

Orange Southwest School District (OSSD)
Regular Board Meeting on Wednesday January 14, 2026
Randolph Elementary School
6pm

[Click Here](#) to watch a video recording of the meeting

I. **Opening (6:00 pm)** called to order by Board Chair Anne Kaplan at 6:00 pm

- Board Attendance: *Ensuring a quorum – Board: Anne Kaplan, Aimil Parmelee, Beverly Lauchner, Ryan Anderson, Martha Hafner, Rachel Gaidys, Rachel Fish. Remote – Sam Hooper. Administration: Michael Clark, Robin Pembroke, Bob Worley, Wes Gibbs, Kyle Southworth, ORCA. Public (all remote): Alexandria McLaughlin, Avery McGill, Jane Ertel, Kelsey, Norie Belanger, Amanda Cotter, Sean McAnulty.*
- Meeting Purpose: Approve and Warn the Annual Budget for Orange Southwest School District:
- Review and Accept Agenda: Any changes needed? Meeting purpose? Are these the right agenda items? Is the right amount of time allotted?
Anne Kaplan requests to add an executive session, without the superintendent present, at the end of the public meeting to discuss the superintendent's contract.

II. **Ownership Linkage (6:10)**

- General Public Comment: Please hold comments on the budget until the second public comment. *The Board welcomes comment but is not able to take any action. Comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker.*
No public comment
- Up for Learning Presentation (Information)
Randolph Union High School students Shota Armstrong and Harold Quayle presented project work between RUMHS, White River Valley and Montpelier to develop a vision of what education could look like. Students collaborated with each other to develop awareness and identify issues. They met with community to share ideas, then returned to discuss learnings. The students discovered that while the schools themselves were very different, the students were looking for very similar things – increased learning opportunities, flexible pathways, encouragement to develop soft skills and to fail safely as an essential step in learning. Up For Learning students spoke with students in their schools and discovered great consistency across grade levels, with students stating having a voice in their education and being a real part of it was important. The students shared a slideshow which begins at 3:19 of the attached meeting recording.
- Facilities Update (Information/Board Discussion)
Facilities Directors Bob Worley and Wes Gibbs Updated the board on planned and in-progress projects around the district then moved into conversation about the replacement of the main transformer. They confirmed that the transformer could be moved and used in the future if the location and design of the school accommodate that. A proposal to renovate the climate control system at RES was introduced. RES is a 25 year old facility that was designed for future educational needs, and is in the best shape of all schools in the district. There is a perception of air quality issues, and there are moisture concerns in the building and while testing doesn't indicate any problems, there is an opportunity to update the environmental system at the school. Wes Gibbs addresses the complexity of maintaining outdated equipment rather than replacing

the systems with current technology and an eye to the future. Discussion turned to assessment of RES, administration requirements, permits, schematics and working with known contractors and engineers. Michael Clark discusses funding and time frame for this project, advising that this project be given good consideration. The board requests that they hear more about this at the February regular meeting.

- Updated Budget Numbers and Preliminary Data

Cost per pupil is 1.22% lower than last year. Michael Clark commends data manager Crystal Larocque and business manager Robin Pembroke for providing accurate, plentiful data which enabled the district to claim more students, reducing the per pupil cost. He outlined other cost savings that impacted the budget, and referenced his Superintendent's Report as well as the preliminary tax impact on page 102 of the board packet. Although these projections are dependent on state decisions still under consideration by the legislature, the OSSD projects a decrease of 4.22% from last year's rate.

- **Public Comment on Budget:** specific to the updated budget information. The Board welcomes comment but is not able to take any action. Comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker.

No public comment

- OSSD Budget Board Motion: I move to authorize the OSSD expenditure budget in the amount of 29,159,606.

Moved by Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Martha Hafner, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- RTCC Budget Board Motion: I move to authorize the RTCC expenditure budget in the amount of \$3,605,569.

Moved by Rachel Fish, seconded by Aimil Parmelee, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Raven Budget Board Motion: I move to authorize the R.A.V.E.N. expenditure budget in the amount of \$347,436.

Moved by Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Ryan Anderson, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Next steps and Budget Timeline reviewed

Michael Clark points out that this meeting almost completes the budget process, with the informational, annual and town meetings finalizing things.

- Informational Meeting Motion: I move to approve the Informational Meeting date, time and location as presented – Thursday, Feb. 26 at 6 pm at Murray Auditorium, RUMHS, Randolph.

Moved by Rachel Gaidys, seconded by Aimil Parmelee, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Ballot:

- The Board needs to discuss the Operation reserve account and the Buildings reserve account and decide how to use the 2024-2025 reserve account. Please see the superintendent report for details about this.

Michael Clark discusses the strategy of not putting money into the operational reserve but instead into the building reserve. The board discusses.

- Annual Warning Approval

- Kyle will update the Annual meeting agenda based on what is decided above and share the warning at the meeting

Board Motion: I move to approve the 2026 annual warning as amended, and to place the full 2024-2025 surplus in the amount of \$1,887,000 in the OSSD Building Reserve Fund..

