

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
The School District of Independence

The Board of Education met in regular session Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the Board of Education Office, 201 North Forest Avenue, Independence, Missouri.

Members Present:       Mrs. Carrie Dixon, President  
                                  Mr. Anthony J. Mondaine, Vice President  
                                  Mrs. Denise Fears, Treasurer  
                                  Mrs. Jill Esry, Director  
                                  Mr. Blake Roberson, Director  
                                  Mrs. Brandi Prunte, Director  
                                  Ms. Wendy Baird, Director

Also Present:             Dr. Dale Herl, Superintendent  
                                  Dr. Lance Stout, Dr. Cindy Grant, Dr. Randy Maglinger, Dr. Pam Boatright,  
                                  Dr. Anthony Robinson, Mrs. Leslie Hochsprung, Mrs. Sherry Potter, Mr.  
                                  Kevin Lathrom, Mr. Todd Theen, Mr. Greg McGhee, Mrs. Meghan Murphy,  
                                  MSTA, INEA, interested patrons, staff, and Ms. Annette Miller.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mrs. Carrie Dixon, and minutes of the meeting were recorded by the secretary, Ms. Annette Miller. Mrs. Dixon welcomed everyone.

Denise Fears made the motion to approve the January 14, 2025 Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Jill Esry and was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Mrs. Dixon said there were three requests to address the Board of Education. Mrs. Dixon read Policy C-140-P regarding Public Comment to the Board of Education.

Katherine Miller, 16511 East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street South, Independence, MO 64055, addressed the Board of Education regarding the 4 day school week as outlined in the 2025-2026 proposed calendar and using Mondays to make up snow days. She said the 5 day weeks are exhausting and the District should consider using AMI instead. Mrs. Miller said she is a District resident, a parent, a teacher, Vice President of INEA, and a member of the Calendar Committee. She encouraged the District to consider AMI and also a way to compensate classified staff during AMI days. This would allow staff to work from home yet it would provide the consistent structure of students' instructional time. Mrs. Miller expressed several other concerns with the proposed calendar: black out days, committee has a number administrators, a template is presented, committee members are curious about which calendar option will be selected, and consideration of employees that are hourly whether 9,10, or 11 month. She said she is willing to help and provide ways to improve the calendar process.

Jason Vollmecke, 2914 South Vermont Avenue, Independence, MO 64052 addressed the Board of Education regarding Policies C-140-P and C-155-P. He said it had been 3 years since he last addressed the Board of Education due to his litigation. Dr. Vollmecke said that his legal counsel had drafted the changes to these two Policies. He also said Policy C-155-P is waiting for another lawsuit. He stated that the Superintendent says cursing should not be used and that any person can be restricted for that reason. Dr. Vollmecke said the Superintendent only wants you to know what he says. Dr. Vollmecke stated that in his litigation he offered to reduce the settlement cost by \$5,000 if he could still be involved in the Academies Program. He also said that patrons/staff should be able to speak on any topic at a Board of Education meeting, not just what is listed on the agenda as this is a public forum.

Melissa Sutherland, 821 East Lexington Avenue, Independence, MO 64050 addressed the Board of Education regarding the proposed 2025-2026 School District calendar. She stated that she is a parent and a substitute teacher. She said that the 4 day school week was developed for good intentions but that some families are struggling. She said the longer days are tiring for elementary students and they struggle to maintain attention in the classroom. Ms. Sutherland said that IEPs for Special Education students requires continuous support and longer school days are more difficult. She said that teachers often spend their Mondays grading papers, attending meetings, etc. She said that stay at home moms are there for their children but other families have to make arrangements for their children which can put a financial strain on them or the children are left at home unsupervised. She said nutrition is also a concern for some children. Ms. Sutherland said she thinks the 4 day school week works for some families but not all families.

Blake Roberson made the motion, second by Jill Esry, that the Board of Education approves the Consent Agenda as presented. Dr. Herl said the District had a great end to the first semester but not a good start to the second

semester due to the snow and ice. The District will have to make up four days now by using March 3, May 5, March 31, and April 28. Transportation is a big part of canceling school if the buses cannot drive their routes due to snow and ice. Dr. Herl shared information on the number of applicants - 91 in 2021, 506 in 2022, 646 in 2023 and 515 this year as of January 7. The Bills total for January 2025 is \$10,929,123.09 with most of the increase in the Capital Fund with additional expenditures due to the increases in salaries for the year.

