

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

DATE: October 22, 2026
TOPIC: 5.7-October 8, 2026 School Board Meeting Minutes
PRESENTER: Dayna Pottratz, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & School Board
REFERENCE TO POLICY/STATUTE: Policy 204

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- a. Review School Board Meeting Minutes.

B. RECOMMENDATION

- a. Approval

C. CONNECTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITY

- a. Operations, Staffing, and Finance

October 8, 2026

- 1.0 **Call to Order: Roll Call:** Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 833, South Washington County, was held on Thursday, October 8, 2026. The meeting was called to order by Chair Katie Schwartz, at 6:00pm at the District Service Center, 7362 East Point Douglas Road South, Cottage Grove, MN 55016. School Board Members present: Elizabeth Bockman Eckberg, Ryan Clarke, Melinda Dols, Louise Hinz, Simi Patnaik, Katie Schwartz and Sharon Van Leer. Student School Board Representative Caden Do was present, Téa Alvarenga and Andrew Chasteen were absent. Superintendent Julie Nielsen was present.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance



- 3.0 **Approval of Agenda:** It was moved by Sharon Van Leer seconded by Simi Patnaik to approve the agenda. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.
- 4.0 **Student School Board Representative Reports:** Caden Do from Woodbury High School shared his experience returning to school after taking PSEO, AP and difficult classes. He noted he is excited to be on the school board and highlighted how much easier it is to get lunch in the remodeled, larger cafeteria.
- 5.0 **Workshop Items:**
- 5.1 Use of Artificial Intelligence in SoWashCo introduced by Ms. Kelly Jansen, Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Bob Berkowitz, Director of Technology and Amber Sorenson, Technology Integration Coordinator shared details about Artificial Intelligence use in SoWashCo Schools.
- 5.2 Open Enrollment Parameters for 2027-2028 presented by Ms. Kelly Jansen, Assistant Superintendent. Ms. Jansen reviewed which schools are closed for open enrollment next year, the eligibility requirements and application deadlines. This will return at the October 22, 2026 meeting for approval.
- 6.0 **Information Items:**
- 6.1 Financial Update presented by Ms. Kris Blackburn, Director of Business Services. She shared the preliminary review for the 2025-26 school year.
- 6.2 Budget Adjustment Update presented by Ms. Kelly Jansen, Assistant Superintendent and Ms. Kris Blackburn, Director of Business Services. They reviewed the adjustment goals in various departments within the district, all potential options and the timeline.
- 6.3 First Reading of Proposed Policy Changes presented by Ms. Julie Nielsen, Superintendent. There was no request for public comment on the policies. These will return for approval at the October 22, 2026 meeting.
- 7.0 **Reports and Comments:** Superintendent Nielsen highlighted the ribbon cutting at Headwaters Life Skills Program. She reminded people the funding for the building came from combining two leases and this is now a 10-year mortgage. She noted the High School Award ceremonies she



has been attending and the All District advisory meeting earlier in the week. She also shared the Marching Band Showcase this weekend, MEA and upcoming community listening sessions to hear about budget adjustments.

Louise Hinz wrote, *“Association of Metro School Districts (AMSD) At the October 2 board meeting, the two major party candidates for governor, Speaker Lisa Demuth and Senator Amy Klobuchar, responded to questions based on the priority issues AMSD members identified in their legislative platform survey St. Michael-Albertville Supt. Ann-Marie Foucault and Minnetonka Supt. David Law and Board Members Sally Browne and Karen Jordan gave overviews of their respective legislative advocacy teams.”*

Elizabeth Bockman Eckberg wrote, *“All Advisory Committee Meeting – October. All committee members from every advisory group were invited to come together to attend a community building and informative presentation from district leadership at the District Service Center. The event was well attended and nearly all action committees were represented by at least one member. Representatives from advisory committees learned about bond construction updates, budget adjustment processes, the five-year planning ahead, and opening Headwaters site. Committee members had the opportunity to connect with one another as well as provide feedback to district leadership about calendar proposals for AY2027-28 and what they’re hearing in the community at present.”*

Melinda Dols wrote, *“916 Report: 916 is hosting a School Safety Training for member districts on November 9th. The training will focus on practical execution- aligning roles, refining communication strategies, and practicing response protocols.*

A Member District Survey is being done by 916 to ensure they are meeting district member needs now and in the future. There will be actionable steps and timelines presented in November.

The 916 annual staff survey is underway. It measures key components of the organization including mission, vision and values, communication, leadership, policy, and practice to identify opportunities for cultural improvements.

Academic Highlight: 916 graduation data in Spring 2026 show that graduation rates have increased by 8% since 2016-219.”

8.0 Future Meeting Dates:

October 22, 2026 – School Board Business Meeting (DSC/6:00 p.m.)

November 5, 2026 – School Board Workshop Meeting (DSC/6:00 p.m.)



- 9.0 **Closed Session:** Pursuant to MN Statute 13D.05, Subdivision 3a, for the Superintendent's Evaluation. At 7:56pm, it was moved by Sharon Van Leer, seconded by Simi Patnaik to move to closed session. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried. At 8:29pm, it was moved by Simi Patnaik, seconded by Ryan Clark to move to open session. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.
- 10.0 **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

