

Minutes
Orange Southwest School District (OSSD)
Regular Board Meeting on Wednesday February 11, 2026
Randolph Union High School
6pm

[Click Here](#) for a video recording of the meeting.

I. Opening (6:00 pm) called to order at 6:05 pm by Board Chair Anne Kaplan

- Board Attendance: *Ensuring a quorum*
Anne Kaplan, Aimil Parmelee, Bev Lauchner, Sam Hooper, Martha Hafner, Rachel Fish, Rachel Gaidys present; Ryan Anderson (remote)
Superintendent Michael Clark, Kyle Southworth, ORCA Media, Larry Satcowitz, Jay Hooper.
- Meeting Purpose: Preparation for Town Meeting and understanding the legislative landscape
- Review and Accept Agenda: Any changes needed? *Meeting purpose? Are these the right agenda items? Is the right amount of time allotted?*

A motion is made to add an agenda item to discuss the timing of board packets.

Moved by Martha Hafner, seconded by Bev Lauchner. Roll call vote taken by chair – Sam Hooper, Ryan Anderson, Bev Lauchner, Martha Hafner vote yay, Anne Kaplan voted nay, Aimil Parmelee abstains. Motion passed, agenda item is added to Board Process section of agenda.

II. Ownership Linkage (6:10)

- General Public Comment: *The Board welcomes comment but is not able to take any action. Comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker.*
No comments, no public attending
- Legislative Updates: Larry Satkowitz discusses with the board that not a lot has changed on the education front. A new map for re-districting was introduced this week, but it's acknowledged to be a conversation starter, not a final draft. Conversation included limitations on federal money going to independent schools, the new non-homestead residential tax classification and reassessment of Vermont properties being done on a regular schedule. Jay Hooper stresses that this is a transitional time, and no two sizes are the same. Re-districting has to be done thoughtfully and collaboratively with clear direction. Michael Clark discusses the Up For Learning students from RUMHS and Montpelier going to

the statehouse to speak about their vision for education. Martha Hafner asks if there has been any conversation about mandated vaccines, Jay Hooper responds that the Vermont health department doesn't agree with the removal of science and will keep the status quo for vaccines. Larry Satkowitz confirms that the state has the authority to enforce standards, even if they're not enforced at the federal level. Further discussion regarding health care, education, CTE, demographics and geography. Michael Clark proposes that the legislature does not buy down the tax rate to avoid creating a tax cliff that residents will have to negotiate at a later date and clarifies how having a state cap on student spending differs from having a threshold . . . a cap limits the amount of money a district is *allowed* to spend on a student. A threshold imposes a penalty if a district spends more than suggested per student but allows districts to spend what they feel is necessary.

- **Budget Review**

Michael Clark reviews the school budget, noting that the proposed budget maintains school services and is 1.22% lower than the current per pupil spending. Even so, the CLA (common level of appraisal) has increased across all three towns, and won't be offset by any education savings. Current projections are that Braintree and Brookfield will see a 4 cent increase per \$100 of property value, Randolph will see a 2 cent increase.

- **Annual Report - complete and will be available on the OSSD website and locally at town clerks, schools, and libraries when the printed copies arrive.**

- **Informational Meetings**

- Thursday February 26, 2026 Budget Meeting
- Monday March 2, 2026 Annual School District Meeting to elect moderator, clerk, and review the school ballot for town meeting
- Two open seats, Randolph and Brookfield:
Bev Lauchner states she will be running as a write-in candidate to maintain her Randolph board seat, Sam Hooper informs the board of his decision not to run for re-election in Brookfield. A write-in candidate needs 30 votes or 1% of the electorate.

III. Board Process (7:10)

- **Support Staff Negotiations Update (Pick meeting date)**

Rachel Gaidys declines to continue on the committee, leaving the negotiation committee as Anne Kaplan, Martha Hafner and Ryan Anderson. Michael Clark

will offer three meeting dates to the Association – Thursday Feb 19, Thursday March 5 and Monday March 9, all at 5 p.m.

- RTCC Program Closures: Criminal Justice and Health Careers (**Vote**)
Discussion of enrollment, with only 3 students interested in health careers.

