

Board of Education Meeting

Liberty School Board Room

August 12, 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

Board of Education Trustees: Tim Austin, Darcy Berwick, Lauren Gold, Nate Hanson, Michael McVey, Jennifer Steben, and Jason Tizedes

Central Administration: Superintendent Kowalski, Assistant Superintendents Baaki Diglio and Owsley, Executive Directors Clary, Davis, Martin and Voelker

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. CEREMONIAL SWEARING IN OF NEW BOARD TRUSTEE

Michael McVey, Saline Area Schools Board President

Nate Hanson, Trustee

4. **BOARD PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT** - Michael McVey, Board President

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S STATEMENT** - Rachel Kowalski, Superintendent

6. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

7. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMENT - None

AGENDA

8. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION made by Treasurer Austin, support Secretary Berwick **to approve the agenda as printed**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

9. SCHEDULED REPORTS

A. Handbook Review

*Presenters: Laura Washington, Principal, Woodland Meadows
Kim Jasper, Principal SMS, and Theresa Stager, Principal SHS*

Annual update on school handbooks. Administration selected to partner with Thrun Law Firm to provide the framework for the handbooks. They are not our policy provider so they can't put their "approval stamp" on our handbooks but building administrators preferred the outline and workability of the template available through Thrun. The goals for the change were to add some new sections as well as streamline existing one, connect handbook content to board policy as well as develop a uniform format across K-12 for easier parental navigation. This process started in the 23/24 school year and has now seen the final handbooks published effective June of 2025..

The review will continue to be an annual process. The handbooks are living documents outlining school policies, expectations and procedures, and are accessible online and via QR code, requiring student/family acknowledgement each year as part of the "intent to return" process.

10. ACTION ITEMS

A. MOTION made by Secretary Berwick, support Trustee Tizedes **made by to approve the Liberty Club van purchase from Gene Butman Ford in the amount of \$59,904. as submitted by Brian Puffer, Director of Community Education.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

11. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Board Finance Committee Update

Facilitator: Tim Austin, Chair

First Finance meeting for new chair/Treasurer, Tim Austin. Since there was a new board member present and assigned to serve on the Finance Committee, the meeting did serve as an overview of the budget process. There was some discussion regarding the proposal for a new data center to be built in Saline Township and the potential to generate some revenue for the

school district for bonds, sinking fund millage, and the CARES millage, it would not have real impact on the district's general fund and day to day operations. The pre-audit has been completed with the full audit scheduled for Sept/Oct. There are no expected surprises. There was also a review of staffing needs for upcoming classrooms. HR continues to monitor open positions. Some details will be discussed this evening in a closed session regarding negotiations. There is no state budget approval yet.

B. Board Policy Committee Update

Facilitator: Lauren Gold, Chair

The Policy Committee met prior to this evening's board meeting. There are updates to Conflict of Interest policies, covering the ethics of receiving money/gifts tied to federal grants. These policies will be on the Consent Agenda for approval at the August 26th meeting. Also for approval will be the policy regarding Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems with minor technical corrections. Policy 8330 (Student Records) will be discussed again at an upcoming Policy meeting in September to assure alignment with FERPA Opt Out guidelines. Also continued discussion regarding our Video Surveillance policy (7440.01). This will be on the agenda again for the September policy meeting for further review. The DEIAC policy will be on the consent agenda for approval of a small addition "One standing member of the committee will be an administrator designated by the Superintendent".

C. Superintendent Evaluation Schedule

Facilitator: Michael McVey, Board President

Discussion to establish an evaluation timeline. An additional special meeting may be added in December for the final evaluation.

12. ADMINISTRATION / BOARD UPDATES

Superintendent Kowalski: Plans to present on Transition Plan in October. Recent community connections included Salty Summer Sounds, and Summerfest where in addition to connecting with people from the community also used these opportunities to educate parents about ParentSquare. Participated in WISD Superintendents retreat primarily focusing on the CTE millage. Shoutout to Carol Diglio for the new staff onboarding which took place August 11th. Very interactive and inspiring sessions for all new employees. Bi-weekly community messages will be starting this week.

