BLAIR-TAYLOR DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 21ST - 5:30 P.M.

Vice President Perry Kujak called the regular Board of Education meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Board members present: Perry Kujak, Michele Steien, David Thompson, Lindsey Byom, Neil Kniseley, and Blaine Koxlien. Absent: Troy Tenneson. Also present: Lynn Halverson, Beth Lisowski, Jared McCutchen, Melissa Pientok, Becky Brouillet, Julie Nehring, and Gwen Kidd.

The Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Mission statement - "To educate all learners to reach their potential as productive citizens" read aloud.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with a second by D. Thompson, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Public comment made by Julie Nehring. She wishes to thank the School Board and Administration for all they do for the Blair-Taylor Staff and Community.

Motion by L. Byom, with second by M. Steien, to approve June 2025 regular and closed meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Motion by M. Steien, with second by N. Kniseley, to approve bills for the month of June 2025. Motion carried by roll call vote 6-0.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with second by D. Thompson, to approve the June 2025 financial statement. Motion carried by roll call vote 6-0.

Reports:

Superintendent, Lynn Halverson - Mr. Halverson updated the board, the resealing of the parking lots are complete, the gym floors have been resurfaced, and the classrooms and hallways are being waxed this week. Mr. Halverson presented the biennial budget update as the revenue limit increase of $325 per pupil, but no increase in general aid. That 325 per pupil increase is passed onto the taxpayers, not additional money from the State budget. The special education reimbursement rate increased to 42% for 2025 and 45% in 2026. However, it isn't sum sufficient so when that dollar amount is spent, it could be a 40% reimbursement instead of 42%. July 1st aid estimate is in. Preliminary numbers show about 270 districts are receiving a decrease in aid and just over 100 with an increase. At this time, Blair-Taylor will receive an increase.

MS/HS Principal - Beth Lisowski - Ms. Lisowski stated there have been a lot of committee meetings as they are working on the student handbook, grading scale, athletic code, laude system, class advisor handbook, and a few changes to the senior exit interviews.

Assistant MS/HS Principal - Melissa Pientok - Mrs. Pientok updated the board; she has been doing some professional development this summer and would like to incorporate some into the middle school. Some are different clubs like lego club, creating writing, and role playing games. Also looking at monthly competitions between homerooms to get students involved.

Elementary Principal - Jared McCutchen - Mr. McCutchen reported he is meeting with the literacy team to go over goals with the 2 new teachers in their new positions and get familiar with Next Path where all our student data is in one spot. Then by next fall he can bring student updates to the board.

Special Education Director - Becky Brouillet - Ms. Brouillet stated she is reviewing our child find process during child development days in January & February. Her team will work with the community to see what services we can provide for families and make sure incoming students are not missed. She is currently working on inservice plans for both teachers and paras. A few staff members are attending a LiftOFF seminar next week at CESA. This seminar is to learn more about a special ed platform to gather data for present levels of performance for IEPs and make the process more efficient.

Discussion Items:

Currently, Blair-Taylor uses a Laude System when recognising students at graduation. This is very confusing as a student may have more laude points but does not have the highest GPA. Or a student with the highest GPA may not have a lot of laude points. A committee made up of 3 teachers, 1 counselor, and 2 admin met to review. When reviewing a few concerns were noted: originally the system was built on semester not trimesters, A student receives more laude points for taking UW classes instead of Tech College classes, students only taking courses if they have Laude Points and doubling up on courses for more points. While students in the trades, work force, Youth Apprentice, etc. are not able to get Laude points. At this time the committee would like to move away from the Laude system and go back to recognizing these students at graduation possibly, Valedictorian (Highest GPA), Salutatorian (2nd Highest GPA), and Honor Students (Students with a 3.67 GPA or higher)

The Board would like notices sent out to students/parents with any feedback. Then bring that feedback back to the next board meeting to possibly act on the decision.

Action Items:

Motion by P. Kujak, with a second by N. Kniseley, to approve Breakfast and Lunch Prices 2025-26 noting we are requesting Mr. Halverson to check with Xcel Energy and DPI to see if we can use Fund 50 for. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by D. Thompson, with a second by M. Steien, to table the Data Wrangler proposal noting that it is requested by the board to gather more information from area districts and requested to see if there are other companies like Data Wrangler for comparison. Motion carried.

Motion by M. Steien, with a second by L. Byom, to approve 2025-26 Elementary Family Handbook with the removal of the declined employee and add the new employee. Motion carried.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with a second by D. Thompson to approve the 2025-26 Middle/High Student Handbook. Motion carried.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with a second by M. Steien, to approve the 2025-26 Athletic Code. Motion carried.

Motion by D. Thompson, with a second by N. Kniseley, to approve the 2025-26 Employee Handbook. Motion carried.

Motion by L. Byom, with a second by P. Kujak, to approve offering Middle School Golf. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with a second by L. Byom, to approve Lexia for the 25-26 school year. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by M. Steien, with a second by N. Kniseley, to approve purchasing the proposed Technology Education Furniture. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by D. Thompson, with a second by M. Steien, to approve consent agenda items, which include issuing a contract to Kathy Luchterhand as 3rd grade teacher, Stacy Spors as 1st grade teacher, and approving the resignation of Hank Kujak as MS Boys Basketball Coach. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with a second by D. Thompson, to move to closed session in accordance with State Statute 19.85(1)(c) to discuss individual staffing 2025-26. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Thompson

David Thompson, Clerk