



**Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
Monday, October 26, 2026**

The Board of Directors held a Regular Board Meeting on Monday, October 26, 2026. This meeting was held in-person and virtually via a Zoom link posted on the Mead School District website. The meeting began at 6:00pm and was held at Union Event Center. Directors Gray, Nolan, Cannon, Killman and Woodworth were present. Also in attendance were Superintendent Travis Hanson and Assistant Superintendents Jared Hoadley and Jay Jordan.

I. Pledge of Allegiance

Director Gray asked all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00pm.

II. Approval of Agenda

Director Nolan made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Director Killman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes

Director Nolan made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, and the October 12, 2026 Work Session as presented. Director Cannon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Remarks for the Good of the Schools

High School Updates

Mt. Spokane High School ASB President, Nduta Chicoine, presented a brief review of recent academic, athletic, leadership and music events at Mt. Spokane High School. The girls softball team took first in state for the fourth year in a row, they are bringing in a historic amount of food donations as part of the Cross Town Claw Down rivalry with Mead High School, they are currently planning for their upcoming Veteran's Day Assembly, the drama department will be performing their fall play in two weeks, and HOSA will soon be hosting a blood drive. Additionally, Ms. Chicoine thanked Director Nolan for his help providing her with some requested resources over the summer.

Board/Staff Comments

Director Nolan commented that there are some great rivalry games/matches going on between Mt. Spokane High School and Mead High School that have been fun to attend. Director Woodworth shared about his visit to Cat Tracks a couple of weeks ago. He stated that this program is a great resource and important for students who need this transition time to help prepare for their future. He found it to be a good classroom and vocational setting with the Student Resource Hub set up for community needs in a store format. He thanked Special Services Secondary Director, Andrea Staton, for the tour and more importantly for the work and effort she puts into this program.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

No individuals signed up to comment on agenda items.

V. Continuing Business
A. 2nd Reading Policy 2230 Revision
Transition to Kindergarten Program

Learning & Teaching Assistant Superintendent, Jay Jordan, presented a second reading of a revision to Policy 2230, Transition to Kindergarten Program. This revision was discussed at the September Work Session and presented in a first reading at the September Regular Board Meeting. The most recent WSSDA model policy was used as the template for this revision and the revisions include the OSPI requirements for a TK program related to best practices on a variety of measures, and the ability for the district to charge sliding scale fees for enrollment (with some exceptions). The district has no plans to charge for this program but the WSSDA model policy recommends adding this language. As previously noted, the consideration of charging a fee would only occur if the district were to expand the TK program beyond the state's allocation. Currently the district does not have sections beyond the state allocation.

Director Nolan made a motion to approve the revision to Policy 2230, Transition to Kindergarten Program, as presented. Director Cannon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

B. 1st Reading Policy 3246 and Procedure 3246P Revisions
Restraint, Isolation and Other Uses of Reasonable Force

Special Services Secondary Director, Andrea Staton, presented a first reading of revisions to Policy/Procedure 3246/3246P, Restraint, Isolation and Other Uses of Reasonable Force, on behalf of Special & Alternative Programs Executive Director, Heather Havens. This was first presented and discussed at the October Work Session. The most recent WSSDA model policy and procedure were used to update these based on recent legislation changes.

Ms. Staton summarized the major changes which include:

- 1) Stricter requirements for restraint and isolation. Restraint or isolation is permitted only when a student's spontaneous behavior presents an imminent likelihood of serious harm to themselves or another person. Property damage alone is no longer identified as justification.
- 2) Clarification between escorts, physical prompts and restraint. Physical escorts and instructional physical prompts are distinguished from physical restraint.
- 3) Significant restrictions on isolation rooms. Districts may no longer create, remodel, or repurpose rooms primarily for student isolation but districts can continue to use the spaces already built.

Director Nolan had a question about chemical restraint as defined in the procedure. Ms. Staton responded that typically a chemical restraint is in the form of as-needed medication coordinated with the school nurse, the student's parent and is part of the student's health care plan. Any chemical restraint is under the scope of medical professionals.

