

**AFSA PreK-12**  
**Work Session Agenda**  
**High School**

January 27, 2026

4:00 - 5:00 pm

AGENDA TOPICS

**Board Members Present: Matt Vinez, Melissa Farler, Kyra Warner, Leslie Scherer, Dave Smith, Julie Cox, Sam Wakefield, Kate Plaisance**

**Board Members Absent: Kerry Schulte, Jennifer Cook**

Call to order: 4:05pm.

**A. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. Forbearance agreement update**

- a. We had a phone call with the bond holders before the holiday break. The meeting discussed the forbearance plan and what the school needs to allow us to stay open next school year. The bond holders asked for a real-time cash flow so they can review it. Creative Planning gave us their template they use for cash flow and we created a real-time cash flow that would help show the bond holders what is needed in the forbearance.
- b. In order to create a new budget we need an agreement in place so our schools budget is accurate. We feel it is not equitable to create a new budget without all the necessary information in it. We have a working budget in the meantime that is what the school is working with.
- c. During the meeting with the bond holders, we asked for a letter of intent. This letter of intent is needed to show our authorizers and MDE that we are in talks of a forbearance plan. AFSA is currently in SOD and we are submitting a SOD plan that requires a forbearance.
- d. Sam has found a lawyer that can help represent the school when working with the forbearance agreement. We are not experts in this field and need someone to represent the schools.

**2. Vertex workflow status**

- a. Sam gave the school board an update on the Vertex Marketing firm. The team is meeting every two weeks to stay caught up. We are currently doing interviews to make sure we are creating a message that works for our school. Once this is completed and we have a common message we will be moving forward with the advertisements.

**3. Fund raising framework review**

- a. The board went through the fundraising spreadsheet that we use to track our work.
- b. Grants: AFSA is currently finalizing 3 grants that will help for next year's budget. Two of the grants can be used for operational expenses and the third will help offset some of our high costs with Agriculture education.
  - i. St. Paul MN Foundation is an operating grant for 50k that will be submitted at the beginning of February.
  - ii. Bigelow Foundation operational grant for 50k will be submitted early February.
  - iii. MN Department of Agriculture Education Grant for 75k. This grant will help us build a stronger program at the elementary level and allow us to have a connection between the buildings when it comes to agricultural education.

We want to utilize our greenhouse more, but that comes at a cost. This will help offset those costs and improve our Ag program.

**c. Greenhouse Needs and other items:**

- i. The board asked for the needs of the greenhouse so we can start looking at donations and fundraising. The greenhouse and AG department is a large expense to our school but it is important to keep it strong. Kyra Warner will create a list that the board can use.
- ii. Play - we are looking to find a play director. Currently we do not have one. Matt V has a contact and will look into it further.

**B. ADJOURN - The meeting was adjourned at 5:02pm.**

**Finance Committee meeting 3:30 pm High School Office conference room  
Regular board meeting to begin at 5:00 pm in High School – sign in Lobby designates room**

**AFSA PreK-12**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**High School (room #202)**

January 27, 2026  
5:00 - 6:30 pm  
AGENDA

**Board Members Present:** Matt Vinez, Melissa Farler, Kyra Warner, Leslie Scherer, Dave Smith, Julie Cox, Sam Wakefield, Kate Plaisance, Kerry Schulte, Jennifer Cook

**Board Members Absent:** none

**A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

**1. Call to Order** Kate Plaisance calls the meeting to order at 5:03pm and read the mission, vision and honoring native peoples.

**Mission:** The Academy for Sciences and Agriculture (AFSA), a public charter school for grades PreK-12, engages learners in academically rigorous, student-centered, hands-on experiences and leadership opportunities within a science, environmental education, and agricultural context.

**Vision:** AFSA will develop lifelong learners who are curious, care for others and have high skill levels in applied sciences, and will be prepared for a future in a diverse, global and changing society.

**Honoring Native Peoples:** We would like to acknowledge that this meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Dakota People and pay our respect to elders both past and present.

**2. Determination of Quorum:** The board meeting has quorum as all board members are present.

**3. Determination of Conflict of Interest on any agenda items:** There is no conflict of interest on any agenda items.

**4. Approve Agenda:** The board needs to amend the acceptance of gifts/donations. We were provided the wrong month and were not able to approve during the December board meeting. Kate Plaisance entertains a motion to amend this month's agenda to include the November and December acceptance of gifts/donations. Dave so moved, Leslie seconded the motion. The approval of the agenda passed unanimously.

**5. Approval of Minutes:** The board reviews the December board minutes. Matt moved to approve of December board minutes, Leslie seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

**6. Approval of Financial Report:** Becky Meyer went through the December financial report and the December supplemental information. We are working on a budget for 365 ADM. At the end of December we are 50% complete with the fiscal year. Cash balance of 413,761 is reported. The revenues received is 48.6% and expenditures disbursed are at 47.9%. We received a cyber security grant that helped with costs with our cyber insurance.

