

Eau Claire School Board Minutes
Monday, May 18, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
ECASD Administration Building and Livestream
Generated by Terri Grzyb

Members present

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

Members absent

Jarrett Dement

CONVENE (GC-1)

President Nordin Farrar 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. Cullen D. from Northstar Middle School led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA (GC-2)

Motion by Erica Zerr, second by Lori Bica to adopt the Board agenda for May 18, 2026.

Motion carried

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

RECOGNITION (R-1)

Superintendent Johnson thanked the student representatives for their contributions and participation throughout the year, with reflections on the value of student feedback. Superintendent Johnson also recognized National Speech and Language Pathologist Day.

PUBLIC FORUM (GC-2.3c)

No members of the public signed up to address the Board.

REPORTS

Board Debrief Report

The Board had no questions or comments.

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONSENT AGENDA (GC-2.5)

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

- Human Resources – Employment Report [HIRE: Business Education Teacher/Marketing Teacher, English Teacher, Social Studies Teacher, Speech & Language Pathologist; RESIGN: Art Teacher, Assistant Principal, Phy Ed Teacher, School Counselor, Special Education Teachers, Technology Education Teacher; TRANSFER: Grade 5 Teacher, Special Education Teacher]
- Facility Use Fee
- Facility Conditions of Use – ECASD
- Facility Conditions of Use – Community
- 2026-2027 Open Enrollment Applications
- Meal Prices for 2026-2027
- Authorization to the Executive Director of Business Services for Summer Months
- CESA 5 Contract

Motion carried

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

BOARD'S CONSENT AGENDA (GC-2.5)

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

- Closed Session Minutes of Board Meeting - April 20, 2026
- Minutes of Board Meeting - May 4, 2026
- Liaison and Committee Assignments

Motion carried

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

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Budget and Staffing Update

Dr. Mark Elworthy, Executive Director of Business Services, presented a detailed budget update which included the following:

- No new state funding was secured, as the recent legislative efforts did not pass the Senate.
- The District's fund balance is stable but will be slightly lower due to a larger budget; cash flow and contingency planning were emphasized.
- Key cost drivers include payroll, self-insurance, voucher payments, open enrollment, and OPEB.
- Open enrollment costs are lower, but voucher payments are increasing and expected to continue rising.
- Medical insurance trends are positive, with revenues exceeding expenses for several months.
- Staffing changes and special education needs are being closely monitored, with additional funding allocated for special ed staffing.
- Options for surplus funds include paying off leases, building fund balances, and investing in capital projects.

Michelle Golden, Executive Director of Human Resources, provided a staffing update which included the following:

- Staffing decisions are based on enrollment, program demand, student needs, and available financial resources.
- Reductions totaled about 35 positions (\$3.5M), with further adjustments possible due to resignations and hiring.
- Staffing ratios and formulas for elementary, middle, and high school were explained, with principals given flexibility to adjust sections based on needs.
- Creative solutions for staffing, such as combined classes, were discussed as potential ways to maintain school communities during right-sizing.

Discussion and questions followed, with the Board highlighting the importance of stronger, proactive community engagement around enrollment decline and district changes.

2026-2027 Employee Handbook Modifications

The 2026-2027 proposed employee handbook modifications were presented. Some of the updates included a new process for religious accommodations, clarification on emergency closure procedures, dress code language, short-term physical or emotional wellness needs, bereavement leave, and committee structures. The employee relations committee's diverse membership and ongoing work to improve the handbook were highlighted. Discussion and questions followed.

BOARD DEBRIEF (GC-2.3)

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

ADJOURN

Motion by Tim Nordin, second by Pa Thao to adjourn meeting.

Motion carried

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.