

January 21, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the School Board, Independent School District No. 701, was called to order at 3:30 P.M. on January 21, 2026 in the High School Board Room. Members present: Directors McLaughlin, Polcher, Egan, Gabardi, Chair Berklich and Student Director Sam Hardy.

Members Absent: Director Galatz

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment: None

Director Polcher added the following addendum items to the Consent Agenda: Accept the resignation from Kayla LaTarte, social studies teacher, effective January 20, 2026. Accept the resignation from Ranae Seykora, high school principal, effective January 20, 2026. Approve the hiring of Kerry Hutchings to Job #66 Resource Room Supervisor, 15 hours per week, Lincoln Middle School, effective January 22, 2026. Approve the hiring of Megan Hoertsch to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Washington Elementary, effective January 26, 2026. Approve the hiring of Sara Bjelland to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Greenhaven Elementary, effective January 26, 2026. Approve the hiring of Hannah Nance-Donaldson to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Washington Elementary, effective January 26, 2026. Approve the hiring of Natalie Scally to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Early Learning Center, effective January 26, 2026. The following addendum items added to the Administrative Business: Adopt the Resolution Electronic Fund Transfers and approve Carrie McDonald, Acting Superintendent, and Kim McLaughlin, Board Treasurer, as account signers with the following depositories of Wells Fargo Bank, Security State Bank, and Park State Bank.

Administrative Reports:

Directors / Student Director:

Sam Hardy, Student Director discussed 4-day school week survey.

Administrators and Staff: None

Committee Report: None

#### APPROVE AGENDA

Moved by Director Egan, supported by Director McLaughlin to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Director Polcher, supported by Director Egan and approved unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda which consists of the Minutes from the January 7, 2026 Regular Meeting, January 9, 2026 Emergency Meeting and the following for the month of December, 2025: Consideration of Claims in the amount of \$2,170,265.67. Electronic Fund Transfers in the amount of \$487,110.15. Treasurer's and Investment Reports and Payrolls in the amount of \$1,979,542.95. Accept the resignation from Maggie Iverson, pupil support assistant, effective January 6, 2026. Accept the resignation for purposes of retirement from Trina Baumgardner, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Staffing Coordinator, effective June 30, 2026. Accept the resignation from Kayla LaTarte, social studies teacher, effective January 20, 2026. Accept the resignation from Ranae Seykora, high school principal, effective January 20, 2026. Approve the hiring of Kerry Hutchings to Job #66 Resource Room Supervisor, 15 hours per week, Lincoln Middle School, effective January 22, 2026. Approve the hiring of Megan Hoertsch to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Washington Elementary, effective January 26, 2026. Approve the hiring of Sara Bjelland to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Greenhaven Elementary, effective January 26, 2026. Approve the hiring of Hannah Nance-Donaldson to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Washington Elementary, effective January 26, 2026. Approve the hiring of Natalie Scally to Job #60 Pupil Support Assistant, 30 hours per week, Early Learning Center, effective January 26, 2026.

**Administrative Business:**

APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR DONATIONS

Moved by Director Polcher, supported by Director McLaughlin to approve the resolution for donations. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE CARRIE MCDONALD TO ACT AS THE IDENTIFIED OFFICIAL WITH AUTHORITY (IOWA) FOR 0701-01 TO AUTHORIZE, REVIEW, AND RECTIFY USERS FOR THE EDUCATION IDENTITY ACCESS MANAGEMENT (EDIAM) SYSTEM

Moved by Director Polcher, supported by Director McLaughlin to approve Carrie McDonald to act as the Identified Official with Authority (IOWA) for 0701-01 to authorize, review, and rectify users for the Education Identity Access Management (EDIAM) system. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE THE 2025 PAY EQUITY COMPLIANCE REPORT AS PRESENTED

Moved by Director Polcher, supported by Director Gabardi to approve the 2025 Pay Equity Compliance Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

ACCEPT THE AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION AIPAC AND  
DISTRICT COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION AND RESOLUTION OF  
CONCURRENCE AS PRESENTED

Moved by Director Gabardi, supported by Chair Berklich to accept the American Indian Education AIPAC and District Compliance Documentation and Resolution of Concurrence as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE THE RESOLUTION ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFERS

Moved by Director Polcher, supported by Director Egan to approve Resolution that the Superintendent and CESO be authorized to make payments through the use of electronic fund transfers, and shall report the same to the School Board each month. Motion carried unanimously.

Acting Superintendent Carrie McDonald moved the closed session for discussion of negotiations strategy after the discussion items.

**Discussion Items:**

Discussed the agenda and the goals of the Joint Meeting with Chisholm Public Schools on February 25, 2026, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at Valentini's Supper Club in Chisholm, MN.

FY2026 Reductions

The small pool at the high school will close on March 4, 2026.

RECESSED

Chair Berklich recessed the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

RETURN FROM RECESS

Moved by Director Polcher, supported by Director Egan to return from recess at 4:28 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

GO INTO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS NEGOTIATIONS  
STRATEGY

Chair Berklich went into closed session at 4:26 p.m. to discuss negotiations strategy.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Chair Berklich returned to open session at 5:25 p.m.

ADJOURN

Moved by Director Polcher, supported by Chair Berklich to adjourn the meeting at 5:26 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

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JOHN BERKLICH, CHAIR

ATTEST:

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JEFF POLCHER, CLERK