REGULAR MEETING
October 21, 2026
6:02 PM

The regular meeting of the Baker School Board was called to order by Chairperson Karen Wang at 6:02pm in the Boardroom of Baker High School. Trustees Dalon Dyke, Cody Strandbakke, Jodi Varner and Jay Quenzer were in attendance. Also present were Superintendent Aaron Skogen, Principals Megan McKeighan and Kelli Carlson, Associate Elementary Principal Maranda Hastig, Associate Principal/AD Deryk Van Zee, District Clerk Jennifer Mettler, and Head of Maintenance Yvonne Skogen. Guest was Kristi Burns.

Consent Items:

The bills, investment report, activity account report, journal adjustments, and minutes were reviewed by the trustees; claim checks 61100 to 61167 were reviewed and approved. There being no objections, Chairperson Wang approves the consent items as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

EDUCATION REPORT

None

ACTION ITEMS

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF CONTRACT RENEWAL WITH BLUE ROCK DISTRIBUTING

Mr. Van Zee presents to the board the renewal for pop contract with Blue Rock Distributing. The contract is a total of $14,000 over a 3 year period; it includes $6,000 scholarships to award during the contract period.
Dalon Dyke moved to accept the contract with Blue Rock Distributing for a total of $14,000 over three years. Jay Quenzer seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

CLASSIFIED HIRING CONSIDERATION(S)

Mr. Skogen presents to the board recommendation to hire; it is recommended to hire Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Custodian and Mr. Logan Adams, Personal Care Attendant.
Jodi Varner moved to hire Ms. Jennifer Johnson as custodian and Mr. Logan Adams as a personal care attendant for the 2026-27 school year; all hires are contingent upon a background check. Cody Strandbakke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF HIRING LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE

Mr. Skogen presents to the board recommendation to fill the vacant High School English position. The District has not received any applications to fill out the current vacancy following the resignation of Mrs. Solomon; Mrs. Kirschten stepped in immediately and assisted the class for two weeks. During the two weeks, Mr. Hunter Grover expressed interest in subbing for the class long-term but due to the fact that we have to fill the position with a certified long-term substitute we are recommending the Board to hire Mr. Grover as a long-term substitute. In addition, the District will begin working with Mr. Grover will be a fully certified teacher for the remainder of the school year. Ms. McKeighan is assisting Mr. Grover with lesson planning and grading.
Discussion followed. The board wants to sincerely thank Mrs. Kirschten for stepping up and helping in our transition.
Jay Quenzer moved to hire Mr. Hunter Grover as a long-term substitute for the 2026-27 school year; hires are contingent on a background check. Dalon Dyke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

EXTRACURRICULAR HIRING CONSIDERATION(S)

Mr. Van Zee presents to the board the recommendation to hire the following vacant extracurricular positions;

Amy Lingle, BPA Assistant Advisor
Kay Randall & Cori Enders – Yearbook Advisors

Jodi Varner moved to hire Amy Lingle, BPA Assistant Advisor and Kay Randall and Cori Enders, Yearbook Advisors for the 2026-27 school year; all hires are contingent upon a background check. Cody Strandbakke seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

1. **COMPLEX**

   Kristi Burns reports there is a usage increase again and started to introduce new equipment for the aquafit classes as well.

2. **MAINTENANCE**

   Grounds and Seasonal Maintenance: Completed our last couple of lawn mowings for the year and prepared the grounds for winter.Had the sprinkler systems blown out for the season to prevent freezing and damage. Completed annual generator maintenance at LF to ensure reliable operation through the winter months. Kirk started getting the boilers up and running as we transition into the heating season. Building Repairs and Winter Preparation: Completed repairs to the pool roof and the roof over Lincoln in preparation for winter.

