

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Independent School District 13
Columbia Heights, Minnesota
Community Room**

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

April 28, 2026

Chair Granlund called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Swearing In of New School Board Member

Jenna Fodness-Bondhus was sworn in as a new School Board Member.

Roll Call

The Clerk called the roll.

Members present: Ms. Granlund, Ms. Houle, Ms. Medearis, Ms. Palmer, Ms. Pettway, Ms. Fodness-Bondhus, Superintendent Stenvik

Student Representative Ms. Hanson

Members absent: None

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Houle, seconded by Pettway, to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor.
Motion passes.

Announcements

- May 12, 5:00 Subcommittee on Policy, Superintendent's Conference Room
- May 12, 5:00 Subcommittee on Community Engagement/ Legislative Action, Community Room
- May 12, 6:00 School Board Meeting, Community Room
- May 19, 5:30 School Board Work Session, Community Room

Communication to the Board

Citizens and Employee Representatives had the opportunity to briefly address the School Board. None

Consent Agenda

Motion by Palmer, seconded by Medearis, to approve the action required to implement the items on the consent agenda. All in favor. Motion passes. Items approved included:

- Personnel Report
- Treasury Report - February 2026, March 2026
- Minutes - March 24, 2026, April 21 Special Called, and April 21 Work Session
- Policy Second Reading - 203.5-School Board Meeting Agenda, 205-Open Meetings and

Closed Meetings, 206-Public Participation, 208-Development, Adoption, and Implementation of Policies, 209 Code of Ethics, 210 Conflict of Interest, 211-Criminal or Civil Action Against.

Acknowledgement of Contributions

Member Palmer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS RESOLUTION:

Minnesota Statute 123B.02 permits school boards to "...receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose and apply the same to the purpose designated. On that behalf, the board may act as trustee of any trust created for the benefit of the district and for the benefit of pupils thereof."

Therefore, the School Board of Columbia Heights Public Schools, Independent School District No. 13, resolves to accept with appreciation the \$24,275.35 in monetary contributions detailed in the background.

Monetary

Dean & Joyce Bliss and E & G Huble each donated \$25, Albert Ogdie, Louann Restad, Corliss Johnsonn and Elizabeth Thomas, each donated \$50, Glenda Glore, and Carolyn Bang each donated \$75, Elane Narbo, Elsie Boquist, and Janie Olsen each donated \$100, Leo & Catherine Mcavoy and Frances Eue each donated \$250, Wayne & Linda Kutzke and J Anne Hennessey each donated \$300, John & Kathleen Kane, Gerald Ryding, and Harlan & Doris Downing, and Pam Sigurdson each donated \$500, Kathy Kelly donated \$1,000 to the 2026 Retired Staff Scholarship Fund.

The Blackbaud Giving Fund donated \$50 to Valley View and \$300 to Columbia Heights School District.

The American Heart Association donated \$350 to North Park.

Jean Hartwell donated \$100 to Columbia Heights Public Schools.

Justin Scherkenbach donated \$143.35 to the Columbia Academy Musical.

Danielle Berg donated \$550 to the Valley View Sunshine Scholarship Fund.

Becky DeBus donated \$100 to Columbia Heights Public Schools

The Columbia Heights Athletic Boosters and Laura Martinson each donated \$8,480 to the CHHS Scholarship Fund.

Anonymous donated \$500 to Columbia Heights Public Schools for the Gratitude event.

The Valley View PTO donated \$1,000 to The Valley View Thank You Event and \$200 to the Valley View Fun Run.

Nadina Beethe donated \$1,000 to Columbia Heights Public Schools

Value in Kind

Kim Wells donated two yearbooks from the 1940's valued at \$0 to Columbia Heights High School in honor of her grandmother, Carol Robidoux.

Sam Oie donated a Bike valued at \$350 to Highland Elementary.

The total fiscal year 2025-2026 monetary contributions to date: \$93,254.30 Total above The motion for the adoption of the preceding resolution was duly seconded by Member Houle, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

Fondness-Bondus- Aye, Granlund-Aye, Houle-Aye, Medearis-Aye, Palmer-Aye, Pettway-Aye.

The following voted against the same: None

Thereupon, the said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Member Palmer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

Reports from Members of the Board:

Fodness Bondhus- attend the Fine Arts night at Highland, Music band, art, and science fair. Packed with families. Serving on the planning committee for the end-of-year at Highland Sub committee of Community Engagement and Legislative Action Committee,

Granlund- held lots of conversations with elected officials, a Valley View Tour, State capital Ways and Means committee, attend the Gradedtude event. Work session, Valley View Carnival, Mutual aid events, The Teacher of the Year, Policy Subcommittee event.

Houle- Work session, Subcommittee on community Engagement and Legislative action meeting, and reviewed the December, January, February, and March Treasury reports.

Medearis-Attended the Gradedtude event, the Work Session symposium at hamlin social equity meeting through a public policy lens. PTO at CA and Highland. Highland fine art night, CHAB meeting. Subcommittee on Policy and the Teacher of the Year celebration.