1. Minutes – December 10, 2024
2. Approval of January 14, 2025 List of Bills totaling \$10,929,123.09

The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Maglinger presented the proposed changes to the Program of Studies for the 2025-2026 school year. He stated the District's CSIP goals are considered when making changes to the Program of Studies. He explained the process for course changes: teachers and departments collaborate on course change requests; they then submit the course change requests by November 7, Principals review and determine approval of requests, the course change requests are then submitted to a review committee (school counselors, Academy Coordinator, CTE Coordinator, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Human Resources, and then Public Relations. Dr. Maglinger said the requests are considered based on staffing models and fit for the pathways. The course change requests that are approved by the Review Committee are then incorporated into this presentation for the Board of Education's consideration for approval. He shared information on the new courses: ELD Computer Literacy I, ELD Computer Literacy II, ELD Orientation; Course name changes: Intro to Fashion and Advanced Fashion; and Course adjustments: Advanced Interior Design, Physical Science, and General Biology. He then shared the Academy Charts (Arts & Education, Business, Industrial Technology, Public Service, and STEM) and explained the proposed changes in each Academy. Dr. Maglinger explained that Dual Credit depends on the pathway and each teacher's certification. He also said that students who attain the OSHA certification in the Industrial Technology Academy can list this certification on their resume/job applications for which they will receive additional pay.

Following a discussion of the changes to the Program of Studies, Wendy Baird asked if there were any curriculum changes included in this information. Dr. Maglinger said that the curriculum changes would be brought to the Board of Education at a later meeting.

Anthony J. Mondaine made the motion, second by Denise Fears, that the Board of Education approves the Curriculum Changes and the 2025-2026 Program of Studies which outlines the changes for the 2025-2026 school year.

Wendy Baird made a motion to amend the previous motion to remove "approves the curriculum changes" as curriculum changes will be presented at a later meeting. Brandi Prunte seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

The original motion was amended to read that the "Board of Education approves the 2025-2026 Program of Studies which outlines the changes for the 2025-2026 school year". The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Denise Fears made the motion, second by Jill Esry, that the Board of Education approves the 2025-2026 School District Calendar as presented. Dr. Herl said that teachers would start on August 11, students first day would be August 18, 2025 and students last day would be May 22, 2026. He said the proposed calendar again contained five (5) makeup days for inclement weather. Mr. Lathrom chaired the committee of 29 people and allowed everyone an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals. Dr. Herl said it is an incredibly difficult task to develop the school calendar. Mr. Mondaine asked if Juneteenth was on the calendar. Dr. Herl explained that proposed calendar was just for the school year but he did say that 12 month employees have the option to work or use flex time for Juneteenth. Ms. Baird said that making up snow days takes a hit in the spring with work days. Mr. Lathrom stated that the Committee was strategic by using some of the days for testing and starting inclement weather makeup days in February to help relieve the possible five day weeks in the spring. When asked about using AMI days, Dr. Herl stated that in-person instructional days are more effective than AMI days for students. He also said that classified staff would need to be considered when discussing AMI days. The Board also discussed the percentage of parents/families that do not have Wi-Fi (do not have this information) and also about school being in session on election dates during the school year.

The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education. (Page 12698)

The motion was made by Denise Fears, second by Blake Roberson, that the Board of Education approves this as the second and final reading of changes/additions to Board of Education Policies C-140-P and C-155-P as presented.

**INDEPENDENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
2025-2026 CALENDAR**

**Student Contact / Teacher Contract Final**

July 2025					August 2025					September 2025					October 2025					
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	
	1	2	3	4					1	1	2	3	4	5				1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10	
14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17	
21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	
28	29	30	31		25	26	27	28	29	29	30				27	28	29	30	31	
Student Attendance 0					Student Attendance 10					Student Attendance 17					Student Attendance 19					
Teacher Contract 0					Teacher Contract 15					Teacher Contract 18					Teacher Contract 21					
November 2025					December 2025					January 2026					February 2026					
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	
					1	2	3	4	5				1	2	*2*	3	4	5	6	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			26	27	28	29	30						
Student Attendance 14					Student Attendance 14					Student Attendance 16					Student Attendance 16					
Teacher Contract 15					Teacher Contract 14					Teacher Contract 18					Teacher Contract 17					
March 2026					April 2026					May 2026					June 2026					
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	
*2*	3	4	5	6			1	2	3					1	1	2	3	4	5	
9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	
16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	*11*	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	
23	24	25	26	27	*20*	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	
30	31				*27*	28	29	30		25	26	27	28	29	29	30				
Student Attendance 18					Student Attendance 17					Student Attendance 14					Student Attendance 0					
Teacher Contract 20					Teacher Contract 18					Teacher Contract 14					Teacher Contract 0					