Director Woodworth inquired how often the need for restraint occurs. Ms. Staton answered that it isn't often and they are working to reduce the need for it as much as possible. At a later date, she will report the specific numbers and information to the board.

This was a first reading, non-action, item. Director Gray authorized bringing this forward for a second reading and action item at the November Regular Board Meeting.

VI. New Business

A. Consent Agenda

Director Gray acknowledged our community partners and read aloud the donations listed in the Consent Agenda and thanked those individuals and organizations for their generosity and support of the Mead School District. She commented specifically on her appreciation for the donations received to help support families impacted by the wildfires.

Director Killman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Director Cannon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Hired Certificated Personnel:

Francine Albert	Shiloh Hills ES	Cert	1.0 FTE Teacher effective 10/1/26
Mary Gonzales	Skyline ES	Cert	1.0 FTE Leave Replacement Teacher effective 10/1/26
Angela Morris	Highland MS	Cert	0.2 FTE Leave Replacement Teacher effective 10/7/26
Nicholas Ritter	Northwood MS	Cert	0.4 FTE Leave Replacement effective 9/30/26
Nicole Arnold	Colbert ES	Cert	0.2 FTE Leave Replacement Teacher effective 10/12/26
Kristine Rust	Evergreen ES	Cert	1.0 FTE Leave Replacement Teacher effective 10/1/26

2. Hired Classified Personnel:

Amanda Bouvier	Transportation	Class	4.25 hrs/day Bus Asst effective 10/7/26
Kristin Brown	Special Services	Class	6.08 hrs/day Para Ed-DLC effective 9/24/26
Elizabeth Child	Mead HS	Class	3 hrs/day Para Ed effective 9/29/26
Treasure Dragseth	Transportation	Class	4 hrs/day Bus Driver effective 9/24/26
Brandon Gamman	Mead HS	Class	6.15 hrs/day Para Ed effective 10/5/26
Alexander Landon	Shiloh Hills ES	Class	6.25 hrs/day Leave Replacement Para Ed effective 10/5/26
Kaelin Magee	Midway ES	Class	5.85 hrs/day Instructional/Supervision Para Ed effective 10/8/26
Kaila Mildren	Highland MS	Class	4 hrs/day Para Ed effective 10/5/26
Trina Miller	Transportation	Class	5.16 hrs/day Bus Asst effective 10/8/26
Isabelle Morse	Transportation	Class	5.42 hrs/day Bus Asst effective 10/9/26
Elijah Sletten	Mead HS	Class	6.15 hrs/day Para Ed effective 10/6/26
Aubrey Starkey	Northwood MS	Class	6.5 hrs/day SPED Para Ed effective 9/4/26
Kaitlyn Wilburn	Brentwood ES	Class	5.25 hrs/day Para Ed effective 9/24/26
Tiffany Baisch	Human Resources	Class	8 hrs/day HR Specialist effective 10/19/26 (no longer Athletic AA at MSHS)
Mary Krejci	Highland MS	Class	6.20 hrs/day Para Ed-DLC effective 10/14/26
Elias Paxton	Mt Spokane HS	Class	6.25 hrs/day Para Ed-DLC effective 10/12/26

3. **Hired Certificated Substitutes:**

Andrea Cross	Cole Steinbach-Kane	Joseph Scarborough	Madison Patterson
Nicholas Kim	Madison Riggs	Kobe Taylor	Stella Rieth
Will Peterson	Magie Suter		

4. **Hired Classified Substitutes:**

Deborah Eyth	James Charters	Alaina Benett	Tiffany Gilbert
Lidia Rivas			

5. **Hired Coaches:**

Jorene Klopsch	Mountainside Middle School	6 th Grade Volleyball Asst
Sabrina Lessenden	Mt Spokane High School	Girls Cross Country Asst
Alyssa Likes	Mead High School	Head Dance Team
John Rice	Mountainside Middle School	7/8 th Grade Football Asst & 6 th -8 th Grade Wrestling Asst
Tanner Trout	Mountainside Middle School	6 th -8 th Grade Wrestling Head
Josh Lucas	Mountainside Middle School	6 th -8 th Grade Wrestling Asst
Brooklyn Wilkerson	Northwood Middle School	7 th Grade Volleyball Asst - Leave Replacement
Kaitlyn Nelson	Mountainside Middle School	7 th Grade Volleyball Asst

