MILAN AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, August 26, 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 August 26, 2026.

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

Board Members Absent: Cislo

Staff: Superintendent McMahon, Assistant Superintendent Bookout, Executive Finance Director Hendrix, Margaret Durkee and Sara Beckman

Guests: Heather Finch and Angela Chidester

Public Comments: None

Motion by Heikka supported by Gutierrez to approve the minutes of the Special Board Meeting on August 21, 2026. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Superintendent McMahon shared a bargaining groups update with the board.

Motion by Burdette supported by Prior to approve Trevor Miner as the MMS and MHS Choir Teacher effective for the 2026-2027 school year. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Motion by Prior supported by Heikka to revise, repeal, and/or adopt Board policies as described in Attachment A. All Ayes. Carried 6-0.

Public Comments: None

Assistant Superintendent Comments:

- We are right in the middle of our opening week of professional development, and Assistant Superintendent Bookout took time to recognize the work our staff are doing to prepare for the new school year.
  One of our goals in planning professional development this year has been to be really thoughtful about how we use our staff's time. We have several new initiatives and district priorities, and we don't want to introduce something new and then move on immediately. We're trying to give staff time to understand the why behind the work, learn what they need to know, collaborate with one another,

and think about what implementation will actually look like in their classrooms and buildings.

This week, that has included learning around student behavior supports, special education, our updated emergency response procedures, and building initiatives. We've also intentionally protected time for grade-level and department collaboration, building planning, and individual preparation.

We've also expanded professional learning for our paraprofessionals this year. In addition to a full day of CPI training for new paraprofessionals, we've added two full days of professional development specifically for our paras. They play such an important role in supporting students and classrooms, and we want to make sure they have dedicated time for training, collaboration, and preparation as well.

There's always a lot to accomplish during opening week, but our goal is for staff to leave this week not just with more information, but feeling prepared, supported, and clear about our priorities as we welcome students back.

- We've also had a great start to our back-to-school events. Open Houses across the district have been very well attended, and it's been wonderful to see students and families back in our buildings.

  One piece Assistant Superintendent Bookout especially wanted to highlight is that all of our schools offered a "soft start" Open House for students receiving special education services. These provided an opportunity for students who may benefit from a smaller, quieter environment to visit the building before the larger Open House, meet staff, find their classrooms, and become more comfortable with the school environment without as much noise and activity.

  It's a relatively simple adjustment, but it's a good example of how we can remove barriers and make important school experiences more accessible to students with different sensory and support needs. Assistant Superintendent Bookout really appreciates our building teams being intentional about creating that opportunity for students and families.

Superintendent Comments:

- Superintendent McMahon thanked the staff for a great first two days of professional development. Our administrative team. Led by Jen Bookout, worked hard all summer preparing for the year and much of that work was transferred to our staff during our opening PD days.

- Superintendent McMahon thanked our staff for their preparation and participation in our Open Houses and thanked all of the parents that were able to attend.

- Superintendent McMahon shared that he was looking forward to the first day with students, next Monday, August 31. The buildings have been prepped and the staff are prepared to get started on another great year at MAS.

Board Member Comments:

- Burdette welcomed the new choir teacher while expressing gratitude to retiring choir teacher Shayla Powell for her years of dedicated service and student impact. He noted the high attendance and energetic atmosphere at the high school open house, attributing the positive environment to the new leadership team. Additionally, he shared updates on ongoing athletics and encouraged the community to attend the upcoming home varsity football game.

- Prior encouraged the community to consult district websites for upcoming student activities and highlighted the success and strong attendance at the recent community kickoff event. She noted that homecoming is one month away and wished everyone a safe start to the school year.

- Heikka commended staff for their work during opening week professional development, with special appreciation for the expanded paraprofessional training. She praised the positive atmosphere at the high school open house, noting that holding the event before the start of the school year and eliminating rigid bell schedule rotations improved the event. Additionally, she commended the organizers of the community kickoff event and announced details for upcoming dance team tryouts.

- Gutierrez commended Shayla Powell for her service, welcomed new choir teacher Mr. Miner, and commended staff for their hard work during the well-attended open houses. She requested that the administration consider scheduling middle school and high school open houses on separate nights in the future to better accommodate families. Additionally, she shared registration and funding support details for the eighth-grade Chicago trip, announced that bus schedules were mailed out, expressed appreciation for the expanded paraprofessional training, and welcomed students and staff back to school. She also provided an update on scholarship disbursements, expressing gratitude for the thank-you letters received from district alumni.

- Meray acknowledged her absences from the previous two board meetings, expressed gratitude to the acting secretary, and noted that she reviewed the meeting recordings to remain updated. She welcomed new and returning staff, reported that the communications committee will schedule an upcoming meeting, congratulated the cast of the recent high school 24-hour musical, and extended formal appreciation to the retiring choir teacher while welcoming Mr. Miner.

- Faro welcomed district families and staff back to school and praised custodians and staff for their work preparing the facilities and creating welcoming open houses. He announced the upcoming state count day on October 1, 2026 and plans to coordinate social media posts for awareness. He thanked Ms. Bookout for proactively compiling the standardized testing schedule. Additionally, he noted upcoming follow-ups with

administration regarding mental health and safety funds, and thanked Sara Beckman for highlighting new staff members on district social media channels.

I. Other Old/New Business

A. Closed Session – Negotiation Strategies

Motion by Meray supported by Heikka 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 7:27 p.m.

Time returned to open session 7:53 p.m.

Time of Adjournment 7:53 p.m.