A motion is made to close the Criminal Justice and Health Careers programs at Randolph Technical Career Center.

VOTE: Moved by Anne Kaplan, seconded by Sam Hooper. Motion passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Teacher Appreciation Idea (Celebrated Week of May 4-8)
Michael Clark suggests the board consider providing OSSD apparel to teachers and staff, Aimil Parmelee likes that this idea would build momentum and community. Discussion of design, Rachel Fish wonders if it might be possible for students to design the logo. Sam Hooper and Aimil Parmelee, as the appreciation committee, give an overview of how the gift cards worked in the past, Martha Hafner asks if all community members are approached to participate.

A motion is made to utilize funds for Orange Southwest apparel for Staff Appreciation.

VOTE: Moved by Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Bev Lauchner. Motion passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Additional agenda item -- Adjustment to timing of board packets (**VOTE**)
Martha Hafner states that getting large packets (75+ pages) of information on the Friday before Wednesday's board meeting is difficult to process with weekend events and other commitments. She requests that large board packets be distributed on the Wednesday before the Wednesday board meeting, and comments that receiving updated information after the packets have been distributed is difficult. Michael Clark points out how quickly information changes, especially with budgeting and re-districting. Having the board packet ready a week prior to the meeting would affect the integrity of the data. Sam Hooper comments on the importance of the board having the most up-to-date information and he feels creating a policy or precedent is unnecessary and an unreasonable expectation. Martha Hafner comments that pages within the board packet that are just to be skimmed should be marked.

A motion is made to have the school board packet completed and distributed the Wednesday prior to the meeting if the packet is over 75 pages.

VOTE: Moved by Martha Hafner, seconded by Sam Hooper. Motion is defeated with 7 opposing votes and one abstention.

IV. Board Education (7:25)

- Reminder of Policy Governance Virtual Training March 26, 2026

V. Monitoring the Organization (7:30)

- 1st Read EL 2.3 Financial Conditions & Activities and 2.6 Asset Protection
- EL 2.5 Emergency Succession Report Adoption Consideration (**Vote**)

A motion is made to accept EL 2.5 Emergency Succession Report as compliant.

VOTE: Moved By Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Rachel Fish. Motion passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- Financials (Information in support of EL 2.3 Financial Conditions)

VI. Policy Decisions for District Governance (7:40)

- Cell Phone Policy First Read
- Criminal History Record Checks Policy – Second read (**VOTE**)
- B2 Volunteers and Work Study Students – Second Read (**VOTE**)
- C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying – Second Read (**VOTE**)
- C14 Section 504 and ADA Grievance Protocol – Second Read (**VOTE**)

A motion is made to adopt the following 4 policies: Criminal History Record Checks, B2 Volunteers, C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying and C14 Section 504 and ADA Grievance Protocol.

VOTE: Moved By Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Rachel Fish. Motion passes unanimously with no abstentions.

VII. Monitoring the Board (7:55)

- *Board Self-Evaluation: Monitoring compliance with Board Governance Process and Board Management Delegation Policies.*
- GP 4.4 Board Chair's Role – Self Evaluation (Discussion)
Board discusses policy governance scenarios perhaps allotting 10 minutes per meeting to hone governance skills.

VIII. Consent Agenda (8:05)

Board motion I move to approve the Consent Agenda

- 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 January 14, 2026
- Superintendent Contract
- New Hires
- Approve 26-27 Calendar
- Request to Purchase Van for Transportation

A motion is made to accept all consent agenda items as presented.

VOTE: Moved By Aimil Parmelee, seconded by Bev Lauchner. Motion passes unanimously with no abstentions.

IX. Closing/Incidental Information (8:10)

- Superintendent's Report
 - Ends Snapshot
- Action Item Recap

X. Executive Session

Future Meetings

- Agenda Planning Meeting: Tuesday March 3 at 6 pm
- Regular Board Meeting: 6pm March 11, 2026 at Brookfield Elementary

Respectfully submitted:

Kyle M. Southworth

Kyle M. Southworth, Administrative Assistant 2/12/26