Student Representative Jillian Hayes: Hope to schedule Miss Saline Madylin Marshall and court to an upcoming Student Showcase. Will be emailing principals for summer club highlights to report on.

Trustee Hanson: Acknowledgement to President McVey for the onboarding process. Thank you to his board constituents for their contributions to his onboarding process and for their own unique ways in which they support the school community and broader Saline community.

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Treasurer Austin: Acknowledgement to the Operations Department for all the work they have done this summer and continue to do in getting ready for the 1st day of school. Acknowledgement of the new traffic pattern at the MS, negotiations, bond work.

Secretary Berwick: Shoutout to the Miss Saline pageant. 12 amazing young women from Saline participated. There will be a STEM booster event that will be taking place on Friday August 22. This will primarily be a meet and greet event with several teams in attendance. Looking forward to the official grand opening of the new STEM center at the HS.

President McVey: Attended Summerfest and enjoyed the engagement opportunities that the community had with Dr. Kowalski. Looking forward to meeting with the new City Manager when he arrives on the job in September.

Vice President Steben: Wishing Trustee Hanson well as he begins his time on the Board and grateful for taking the time with each trustee. Acknowledge the hard work being done by both bargaining teams and hope for a positive start to the school year. Also acknowledged the grief that our district has recently experienced and condolences to the families and friends.

Trustee Gold: Acknowledgement about the recent losses affecting the school district and families. Reminder that August is National Immunization Awareness Month. Reminder to families to keep up to date on vaccinations.

Trustee Tizedes: Acknowledgement about the recent losses affecting the school district and families. Shout out to a couple of HS students that have started their own business. Love seeing that entrepreneurship spirit in kids. Looking forward to the STEM meet and greet coming up. Welcome to our newest Trustee Nate Hanson. Offered a public apology to trustee applicant Kelly Van Singel for comments that he made at the July 14th Special meeting.

13. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION made by Vice President Steben, support Trustee Tizedes **to authorize the Consent Agenda as printed:**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

- A. **Approval** of the Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes of July 8, 2025
- B. **Approval** of the Special Board Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2025
- C. **Approval of Payment** of the General Fund Accounts Payable of August 12, 2025, in the amount of \$7,807,233.08
- D. **Approval of Payment** of the 2021 Bond Fund Series III Accounts Payable of August 12, 2025 in the amount of \$79,771.50
- E. **Approval of Payment** of 2023 Bond Fund Series I Accounts Payable of August 12, 2025, in the amount of \$5,068,945.56

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- F. **Approval of Payment** of 2025 Bond Fund Series II Accounts Payable of August 12, 2025, in the amount of \$188,568.64
- G. **Receive and File** Human Resources Report

CLOSING

14. ITEMS SCHEDULED ON THE NEXT AGENDA

There will be a special Board Meeting on Tuesday, August 19, 2025.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

OTHER PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS

Daisie Scharmen, Parent/SEAC - spoke regarding comments made at a previous Board meeting regarding Saline's special education program.

16. NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Education Meeting will be held on August 19, 2025, at 6:30 PM.

17. CLOSED SESSION

MOTION made by Secretary Berwick, support Treasurer Austin **to enter Closed Session of the Board of Education at 7:32 PM, with the intent to re-enter Open Session at 8 PM, for the purpose of Collective Bargaining 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act. Under Section 8(c) a simple majority vote is sufficient to enter into a closed session.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

18. RE-ENTER OPEN SESSION

Without objection, the Board re-entered open session at 8:21 pm.

19. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION made by Treasurer Austin, support Trustee Hanson **to adjourn the Regular Board of Education Meeting of August 12, 2025, at 8:21 PM.**

Ayes - All Present - **MOTION CARRIED 7-0**

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darcy Berwick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Darcy Berwick
Board Secretary

Recorded by: Betty Jahnke