Palmer- High school conferences, Work Session, Special called meeting, Subcommittee on Policy

Pettway - Jazz band concert at CA, Work Session, and The Gratitude events hosted by Bethel College. Chair meeting and the teacher of the year, Nicole Herche. Subcommittee on Community Engagement and Legislative Action

Superintendent's Report and Correspondence:

I want to thank the voters for coming out to vote in our April election. It is unusual for us to have an election outside of November, however it was necessary given a previous resignation. Welcome, new member, Fondness Bondhus. Compensatory Revenue remains a serious financial issue for our school district. We sent out a sample letter for parents and community members to contact Minnesota lawmakers. There are only a few weeks left in the session. I participated in the Native American student trip to Mille Lacs for the big drum ceremony. I appreciate Chief Virgil Wind for hosting our school group at the important event. On April 17, we hosted a community gratitude to thank the community for all of their support this year. The event included student speaker, parent testimonies, musical performances, and delicious food. The event was made possible by generous donations. Lastly, recently I had the opportunity to meet with Caroline Kennedy, who asked me to be one of the 4 people to represent the courageous people of the Twin Cities in accepting the 2026 Profile in Courage Award. This is a responsibility I take seriously.

Student Representative report:

Hanson-Went to Mille Lacs, it was a relaxing and healing time.

Setting up for the final print of the school's newspaper.

Information Items

James R. Hemak Junior Achievement Fund:

Bondo Nyembwe, Assistant Superintendent, presented information to honor James R. Hemak. Jr. Achievement, JA Blz Town, JA Finance Park, Personal Finance 4% interest for 2026.

ESSA Grants:

Tara Thukral, Director of Teaching and Learning, presented information on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Grants. The focus of the grants is on academic achievement and growth. This will be an item seeking Board approval at the May 12, 2026, meeting.

Action Items

Discontinuance and Reduction of Positions for 2026-2027:

Motion by Houle, seconded by Palmer, to adopt a resolution Discontinuing and Reducing Positions for 2026-2027,

Motion by Houle and seconded by Palmer to call for a 5 Minute Break.

Motion by Houle to withdraw the motion for the discontinuance and reduction of Positions for 2026-2027 as it was read.

Motion by Houle to introduce the following resolution and move to its adoption:

RESOLUTION DISCONTINUING AND REDUCING POSITIONS DUE TO ENROLLMENT AND DEPARTMENTAL EFFICIENCIES

WHEREAS, the School Board of Independent School District No. 13 adopted a resolution on January 20, 2026, directing the administration to make recommendations for reductions in programs and positions, and

WHEREAS, said recommendations have been received and considered by the School Board,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 13 as follows:

The following positions, or portions thereof, be discontinued due to enrollment, program elimination, curricular changes, and departmental efficiencies:

11.0 FTE Net Licensed Teacher Positions

2.0 FTE Licensed/Non-Affiliated District Center Positions

2.0 FTE Non-Licensed Secondary Positions

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Board member Palmer and, upon a vote being taken thereon, Fondness-Bondhus-Aye, Granlund-Aye, Houle-Aye, Medearis-Aye, Palmer-Aye, Pettway-Aye.

WHEREUPON: said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Termination, Elimination, and Reduction of Non-Affiliated and Non-Licensed

Positions:

Motion by Palmer to introduce the following resolution and move to its adoption:

RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE TERMINATION, ELIMINATION, AND REDUCTION OF POSITIONS

WHEREAS, the following are positions or employees in Independent School District No. 13:

NON-AFFILIATED

Ana Heras Guillen – Building Monitor

Jaime Layton – MTSS Coordinator

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 13, that those persons or positions listed above in Independent School District No. 13, are hereby terminated, eliminated or reduced at the close of the current 2025-2026 school year or on the date otherwise noted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that written notice be sent to said employees regarding termination, elimination or reduction.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Board member Houle and, upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

Roll Called Vote: Fondness-Bondhus- Aye, Granlund Aye, Houle Aye, Medearis-Aye, Palmer- Aye, Pettway- Aye.

WHEREUPON, said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Termination of Probationary Teacher Contracts Resolution 2:

Member Houle introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE TERMINATION AND NONRENEWAL OF THE TEACHING CONTRACTS OF PROBATIONARY TEACHERS

WHEREAS, the following persons are probationary teachers in Independent School District No. 13: *(See list below)*

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 13, that pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 122A.40, Subdivision 5, the teaching contracts of those persons listed on page two of this resolution, probationary teachers in Independent School District No. 13, are hereby terminated and not renewed at the close of the current 2025-2026 school year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that written notice be sent to said teachers regarding termination and non-renewal of their contract as provided by law, and that said notice shall be in substantially the following form:

NOTICE OF TERMINATION AND NON-RENEWAL

Dear _____:

You are hereby notified that at a regular meeting of the School Board of Independent School District No. 13 held on April 28, 2026, a resolution was adopted to terminate your contract effective at the end of the current school year and to not renew your contract for the 2026-2027 school year. Said action of the Board is taken pursuant to M.S. 122A.40, Subd. 5.

PROBATIONARY TEACHERS

Jennifer Rodriguez

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Board member Granlund and, upon vote being taken:

Roll Called Vote: Fondness- Bondhus- Aye, Granlund Aye, Houle-Aye, Medearis-Aye, Palmer- Aye, Pettway- Aye, Resolution Carries.

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Revised 2025-2026 Budget:

Motion by Houle, seconded by Medearis, to approve the revised 2025-2026 Budget, as presented by Bryan Hennekens. All in favor. Motion passes.

Board Topics

Granlund held many conversations with community members about Flock cameras in our community, with heightened concern about Flock drone first responders. The City of Columbia Heights will be holding a listening session open to the public.

Medearis-Teacher Appreciation Week next week

Stenvik High School theater Spring Play "The Play That Went Wrong", with performances this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The New Sport of Girls' Flag Football has a home game on the football field on Sunday at 4 PM.

Adjournment

Motion by Medearis, seconded by Pettway, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM. All in favor. Motion passes.

5/12/2026

Date minutes approved

Laura Palmer, Clerk, Board of Education.
Independent School District 13