July	0	Jan	18
Aug	15	Feb	17
Sept	18	March	20
Oct	21	April	18
Nov	15	May	14
Dec	14	June	0

Total = 170

Tentative Summer School Start - May 27th, 2026  
 Graduation - May 15th and May 16th  
 Seniors Last Day - May 14th

\*\* = Weather Make Up Days  
 #1 February 2, #2 March 2, #3 April 20,  
 #4 May 11, #5 April 27

Required Student Contact Days	155
Required Teacher Contract Days	170
Float Work Day	1
Total Contract Days	171

Non Work Days Before / After Contract Days
First / Last Day of Semester
Non School / Non Contract
Professional Development - No School / Contract
Teacher Work Day
1/2 PD Day / 1/2 Teacher Work Day
Parent Teacher Conference Week

Brandi Prunte moved to amend the motion to allow people until Monday prior to the Tuesday Board of Education meeting to request to address the Board and to allow people to speak on any topic, not just Agenda items. The motion was seconded by Wendy Baird and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Carrie Dixon  
Denise Fears  
Jill Esry  
Blake Roberson

Nays: Anthony J. Mondaine  
Brandi Prunte  
Wendy Baird

This motion failed.

The original motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education. (Pages 12700-12704)

Wendy Baird made the motion, second by Brandi Prunte, that the Board of Education approves the bid and contract of \$699,838.00 from Herner Construction for the Addition to the Weight Room at George Caleb Bingham Middle School. Dr. Herl said there was good participation from contractors for this project and the bid and contract were reviewed by the District's architect, Facilities Supervisor, Mr. McGhee, and Dr. Herl. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Brandi Prunte made the motion, second by Blake Roberson, that the Board of Education approves the Guaranteed Maximum Price and Amendment 1 for \$1,671,006.00 from Newkirk Novak Construction Partners, Inc. for the renovations at Fairmount Elementary School. Dr. Herl said this is for the first phase of renovation work involving the structural steel and building the ground floor at Fairmount Elementary School. He said that additional construction work will be brought to the Board in February. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Blake Roberson made the motion, second by Jill Esry, that the Board of Education approves the bids and contracts from two companies, Offen Petroleum as the primary service and Hampel Oil as the secondary service, for diesel and unleaded fuel purchases as needed for District vehicles. Dr. Stout said four bids had been received but one vendor was eliminated due to past performance issues. This recommendation for approval will allow both departments (Transportation and Facilities) to purchase the necessary fuel as needed. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Denise Fears made the motion, second by Blake Roberson, that the Board of Education approves changing the attendance boundary areas effective the fall of 2025. Dr. Herl thanked the Board of Education for meeting and going over the proposed boundary adjustments. He explained that currently 83 students are being bused to other elementary schools due to 19 classrooms that are capped at capacity. Dr. Herl said the areas that would be affected are as follows: Procter to Bryant – area north of West Walnut; Glendale to Christian Ott – area north of Truman Road; Little Blue to Blackburn – Meadow Hills subdivision area; and Three Trails to Cassell Park – Sterling Avenue west to Hardy Street. He said that families wanting to remain in their current school building (as well as future siblings) will be grandfathered but that transportation will not be provided. The Board discussed the number of students affected at each boundary change, plans to increase staff (teachers, administrators, counselors, etc.) if necessary, continue monitoring the District's mobility, using a demographic study, etc. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education. (Page 12705)

There being no further business to come before the Board of Education, Denise Fears made the motion, second by Jill Esry, to adjourn the meeting and go into closed session for legal §610.021(1), RSMo; and personnel §610.021(3) RSMo and §610.021(13) RSMo; issues at 7:29 p.m. The motion was approved as follows:

Ayes: Carrie Dixon  
Anthony J. Mondaine  
Denise Fears  
Jill Esry  
Blake Roberson  
Brandi Prunte  
Wendy Baird

Nays:

  
Secretary

  
President

**Public Comment to the Board**  
**C-140-P**

Written submissions may be directed to the Board, through the Superintendent, for consideration at a Board meeting. Copies of all correspondence directed to the Board will be made available to all Board members.