6. **Approved Volunteer Coaches:**

Abigail Smith		
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7. **Approved AP Vouchers for General Fund, Capital Projects, Transportation Vehicle, Private Purpose Trust and ASB.**

Vouchers audited and certified by auditing officers as required by RCW 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing which has been made available to the Board. As of this day, **October 26, 2026**, the Board, by a unanimous vote does approve for payment the vouchers included in the above referenced list and further described as **Warrant Numbers 129228 to 129782** in the following amounts:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>
General Fund - AP	\$ 2,467,890.98
General Fund - PR	\$15,033,805.12
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 608,582.36
ASB Fund	\$ 238,551.40
Transportation Vehicle Fund	\$ 200,974.28

8. **Approved Co-Curricular, Supplemental & Extra-Curricular Contracts.**

9. **Accepted the Following Donations:**

- \$3,000.00 from Scottish Rites Charities to support families impacted by wildfires.

- \$4,000.00 from Greater Spokane League (Dick's Foundation Grant) for Mead HS athletes who lost athletic equipment/gear due to the wildfires.
- \$1,616.64 from Mead Sports Booster Organization for Mead HS athletic trainers and baseball.
- \$2,500.00 from Mainstream Electric, LLC for the Mead HS Cheer Program.
- \$10,000.00 from Kaiser Permanente for Mead School District's Student Resource HUB.
- \$738.18 from Mead Band Wagon for the Mead HS Band Program.
- \$1,621.50 from Mt. Spokane Athletic Boosters for replacement of fading/tattered gym banners.
- \$5,087.33 from Highland Parent Pack for the Highland MS Choir Program.
- \$7,902.44 from Highland Parent Pack for Highland MS volleyball.
- \$500.00 from Cobank ACB, The Blackband Giving Fund, for Brentwood Elementary.
- \$550.00 from Chase Milligan for Mt. Spokane HS' History Bowl.
- \$950.00 from Hoffman Music for the Mead HS Band Program.
- \$1,000.00 from Spokane County Deputy Sheriff's Association for the Mead HS Cheer Program.
- \$4,565.94 from Mead Sports Booster Organization for Mead HS Girls Basketball and Girls Tennis.

10. Approved Unpaid Leaves (i.e. parenting, medical, good of the district, educational etc.):

Sark Kirshirian	Technology	Class	20 hrs/week; effective 9/1/26-11/25/26
Holly Kranches	Special Services	Cert	0.2 FTE Speech Language Pathologist; effective Mondays 11/2/26-11/30/26
William Schwalbe	Mead HS	Cert	1.0 FTE Teacher; effective 10/12/26-1/2/27
Jack McClary	Mountainside MS	Class	6.4 hrs/day Para Ed; effective 10/14/26 - 10/15/26
Reytina Nelson	Mountainside MS	Class	3 hrs/day Para Ed; effective 9/29/26, 10/6/26, 10/13/26, 10/15/26, 10/20/26, 10/22/26
Ava Sargent	Creekside ES	Class	6.25 hrs/day Preschool Para Ed; effective 10/20/26-10/22/26
Emma Allen	Mountainside MS	Cert	1.0 FTE Teacher; effective 10/3/26 - 1/22/27
Camille Geohring	Colbert ES	Cert	1.0 FTE Teacher; effective 10/12/26 - 11/20/26
Sydney Martin	Shiloh Hills ES	Cert	1.0 FTE Teacher; effective 10/5/26 - 1/3/27
Katie McConnell	Mt Spokane HS	Cert	1.0 FTE Teacher; effective 10/5/26-6/16/27
Macy Mills	Special Services	Cert	1.0 FTE Speech Language Pathologist; effective 10/15/26 - 1/29/27
Meghan Thurston	Evergreen ES	Cert	1.0 FTE Teacher; effective 10/19/26-1/3/27
Chad Thayer	Evergreen ES	Class	6.5 hrs/day Para Ed; effective 11/20/26-11/24/26
Brenna Weishaar	Special Services	Cert	0.6 FTE Speech Language Pathologist; effective 2 nd semester 26/27 year