Moved by Martha Hafner, seconded by Beverly Lauchner, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Board seats on the Ballot (Discussion)

- Randolph – Beverly Lauchner (appointed) is up for election and will be running.
- Brookfield – Sam Hooper's term is expiring, he hasn't decided at this point if he is running again.

III. Board Process (7:00)

- Support Staff Negotiations Update (Information)
Michael Clark has a meeting scheduled with the Association Thursday, Jan 15.
- Annual Report to Voters from the Board
 - Board Motion: I move to approve the annual report as discussed.

Moved by Rachel Fish seconded by Aimil Parmelee, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Update on meeting with Legislators in February (Information)
Sam Hooper reports he has drafted the invitation email to legislators and is waiting for one email address before sending that off.

IV. Board Education (7:10)

- Reminder of Policy Governance Virtual Training January 22, 2026

V. Monitoring the Organization (7:15)

- Accept/Reject EL 2.4 & 2.5 (BMD 3.4.5) 2nd Read (Action)
Board discusses tabling EL 2.5 until all information is received rather than conditionally approving the item.
 - Board Motion: I move to approve Executive Limitation 2.4 as presented

Moved by Beverly Lauchner, seconded by Ryan Anderson, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Board Motion: I move to table Executive Limitation 2.5 until the February meeting.

Moved by Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Ryan Anderson, passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Financials (EL 2.3 Financial Conditions) (Information)

VI. Policy Decisions for District Governance (7:30)

- Criminal History Record Checks Policy -- First Read
- B2 Volunteers and Work Study Students -- First Read
- C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying -- First Read
- C14 Section 504 and ADA Grievance Protocol -- First Read

Michael Clark explains the purpose and any changes to each policy, Anne Kaplan notes that policies are required and are part of the Superintendent's charge in keeping the district compliant. Rachel Gaidys asks if, for the policies that are being approved due to staffing changes, the language could be modified to be more consistent with the position rather than the individual. Michael Clark is waiting for an answer from the VSBA on that issue.

VII. Monitoring the Board (7:45)

- *Board Self-Evaluation: Monitoring compliance with Board Governance Process and Board Management Delegation Policies.*
- GP 4.5 Board Members' Conduct & 4.6 Committee Principles – Self Evaluation (Discussion)
- District Quality Standards Survey (Discussion)

VIII. Consent Agenda (8:00)

- 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 December 10, 2025 and Minutes from Jan 5, 2026
- Approve Annual Tuition Rate
- Set High School Choice Numbers (15/15)
- AOE Financial Management
- New Hires

Board motion: I move to approve the Consent Agenda

Moved by Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Ryan Anderson, passes unanimously, no abstentions.

IX. Closing/Incidental Information (8:10)

- Superintendent's Report

Discussion of calendar as well as noting that Cara Houston has submitted her resignation as Brookfield principal effective June 30, 2026.

- Ends Snapshot

Michael Clark introduces the ENDS snapshot and reminds that winter break fell during this report

- Action Item Recap

X. Executive Session

I move to find that premature general knowledge regarding the superintendent's contract clearly places the board at a substantial disadvantage because the board risks disclosing its negotiation strategy if it discusses the superintendent's contract in public

Moved by Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Ryan Anderson, passes unanimously, no abstentions.

I move to enter Executive Session, without the superintendent present, for the purpose of discussing the superintendent's contract under Title 1, Section 131 (a)(1).

Sam Hooper seconds, the motion passes unanimously.

Moved by Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Rachel Fish, passes unanimously, no abstentions.

Board enters Executive Session at 8:13 pm.

Future Meetings

- Agenda Planning Meeting: Tuesday February 3 at 6 pm
- RAB Meeting: 5 PM RUMHS
- Regular Board Meeting: 6pm February 11, 2026 at RUMHS

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle M Southworth 01/16/2026

Kyle M. Southworth, Administrative Assistant

FORM FOR TAKING MINUTES AT
EXECUTIVE SESSION

Name of Board: OSSD

Date of Meeting: Jan. 14, 2026

Continuation of minutes provided by Martha Hagner

Executive Session

8:13 p.m. A motion was made (Amil Parmelee) & seconded
(Rachel Fish) to enter Executive Session to discuss
_____ (with the ^{out}superintendent present*).

Passed unanimously (or vote: ✓yes; no; abs.).

*cross out this section if supt. is excused from Exec. Session.

_____ 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 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Hagner

Ends Snapshot January 2026 Update

At its October 2025 meeting, the Orange Southwest School District (OSSD) Board adopted the following amended Ends for the district. The administration believes it is essential to keep the Board regularly informed about specific progress toward achieving these Ends.

To that end, in addition to the traditional annual End-of-Year Ends Report, the administration will prepare an Ends Snapshot Report to share with the Board at each monthly meeting. These monthly reports are not intended to capture every initiative or activity related to the Ends across the district. Rather, they will highlight selected examples of ongoing work to help the administration, Board, educators, students, and the broader community better understand how we are ensuring that OSSD graduates possess strong academic and essential life skills and are prepared to actively contribute to their communities.