(Theil Roofing) We still have a repair to complete on a vent seal and one additional large section of the BHS roof to address. These projects will help us continue protecting our buildings from winter weather and water intrusion with freezing and melting in the seams.
Safety and Building Monitoring: Checked all AEDs and updated them with new pads to ensure our emergency equipment is ready when needed. Insured staff knew about the smart child keys. We are working to bring our Meshify water and temperature sensors back online in all three buildings in coordination with our insurance company. Several of these sensors had been offline for a couple of years, and we are now updating the system and getting them operational again. The insurance representative and I worked together on October 14 to set up the new sensors. These monitoring systems have the potential to save the district significant money by providing early warnings of water leaks, temperature issues, and other problems before they become costly or catastrophic. (At no additional cost to the district). Our updated communication system for HVAC/Boilers with Long Technology is scheduled for installation Monday, October 26. This will be another step toward improving our communication and response capabilities.
Plumbing Issue and Response: On September 30, we experienced an unexpected plumbing issue. Thanks to quick action and mitigation, we were able to get the school back into operation and maintain the building in good standing. This was a good example of the importance of responding quickly when unexpected maintenance issues arise.
School Events and Staff Appreciation: We had a great time with Homecoming this year. The students and their advisors did a nice job helping clean up the halls afterward, and I appreciate their efforts in helping keep our buildings looking good. We also recently celebrated Lloyd's 66th birthday! It is always nice to take a moment to recognize the people who contribute so much to our schools and our maintenance operations.

3. **PRINCIPALS**
   a. **ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS, Kelli Johnston & Maranda Hastig**
   Constitution Day - September 17 - Longfellow students celebrated Constitution Day by reciting the Preamble to the Constitution while waving flags generously donated by Mrs. Jones.
   Student of the Month Assembly - September 30
   Lincoln
   Lucas Strandbakke - Grade 2
   Nominated by Ms. Stenberg
   Briar Straub - Grade 2
   Nominated by Mrs. LaCroix and Mrs. Benter
   Longfellow
   Charlotte Losing - Grade 5
   Nominated by Mrs. Benter and Mrs. Lesh
   Jason Benedict - Grade 6
   Nominated by Mr. Kendall and Mrs. Benter
   Parents were invited to join us in celebrating their children who received awards recognizing their accomplishments and positive contributions to our school.
   Teacher Observations/Evaluations - Formative teacher evaluations and observations have begun.
   4-H Presentation - October 6 - 4-H Ambassadors visited Longfellow to share the many opportunities available through 4-H, including building communication skills, exploring trades, participating in hands-on learning, and developing important life skills.
   Fire Safety - October 7 - Fallon County Firefighters visited Lincoln to share tips and strategies with K-2 students. They practiced "Stop, Drop, and Roll" and "Get Low and Go". After the presentation, students could see and explore the fire truck in the parking lot right outside the school. Thank you to the firefighters for sharing their fire safety knowledge with our students! Homecoming Activities - October 9 - Homecoming Royalty walked with K-2 students to the cafeteria and ate lunch with them. They greeted 3rd and 4th grade students in the hallway on their way to lunch, and then played on the playground and in the gym with 5th and 6th graders. In the afternoon, students participated in a variety of collaborative games. They all had a great time and appreciated the popsicles at the end of the hot, fun-filled afternoon! Superior Care - October 14 - Mrs. Tunby's 1st graders shared their reading skills with the residents of Superior Care. They will continue monthly visits throughout the school year, Petal It Forward - October 14 - The purpose of Petal It Forward is to spread kindness and brighten someone's day through the simple gift of flowers. Mrs. Benter's PE classes handed out bouquets graciously donated by Josey at Classy Cactus; two bouquets went to each person - one to keep and one to share with someone else, creating a ripple effect of kindness throughout our community.
   Developmental Screening for Children Ages 0-5 (not yet enrolled in school) - October 20 - Over 35 students participated in developmental screenings with support from visiting speech-language pathologists, a school psychologist, and an audiologist. Students were assessed in the areas of language, concepts, gross and fine motor skills, hearing, and vision. These screenings help with the

