

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING – DECEMBER 3, 2025

The Board of Education of the Lake Mountain School District met in a board meeting on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at 6:00 PM. The board meeting took place in council chambers at the City of Eagle Mountain City Hall offices.

Board members present: President Julie King, Vice President Matt Isaacson, Charity Judkins, Joylin Lincoln, Melissa Sauser, and Ilene Strong. Not present: Julie Myers.

Also present: There were approximately 69 others in attendance.

President Julie King conducted the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jen Cherry, a teacher at Silver Lake Elementary.

INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT OR REFLECTION

An inspirational thought was given by Board member Melissa Sauser.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Malea Bliss, a Senate Candidate from Kearns, attended the meeting to express her support for the community. She noted that after speaking with city leaders, it is clear that growth is outpacing available infrastructure. She emphasized the need for smarter growth solutions, citing challenges such as commuting difficulties and limited access points that pose safety concerns. Her goal is to help develop a blueprint for responsible growth with infrastructure that anticipates future needs. She acknowledged the Board's responsibility to educate the next generation and noted that this is difficult when buses and traffic cannot move safely. She expressed her desire to be a partner and a voice at the Capitol to advocate for road funding. She reminded attendees that voting runs from December 5 through December 11th and encouraged support, participation, and engagement.

Monica Corry of Cedar Fort spoke in opposition to the proposed closure of Cedar Valley Elementary. She urged the Board not to rush the decision and to ensure all facts are fully reviewed before taking action. She expressed a desire to collaborate moving forward to achieve the best outcomes for students. Ms. Corry noted that charter schools expected to open in 2027 are not a guarantee, emphasizing that closing CVE in 2026 would create a gap in available options and does not align with projected enrollment needs. She also shared concerns about the laws referenced in the prior board meeting, stating she was unable to obtain clarification regarding satellite school options and safety issues. She said communication barriers with Alpine School District made it difficult to get accurate information, as teams were not aligned. Ms. Corry urged the Board to work collaboratively, be transparent, and involve the community in finding solutions. She concluded by asking the Board not to rush the process and to keep CVE open.

Erika Douglas a 16-year Cedar Fort resident whose children attended Cedar Valley Elementary, spoke in support of closing CVE. She stated that she has never supported the school remaining open due to what she views as irresponsible funding practices. She emphasized that her concerns extend beyond finances, noting that she has long advocated for students to have access to art, music, and PE. If the school remains open, she believes these programs must be provided. Ms. Douglas, previously a special education teacher, district reading specialist and school librarian, expressed concerns about split classes, stating they negatively affect the detailed instruction needed in each subject. She argued that students need dedicated classes and access to appropriate specialists. She added that if students are moved to the new school, they will receive all necessary services without losing any supports. She noted that funds saved from closing CVE could allow the district to hire approximately 33 teacher aides, 18 first-year teachers, 15 Lane 1 Step 6 teachers, 12 school psychologists and SLPs, and 18 school nurses.

Mitchell Kneuppo of Cedar Fort spoke in opposition to the closure of Cedar Valley Elementary. He noted that fewer than 50% of Utah students are reading at grade level and emphasized his desire for his children to read, write, excel in science, and be academically challenged. Drawing on his experience as a flight instructor – where the consequences of insufficient knowledge are significant – he stressed the importance of ensuring students are fully prepared. He stated that if children are not given a proper education and adequate academic challenges, they will face difficulties once they leave the school system.

Ashley Lott of Eagle Mountain spoke in favor of closing Cedar Valley Elementary. She stated that the school is not equipped to accommodate the anticipated growth and the capital investment required to make it adequate would serve only as a temporary fix and represent a misuse of funds. Ms. Lott noted that when the emotional aspects are set aside, the data presents a clear picture. She emphasized the Board's responsibility to allocate resources equitably across the entire district, which serves 25,000 students, rather than concentrating disproportionate capital, staffing, and resources into a single campus. She encouraged the Board to redirect those funds to strengthen the district as a whole, acknowledging that significant growth challenges lie ahead. She urged the Board to vote to close CVE and to move forward with opening additional schools in the area.

Kelsey Guernsey of Eagle Mountain spoke in opposition to the closure of Cedar Valley Elementary. She shared that students are having positive experiences and are thriving due to the school's unique culture, where teachers know students and families personally. She emphasized that small class sizes support both academic success and emotional development. Ms. Guernsey expressed concern that the school's students would be reassigned to sites that are already overcrowded, which could negatively affect their learning. She also noted that longer bus rides would reduce family time as well as options for after school activities. She believes this decision will disrupt friendships, and create instability – particularly for students in the Fire Fly community who have already been asked to change schools once before. She urged the Board to keep CVE open until a better option, such as a new school in the Fire Fly development, becomes available. She concluded by stating that students deserve stability and access to quality education, and she trusts the Board to make the decision that best serves students.