11. Accepted the Following Resignations/Retirements:

Courtney Bock	Colbert ES	Cert	Resign-Requesting Release of Contract-effective 10/23/26 (Library Information Technician)
Rhonda Driskill	Transportation	Class	Resignation effective 8/18/26 (Bus Driver)
Shelli Nemec	Human Resources	Class	Resignation effective 10/16/26 (Recruiting Specialist)
Joel Pierce	Prairie View ES	Class	Resignation effective 10/9/26 (Para)
Alaina Thies	Colbert ES	Class	Resignation effective 10/9/26 (Behavior Tech)
Cheri Bayley	Custodial Services	Class	Retirement effective 12/30/26 (Custodian)
Virginia Cronin	Mead Learning Options	Cert	Retirement effective 8/25/26 (Teacher)
Karen Pfaff	Northwood MS	Cert	Retire-Requesting Release of Contract-effective 1/22/27
Timothy Hill	Transportation	Class	Resignation effective 10/9/26 (Bus Driver)

B. Student Travel Proposal - Mead High School Choir

Learning & Teaching Assistant Superintendent, Jay Jordan, presented a travel proposal from Mead High School Choir for 16 students and 3 adult chaperones to travel to Reno, Nevada, April 29-May 2, 2027, to take part in the Reno Jazz Festival at the University of Nevada, School of the Arts. Dr. Jordan noted that they took this trip last year. This is a 3-day festival where the choir will perform for 2 renowned artist educators, and receive detailed feedback and compete for a coveted spot in the Festival Showcase on Saturday night. Additionally, the remainder of the festival is filled with opportunities to learn via clinics, workshops and concerts. Last year they were invited to perform in the Festival Showcase.

Students will miss two days of school, April 29 & 30, 2027, and the choir teacher will need a substitute teacher for those same two days. The estimated cost per student is \$800.00 with fundraising opportunities available.

Director Nolan inquired about the timing of the fundraising and Chief Financial Officer, Heather Ellingson, stated that typically the funds are raised prior to the event.

Director Nolan made a motion to approve the request from Mead High School Choir to travel to Reno, Nevada, April 29-May 2, 2027, as presented. Director Woodworth seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Resolution 26-08

Federal Scholarship Tax Credit Program for K-12 Educational Expenses (Education Freedom Tax Credit Program)

Director Gray shared that the board is bringing forward a resolution that urges the Washington Governor, Bob Ferguson, to opt into the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit Program for K-12 Educational Expenses established by Public Law 119-21, by January 1, 2027. She shared that the board has also written a letter to the governor to accompany the resolution. Director Gray stated that this is a federal program that many other states have already opted into and unless Washington State opts in, Washington families will not be able to take advantage of the educational resources and opportunities that this program provides. She proceeded to read the proposed resolution aloud and followed that with reading the board's letter aloud. Both the resolution and letter are attached to these minutes.

Director Cannon commented that he supports this and because the deadline for opting in is getting close, the board would like to draw attention to this and voice their encouragement to the governor. Director Cannon believes this program will provide a potential substantial benefit to public school students and he doesn't want to turn away potentially helpful resources when school district budgets are tight. He believes it is the board's duty to provide this avenue of resources to Mead's families. He recognizes that not all of the details are yet known surrounding this program but stated that this is a tax credit, not a tax deduction. Individuals can send up to \$1,700.00 to the IRS or to a scholarship granting organization (SGO), and he would prefer families have the option to send that money to a SGO.

Director Nolan noted that 31 states have opted in so far, and he believes it is not a partisan issue and worthwhile to consider. He suggested perhaps an explanation of this program could be sent to the district/community through the Mead Matters publication as some people are not aware of the benefits this program could provide.

