

BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2026

The Board of Education of the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, Wayne and Washtenaw Counties, Michigan, met in a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 7 p.m. at the E. J. McClendon Educational Center, 454 S. Harvey Street, Plymouth, Michigan, 48170.

Vice President Sidhu called the Regular Meeting to order at 7 p.m. in the Boardroom.

Present: Members Ahmed, Kehoe, Picard, Sidhu, Vos, and Westra

Absent: Member Christenson

Administrators: Dr. Monica Merritt, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Liz Vartanian-Gibbs, Assistant Superintendent of Student & Family Engagement
Jill Minnick, Chief Finance and Operations Officer
Jen Curry, Chief Academic Officer
Matthew Lents, Director of Facilities and Capital Projects

Others Present: Diane Robertson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and the Board
Josh Patterson, SVA Student Co-Chair
Arjan Swaminathan, SVA Student Co-Chair
Joe Ross, McCarthy and Smith, Project Manager

Josh Patterson and Arjan Swaminathan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

A. Adoption of the Agenda/Approval of the Consent Agenda

Action Item #26-01-33: It was moved by Member Kehoe and seconded by Member Ahmed to Adopt the Agenda and the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Kehoe, Picard, Sidhu, Vos, and Westra

Nays: None

The motion was carried 6-0

New Hires

Shepard, Kourtney	Elementary Classroom Hoben Elementary School	Effective 1-15-26
Banwart, Reuben	P-CEP Master Scheduler Plymouth High School	Effective 2-9-26

Leaves

Gorman, Shannon	Language Art West Middle School	Childcare Leave of Absence Effective 1-5-26 through 4-3-26
Jacobs, Jennifer	Dean of Student Support West Middle School	Childcare Leave of Absence Effective 1-12-26 through 3-27-26
St. Peter, Meghan	Social Studies Liberty Middle School	Childcare Leave of Absence Effective 1-5-26 through 4-3-26
Yun, Claire	History Canton High School	Childcare Leave of Absence Effective 1-6-26 through 4-17-26

Resignations

Horning, Katherine	Psychology Canton High School	Resignation Effective 1-16-26
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Layoffs

Beaulieu, Steven	Adult Education Coordinator Starkweather Academy	Effective 3-20-26
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Approval of Minutes

The Regular Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2026, were approved as presented.

B. Celebrating Success

Member Westra presented the Extra Miler Award to Nicol Shamey, a teacher at Plymouth High School, in recognition of her exceptional dedication to her students. Nicol builds strong relationships and ensures students are supported in reaching their full potential. She leads the P-CEP Journey Program, which provides targeted academic and personal growth support for students. In addition to her work in the classroom, Nicol is a twice-published author, including an Education Practice Brief and the book *First, Do No Harm: Teaching & Learning Resilience*. Nicol goes above and beyond every day to support her students and fellow colleagues and is a deserving recipient of this award.

C. Board Committee Reports/ActionPresident's Report – Lauren Christenson

Vice President Sidhu thanked her Board colleagues for attending recent community engagement events, including the Middle School Robotics Showcase and the MLK Day Community Celebration. She also shared that the Board is currently seeking a facilitator for a future Board governance workshop.

Student Performance and Achievement Committee (SPA) – Judy Westra

Member Westra shared that the SPA Committee has not met since the last Board meeting. The next SPA committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 5 p.m. in the Boardroom, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Policy Advisory Committee (F&O) – Anupam Sidhu

Member Sidhu shared that the Policy Committee met this evening and reviewed presentations from Miller Johnson and Thrun Law as part of the district's ongoing review of its policies and in consideration of a potential change to its policy management software and consultant. The committee will continue this discussion at a future meeting. The committee also received a presentation from MDE regarding the pre-Labor Day school start waiver, which will be discussed during upcoming teacher negotiations. Benefits of an earlier start include aligning Early Middle College and dual-enrollment programs with college start dates and providing greater calendar flexibility due to the late Labor Day in 2026. The next Policy committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the collaboration conference room, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Finance and Operations Committee - Patrick Kehoe

Member Kehoe shared that the F&O committee met on January 22, 2026, and reviewed a resolution for a PFO pavilion purchase at Smith Elementary School. The committee also reviewed an economic outlook presentation and December financial reports. The next F&O committee meeting will be held on Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 5 p.m. in the Boardroom, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Student Voice in Action Committee (SVA) - Lauren Christenson

Josh Patterson and Arjan Swaminathan, SVA Student Co-Chairs, shared that the SVA Committee has not met since the last Board meeting. The next SVA Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at Pioneer Middle School, and everyone is welcome to attend.

D. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Merritt announced an important milestone for Plymouth-Canton Community Schools through an expanded partnership opportunity with orsa credit union, formerly Community Financial. She shared that discussions began in September with a shared vision to expand opportunities for students while aligning with the district's Dynamic Plan and its focus on innovation, relevance, and future readiness.

The proposed partnership includes naming rights for the Innovation Hub, supported by a \$5 million investment over a 25-year period. The investment is intended to benefit all students, kindergarten through grade 12, with an emphasis on STEM and Career and Technical Education, including learning related to emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and augmented and virtual reality.

Members of the orsa credit union administrative team were introduced, and Tansley Stern, President of orsa, shared remarks on behalf of the credit union. It was noted that this partnership builds on a relationship spanning more than three decades, including long-standing financial literacy programs and in-school credit unions.

Superintendent Merritt also outlined the process moving forward, noting that the proposal is presented as a first reading this evening in accordance with Board Policy 7250, and will return in March for Board consideration following the required review period. She expressed appreciation for the Board's governance process and looks forward to continuing the conversation regarding this long-term opportunity for the district and its students.

