

Eau Claire School Board Minutes
Monday, April 6, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
ECASD Administration Building and Livestream
Generated by Terri Grzyb

Members present

Lori Bica, Jasmine Case, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Tim Nordin, Pa Thao, Erica Zerr

CONVENE (GC-1)

President Nordin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Board Secretary Terri Grzyb confirmed the meeting had been properly noticed and was in compliance with the Open Meeting Law. A roll call was conducted to verify quorum. Christopher B. from Flynn Elementary School and Annia L. from Putnam Elementary School led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA (GC-2)

Motion by Lori Bica, second by Jarrett Dement to adopt the Board agenda for April 6, 2026.

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Jasmine Case, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Tim Nordin, Pa Thao, Erica Zerr

RECOGNITION (R-1)

Superintendent Johnson recognized National Music in Our School Month, Youth Art Month, National School Social Work Week, Chippewa Valley Montessori School for their Art Show, and Memorial High School for their Basketball Team Academic All-State Award. North High School's Wisconsin DPI Portrait of a Graduate Steering Committee will be recognized at a future Board meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM (GC-2.3c)

The following citizens addressed the School Board, expressing strong support for the Power of Perception program, emphasizing its positive impact on students and the community:

1) Elijah Edwards, 2) Tavia O'donahoe, 3) Michael Frison, 4) Rosie Dean, 5) Jerry Hampton, 6) Lavonte Bean

The following citizens addressed the School Board, expressing concerns about proposed reductions in force, particularly in music and arts programs:

7) Nicholas Phillips; 8) Dave Berger; 9) Oliver Phillips; 10) Cathy Reitz; 11) Liz Mosher; 12) Eric Borg; 13) Gwen Heywood; 14) Violet Kilmurray

REPORTS

Legislative Liaison Report

Commissioner Thao provided a Legislative update, which included the following:

- 2025 Wisconsin Act 89 requires districts to adopt a policy by September 1 outlining clear standards for staff and volunteer communication with students, including expectations outside school hours and mandatory annual training on recognizing, preventing, and reporting grooming and boundary violations.
- Assembly Bill 1148 would require districts to pay student teachers a minimum wage of \$15/hour, starting in the 2026–27 school year.
- Senate Bill 812, a bill to join a federal school choice tax credit program, encouraging advocacy for increased public education funding.

Board Debrief Report

President Nordin explained that the Board Debrief Report came from the Board's self-evaluation survey and that this meeting was the first time the debrief was formally placed on the agenda.

Rather than presenting a detailed report or recommendations, he stated the intent was to simply open the floor for Board members to share comments or reflections related to the debrief providing an opportunity to

respond, reflect, and discuss openly.

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONSENT AGENDA (GC-2.5)

On behalf of the Board, President Nordin expressed the heaviness and emotion of the proposed staff cuts. Superintendent Johnson also acknowledged the difficulty and stated that such decisions are guided by a comprehensive approach that incorporates student enrollment projections, secondary course requests, classroom staffing formulas, and input from departments and staff. Course opportunities for students haven't changed.

Motion by Jarrett Dement, second by Lori Bica to approve the following Superintendent's Consent Agenda items:

- Human Resources – Employment Report [ADDITIONAL TIME: Math Teacher, Science Teacher; HIRE: Agriculture Teacher, Football – Head Coach, School Psychologist, School Social Worker, Special Education Teachers, Speech & Language Pathologist; RESIGN: Agriculture Teacher, Art Teacher, Director of Special Education, Early Childhood Head Start Teacher, Grade 1 Teachers, Grade 5 Teachers, Kindergarten Teacher, Physical Education Teacher, Special Education Teachers, Speech & Language Pathologist; RETIRE: Alternative Education Teacher, Art Teacher, Assistant Principal/Athletic Director, Elementary Principal/Dual Immersion Administrator, Executive Director – Business Services, Instructional Coach, Kindergarten Teachers, Music Teacher, Science Teacher; TRANSFER: Assistant Principal – Interim, Behavioral Interventionist, Principal; TERMINATION: Special Education Teacher; VOLUNTARY REDUCTION: Family & Consumer Sciences Teacher]
- Referendum Project Bids
- McKinley Charter School Status
- CESA 10 Contract for 2026-2027
- 2026-2027 Head Start Transportation Waiver Request
- Preliminary Notice of Non-Renewal for Limited Term Contracts
- Preliminary Notice of Non-Renewal due to Reduction in Force

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Jasmine Case, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Tim Nordin, Pa Thao, Erica Zerr

With the approval of the employment report, Superintendent Johnson announced that Marcus Larsen will serve as the DeLong Middle School principal starting July 1, 2026.

BOARD'S CONSENT AGENDA (GC-2.5)

Motion by Erica Zerr, second by Lori Bica to approve the following Board Consent Agenda Items:

- Minutes of Closed Session - February 16, 2026
- Minutes of Board Meeting - February 16, 2026
- Minutes of Closed Session - March 2, 2026
- Minutes of Board Meeting - March 2, 2026
- Board Summary Statement for OE-7: Community Engagement
- Renew the Chippewa Valley Montessori Charter School Contract
- Board Direction to Superintendent Regarding Voucher Transparency
- Investment of Sponsorship Dollar in Fund 46

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Jasmine Case, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Tim Nordin, Pa Thao, Erica Zerr

MATTERS RESERVED FOR BOARD ACTION

Equity Statement

Board members reaffirmed its commitment to eliminating systemic inequalities and supporting historically marginalized students, with all Board members taking turns reading the statement aloud, paragraph by paragraph.

Motion by Jarrett Dement, second by Stephanie Farrar to approve revisions made to the District's equity statement.

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Jasmine Case, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Tim Nordin, Pa Thao, Erica Zerr

FOCUS ON RESULTS

Multilingual Learners: Growth, Achievement, and Strategic Priorities

Kaying Xiong, Executive Director of Student Services and Special Education; Misti Trowbridge, Director of Student Services; and Lizzie Ehrenberg, DeLong Multilingual (ML) Teacher presented a comprehensive review of the District's ML program, including demographic data, assessment results, program structure, and strategic priorities.

ECASD serves 943 bilingual students and 564 ML students, with 32 unique home languages reported. ML students are assessed annually using the WIDA Access test, which measures English proficiency across listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Growth is the primary indicator of success, rather than proficiency alone. The program focuses on increasing exit rates, reducing long-term dependency, and supports students at all grade levels. Challenges include finding BEAs for less common languages. Discussion and questions followed, including ways to promote the program, grow bilingual teacher pipelines, and improve communication with families.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Budget Update

Mark Elworthy, Executive Director of Business Services, and Michelle Golden, Interim Executive Director of Human Resources, provided a detailed update on District budget development, staffing reductions, and the transition to self-funded health insurance, explaining the financial challenges, process for reductions, and efforts to minimize impact through early retirements and attrition. Discussion and questions followed.

BOARD DEBRIEF (GC-2.3)

President Nordin asked Board members to complete the survey before adjourning.

ADJOURN

Motion by Stephanie Farrar, second by Jarrett Dement to adjourn meeting.

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Jasmine Case, Jarrett Dement, Stephanie Farrar, Tim Nordin, Pa Thao, Erica Zerr

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.