early identification of potential developmental concerns so students can receive additional support or follow-up evaluations when needed.
A huge thank-you to LaCinda Huether for stepping in to coordinate the screenings and keep everything running smoothly despite receiving limited advance information. Thank you to Mrs. O'Donnell for sharing her valuable knowledge and experience, and to Mrs. Kirschten for helping out at the last minute. Their support helped make the screenings a success!
UPCOMING
End of Quarter 1 - October 22
Red Ribbon Week October 22-29; Students in SADD will be presenting in elementary classrooms.
Fall Music Concert for Grades 6-12 - October 27 at 7:00 pm
Lincoln Halloween Parade - October 29 at 2:00 on the playground (In the case of inclement weather, the parade will be in the gym.)
October Spartan of the Month Assemblies - October 28
Longfellow - 8:00 AM
Lincoln - 8:30 AM
Parent-Teacher Conferences - November 6

b. HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, Megan McKeighan

Congratulations to the following high school students: Kristian Atkinson, Cadence Brown, Justice Croy, Kenadi Croy, Kloe Ehret, TK Enders, Ava Goerndt, Sophia Harris, Tatem Miller, Trypp Sanders, and Taylor Tate for having no absences during quarter one.
Congratulations to the following middle school students: Aubree Brown, Dylan Dyke, Taylor Enders, Henry Griffith, Kelton Hogen, Kazden Hoversland, Harper Kenney, Brody Knuths, Brantley Kono, Claire Losing, Matthew Losing, Rayce Skogas, and Riley Tiedemann for having no absences during quarter one.
We had a lot of success with our K-12 Homecoming activity again this year. Video Courtesy of Kallie Benter.
Below are snippets from our NWEA MAPS Testing (Grades 7-10)
NWEA Achievement Percentile Bands
NWEA groups student achievement into five distinct quintile bands:
Lo (1st – 20th percentile | Red): Scores fall significantly below the national grade-level average; students typically need intensive academic support or intervention, this may include a special education evaluation/IEP. The national average and goal of students with an IEP is 14% or below.
LoAvg (21st – 40th percentile | Orange): Scores are below the national average range, though some districts consider the 40th percentile part of a flexible grade-level baseline.
Avg (41st – 60th percentile | Yellow): The core average range; the 50th percentile sits right at the national median for that grade and season.
HiAvg (61st – 80th percentile | Green): Scores are above the national average, indicating strong academic performance compared to same-grade peers.
Hi (81st – 99th percentile | Blue): Well above the national average; scores in the upper brackets (such as 90th–99th) often reflect advanced or accelerated achievement (sometimes roughly 1 to 2+ grade levels ahead, depending on the subject)
The Fall 2026-2027 achievement data demonstrates solid overall performance across Baker Middle and High Schools, with distinct upward trends as students progress through the grade levels. Mathematics is a consistent strength across levels. However, targeted interventions are needed in Reading, particularly in the early middle school and freshman years, to bring achievement up to par with our mathematical outcomes.
School Strengths:
Strong Math Performance District-Wide: Mathematics is the highest-performing subject across both middle and high school levels. By 10th grade, students reach an impressive median of the 78th percentile, and 8th graders achieve a median of the 72nd percentile. A significant majority of students in these grades are scoring above the 60th percentile.
Exceptional 10th Grade Achievement: The 10th-grade cohort demonstrates excellent proficiency across all measured areas. Median scores sit at the 78th percentile in Math, the 72nd percentile in Reading, and the 72nd percentile in Language Usage.
Positive Grade-Over-Grade Growth Trajectories: Within both schools, older cohorts consistently outperform younger cohorts. 8th graders score higher than 7th graders in Math (72nd vs. 63rd percentile), Reading (58th vs. 52nd percentile), and Language Usage (63rd vs. 55th percentile). Similarly, 10th graders show marked improvement over 9th graders in every subject.
Areas for Improvement:
Middle School Reading: Reading is the lowest-performing subject at Baker Middle School. Grade 7 students achieved a median of the 52nd percentile, with 40% of the class scoring in the bottom two

