

## **Board of Education Meeting - Aug 12 2025 Minutes**

Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at 6:00 PM

Tooele County School District 92 Lodestone Way Tooele, Utah 84074

***THESE MINUTES HAVE NOT YET BEEN FORMALLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND, UNTIL SUCH FORMAL APPROVAL, ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE***

### **1. Executive Session, 5:15 pm (Closed to the Public)**

Board Members Present: Melissa Rich, Scott Bryan, Robert Gowans, Emily Syphus, ValaRee Shields, Elizabeth Smith(5:16 pm), Todd Thompson (5:17 pm)

Board Member Shields made a motion at 5:15 pm to enter Executive Session

### **2. Business Meeting, 6 pm (Start of Public Meeting)**

#### **2.1 Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Board Members Present:** Elizabeth Smith, Scott Bryan, Robert Gowans, Melissa Rich, Todd Thompson, Emily Syphus, ValaRee Shields

**Administration Present:** Dr. Mark Ernst, Dr. Jeff Hamm, Lark Reynolds, Dr. Cody Reutzel, Dr. Sarah Jarnagin, Brad Hranicky, Angie Gillette, Marissa Lowry, Charles Hansen, Brett Valdez, Ian Silva, Dustin Nelson, Jackie Gallegos

At 6:00 pm, President Rich called the meeting to order and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance

**3. Open Forum (Limited to three minutes per individual and a total of 30 minutes for all comments. To speak, sign up at the clerk's desk prior to the start of the open forum.)**


3.1 Patron Comments

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- Mike Boehm spoke regarding an RFP for a school/home communication platform
- Lisa Johnson delivered a message from TEA

There were also four public comments that were submitted electronically.

[Submission ID 2349 Received for Board of Education Public Comment.pdf](#) 

[Submission ID 2434 Received for Board of Education Public Comment.pdf](#) 

[Submission ID 2621 Received for Board of Education Public Comment.pdf](#) 

[Submission ID 2623 Received for Board of Education Public Comment.pdf](#) 


**4. Consent Items (Routine items on the consent agenda not requiring public discussion by the Board may be adopted by a single motion. A Board Member may request to remove an item from the consent agenda for individual discussion and consideration.)**

4.1 Minutes

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Point of Contact: Jackie Gallegos, Board Clerk

[Board of Education Meeting - Jun 10 2025 - Minutes - Html](#) 

[Board of Education Work Session - Jul 29 2025 - Minutes - Html](#) 

- 4.2      Expenditure Report      # - #  
Point of Contact: Jill Whiting, Budget Director  
[June Board Expenditure Report.pdf](#)   
[FY25 July Board Expenditure Report.pdf](#)   
[FY26 July Board Expenditure Report.pdf](#) 
- 4.3      Revenue Report      # - #  
Point of Contact: Jill Whiting, Budget Director  
[June Board Revenue Report.pdf](#)   
[FY25 July Board Revenue Report.pdf](#)   
[FY26 July Board Revenue Report.pdf](#) 
- 4.4      Disbursement Report      # - #  
Point of Contact: Myken Hurst, Accounts Payable  
[June Disbursement Report.pdf](#)   
[7.25 Disbursement Report.pdf](#) 
- 4.5      Financial Reports      # - #  
Point of Contact: Jill Whiting, Budget Director  
[May Combined Financial Statements.pdf](#)   
[June Combined Financial Statements.pdf](#) 
- 4.6      Personnel Decisions      # - #  
Point of Contact: Charles Hansen, Human Resources Director  
[Personnel Decisions-June 2025.pdf](#)   
[Personnel Decisions-July 2025.pdf](#) 
- 4.7      Surplus      # - #

Point of Contact: Emily Spendlove, School Finance/Fixed Assets

[Memo surplus to board 25-08-01.pdf](#) 

4.8 Seclusion Rooms

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Point of Contact: Marissa Lowry, Special Education Director

All Seclusion rooms must have prior approval from the Board of Education so please find attached a list of the spaces being proposed.

[Seclusionary Time-out Space .pdf](#) 

[Seclusionary Timeout.pdf](#) 

4.9 Vote on Consent Items

Approve the consent items as presented or amended.

*Moved by:* Scott Bryan

*Seconded by:* Emily Syphus

**Yea**

Melissa Rich, Robert Gowans, ValaRee Shields, Elizabeth Smith, Emily Syphus, Todd Thompson, and Scott Bryan

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**5. Action Items**

5.1 Early Learning Plan 2025-2026

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Dr. Cody Reutzel, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, presented the District's 2025–2026 Early Learning Plan, which outlines a comprehensive approach to early literacy and mathematics instruction in grades K–3. He reviewed progress made from the 2022–2023 through the 2024–2025 school years, noting that while the District is not yet fully satisfied with current outcomes, they are encouraged by the improvements. Board Member Syphus inquired about the resources required to support these changes. Dr. Reutzel emphasized the importance of LETRS training, ongoing

professional conversations, and a philosophical shift in instructional practices as key contributors to the progress.