Tyler Boud, a student of Cedar Valley Elementary spoke against the closure of Cedar Valley Elementary. He shared that he and his siblings previously struggled at Hidden Hollow, but since transferring to CVE they have made significant progress and are now doing well academically. He questioned why the school would be closed when the surrounding schools are experiencing overcrowding and the area is rapidly growing and noted that no clear reason has been provided for the closure. He expressed concern about the impact on families, businesses, students, and teachers, and asked the Board not to close the school or separate him from his friends. He concluded by reminding the Board that they were elected to represent the community, which does not want CVE to close.

Heather Wrigley of Cedar Valley spoke in opposition to closing Cedar Valley Elementary. She acknowledged that closing the school would generate some savings but argued it would place significant strain on surrounding schools and create avoidable challenges during the district's first few years of operation. She noted that while closure would save roughly 4% of the district's budget, the hidden costs – including overcrowded classrooms, teacher burnout, reduced programs, longer bus rides, lower academic performance, and increased behavior issues – would be substantial. Ms. Wiggley stated that keeping CVE open and maintaining Fire Fly within its current boundaries would address multiple concerns: it would allow the district to fully utilize the CVE campus, keep Fire Fly students within their chosen community, and support SPED students who thrive at CVE but have struggled elsewhere. She urged the Board to take time to evaluate the legal and logistical questions previously raised. She requested clarification on the statute cited regarding the satellite option, noting that the community is willing to close the road and build required fencing. She emphasized that keeping CVE open aligns with the Board's responsibilities and referenced a petition signed by 1,200 individuals asking that the school remain open until an alternative solution is identified. Ms. Wiggley concluded that the appropriate time for closure would be when the campus reaches full capacity and the West area is ready for a new school. She stated the community is actively seeking land, exploring funding options, and engaging legislative partners to support the establishment of a future school.

Ashley Cook of Cedar Fort thanked the Board for the work they have done and acknowledged the difficulty of the decision ahead. She addressed the common reasons districts close schools – under enrollment, consolidation, safety concerns, and financial challenges. She stated that Cedar Valley Elementary would only need an enrollment of 200 students to align with the district’s average cost per student. With current enrollment at 130 and expected growth from the Fire Fly area, she believes enrollment will increase. Mrs. Cook noted concerns about the school eventually outgrowing the building but stated that the anticipated charter school opening in 2027 will absorb much of that future enrollment growth, preventing CVE from exceeding capacity. She acknowledged that the building needs repairs but emphasized that most major issues have already been addressed. Regarding staff, she asked how many Board members had directly spoken with the teachers and shared that the teachers she has spoken with want consistency for themselves and their students and want to remain together as a staff, but do not want to be reassigned to the Brylee Farms or the Fire Fly school. Mrs. Cook stated that keeping CVE open is the path that minimizes disruption and best supports both students and teachers. She concluded that this approach allows the Board to move forward with updated data, improved processes, and new approaches.

Mayor Wyatt Cook of Cedar Fort spoke in opposition to the closure of Cedar Valley Elementary. He began by congratulating the board and thanking them for their service, noting the weight of the decisions they face. He provided several clarifying points regarding the information surrounding the potential closure of CVE. He advised the proposed changes would add about five (5) minutes to current bus routes times causing about a twenty (20) minute round trip daily – with some students, such as those in Fairfield, experiencing longer rides. He noted this will impact the students study time and family time. He noted that while Alpine School District lists the school capacity at 300 students, he stated this number is flexible, as certain classrooms can be adapted or reconfigured as well as portables and a satellite option. Many schools address limited outdoor space by using split lunch and recess schedules, a common practice nationwide. And the charter schools planned for the area have received preliminary approval, which he described as a positive step toward addressing future growth in the area. Mayor Cook emphasized that CVE has been through significant challenges and, while currently small, the school will not remain that way as growth continues. He expressed concern that CVE might be treated similarly to how ASD handled schools in the West, urging the Board to pursue better options as a new district with a new governing body. He encouraged the Board to consider all alternatives and avoid closing CVE.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Board Handbook Creation

President Julie King asked whether the discussion of the Board Handbook should be moved to a work session or addressed immediately as part of making board assignments. She emphasized the importance of establishing norms and practices early to prevent future issues. **President King** questioned if the Board wished to discuss during the work session on December 17th or prioritize the topic sooner.

