

Board of Education Meeting

Liberty School Board Room

December 9, 2025, at 6:30 PM



MINUTES

Mission

We, the Saline Area Schools, will equip all students with the knowledge, technological proficiency, and personal skills necessary to succeed in an increasingly complex society. We expect that our students, staff, and the Saline Community will share in these responsibilities.

OPENING

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting of December 9, 2025 was called to order by President Michael McVey.

Board Members Present: Tim Austin, Darcy Berwick, Lauren Gold, Nate Hanson, Michael McVey, and Jason Tizedes

Board Members Absent: Jennifer Steben

Central Administration Present: Superintendent Kowalski, Assistant Superintendent Owsley, Executive Directors Clary, Davis & Martin

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

STUDENTS

OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT

Ann Friedholm, CEO, ChadTough

Ann Friedholm provided an update to the Board regarding the ChadTough Foundation. They are the largest funder of DIPG research. Over \$44M invested in 100+ researchers at 46 institutions. An important key achievement is the first FDA approved drug for DIPG.

4. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMENT - None

AGENDA

5. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION made by Trustee Tizedes, support Treasurer Austin **to approve the agenda as revised.**

Revision: Consent Agenda, Item G. Pull from Consent Agenda to discuss separately.

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

6. STUDENT SHOWCASE

Performance by members of the SHS Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Choir

Illuminaire for choir and orchestra by Elaine Hagenberg

Directors: Matt Briere (Orchestra) & Sarah Deas (Choir)

Music Department Chair, Matt Briere, highlighted many of the fall 2025 accomplishments of the Band, Choir and Orchestra programs. All groups received highest level ratings at all-state festivals and competitions.

The annual “Masterworks Concert” will be held Tuesday, December 16th at the Saline High School auditorium. They will be performing a piece written by Elaine Hagenberg, a living American composer, entitled “Illuminaire”, a contemporary work symbolizing the emergence of light during the darkest season. Some members of the Chamber Orchestra and Choir performed the 1st movement at this evening’s Board meeting.

7. ADMINISTRATION AND BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Superintendent (Kowalski) Dr. Kowalski gave a brief update on two areas. For athletics, she reported progress on the Board-requested Athletic Department Review: reinforced chain-of-command and 24-hour rule expectations, ended GRIT surveys in favor of direct feedback, developing a more formal new-coach mentoring system, improving Schedule B stipend/coaching recruitment, and strengthening eligibility/residency checks with required rosters and admin presence at first practices. Longer-range items (full-time athletic admin assistant and review of self-funded varsity models) are being planned.

She then recognized the district’s partnership with the Saline Area Chamber for the 50th Anniversary Holiday Parade, honored student contest winners (logo, art, and writing), thanked parade partners and volunteers, and expressed appreciation for Betty Jahnke’s support of the Board and district.

Student Representative (Hayes) Jillian thanked the choir and orchestra for their performance this evening. Also gave an acknowledgement to Heritage and their 67th day of school party. Holiday wishes to the Hornet Community.

Citizens for a Quality Community (McVey/Hanson) No report
Chamber of Commerce (Austin) No report
Foundation for Saline Area Schools (Steben) No report
Board Associations (McVey) No meetings to report on.
Sex Education Advisory Board (Gold) This committee met recently, reviewed curriculum and state changes. The body safety program will be running this spring.
DEI Advisory Committee (McVey/Gold) - Will be meeting December 17th.
Wellness (Berwick) No report
City of Saline (McVey/Steben) No report
CARES (Berwick) CARES grants were recently awarded. The proposed awards are on the agenda for approval this evening.
Miscellaneous No report

8. ACTION ITEMS

A. **MOTION** made by Treasurer Austin, support Trustee Tizedes **to approve the following new courses to be added to the 26/27 Saline HS Course Catalog as submitted by Kara Davis, Executive Director of Teaching & Learning**

Sports Video Production I
Business Law and Ethics
Introduction to Accounting
History Through Film
A World on Fire: Chronicles of Courage Throughout History
Sports Economics: The Money Behind the Game
Mechatronics and Robotics
AP Cybersecurity I and II
Underwater Robotics and ROV Engineering
Introduction to Fitness
Unified Art

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

B. **MOTION** made by Secretary Berwick, support Trustee Tizedes **to approve the 25/26 Round I distribution of CARES Discretionary Funds in the amount of \$73,239.60 as recommended by the CARES Advisory Council and submitted by Brian Puffer, Director of Community Education.**