- i. **Payment of Invoices:** We are all up to date with all outstanding invoices. Cash flow is going to start to get more difficult. We will have the line of credit paid off by the end of the month. We are behind on our bond payments.
- ii. **Acceptance of Gifts:** 2,694.50 was down for Donations. The larger donation was Culvers that donated for our FFA.

Kate entertains to approve the financial report, payment of invoices, and acceptance of gifts, Kerry so moved, Leslie seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

**B. SCHOOL GUEST SPEAKERS**

There were no guest speakers present.

**C. GUEST COMMENTS** (Three minutes per presenter)

There were no guest comments at this time. Leslie wanted to recognize the educators of AFSA. It is not an easy time to be an educator and we are behind you.

**D. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- 1. **School Activities Reports:** Sam reported on the activities taking place in both schools. In the board packet “AFSA School Update to Board FY26 - January is the information that was reported on. See below with the updated enrollment report.

Grade	Previous Year 24-25	Current Enrollment	26-27 Applications	Enrollment Goal	25-26 Open Applications
Pre-k		16	7	18	
KG		13	4	20	
1st		11	2	22	
2nd		7	1	22	1
3rd		14	2	22	
4th		22	2	22	1
5th		14 (+1)	1	30	1
6th		38	8	30	
<b>Total</b>		<b>135</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>3</b>
7th	34	28 (-1)	12	35	2
8th	33	36	4	40	4
9th	51	38 (-1)	7	60	1
10th	46	46 (+2)	1	50	2
11th	43	38 (+1)	0	50	
12th	38	43	1	40	1

Total		249	229	25	275		10
District Total			364 (+2)	52	461		13

2. **Administrative Reports** - No administrative reports at this time.
3. **Committee Reports** - No reports at this time.
  - a. Election team
  - b. Donations team
  - c. Finance Committee
  - d. Exec Committee
4. **Training updates**
  - a. All members have done the Mandatory Reporting and Board training. Kyra and Matt have 3 online training sessions left to complete. Kate will send those links to them. All other members need to do 1 training of their choice. Please communicate your plans.

## E. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. **Election process.**
  - a. Current board members that are up for re-election are Leslie, Kerry, and Kate. Kerry is not going to run again. The board is going to look to replace with another elementary teacher so we can well represent both schools. Dave Smith would also like to find a replacement on the board as well.
  - b. The election committee will be Matt, Kyra and Julie. Next month we will start the election process so the vote can be done by the end of May.
2. **Assistant Director position proposal (FY27)**
  - a. Sam spoke on the new role that we are looking to add when Becky is done at the end of June. We believe that it will be easier to find more candidates with that type of role. We will create a job description that allows more flexibility depending on the qualifications of the applicant. We are not going to be able to replace Becky, and this position will be more in the building allowing them to take on responsibility of other administration. This will free Sam up to do the parts of Becky's job that will be harder to find a replacement for. We hope to get that posted by March 1, 2026.
3. **Enrollment policy**
  - a. We are updating our enrollment policy so we can eliminate the previous years enrollment concern. Last year, we had a larger number of Prek families not inform us of their next year's plan. It caused a waitlist in KG, then we had last minute movement. We updated the transition for PreK to KG with needing to apply again for KG. The rest of the policy remains the same.
4. **MDE SOD submission**

- a. Becky, Kate, and Sam met with MDE to go over our SOD status. Becky and Creative Planning are working on the spreadsheet that lays out our enrollment and our future projections. MDE is comfortable with our spreadsheet.
- b. Sam finalized the SOD narrative and that completed the SOD submission. It is due February 2nd, 2026. Sam will submit.
- c. We also will attach the letter of intent from our bond holders to show that we are working on a forbearance plan.

## **F. ACTION ITEMS**

1. **Enrollment policy** Julie moved to approve up the updated enrollment policy, Kerry seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.
2. **MDE SOD submission:** Dave moved to approve of the letter, spreadsheet, and narrative for the MDE SOD submission, Julie seconded the motion. Pass unanimously.

## **G. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. Next meetings:
  - a. Regular meeting February 24, 2026 at 5 pm
  - b. Auction put on by the PTO is amazing, great job to those who helped out.
  - c. Heggies Pizza fundraiser is taking place now.
  - d. Kate Plaisance will respond to the email from a parent in concern of them leaving for another school. They had a complaint on how behaviors were handled.

**I. ADJOURNMENT** - Kyra moved to adjourn the board meeting at 6:13pm, Dave seconded that motion. Passed unanimously.