disturbance, require licensed school psychologists specifically. Shortages in that role had an outsized impact on required timelines.

While this report reflects data through June 2025, current performance is stronger, and we are anticipating better results for 2025-2026. Safeguards now in place—including real-time monitoring, escalation triggers, and stabilized staffing—are designed to prevent future regression and sustain progress.

16. Additionally, what safeguards are in place to prevent future regression once the target is met?

The district takes this decline seriously and has implemented concrete steps to recover and sustain progress toward the 95% target, including:

- Case-level tracking now begins immediately after parent consent is signed
- Escalation protocols are triggered at 30 school days, prompting direct intervention by district leadership
- Contracted evaluators are now fully onboarded and operational
- Recruitment of qualified internal evaluators remains a priority
- School-level accountability has been strengthened through clearer expectations and regular compliance monitoring

We expect continued improvement through 2025–26, and sustained compliance will require ongoing attention to staffing and systems, with the understanding that reaching and sustaining near-perfect compliance is a capacity-dependent, multi-year effort, not a one-year correction.

Interim Guardrail 2.2: Long-Term Suspensions or Expulsions of Students with Disabilities

17. Given the volatility in the suspension ratio over time and the spike to 2.72 in 2024, what underlying drivers, such as behavioral supports, manifestation determination practices, campus discipline culture, or staffing supports, are contributing to these fluctuations, and how will Tulsa Public Schools structurally reduce reliance on long-term removals to meet the 1.5x target by 2026 rather than relying on year-to-year variance?

There has been a concerted effort to reduce the length of suspensions, and now the district is focusing on the number of suspensions. In the past, TPS focused heavily on social and emotional learning needs, trauma-informed practices, and ways to support students who are struggling with mental health challenges. Unfortunately, due to the stance of the state of Oklahoma under previous leadership took on the aforementioned, Tulsa Public Schools lost ground on best practices to reduce suspensions. As a result, we are returning to the restorative practices that resulted in suspension reduction in the past. In addition to the social and emotional mental health needs, we are also revisiting Tier 1 behavioral support strategies. When we see spikes—such as the increase in 2024—it often reflects gaps in campus-level supports and adult capacity to meet student needs proactively.

Several underlying factors contribute to this fluctuation:

- Inconsistent implementation of behavior supports across campuses
- Inconsistent application of legally required reviews before disciplining students with disabilities
- Limited access to mental health and crisis intervention supports within the school building
- Staffing strain, particularly when schools are managing high-need students without adequate specialized support

To address this, TPS is shifting from reactive discipline toward structural, preventive supports, including:

- Investment in specialized programs and therapeutic partnerships for students with intensive behavioral needs
- Expansion of centralized and school-based supports aligned to student need (autism-related supports vs. mental-health-driven behaviors)
- Districtwide professional development focused on proactive behavior strategies, de-escalation, and legally sound discipline practices
- Ongoing work to strengthen early intervention supports for behavior, so students receive help earlier and remain in school settings whenever possible

- Standard “calm room” space suggestions to help principals identify effective uses of site bond funds to meet program needs (furniture, room renovations, etc.)

The goal is to meet the 1.5x target by reducing reliance on long-term removals altogether by building adult capacity, increasing in-building supports, and ensuring students with disabilities are served in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their needs.

This work is underway, but it requires sustained investment and alignment.

Interim Guardrail 2.3: Families Acknowledging Receipt of Accessible and Timely Special Education Information

18. While overall progress has been made, data shows plateauing and population variation in family acknowledgment rates. What barriers, including language access, digital access, trust, or engagement strategies, are contributing to slower growth among certain populations, and how will the district ensure consistent, accessible, and verifiable communication so the 75 percent target by 2027 is achieved equitably across all families?

The district has made some progress, but the plateau tells us that access alone is not the same as understanding.

Several barriers affect acknowledgment rates, particularly among multilingual families and families navigating complex systems:

- Language access, including translation quality and availability
- Digital access, especially for families relying on mobile devices
- Trust and familiarity, particularly for families new to special education
- The volume and complexity of forms can limit meaningful engagement

While this metric tracks acknowledgment of receipt, the district is also focused on ensuring families understand the information, not just receive it.

Key actions underway include:

- More targeted, language-specific communication
- Simplified messaging aligned to family needs
- Exploration of multiple outreach methods, not just enrollment forms
- Stronger coordination between campuses and central teams to follow up with families who need additional support

These efforts are designed to ensure that growth toward the 75% target is equitable, not driven by families who already have the easiest access.

19. The 2026 data indicate lower acknowledgment rates among multilingual learner families and only moderate gains among families of students with IEPs. How is the district tailoring communication strategies by subgroup, including language access, outreach methods, and trusted messengers, and what accountability measures exist to ensure these efforts close gaps rather than perpetuate them as the district moves toward the 2027 target?

Families are not a monolithic group, and our communication strategies cannot be either.

For families of students with IEPs and multilingual families in particular, the district is moving toward:

- Plain-language explanations, not just compliance documents
- Trusted messengers, including school-based staff with established relationships
- Multiple touchpoints, such as follow-up surveys and meeting-based confirmation, rather than one-time forms
- Improved data verification, ensuring acknowledgments are accurately recorded and reviewed
- To ensure these efforts close gaps rather than perpetuate them, the district is strengthening accountability at both the system and campus levels, including clearer ownership for follow-up and regular review of group-level data.

- The focus going forward is not just whether families confirmed receipt, but whether they were meaningfully informed and supported.

G.1 Bids for combined Purpose General Obligation Bonds 2026A

20. Can we clearly articulate how these bond-funded investments will improve classroom learning conditions, not just infrastructure quality?

This agenda item is for the issuance of \$40 million of general obligation bonds as part of the 2021 Bond package. This Bond package includes multiple construction projects including: roofing, paving, interior renovations, furniture for schools, and cafeteria equipment. In addition, a major technology infrastructure project for district-wide wireless upgrade is included. Finally, this allocation will also cover curriculum resources and applications along with other classroom upgrades (STEM, early childhood, etc.) that support student outcomes. More information on the 2021 Bond can be found online [here](#). All purchases requiring board approval will be brought to the board for consideration and the rationale for these purchases will inform the board members regarding need and/or impact for students on classroom learning conditions, student outcomes and infrastructure upgrades.