In addition to written submissions, a specific time will be set aside at regular Board meetings for public comments regarding items from the posted agenda. Individuals who want to make public comments regarding an agenda item must provide a written request to the Board of Education and received in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools by 4:00 p.m. on the Friday prior to the Board meeting or 24 hours after the public posting of the agenda on the District website, whichever is later. To provide notice to the public of matters to be discussed by the Board, only comments directly related to the posted agenda item will be permitted. The Board President will apply reasonable restrictions on individuals addressing the Board including but not limited to restrictions on the number of items to be considered, the number of spokespersons and the amount of time each spokesperson may have to address the Board. At each meeting, up to thirty minutes will be allotted for public comment. There is a maximum limit of five minutes per approved individual. If the meeting agenda is full, the Board President may reschedule an item for the next regular meeting. The Board President will set a time limit for the public comment portion of the meeting. No individual will be permitted to speak more than once during this part of the meeting. Each member of the public to speak will be given the same amount of time to address the Board.

If an individual wishes to have an item placed on the agenda of a regular Board meeting, he or she may make a written request to the Superintendent after going through the appropriate process for a complaint or concern pursuant to District rules. *See* District Policy C-120-P regarding Complaints or Concerns. The individual is also required to meet with the Superintendent/designee to attempt to resolve the issue. Superintendent/Designee must meet within 20 days of the request. After the meeting or if the Superintendent/designee does not meet with the individual within 20 days, the individual may submit a written request to the Board Secretary to have the item placed on the agenda.

The written request must be received by Board of Education and received in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools by 4:00 p.m. on the Friday prior to the Board meeting and must describe the items to be discussed with reasonable particularity. The item may then be placed on the agenda as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent and the Board President. The Board President will refuse to allow discussion of an issue that has not gone through the appropriate process as a complaint or concern pursuant to District rules.

The item will be placed on the agenda if it directly relates to the governance or operation of the District. The District may refuse to place an item on the agenda; (1) if the Board

has heard an identical or substantially similar issue in the previous 3 calendar months or (2) if the resident previously violated District rules regarding conduct at meetings or on school property and upon a specific finding by the superintendent or board that the refusal or delay in hearing the resident's agenda item is necessary to protect the board's ability to conduct business at its meetings and is unrelated to any viewpoint expressed by that resident or the proposed agenda item. If an individual's request to place an item on the agenda is denied, the District shall provide a short explanation in writing within five (5) business days of the denial. The District may delay hearing an agenda item if more than 3 resident-initiated agenda items are scheduled for the same meeting. If the agenda item is delayed or denied, the resident may communicate to the Board as outlined in the first paragraph of this section about the agenda item.

Adoption Date(s): July 12, 2023; Updated July 9, 2024

## Visitors to District Property and Events

### C-155-P

~~All visitors to school property or events must demonstrate appropriate behavior as good role models for the District's students.~~ Visitors during school hours, including Board members, must sign in at the building main office prior to proceeding elsewhere in the building. The principal of each school building will ensure signs are posted to direct visitors to designated doors nearest the building office.

### **Disruptive Conduct**

Visitors who engage in disruptive conduct or exceed the scope of their permission ~~granted to be on District property~~ may be considered trespassers and subject to arrest and prosecution. ~~The~~If a visitor engages in disruptive conduct, the Superintendent or designee may limit or revoke the visitor's permission to visit school property or parts of school property ~~at any time~~. The Superintendent or designee may inform the visitor that he or she is not welcome back on District property, or a specified portion of District property, and/or at District events ~~indefinitely or~~ for a specific period of time: not to exceed one year. During any period of prohibition, the visitor will not be allowed on District property, except that no person may be denied the ability to attend open, public meetings of the Board and its committees or advisory committees except upon a specific finding by the Superintendent or Board of Education that denial of admission to such meetings is necessary to protect the Board's ability to conduct business at its meetings and is unrelated to any viewpoint expressed by that person. The Superintendent may make exceptions for parents, guardians or custodians of students enrolled in the District if the person's presence is necessary to transport the student or may benefit the student educationally, or in situations where the parent, guardian or custodian will be supervised at all times.

