

**MILAN AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, February 25, 2026
MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Milan Area Schools Board of Education was called to order in the District Office Boardroom located at 100 Big Red Drive, Milan MI, 48160, by President Faro at 7:00 p.m. on February 25, 2026.

Board Members Present: Faro, Gutierrez, Meray, Cislo, Prior and Burdette

Board Members Absent: Heikka

Staff Present: Ryan McMahon, Jennifer Bookout, Krista Hendrix, Margaret Durkee, and Sara Beckman

Guests Present:

Student Board Member Comments:

- Heikka noted the upcoming district celebrations for National School Social Worker Week and Maintenance Staff Worker Appreciation Day on March 4th. She expressed gratitude toward the district social workers and the maintenance department for their dedication and service.

Public Comments:

- Andrea Bennink provided updates as the WISD PAC representative, welcoming Heidi Phelps to the district and emphasizing future collaboration between families and the WISD. She detailed the state's recent Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) compliance monitoring process, noting that the PAC advocated for increased support in non-academic and extracurricular settings to ensure students with disabilities participate fully with their non-disabled peers. She highlighted the need for broader family representation in state feedback loops and shared that a summary report of recommendations is expected within three months. Additionally, she shared an extensive list of upcoming WISD and local support opportunities, including workshops on transition law, MiABLE savings accounts, and post-high school employment, as well as a local 8th-to-9th grade transition night for families with IEPs and 504s scheduled for May 12th.

Motion by Prior supported by Burdette to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 11, 2026. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Gutierrez supported by Burdette to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting Closed Session of February 11, 2026. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Meray supported by Gutierrez to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 11, 2026. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Prior supported by Gutierrez to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting Closed Session of February 11, 2026. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Burdette supported by Cislo to approve the 2025-2026 General Fund Budget Amendment as included in Attachment A. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Cislo supported by Gutierrez to approve the purchase of two 71 passenger buses from Midwest Transit Equipment as detailed in Attachment B. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Prior supported by Cislo to approve the Master Agreement with the Milan Area Schools Transportation Association as detailed in Attachment C. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Gutierrez supported by Burdette to extend Superintendent McMahon's contract by one year through June 2029. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Cislo supported by Meray to approve the Administrator Handbook Changes as presented in Attachment D. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Public Comments

- George Elder expressed concerns regarding board neutrality and the perceived endorsement of political viewpoints during the recent student walkout.

Assistant Superintendent Comments:

- First, during the week of March 9, students in 7th, 9th, and 11th grade will participate in the Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth Survey, or MiPHY. Parents and guardians have received an email from their building principal with detailed information about the survey and a full list of the questions. Participation is voluntary, and families may choose to opt their child out. The information gathered helps inform our health curriculum and future planning to better support students.
- Assistant Superintendent Bookout also noted that selected 8th grade students at Milan Middle School participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP, on Tuesday. NAEP is a national assessment that provides a snapshot of student achievement across the country. Thank you to our staff and students for their flexibility and cooperation in supporting that process.
- Finally, Assistant Superintendent Bookout highlighted our winter NWEA benchmark results. At the early elementary level, Kindergarten and First Grade winter scores in both Reading and Math are above national norms, and both grade levels exceeded their winter growth goals. Young 5s are also showing solid progress, particularly in Math. Overall, many of our youngest learners are already meeting or exceeding their spring growth targets.

- In grades 2 through 4, winter achievement is at or above national norms in both subjects, and all grade levels exceeded their winter growth goals. Several grades have already met or surpassed their spring growth targets in Reading and Math.
- At the middle school level, winter achievement is at or above national norms in most grades. We saw especially strong growth in 5th and 8th grade, and overall trends remain positive.

Superintendent Comments:

- Superintendent McMahon thanked our PECC Executive Director, Mrs. Kishiyama, and the PECC staff for all the work they put into holding a successful PECC Open House event last Thursday. We had new families come visit classrooms and meet staff, in preparation for PECC enrollment that starts on March 1st. We are also looking forward to our Kindergarten Round-Up that will be held on March 25th.
- Superintendent McMahon thanked our Technology Director, Gina Cazan, and her team for all the work they are putting into upgrading our phone system. They have been keeping our current system patched together and it has outlived its lifespan. We will be planning to move to new devices and a cloud based system called Zultys starting on March 13. Gina and her team have also been working on moving the district from our physical servers to a cloud-based server system, arranged through an MDE grant, that will provide approximately \$20,000 in savings this year and up to \$36,000 savings next year.
- Superintendent McMahon announced that our new Executive Director of Student Services, Heidi Phelps, had her first official day today. Heidi was able to spend a day last week meeting with Lon and she has been out visiting the buildings and meeting our staff across the district. We are looking forward to Heidi being a part of the administrative team.

Board Member Comments:

- Gutierrez: Thanked Superintendent McMahon for the phone system upgrade, noting its importance as a critical safety investment. She requested that the district proactively highlight the upcoming 8th-to-9th grade transition night to ensure all eligible families are reached. She also commended the Sun Times for its comprehensive and positive coverage of district athletics and administrative initiatives.
- Prior: Noted that Policy 254 will be updated to remove the home address requirement for public speakers to align with current practices. She directed the Board to the district website for the most accurate versions of policies 3108 through 3115F. Additionally, she praised the boys' basketball team and their families for demonstrating exceptional sportsmanship during the recent regional tournament.
- Burdette: Reported on his attendance at several recent athletic events, including senior night and victories for both the boys' and girls' basketball programs. He highlighted the

recognitions in wrestling, track, and bowling, noting the positive impact of celebrating student achievements. He also encouraged community attendance at the upcoming GMACF gala.

- Meray: Commended the administration and staff for the strong winter data performance, attributing the results to the district's commitment to excellence. She expressed anticipation for the May presentation regarding the new ELA curriculum and its classroom impact. Addressing public feedback, she clarified that her prior comments regarding student walkouts were intended to thank the administration for balancing the rights of student expression with the duty to maintain a safe, non-disruptive environment.
- Faro: Announced that the Board meeting schedule for June through December is currently being finalized in coordination with the Superintendent. He informed the Board of an upcoming MASB self-assessment and requested that members complete the digital link upon receipt. He also noted the next Big Red Board Chat regarding board service will take place on April 16th at Symons Elementary.
- Prior: Added that once the Board meeting dates are officially set, she will select and supply the dates for the Big Red Board Chats, aiming to schedule them on opposite weeks from the regular meetings when possible.

Motion by Cislo supported by Burdette to enter into closed session pursuant to Section 8(1)(c) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act for Negotiation Strategies. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Time entered closed session 7:41p.m.

Time returned to open session 9:26 p.m.

Time of Adjournment 9:26 p.m.

Cassie Prior, Acting Secretary