Director Gray agreed with both Directors Cannon and Nolan and noted this is a way to supplement and provide options and resources to Mead's students in addition to the exceptional education that Mead already provides. Individuals can designate funds to this program on their tax return regardless if Washington state opts in, but she'd prefer to have that money benefit Washington state students rather than go to other states. She believes this program will support Mead's educators, families and community.

Superintendent Hanson shared that he appreciates the spirit of partnership he has with the board and acknowledged that the board sets the direction, and translates public values and educational goals for the district. His job is to inform the board candidly how he sees issues and recognizes that he and the board agree that Mead's educators do fantastic work. While there are always ways to improve, the district has much to be proud of and he doesn't believe the board's resolution calls that into question. However, his primary concern is that he doesn't see this program as being on an entirely level playing field. School districts serve every student under the umbrella of many requirements and SGOs are subject to very few of the same requirements. He noted that Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chris Reykdal, has urged the governor not to opt into this program. The organization that Superintendent Hanson is a member of, the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA), recommends not opting in as well. He knows and respects some who think this program brings more risk than reward and believes this is a very complex decision for the governor.

Should Washington state opt in, the state cannot impose restrictions on SGOs beyond what the federal government allows. SGOs cannot send funds to public schools and many will seek the scholarship funds to pay private providers. Public schools do not and cannot charge (with very few exceptions) for the educational services they provide. At the same time, these funds could be used in very real ways to defray educational expenses for families and while that makes good sense, he does not want to ignore those who have expressed this will weaken public schools. He stated that while no law is perfect, this one is far from it. That being said, he noted this program will be open for amendments, changes and improvements and he asked the board if they move forward with this resolution and Washington state does, in fact, opt in, his hope is they will join him to ask Washington's legislators and Washington's congressional delegation for modifications. These modifications may include requiring SGOs to demonstrate outcomes and results, not just financial compliance; allowing the state to monitor and have oversight of these SGOs; and implementing ways to keep profit-seekers out or SGO board members from steering funds to companies they own etc. There is a real risk for fraud and profit-seeking rather than focusing on the needs of kids.

Lastly, Superintendent Hanson spoke directly to Mead School District staff. He stated that his conviction about the work that both certificated and classified staff do everyday shows the Mead community what public education promises. Regardless of what the governor decides on this program, he remains committed to working with the staff and the board to make Mead an exceptional experience for every student. He expressed his deep appreciation for the professionalism and dedication he regularly witnesses from the staff. He shared that he is cautious, concerned and open regarding this program.

Director Gray stated that the board believes in the public education system and Director Cannon shared he doesn't see this resolution as any kind of referendum on public education, rather a tax relief strategy for families that will benefit families. Director Nolan referenced Superintendent Hanson's suggestion regarding more oversight for the SGOs, stating that he did not think the state was the right entity for that.

Director Nolan made a motion to approve the letter to the governor and adopt the resolution. Director Killman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. Reports

A. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Hanson updated the board regarding the grant opportunity that was discussed at the October Work Session through Playlab. The Playlab grant is in conjunction with the Gates Foundation and Gonzaga University and would provide AI resources and training for students in age appropriate ways where students would not be out on the open web. Playlab provides opportunities for students to learn AI in a more internal atmosphere. The grant application was submitted and the district should hear back sometime in December.

Superintendent Hanson also shared about another grant opportunity that the district is pursuing through the Balmer Group which has put together an additional academic instruction opportunity in the form of a summer school program. It's called Discover Works and a contingent from the district will be sent to ESD 101 soon to learn more about this opportunity. ESD 101 will serve as the fiscal agent for this grant. The district's summer stem program has seen wild success and been very impactful and Discover Works is a unique way to access grant dollars to provide additional summer programming. Superintendent Hanson is excited to learn more about this and will keep the board updated.

VIII. Remarks for the Good of the Schools – Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

No one signed up to comment on non-agenda items.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51pm.

President

Secretary



RESOLUTION 26-08

A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Mead School District, Spokane County, Washington, urging Governor Bob Ferguson to opt Washington state into the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit Program for K-12 Educational Expenses established by Public Law 119-21.