We anticipate that the format and content of these reports will evolve over time to provide a more comprehensive and efficient picture of our progress. We welcome your feedback as we refine this process.

Policy Title 1.0 Ends Statement:

All students of Orange Southwest Schools will graduate with strong academic and essential life skills, prepared to actively contribute to their communities, as supported by community-approved resources.

The above will be achieved through the following priorities:

- 1.1 A rigorous academic foundation
 - 1.1.1 ELA (Reading, writing, listening, communicating)
 - 1.1.2 Mathematics
 - 1.1.3 Science and technology
 - 1.1.4 Social studies
 - 1.1.5 Arts
- 1.2 Life skills, personal development and self-care
 - 1.2.1 Vocational skills
 - 1.2.2 Wellness
 - 1.2.3 Financial literacy
 - 1.2.4 Self-direction
 - 1.2.5 Social-emotional skills
 - 1.2.6 Critical thinking, curiosity, and creativity
- 1.3 Community engagement and global citizenship
 - 1.3.1 Global awareness (including world languages)
 - 1.3.2 Civics

- 1.3.3 Community involvement
- 1.3.4 Care for the environment
- 1.3.5 Respect for and inclusion of diversity

January Snap Shot

1.1 A rigorous academic foundation

1.1.1 ELA (Reading, writing, listening, communicating)

- BRK: Two teachers at Brookfield are participating in coaching through Vt Reads and will practice coaching teachers in early and foundational literacy skills.
- RES: Our EST coordinator has reorganized the way that we are looking more frequently at the EST students. This will now be taking place for each EST student at the team meetings. STAR testing is taking place in the first three. Additionally, three staff members have joined the AOE Read VT initiative to advance early literacy through the development and implementation of targeted instructional practices and routines. Literacy Consultant LLC visited RES on Jan. 13th to meet with staff and begin the work.
- OSSD: Five teaching staff members have joined the AOE Read VT initiative to advance early literacy through the development and implementation of targeted instructional practices and routines. Literacy Consultant LLC visited RES & BRK on Jan. 13th to meet with teachers and begin the work.

1.1.2 Mathematics

- BRK: Building math fact fluency with games and activities. 5th graders worked on a performance task where they measured their body parts and used ratios to determine the measurement of the Statue of Liberty

1.1.3 Science and technology

- RU: Chemistry classes are developing in depth research projects

1.1.4 Social studies

1.1.5 Arts

1.2 Life skills, personal development and self-care

1.2.1 Vocational skills

- BRK: In coordination with the fifth/sixth grade teacher, we are working to help students better understand how to keep themselves safe online via social media.
- RES: Specialized services are offering functional skills learning in partnership with the school kitchen

1.2.2 Wellness

- BRK : In coordination with the fifth/sixth grade teacher, we are working to help students better understand how to keep themselves safe online via social media.

1.2.3 Financial literacy

1.2.4 Self-direction

- BRK: 3 students are presenting composting rules and expectations to school for review; 2 students have created two separate clubs (DND and Writing Club), created sign ups, found a teacher to supervise and have created what will be covered during their meetings.
- RES Specialized services are offering functional skills learning in partnership with the school kitchen
- RU: the 10th grade Advisory Cohort is rotating through Advisors with workshops related to independent living. Students have learned how to draft emails, write checks, make chocolate pudding from scratch, and more.

1.2.5 Social-emotional skills

- BRK: Using the DESSA ratings, classes are teaching at least one lesson a week in a specified competency.

1.2.6 Critical thinking, curiosity, and creativity

- RU: Outdoor Education, outdoor building projects and teambuilding for all grade levels
- OSSD: UP For Learning Leadership Training Regarding Re-Vision Project reviewed data from listening sessions
- BRK: Building mazes and coding robots to move through the mazes in STEM classes. The 3/4 class is support critical thinking and curiosity by learning how to use dictionaries and definitions and etymology of words. The 5th and 6th grade students are working on a unit about staying safe online and reducing instances of cyberbullying. The class came together to come up with ideas of ways to prevent cyberbullying when they are online. Here is the document that has those ideas.

1.3 Community engagement and global citizenship

1.3.1 Global awareness (including world languages)

- BRK: The 5/6 class undertakes challenges twice a week in which they have to guess where in the world a picture on the board was taken (similar to Geoguessr). At the end of the week we reveal the answers, and talk about similarities and differences we see with our own environments.
- RU AP Statistics collaborates with Public Assets Institute to develop investigative project

1.3.2 Civics

- OSSD: UP For Learning Re-Visioning Project Board Report

1.3.3 Community involvement

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1.3.4 Care for the environment

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1.3.5 Respect for and inclusion of diversity

- BRN: Selections for the arts include diverse selections in performances and history of art. During the holiday there were multiple opportunities for students to experience holiday traditions from other cultures.