Board member Strong proposed beginning the work on a handbook. **President King** agreed, noting that someone could volunteer to lead the effort or the discussion could be held during a work session. **Board member Strong** asked whether this would involve policy work, and **President King** clarified that it would not. Instead, it would address expectations such as how to respond when a board member acts outside established norms, as well as responsibilities, committee selection, and overall board culture.

Board member Sauser stated that a work session would provide the necessary time for an in-depth discussion. **President King** concluded by recommending that the topic be moved to a work session unless any board member objected. No board members objected.

2. Policy 4201: School Calendars

President King explained the policy review process, noting that the first month is designated for discussion and edits, while the second month is reserved for action. Two policies are currently scheduled for review and turned the time over to **Board member Lincoln**.

Board member Lincoln explained that discussing the policies at this stage allows the community time to review the proposals, provide feedback, and suggest revisions. She encouraged community members to

send comments to any Board member. She noted that without an adopted policy, the Lake Mountain School District must default to Alpine School District's policies. **Board member Lincoln** highlighted that ASD adopts its calendar only one year in advance, while she recommends adopting a three-year calendar to improve consistency. She emphasized the value of maintaining a common calendar across all three (3) new districts to support alignment and fluency. **Board member Lincoln** reviewed the policy components, including definitions, required codes, committee composition, and compliance expectations. The policy established procedures for the Superintendent to form a calendar committee and references information from ASD's calendar committee, including who participated. She noted that ASD conducted a comprehensive survey, breaking the data down by area, and the intent was to incorporate the range of comments and perspectives received. She added that the proposed policy accounts for calendar effectiveness, outlines a review cycle, and ensures the district tracks policy history.

President King suggested using the phrase "the Superintendent or their designee," noting that responsibilities could be delegated to another cabinet member or district leader.

Vice President Isaacson asked whether the policy permits the adoption of multiple calendars. **Board member Lincoln** confirmed that it does. **Vice President Isaacson** then inquired about the process for amending a calendar. **Board Member Lincoln** explained that once a calendar is adopted, it can always be amended. Some amendments may be required by state statute (e.g., Kinder testing dates for ASD last year which required a calendar amendment), but the option to amend is always available.

President King noted a numbering issue: there is no number 3, and it jumps from 2 to 4 and suggested a simple cleanup.

Board member Sauser asked, regarding the language in Section 2.1 on calendar requirements, whether early-release days are necessary and why they are listed in the same bullet as professional development days. **Board member Lincoln** explained that they were grouped together so families can more easily plan ahead and view all key dates in one place, noting that early-release days can be reviewed at a later time.

Board member Sauser then asked who served on the ASD committee when it was originally formed and when the LMSD committee would need to be established. **Board member Lincoln** responded that the committee membership is outlined in the definitions section. And she stated that if the Board approves the policy and adopts the calendars, a new committee would not need to be created until the 2027-2028 school year. **Board member Sauser** thanked **Board member Lincoln** for her work on the policies and for providing opportunities for community input.

Board member Judkins emphasized the importance of having a built-in process for reviewing and evaluating both policies and board practices to ensure they continue to meeting the district's needs.

Board member Lincoln agreed, noting that reflection is an essential part of being an educator. She expressed appreciation for incorporating this process and stated that ongoing reflection will help the Board improve over time.

President King referenced Section 2.1, explaining that the current language reads as if it refers to minimum days rather than early-release days. She suggested revising the wording. **Board member Lincoln** responded that the language can be tightened up and the definitions strengthened to provide greater clarity.

3. Policy 5201: Tax Increment Funding

Board member Lincoln explained that while partnerships between a school district and a community for economic development can be valuable, they should be used sparingly and guided by a clearly defined policy. The policy should outline the process and procedures so the community understands when and why such partnership may be considered. She noted examples such as solar farms, where large acreage is utilized without generating housing or supporting student growth, underscoring the need for clear definitions and criteria. She emphasized that any partnership must ultimately benefit students, as the district's core mission is educating students. The policy establishes standards of eligibility and clarifies that proposals must provide a benefit to the district, not solely to a private company. Because some aspects extend beyond the Board's or Business Administrator's expertise, the district may engage a third party to support evaluation and ensure transparent collaboration with stakeholders. **Board member Lincoln** added that procedures are outline without naming the Business Administrator directly, as that role

falls under the designation of “designee”, though the Superintendent must remain fully informed. The policy also includes evaluation standards, accountability measures, and a review cycle.