E. Citizens' Comments

- Sarah Krzyzanski, Michelle Moustakas, Laurie Mayers, Judy Oldfield-Wilson, and Rachel Hayes spoke in support of immigrant families.
- Dennis Furlong spoke on his communication with the Plymouth-Canton Educational Foundation

F. Administrative Reports/Recommendations

Student and Family Engagement – Dr. Liz Vartanian-Gibbs

Student and Family Engagement Updates (Strategic Goals A, B, & C) (Presentation)

Dr. Liz Vartanian-Gibbs and members of the Student and Family Engagement Team provided an update on the department's comprehensive programming, which provides wraparound supports and services to P-CCS students and families and aligns with the district's Dynamic Plan goals to ensure students have the resources and supports needed to learn.

Presentation highlights included the expansion of early childhood programs; significant growth in Family Academy programming, with attendance tripling; and the delivery of wraparound services to more than 200 students and families since September 2025. The team also highlighted district nursing services supporting thousands of students, noting that 28% of students have documented health concerns. All schools have earned the MI HEARTSafe designation, with 65 AEDs now in place across the district. Additional updates included districtwide health and safety initiatives; mental health programming for students, families, and staff; community engagement efforts such as the annual Mental Health and Wellness Fair; Care Solace care coordination services; suicide prevention initiatives; partnerships with grief support providers; and the expansion of the therapy dog program to support emotional regulation.

Board members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

Finance and Operations – Jill Minnick

First Reading Resolutions

Consider Approval of a Resolution to Purchase an Outdoor Pavilion Structure at Smith Elementary School

The Board reviewed a recommendation for the purchase and installation of an outdoor pavilion at Smith Elementary School in recognition of the school's 75th Anniversary. The pavilion will be purchased from GameTime using OMNIA Partners cooperative pricing in the amount of \$68,001.60, with a ten-year warranty. This purchase will be fully funded by the Smith Parent-Family Organization, with the District issuing the purchase order for oversight and reimbursement following installation. Installation is anticipated for spring or summer 2026. (First Reading)

Board Members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

Final Reading Resolutions

- **Action Item #26-01-34:** It was moved by Member Kehoe and seconded by Member Westra to Approve a Resolution to Purchase Two John Deere Gator Utility Vehicles. The Board reviewed a recommendation from the Facilities Department to purchase two 2026 John Deere Gator utility vehicles with snow plows to support year-round grounds maintenance at P-CEP. The purchase will be made through Hutson, Inc. under the State of Michigan MiDeal cooperative contract at a total cost of \$74,896.34, funded through the 2025-2026 maintenance equipment replacement budget. (Final Reading)

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Kehoe, Picard, Sidhu, Vos, and Westra

Nays: None

The motion was carried 6-0

- **Action Item #26-01-35:** It was moved by Member Kehoe and seconded by Member Vos to Approve a Resolution for Bid Package #EL-4 Gallimore Addition and Renovation and Hoben Renovation.

The administration recommended approval of construction contracts totaling an amount not to exceed \$8,611,506. Separate contingency budgets have been established for Gallimore Elementary and Hoben Elementary to address items not included in the initial construction documents. The recommended award will be funded with 2023 Bond funds. (Final Reading)

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Kehoe, Picard, Sidhu, Vos, and Westra

Nays: None

The motion was carried 6-0

- **Action Item #26-01-36:** It was moved by Member Kehoe and seconded by Member Westra to Approve a Resolution for Bid Package #HS-7 Salem High School Multipurpose Room Addition and #PCEP-4 Canton High School Baseball/Soccer Concessions. The administration recommended approval of construction contracts totaling an amount not to exceed \$12,544,234. A separate construction contingency has been established outside of the contract amounts to address unforeseen conditions and scope coordination. The recommended award will be funded with 2023 Bond funds. (Final Reading)

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Kehoe, Picard, Sidhu, Vos, and Westra

Nays: None

The motion was carried 6-0

- **Action Item #26-01-37:** It was moved by Member Kehoe and seconded by Member Picard to Approve a Resolution to Purchase Filter First Water Bottle Filling Stations. In January 2025, Filter First legislation was enacted, requiring school districts to install approved filtered water bottle-filling stations. Following a successful pilot installation, the Facilities Department recommends purchasing additional units to achieve districtwide compliance. The units will be purchased from Ferguson Enterprises, LLC, through the OMNIA Cooperative Agreement at a total cost of \$367,335.13, and will be funded through Filter First funds. (Final Reading)

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Kehoe, Picard, Sidhu, Vos, and Westra

Nays: None

The motion was carried 6-0

Teaching and Learning – Jen Curry

Final Reading Resolutions

- **Action Item #26-01-38:** It was moved by Member Kehoe and seconded by Member Westra to Approve a Resolution for a Course Revision for Digital Media Arts I and II. This course revision is recommended to restructure the current year-long Digital Media Arts I and II courses into four semester-long (.5 credit) Visual, Performing, or Applied Arts courses to provide increased scheduling flexibility and establish a sequenced pathway with defined prerequisites for students in grades 9–12. The revised courses would be implemented beginning in the first semester of the 2026-2027 school year and beyond. There is no cost associated with these proposed revisions. (Final Reading)

Ayes: Members Ahmed, Kehoe, Picard, Sidhu, Vos, and

Westra Nays: None

The motion was carried 6-0

G. Remaining Citizens' Comments

- None

H. Discussion

Board members were reminded of the upcoming MASB Winter Institute and asked to email President Christenson and Superintendent Merritt if they are interested in attending any professional development courses.

I. Follow-up Board Questions

After the presentation by the Student and Family Engagement Department, Board members expressed interest in receiving data reflecting the impact of the department's initiatives.

J. Adjournment

Vice President Sidhu adjourned the Regular Meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Judy Westra
Secretary, Board of Education