WHEREAS, Public Law 119-21, enacted July 4, 2025, established a federal scholarship tax credit—through Section 25F of the Internal Revenue Code—for contributions to nonprofit scholarship granting organizations (SGOs) that provide educational assistance to eligible K-12 students for qualified educational expenses; and

WHEREAS, this program is a tax credit program, not a voucher program: it is funded entirely through private donations that receive federal tax credits, not through government appropriations or redirected public education funds, and therefore does not reduce funding available to public schools at the state or local level; and

WHEREAS, this federal program allows individual taxpayers to receive a dollar-for-dollar federal tax credit of up to \$1,700 annually for contributions to qualified SGOs, a credit that reduces tax liability more effectively than a deduction and is available regardless of a donor's tax bracket; and

WHEREAS, unlike traditional state-level programs focused primarily on private school tuition, this federal program covers qualified elementary and secondary educational expenses for students attending public schools, and qualifies a broad range of expenses including tutoring, technology, transportation, extended-day programs, and special needs services; and

WHEREAS, eligible students are those from families with household incomes at or below 300 percent of area median gross income, ensuring the program serves working families and those most in need of educational support; and

WHEREAS, the program is designed so that approximately 90 percent of all K-12 students in every participating state are eligible, meaning an estimated 1.3 million Washington students stand to benefit from expanded educational opportunities such as tutoring, academically focused after-school programs, and services for students with special needs, if the Governor opts the state in; and

WHEREAS, under Section 139K of the Internal Revenue Code, also created by Public Law 119-21, scholarship funds received by eligible students are excluded from gross income for federal tax purposes, meaning families owe no federal income tax on scholarship amounts received; and

WHEREAS, conservative financial estimates project that if just one percent of Washington taxpayers with a federal tax liability of at least \$1,700 participate, annual scholarship donations would exceed \$24 million; at a thirty percent participation rate, annual donations could reach \$723 million; and

WHEREAS, participating nonprofit SGOs must meet rigorous requirements, including spending at least 90 percent of qualified contributions on scholarships, serving at least 10 students attending more than one school, maintaining 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, verifying annual household income and family size of all applicants, and maintaining separate accounts and detailed records for federal audit purposes; and

WHEREAS, participation in this program is voluntary, requiring the Governor to elect Washington state's participation by submitting a list of qualified SGOs to the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury no later than January 1, 2027, in order for Washington families to access scholarship funds in the first year of the program; and

WHEREAS, if Governor Ferguson does not opt Washington state into the program by January 1, 2027, Washington taxpayers may still claim the \$1,700 federal tax credit but may only donate to SGOs in states that have opted in—meaning funding generated by Washington taxpayers would flow out of Washington to students and schools in other states, while Washington students and schools receive no benefit; and

WHEREAS, failure to opt in would deny Mead School District students and families access to federal educational assistance available to students in participating states, placing Mead School District at a competitive disadvantage; and

WHEREAS, Washington state has a compelling interest in supporting working families and allowing families of students enrolled in its public schools to take advantage of expanded educational opportunities generated by Washington taxpayers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mead School District Board of Directors urges Governor Bob Ferguson to exercise his authority under Section 25F(g)(1)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code to elect Washington state's participation in the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit Program for K-12 Educational Expenses established by Public Law 119-21, and to do so no later than January 1, 2027, to ensure no Washington family or the public schools their children attend are denied access to these federal funds; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Mead School District Board of Directors declares that opting into this federal program will:

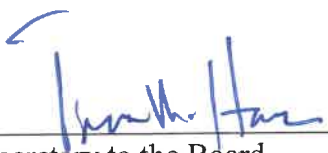
- (a) Direct up to an estimated \$723 million annually in privately donated scholarship funds to Washington students;
- (b) Provide scholarships for allowable educational expenses, including tutoring, technology, transportation, extended-day programs, and special needs services, to students in Mead School District and throughout Washington state;
- (c) SGOs may direct scholarship funds to students within their own communities;

- (d) Expand educational options and opportunities for working families at no additional cost to those families; and
- (e) Ensure that tax dollars generated by Washington taxpayers benefit Washington students rather than flowing to other participating states; and be it further

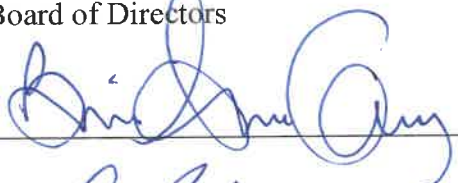
RESOLVED that duly certified copies of this resolution shall be presented to the Office of the Governor of Washington State.