Vice President Isaacson sought clarification on the provision for third-party financial reviews, noting the reference to three (3) TIF per year. He asked whether the policy limits the district to three (3), allows more than three (3), or permits an unlimited number without expense. **Board member Lincoln** explained that the number three (3) was intentionally included to keep the district’s primary focus on students and education rather than spending educational funds on evaluating economic development proposals. **Vice President Isaacson** confirmed that this means the district may contract for up to three (3) per year and not exceed that limit. **Board member Lincoln** reiterated that the intent is to restrict the use of funds needed for educating students. **Vice President Isaacson** suggested adjusting the wording to specify “up to three (3)”, while still allowing for additional contracts if necessary. He also recommended amending the language regarding who initiates and negotiates agreements, expanding it beyond the Superintendent to include the Board President or Board leadership. He further noted that the eligibility requirement is projects must create jobs above the average level – may exclude proposals such as solar farms, which typically do not generate new jobs. **Board member Lincoln** stated she could revise the language and make the necessary adjustments.

President King expressed strong support for the section on eligibility and standards for consideration. She highlighted the importance of requiring a financial benefit beyond the standard tax base, noting that the district often bears the greatest impact in these agreements. She appreciated provisions that allow for higher increments, litigation payments, or land donations, as well as the inclusion of the three (3) year trigger. She explained that some companies do not fulfill their commitments, leaving land undeveloped and failing to generate the anticipated revenue. She stated that it is important for the district to enter negotiations at a different rate than other entities and to clearly outline its requirements from the outset. Establishing this framework early helps ensure clarity during negotiations. **Board member Lincoln** agreed, noting that the district has “the most skin in the game”. She emphasized that educating students is central to the future of the community, and the district must secure the greatest possible benefit for them. **Vice President Isaacson** asked if the three (3) year trigger means the agreement would expire if no action was taken. **Board member Lincoln** explained that the intent is to allow for renegotiation at that point, noting that the policy is designed to avoid binding future boards. Limiting the term to three (3) years ensures expiration and an opportunity to revisit the agreement. **Vice President Isaacson** recommended adjusting the language to clearly state that the agreement includes an expiration date.

ACTION ITEMS

1. November Minutes

Board president Julie King recommended the approval of the November 25th board meeting minutes. Board member Sauser made the motion to approve the November 25th board meeting minutes, and it was seconded by Board member Strong.

Board member Sauser expressed appreciation for Executive Secretary, Breanna Loniero, noting that she is currently supporting all four (4) school boards. She commended the high quality and detail of her minutes and publicly thanked her for the extensive work she is doing behind the scenes to support the Alpine Board and the three (3) newly formed boards during the transition. The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of Cedar Valley Elementary School Closure

Board member Lincoln made the motion to close Cedar Valley Elementary effective the 2026-2027 school year, and it was seconded by Board member Strong.

Board member Lincoln stated that this was a difficult decision because of her deep care for the community. She noted that her first connection to the school began in 1998 and that she values the small-town environment. She explained that the cost to educate students at CVE is nearly twice the district average, and although those costs would decrease if enrollment reached 300 students, the school’s capacity is only about 205 students before split classes become necessary. Split classes, she emphasized, should not be the long-term solution. She noted that an addition 71 students would strain the school and

projections are showing 78 additional students next year and continued growth beyond that. With only one class per grade, there are no alternatives if a student does not connect well with their teacher or if students have conflicts with peers – issues that can affect not just one year, but multiple years as the same students move up together. Board member Lincoln outlined the significant challenges of expanding the building into the parking lot, including sewer constraints, safety concerns, and the complications of students crossing the street. She added that a road cannot be fenced and that the state safety consultant evaluated the site. She also noted the absence of specialty classes, meaning students are not receiving the full benefits available in more comprehensive schools. She concluded that the Board's responsibility is to ensure safe schools and equitable opportunities for all the students. While she has deep respect for the community and appreciates small rural towns, acting now allows students to move together to Brylee Farms and helps prevent further overloading at the current school. Her vote, she stated, reflects what she believes is the best long-term solutions for students.

President King noted that several ASD staff members were present to answer any questions from the Board, including **Eric Woodhouse**, Executive Director of Operations; **Frank Pulley**, Director of Physical Facilities; and **Derek Farnes**, Director of Operational Analytics. She stated that each of them was closely involved in the boundary studies and discussions and is available to address any specific issues or questions.