[Annual Results of Early Learning Plan.pdf](#) 

[Early Learning Plan 2025-2026.pdf](#) 

[2025-26 Early Learning Goals.pdf](#) 

Approve the 2025-2026 Early Learning Plan as presented

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*Moved by:* Emily Syphus

*Seconded by:* ValaRee Shields

**Yea** Melissa Rich, Robert Gowans, ValaRee Shields,  
Elizabeth Smith, Emily Syphus, Todd  
Thompson, and Scott Bryan

**Motion Carries 7-0**

5.2 2025-26 School LAND Trustland plan re-review

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Area Directors presented two Trustlands plans for the 25-26 school year that the State sent back for modifications.

[RE-REVIEW of GHS Upcoming plan 25-26.pdf](#) 

[RE-REVIEW of Ibapah SLT plan 25-26.pdf](#) 

Approve the Upcoming 25-26 plans as presented

# - #

*Moved by:* Elizabeth Smith

*Seconded by:* Robert Gowans

**Yea** Melissa Rich, Robert Gowans, ValaRee Shields,  
Elizabeth Smith, Emily Syphus, Todd  
Thompson, and Scott Bryan

**Motion Carries 7-0**

## 6. Information, Discussion, or Calendar Items

6.1 Title IX Report

Catham Beer, District Activities Director, presented the annual Title IX report for the 2024–2025 school year, as required by Utah Code 53G-6-1101. The report provided an analysis of gender equity in athletic participation across Tooele County School District high schools. Key areas reviewed included student participation by gender, athletic opportunities, coaching ratios, budget allocations, and access to facilities. Board Member Bryan commented on the potential to promote new sports and emphasized exploring additional strategies to support and enhance athletic opportunities for both girls and boys.

## 6.2 Academic-focused Agenda Item

Dr. Mark Ernst, Superintendent, led a discussion about an academically focused standing agenda item at each board meeting. He also outlined changes to our practice around employee and school recognition at board meetings and Board of Education observations at schools.

### **Employee Recognition**

Superintendent Dr. Mark Ernst announced a change in how employee recognition will be conducted during the 2025–2026 school year. Rather than recognizing Employees of the Year at Board meetings, honorees will now be celebrated at the first faculty meeting of the month at their respective schools. These brief recognitions (approximately 10 minutes) will be attended by District Administration and Board Members. This shift is intended to honor employees in front of their peers and foster a more personal and meaningful experience. Member Thompson expressed concern about maintaining visibility of employee achievements, while Vice President Gowans supported the change, noting the value of recognizing staff within their school communities. The Communications Team is exploring ways to further highlight these recognitions.

### **Board Observations in Schools**

Superintendent Dr. Mark Ernst outlined a revised approach to Board observations in schools. Instead of assigning specific

dates to each school, a calendar will be provided showing when Superintendent Ernst, Assistant Superintendent Hamm, and SES Directors plan to visit schools. Board Members may join these visits as their schedules allow. President Rich noted that this change in approach will help ensure compliance with open meeting laws by limiting attendance to no more than three Board Members per visit, thereby avoiding a quorum. This flexible model is designed to promote more authentic interactions and a deeper understanding of school initiatives. Member Shields expressed interest in celebrating teacher successes during these visits, while Member Syphus emphasized the importance of maintaining follow-up conversations with principals regarding classroom challenges and achievements. Dr. Ernst is committed to sharing details about the structure of these visits and the focus areas for each director.

### **Academic-Focused Agenda Item**

Dr. Ernst proposed the addition of a standing academic-focused agenda item at each Board meeting, in response to Recommendation 2.2 from the recent audit. Dr. Ernst mentioned that of the 17 recommendations, four have been completed. The academic item will provide regular updates on assessment data and instructional progress, with a proposed cadence of reviewing beginning-of-year data in September, mid-year updates, and end-of-year outcomes. Board Members provided input on the types of data they would like to see:

Vice President Gowans requested student-to-teacher ratios and staffing numbers.

Member Shields asked for updates on the AHLPS initiative and graduation rates.

Member Syphus emphasized understanding teacher needs to support initiatives like AHLPS, GVCs, and CFAs, and tracking academic progress in grades 4–12.

Member Thompson suggested using visual tools such as entry, target, and stretch goals, and incorporating leading indicators and lagging measures to assess progress that could quickly tell us if we are winning or losing.

Suggested topics for the September agenda include:

- Beginning-of-year data compared to the previous year
- Progress with GVC implementation
- Classroom sizes and staffing trends

## 7. Adjourn (10 pm Curfew)

### 7.1 Adjournment

At 7:26 pm, a motion was made to adjourn.

Adjourn

*Moved by:* Scott Bryan

*Seconded by:* Elizabeth Smith

**Yea** Melissa Rich, Robert Gowans, ValaRee Shields,  
Elizabeth Smith, Emily Syphus, Todd  
Thompson, and Scott Bryan

**Motion Carries 7-0**

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Board Clerk

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Board President