quintiles (1st-40th percentiles). While Grade 8 shows slight improvement (58th percentile median), Reading remains the only middle school subject where the median falls below the 60th percentile.
9th Grade Transition in Reading: While High School Math and Language Usage are strong starting in 9th grade (70th and 67th percentile medians, respectively), Reading scores drop notably to a 58th percentile median. This suggests a gap in foundational reading skills as students transition into high school curricula, requiring specific instructional focus.
7th Grade Foundational Gaps: The incoming 7th-grade cohort shows the lowest median scores across the board (52nd percentile in Reading, 55th in Language Usage, 63rd in Math), indicating that they may require intensified support to catch up to the historical achievement standards of the middle school.

c. ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL/ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR, Deryk Van Zee

Our high school volleyball team is currently 11-7 overall with a conference record of 6-2 with loses to Huntley and Colstrip. The girls are looking to lock up the district # 2 seed with a win this weekend in Colstip. We must win in 4 games, if it goes to the fifth set and we win, it comes down to set points. Districts will be at Huntley project 10-29 to 10-30. If we are the #2 seed we will play at 2:30 on Thursday 10-29 if we are the #3 seed we will play at 11:30 on Thursday 10-29. The tournament is a double elimination and the top three teams will move on to Divisionals in Butte Nov. 5th-7th.

Our high school football team is currently 4-3 overall with a conference record of 3-2 and are currently the # 3 seed in the Eastern B. Senior night will be held on Friday Oct. 23rd against Joliet. The way the season has gone it is a win or go home for both teams. We win we are the #3 seed, if we lose we are out of the playoffs. The #3 seed from the East plays the #2 seed from the North which will either be Malta or Glasgow.

Cross Country has had a really good year as we have 8 runners: Wiley Thielen, Johnny Miller, Kaine Kendal, Ellie Gardner, Sienna Gardner, Teighan Barnett, Leah, Gardner, and Lilly Klauzer who will be competing at the State Cross Country Championships in Billings on Saturday Oct. 24th. There were two more girls, Morgan Hurley, Bracyn Hastig and Morgan Sonsolla who qualified but are currently at National FFA. The girls will run at 1:30 and the boys will start at 2:30.

FFA took a group of sixteen or so members to Billings on the 12th-13th of October for the NILE where we had students judge livestock and compete in sales, vet contests, and horse and meats contests. We currently have ten members with Ms. Hamilton and Mr. Schmidt at National FFA in Indianapolis, Indiana. They left last night and will return on Sunday the 24th.

Speech and Drama started practice this month and will have their first competition in Sidney on the 31st of October.

Fall Concert is coming up on Oct. 27th at Longfellow.

Middle school girls basketball, 4th/5th grade boys and girls basketball, and MS wrestling have all started this month and are getting ready for their first action in the next week or so.

Jessica Stark will be a volunteer coach for MS wrestling.

4. SUPERINTENDENT, Aaron Skogen

Current Openings: 7-12 Science, English, Elementary, Special Education, Personal Care Attendant – Elementary

Resignation(s): Mrs. Amber Solomon – English, Mrs. Faytema Halmans – Custodian, Ms. Tasia Miller – Personal Care Attendant

Bank of Baker Tailgate – Homecoming; big thank you to Bank of Baker for hosting before the home football game.

Indian Education For All – Committee Meeting was held Monday, October 19, 2026 and came out of the meeting with great ideas for the next few years.

The District is in the accreditation cycle and also in the Civil Rights Data Collection data collection cycle.

Next scheduled board meeting is November 10, 2026 at 6 pm.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

s/ *Jennifer Mettler*
Clerk

s/ *Karen Wang*
Chairman