

BLAIR-TAYLOR SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, JAN 19th – 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: Blaine Koxlien, Perry Kujak, Michele Steien, Lindsey Byom, Neil Kniseley, David Thompson. Absent: Troy Tenneson. Also present: Lynn Halverson, Beth Lisowski, Melissa Pientok, Jared McCutchen, Becky Brouillet, and Zach Ristall.

The Pledge of Allegiance recited.

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

Motion by M. Steien, with a second by N. Kniseley, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

No public comment tonight.

Motion by D. Thompson, with second by L. Byom, to approve December 2025 regular and closed meeting minutes. Motion carried.

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

Motion by M. Steien, with second by P. Kujak, to approve the December 2025 financial statement. Motion passed by roll call vote 6-0.

Administrative Reports:

Superintendent - Lynn Halverson - Mr. Halverson and Lindsey Byom will be attending the State School Board Convention this week on Wednesday through Thursday. The remainder of this report will be included in the discussion items.

MS/HS Principal - Beth Lisowski - We have reached mid-trimester 2, so halfway through the school year. A lot of activities are taking place this month. Beginning with mock interviews for 10th graders will be held tomorrow, January 20th, parent-teacher conferences for middle and high school are scheduled for Wednesday, January 21st. On Thursday Nick Tokman, a public speaker, will discuss adversity, mental health, and integrity with all Blair-Taylor and Whitehall high school students. Teacher In-service on Friday will focus on meeting the needs of all students, including accommodations for IEPs and 504 plans. There will be a band concert on Monday, January 26th. High school lunch and learn on Tuesday, featuring career option speakers and the first official TVC scheduling meeting next Friday

Assist. MS/HS Principal - Melissa Pientok - Before the holiday break the middle school had a well attended school dance. A huge thank you to the teacher chaperones and high school student DJs. Middle school intervention groups will start this week based on November STAR testing assessments. Groups are split based on student needs, but those not meeting in a group will work on IXL skills. Mrs. Hulne held their first sixth grade piano recital last week. Ukulele is planned for the next six weeks. Middle school wrestling and girls basketball seasons have started.

Elementary Principal - Jared McCutchen - The elementary winter AIMS testing data has been shared with the board. It shows many students who needed reading interventions in the spring have

significantly improved. Reason being due to the staff training with Keys to Literacy, part-time reading coach, and each classroom having foundational skills instruction time.

Special Ed Director - Becky Brouillet - The new elementary class schedule had minor bumps with special ed students, but have since adjusted. Information was sent to families about Child development days. This will take place on February 4th and 5th. Special ed staff will discuss the importance of testing with students and ensure they receive technical test-taking instruction.

Discussion Items:

The current three-year operational non-recurring referendum is ending at the end of the year. On April 4, 2023, the community approved a three-year non-recurring operational referendum to exceed the revenue limit by 1.5 million per year for the 23-24, 24-25, and 25-26 school years. The purpose of the current operational referendum was to maintain current operations and opportunities for students, staff retention and attraction, and to rebuild the fund balance. In that time, we as a district revamped our salary schedule to be competitive with neighboring districts and increased the fund balance from 6.07% to 18.27% at the end of this year. The overall impact on the community for the current operational referendum was as communicated, if not less.

Now that we no longer have the authority to levy any additional dollars above the revenue cap, we need to renew an operational referendum. We still need to maintain our current operations and opportunities for students and retain and attract high quality staff. However, since our fund balance is at a healthy level we can ask our community for less than the 1.5 million as the previous referendum.

If we do not ask our community to pass another referendum the district will average a deficit of around \$1.182 million each year over the next three years with current projections. If a referendum were to fail, the current fund balance would be depleted in two years, taking away all of the progress of the current operational referendum.

Mr. Halverson would like to ask the board for permission to ask the community for a 1.1-million-dollar non-recurring operational referendum for a duration of three years (26-27, 27-28, and 28-29 school years). Even with a 1.1 million operational referendum, there will still be manageable deficits.

Action Items:

Motion by D. Thompson, with a second by N. Kniseley, to approve a Resolution authorizing the school district budget to exceed revenue limit by \$1,100,000 per year for three years for non-recurring purposes. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with a second by M. Steien, to approve a Resolution providing for a referendum election on the question of the approval of a resolution authorizing the school district budget to exceed revenue limit by \$1,100,000 per year for three years for non-recurring purposes. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by M. Steien, with a second by P. Kujak, to approve no cap on regular education open-enrollment seats and to establish a cap on special education open-enrollment seats for the 2026–2027 school year, based on the criteria outlined in Policy #5113. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by D. Thompson, with a second by N. Kniseley, to approve purchase of track uniforms from BSN Sports. Motion carried by roll call vote, 6-0.

Motion by N. Kniseley, with a second by L. Byom, to approve Personal Recommendations being to issue a contract to Brittany Kotlarz as a part time elementary paraprofessional, and issue a contract to Allan Lien as an assistant track 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 staffing 2026-27, district administrator evaluation and administrative position evaluations. Motion carried.

Motion by D. Thompson, with a second by B. Koxlien to adjourn for the evening.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Thompson", written in black ink.

David Thompson, Clerk