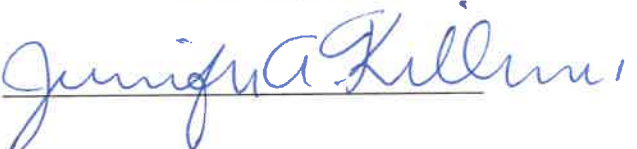
ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of Mead School District at a duly noticed public meeting held on October 26, 2026.

Attest:


Secretary to the Board

Mead School District No. 354
Board of Directors






2323 E. Farwell Rd., Mead, WA 99021
509-465-6000
www.mead354.org

Mead School District
Board of Directors
2323 E Farwell Road
Mead, WA 99021

October 26, 2026

The Honorable Bob Ferguson
Governor of Washington
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Ferguson:

Thank you for the leadership you showed for our region in the aftermath of the Spokane Complex fires. Your willingness to set politics aside, request a federal Major Disaster Declaration, and work to unlock resources for families and communities made a real difference when people here needed it most. We are writing in that same spirit of practical partnership.

The Mead School District Board of Directors respectfully asks you to opt Washington into the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit Program by January 1, 2027. This program creates an additional stream of privately donated resources that public-school students can use for tutoring, technology, transportation, extended-day programs, and special needs supports. **With both state and local education budgets under real pressure, this is one more tool we can use to support students without reducing any of the funding we already receive. Declining this mechanism would deny students practical supports they can use while remaining enrolled in their public schools.**

We have reviewed the concerns raised in Superintendent Reykdal's October 9 letter. We believe several of those points do not accurately reflect how the program works, and are simply objections based on political animosity. The program is funded entirely by voluntary private donations that receive a federal tax credit. It does not draw on state appropriations, local levies, or any other public-education dollars. Existing funding for Mead and every other public school district remains fully intact. New York Governor Kathy Hochul, after reviewing the same federal rules, chose to opt her state in for this reason, she concluded the program can bring additional dollars to students and families without taking a single dollar from public schools or from state or local budgets. The Washington Student Success Coalition, whose members include Microsoft, the Seattle Metro Chamber, the Bellevue Chamber, and education organizations, has similarly endorsed the program as a way to bring substantial new resources to Washington public-school students, for tutoring, after-school programming, and other supports.

Students who attend public schools are eligible for these supports, and eligibility covers the large majority of families in Mead and across the state. Even modest participation by Washington

taxpayers could generate tens of millions of dollars a year for students, with higher participation potentially reaching several hundred million. All of it comes at no detriment to the state or district budgets.

If Washington does not opt in by January 1, 2027, Washington taxpayers can still claim the federal tax credit, but their donations would go to support scholarship organizations in other states. Resources generated by Washington taxpayers would then help students elsewhere, while Mead students and other public-school students here would receive no benefit.

The Board has adopted a resolution asking you to elect Washington's participation. We are looking at every practical option that can put more resources in front of our students without adding cost to the district or reducing existing public funding. This program is one of those options. We ask that you consider opting Washington in by January 1, 2027, so public school students across the state can access these supports in the program's first year. We would welcome the chance to discuss how districts can participate constructively.

Thank you again for the way you stepped forward for Spokane families after the fires. We hope you will bring that same willingness to set politics aside and help Washington students by keeping this additional funding source available when budgets are tight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "BrieAnne Gray".

BrieAnne Gray
Board Chair
Mead School District Board of Directors

cc: Mead School District Board of Directors
Superintendent of Mead School District