

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

A Special Meeting of the Springfield School District No. 19 Board of Education was held on February 20, 2026.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Board Chair Jonathan Light called the Springfield Board of Education Special Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Light led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Land Acknowledgement

Vice Chair Langworthy shared the following Land Acknowledgment:

We acknowledge that we are in the traditional homeland of the Kalapuya people, specifically the community that was known as Chifin, the area that we now call Springfield.

Kalapuya people, who have lived in this region since "[Time Immemorial](#)", were illegally dispossessed of their land and forcibly removed to what are now the Grand Ronde and Siletz reservations over several years, but most notably in treaties between 1851 and 1855.

The Kalapuya are now members of the [Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde](#) and the [Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians](#), and members of the Kalapuya still live, work, study, and thrive in this area, and continue to make important contributions here in Springfield, across the land we now refer to as Oregon, and around the globe.

This information is shared out of a responsibility to prevent the erasure of Native culture, heritage, and people and to ensure a quality contemporary education for future generations.

Attendance

Board Members in attendance included Board Chair Jonathan Light, Director Ken Kohl, Director De Graff, and Director Amber Langworthy.

District staff and community members identified included Taylor Madden, Brian Richardson, Jeff Michna, Brian Megert, Ame Beard, Jodi O'Mara, Johnathan Gault, Jody Barnhart, Kim Weston, Kimberlee Pelster, Brandon Ferguson, Jason Ray, Lou Woodford, Gail Woodford, Katie Dawson, Melissa Blomquist, Tina Belmont, Andy Price, Joyce Douglas, Ame Beard, Carla Smith, Josh Donaldson, Katie Ryan, Ingrid Nordstrom, Barry Barrean, Jose da Silva, Matt Brandt, Sheila Stapley, Tanya Martin, Melissa Stalder, Andrea Wallace, Damian Laudati, Jolie Brantley, Kai Isham, Brandi Starck, and Pam Skinner.

2. DISCUSSION

A. Review Process for Candidate Interviews

Chair Light

The school board discussed the selection process for an acting superintendent, of whom will fill the vacancy from March 2 to June 30, 2026, and an interim superintendent from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

Director De Graff asked Chair Light about appointing an acting superintendent and we all didn't have as much input as we will for an interim. Director De Graff stated that she didn't have any part of the structure. She stated that Chair Light also said that we provided questions. The whole Board didn't develop the questions. Recommends sticking to the list that was shared with the candidates so that there are no surprises. Suggests lengthening the time to 30 minutes.

Director De Graff asks when each candidate was contacted. No answer was given.

Director Langworthy provided details on who nominated certain candidates, noting the list of candidates was developed through recommendations from the Coalition of School Administrators (COSA), board attorney and former and current district staff.

Chair Light explained the process of reaching out to candidates to determine their interest without undue pressure.

3. INFORMATION

Chair Light

A. Interview Candidates

Brian Megert emphasized his advocacy for students, building staff morale through voice and agency, and addressing budget shortfalls and staff conflicts. He highlighted his experience in crisis management and budget oversight, aiming to restore relationships and ensure a smooth transition. An overview of his extensive experience at the Douglas Educational Service District was highlighted. Megert expressed a long-term commitment to the role, emphasizing passion and dedication. The importance of a student-centered, decision-making framework that keeps students centered was stressed.

Ame Beard highlighted her experience in building relationships with partner organizations and advocacy, including a nonprofit board project. She stressed the importance of authentic listening to stakeholders, particularly teachers, and the need for community forums and surveys. Beard emphasized her transformational leadership skills, citing her success in stabilizing and improving a school with a 100% graduation rate.

Jodi O'Mara highlighted her experience managing budget cuts, stakeholder relationships, and the need for healing and stability. O'Mara stressed the importance of understanding the budget, involving staff, and maintaining a student-centered approach. Adaptability and collaboration in addressing budget shortfalls and improving educational outcomes.

4. DISCUSSION

A. Debrief Interviews

Chair Light

The discussion included the challenges, responsibilities, qualifications, strategies, and suitability of each of the candidates, emphasizing the need for crisis response, mediation, and conflict management. Expectations and criteria they were looking for in an active superintendent was shared. The board debated the merits of internal versus external candidates.

5. ACTION ITEMS

Chair Light

A. Appoint Acting Superintendent

MOTION: Director Kohl moved, seconded by Director De Graff to appoint Jodi O'Mara as acting superintendent.

Chair Light called for a roll call vote. Each board member was asked to indicate if they approve the motion to appoint Jodi O'Mara as acting superintendent: Director Jonathan Light - No, Director Amber Langworthy - No, Director Ken Kohl - Yes, and Director Nicole De Graff - Yes.

Motion failed, 2:2.

MOTION: Director Langworthy moved, seconded by Director Light to appoint Ame Beard as acting superintendent.

Chair Light called for a roll call vote. Each board member was asked to indicate if they approve the motion to appoint Ame Beard as acting superintendent: Director Jonathan Light - Yes, Director Amber Langworthy - Yes, Director Ken Kohl - No, and Director Nicole De Graff - No.

Motion failed, 2:2.

Director De Graff expressed concern about the board's trustworthiness and ability to make an informed decision, suggesting the board turn to Lane ESD for further coordination.

Director De Graff exited the boardroom at 7:14 p.m.

B. Authorize Board Chair to Negotiate and Execute Agreement for Acting Superintendent Chair Light

The board agreed to remove Action Item 5.B.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Interim Superintendent Search Process Chair Light

Chair Light outlined the potential timeline for the interim superintendent search, to expedite the process and include new board members.

The Board discussed the timeline for selecting a search firm and establishing qualifications for the interim superintendent, aiming for a decision by July 1st. Additional meetings were suggested to expedite the process.

Director Langworthy mentioned the availability of facilitators and trainers who also provide search services.

The board considered reaching out to Lane ESD for interim services, agreeing to keep all three candidates as possibilities and postponed the final vote to Monday the 23rd for the Springfield Public School Board meeting, during which they will appoint an acting superintendent.

The importance of community and staff involvement in the search was emphasized, with options to use existing firms or issue new RFPs.

7. NEXT MEETING:

February 23, 2026 – Special Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Light thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

8. NEXT MEETING:

February 23, 2026 – Special Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Light

Having concluded all business, Chair Light adjourned the Springfield Public School District's Special Meeting at 7:25 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Trenay Ryan, LCOG)