To inform a visitor that he or she is not welcome back on District property or at District events, the Superintendent must send a restriction letter to the visitor, sent by first-class mail and by email, if known. The restriction letter shall include:

1. A description of the visitor's disruptive conduct;
2. The time period for which admission to District property and District events will be denied, not to exceed one year;
3. A description of the District property and events from which the visitor is restricted;
4. Whether the visitor is being restricted from attending open, public meetings of the Board and its committees or advisory committees; and
5. Notice of the visitor's right to appeal the restriction to the Board of Education, by referencing this policy, a copy of which will be provided with the letter

## Appeals

Any visitor restricted for “disruptive” conduct under C-155-P, or a representative of the visitor, may submit a written appeal of the restriction to the Board of Education’s Secretary via electronic mail or first-class mail. The appeal must be received by the Board of Education’s Secretary within thirty (30) calendar days after the restricted visitor’s receipt of the restriction letter. Therein, the visitor shall state all reasons why they believe the restriction should be revised or overturned. Within fourteen (14) days following receipt of the visitor’s appeal letter, the District’s administration shall provide a written response to the Board of Education’s Secretary, with a copy provided to the visitor, stating all reasons why the restriction should be affirmed. If the visitor submitted their appeal via electronic mail, the District shall provide its written response to the visitor via electronic mail; otherwise, the response shall be provided via first-class mail.

Within seven (7) days after receipt of the District administration’s written response, the visitor or their representative may, but is not required to, submit to the Board of Education’s Secretary a written rebuttal via electronic mail or first-class mail. If the visitor makes new factual assertions that were not raised in the original written appeal, the District’s administration may, within seven (7) days following receipt of the written rebuttal, submit to the Board of Education’s Secretary a written reply to address only those new factual assertions, with a copy provided to the visitor. Otherwise, the District’s administration shall not provide any information to the Board of Education regarding the appeal outside of the contents of the administration’s written submission until the Board of Education has issued a decision regarding the appeal.

Upon receipt of any written rebuttal, the Board of Education shall consider the visitor’s appeal at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education that is scheduled to take place at least five (5) business days after receipt of such rebuttal.

A visitor who is restricted from attending open, public meetings of the Board and its committees or advisory committees may, in lieu of submitting a written rebuttal, submit to the Board of Education’s Secretary a request to provide an oral rebuttal at a Board of Education meeting. Upon receipt of any request to provide an oral rebuttal by a visitor who is restricted from attending open, public meetings of the Board and its committees or advisory committees, the visitor or a representative designated by the visitor shall be provided with the opportunity to address the Board at the next meeting of the Board of Education that is scheduled to take place at least five (5) business days after receipt of such request, and the Board of Education shall consider the visitor’s appeal at that same meeting. If the District administration determines there is reason to believe that the visitor’s presence at a Board of Education meeting will create an immediate danger to the physical safety of individuals present at the Board of Education meeting, the visitor may be required to address the Board of Education virtually rather than in person.

The visitor or their representative may address the Board of Education for a period of time not to exceed five (5) minutes. If, during their presentation, the visitor makes new



factual assertions that were not raised in the original written appeal, the District's administration may address only those new factual assertions for a period of time not to exceed five (5) minutes, and the visitor may listen to such address. Otherwise, the District's administration shall not provide any information to the Board of Education regarding the appeal outside of the contents of the administration's written submission until the Board of Education has issued a decision regarding the appeal.

If the visitor does not submit a written rebuttal or request to provide an oral rebuttal within seven (7) days of receiving the District administration's written response, the Board shall consider the appeal at the next meeting of the Board of Education that is scheduled to take place at least five (5) business days after the expiration of the time to submit such written rebuttal or request an oral rebuttal.

The Board of Education shall consider the visitor's written appeal, the District's response, and the visitor's written or oral rebuttal, if any, and the District's reply to any new factual assertions in the visitor's rebuttal in deciding whether to affirm, overturn, or revise the restriction. The Board of Education will provide notice of its decision to the appealing visitor and Superintendent within three (3) business days of the Board meeting. The Board of Education's decision shall be final.

### **Possession of Weapons**

Possession of weapons, including concealed weapons, is strictly prohibited on District property, on District transportation or at any District function or activity sponsored by the District unless the visitor is an authorized law enforcement official or is specifically authorized by the Board.

### **Sex Offenders**

Individuals listed on the Missouri Highway Patrol's sex offender registry may not be present in any school building, or on District property, in any District vehicle utilized to transport students, or be present at school activities without the written permission of the Superintendent. For those extraordinary circumstances when permission is granted, it will be granted in writing for a specific event. In such cases, the Superintendent will notify the principal of the building in which the sex offender will be present and arrange for the sex offender to be supervised at all times and the sex offender will not be permitted to be alone with a child.

Adoption Date(s): July 12, 2023