The breakdown is as follows:

Saline Unified Basketball: \$4,000
New Outboard Engine (SHS Rowing Team): \$2,664
Memory Kits for our Friends (Dementia Friendly Saline): \$5,050
Saline Middle School Wrestling Room Mats: \$15,000
New Drumline Equipment (SHS Marching Band): \$15,000
Saline Lacrosse Unity Project: \$10,150
Saline Recreation Center Lobby Enhancement: \$11,950.00

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Saline High School Girls Soccer Uniforms: \$5,000
Saline Fiddlers Performance Uniforms: \$4,425.60

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

C. **MOTION** made by Secretary Berwick, support Trustee Tizedes **to approve the technology purchases as submitted by Jay Grossman, Director of Technology in the amount of \$1,398,766.23.**

The cost breakdown is as follows:

531 MacBooks from Apple totaling \$498,769.00
160 HP Laptops from InaCompTSG totaling \$115,980.00
640 Meraki Wireless Access Points totaling \$784,017.23

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

D. **MOTION** made by Treasurer Austin, support Trustee Gold **to approve the recommendation to accept the quote from Interkal for the North & South bleacher replacement at the Saline High School Main Gymnasium in the amount of \$322,897.00 as submitted by Rex Clary, Executive Director of Operations.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

E. **MOTION** made by Treasurer Austin, support Trustee Hanson **to approve the trade contractor award recommendation from Clark Construction to enter into contract with Trane for Mechanical Equipment totaling \$892,679.00 for the Saline Area Schools Heritage STEAM Addition as submitted by Rex Clary, Executive Director of Operations.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

F. **MOTION** made by Secretary Berwick, support Trustee Gold **to approve the recommendation for furniture and installation at the Saline Senior Center totaling \$205,207.18 as submitted by Rex Clary, Executive Director of Operations.**

The cost breakdown is as follows:

Interior Environments: \$64,757.42
ISCG: \$121,373.36
Freight: \$9,306.54
Contingency 5%: \$9,770.00

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Implementation of New Thrun Policies & Timeline
Facilitator: President McVey

Discussion about the transition to Thrun Policy. Included in the discussion was the bespoke district policies and how they will align in the Thrun Policy manual. District administration will be involved in the crosswalk process. Work will begin in the early part of 2026 with the expectation that final adoption of the new policies and rescinding of the old Neola policies to happen in approximately 6 months time. The first step will be to purchase the Thrun policies to begin the work in January.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION made by Trustee Gold, support Trustee Tizedes **to authorize the Consent Agenda as revised:**

- A. **Approval** of the Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes of November 11, 2025
- B. **Approval** of the Board Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of November 11, 2025
- C. **Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of December 9, 2025, in the amount of \$6,775,313.88
- D. **Approval of Payment** of the 2021 Bond Series III Accounts Payable of December 9, 2025 in the amount of \$3,353.00
- E. **Approval of Payment** of 2025 Bond Fund Series II Accounts Payable of December 9, 2025, in the amount of \$2,568,319.68
- F. **Receive and File** Human Resources Report

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Revision: Pull Item G. for separate discussion

G. **Approval** of the 2026 Board of Education Regular Meeting Calendar

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

CLOSING

11. ITEMS SCHEDULED ON NEXT AGENDA

- Appt to Cable Commission
- School Board Recognition
- Election of Officers
- Potential SEAB Hearing

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Additional HS Course Approvals

12. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

13. NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Education Meeting will be held on January 13, 2026 at 6:30 pm. This will include both an Organizational and Regular Board Meeting.

14. CLOSED SESSION

MOTION made by Treasurer Austin, support Trustee Hanson **to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 7:48 pm, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at approximately 9 pm, for the purpose of Superintendent Evaluation Section 8(a). Under Section 8(a) a simple majority vote is sufficient to enter into a closed session.**

Following the MASB protocol, Superintendent Kowalski was rated “effective” (3.0) in all categories - Governance & Board, Community Relations, Staff Relations, Business & Finance, and Instructional Leadership. Effective is the highest rating available. A final report will be released through our Communications Department in the coming weeks.

MOTION made by Treasurer Austin, support Trustee Gold **to accept the evaluation of “effective” in all categories as noted earlier.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

16. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION made by Trustee Tizedes, support Treasurer Austin **to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of December 9, 2025 at 9:56 PM.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Respectfully submitted,



Darcy Berwick
Board Secretary

Recorded by: Betty Jahnke