Board member Strong noted that **Board member Lincoln** referenced several figures in her comments and, since she had heard those numbers previously, requested that an official district representative provide the exact data for clarification.

Mr. Woodhouse explained that he is not the Business Administrator and did not have the information readily available, but the figures had been shared in an email. He asked **President King** to read the information from the message sent by Business Administrator, Jason Sundberg. **President King** presented the figures, noting that they were from last year and would be slightly higher now.

Board member Strong shared that she approached the decision with a heavy heart. She recalled being on the other side of a school-closure discussion in her own neighborhood, where the community united to advocate for what they had built. However, she emphasized that she is also viewing the situation through her experience as a former principal in ASD, working in a high-growth area. She stated that the district needs additional classrooms and a new school, and looking at the data from a districtwide perspective, the numbers are deeply concerning as she has worked with teachers in overcrowded classrooms. She expressed gratitude for previous decisions that supported CVE, noting they were the right decisions at the time. However, based on the current data, Board member Strong said she believes closing CVE is the best decision for the district as a whole. She added that one of the biggest concerns raised during her campaign was the potential for increased taxes, and she committed to doing everything she can to avoid raising them. This decision is one way to improve efficiency and save money for the district.

Boad member Sauser thanked the community for their feedback on the proposed boundary change and potential school closure. She expressed appreciation for those who participated in the survey and those who provided public comment at ASD board meetings. She summarized two of the most common community questions: Why close the school now if the area is growing? And why is CVE being considered for closure when other areas with growth are not? **President King** responded that the Board has reviewed potential closures multiple times over the years. Several years ago, five (5) schools were considered for closure, and only two (2) were ultimately closed. With the upcoming district split, areas that have previously been hesitant to close schools will likely need to reconsider. She noted that school closures are the most difficult decisions the Board makes, followed closely by boundary changes, and sometimes boards avoid these difficult decisions, delaying them for years. Addressing why closure is being considered despite growth, **President King** explained that the CVE property presents unique challenges. The building was originally an LDS church and renovated into a school. It includes eight (8) traditional classrooms and a satellite area, but not all spaces are being utilized for classroom use. The practical maximum capacity is about eleven (11) classrooms, which limits flexibility as enrollment increases. She shared that the Board explored all alternatives – including adding a satellite building in the parking lot or placing multiple portables onsite. However, the state safety specialist advised that these options would be unacceptable because the area would need to be fully fenced and would be classified as a separate campus, requiring additional security measures. Each option introduced new complications,

and the limitations of the site became increasingly clear. She concluded that the Board must determine when continued investment in a constrained site is no longer sustainable. Given the significant limitations and lack of room for expansion or flexibility, the Board needed to look toward more viable long-term solutions.

Board member Strong asked **Mr. Pulley** to address the safety concerns raised during public comments and to clarify the related legal requirements. **Mr. Pulley** explained that campuses must either be fully fenced or have active security during school hours. If a campus were added across the street, it would require full fencing, a secured entry point, and continuous monitoring. While this is possible, it would come with significant costs. He also noted that converting parking areas into additional classroom space creates further challenges – specifically, the loss of parking and drop-off areas – and the site has inherent limitations unless additional property is acquired.

Mr. Woodhouse discussed staffing challenges, noting that staffing decisions usually do not rely solely on district averages because student numbers fluctuate across grade levels. Current enrollment at CVE shows significant variation, and projections for next year include the need for eleven (11) full-size classrooms with 30-31 students in each. Although split-grade classes are possible, the district uses them sparingly because the Board has invested resources to limit them. Larger class sizes would overwhelm teachers and reduce administrative flexibility – particularly when student dynamics require adjustments. He added that by 2028 the school would need thirteen (13) full-size classrooms, which would exceed the building's capacity. While it is feasible to make it work, doing so becomes complicated and costly. He noted that a purpose-built school campus functions far better than attempting to retrofit spaces such as an LDS church building. He emphasized the need for fiscal responsibility and cautioned against building new schools too quickly, only to later have to close them due to insufficient enrollment. The district is trying to plan for the next thirty (30) years to avoid difficult decisions such as these in the future.

Board member Strong asked if the satellite could be moved to a different location. **Mr. Pulley** responded that portables are moved frequently across the district to meet growing needs. Moving it to another location is possible and would not pose a facilities concern.

Board member Judkins sought clarification, noting that the current site is projected to reach capacity within a year. **Mr. Woodhouse** stated that enrollment is expected to approach 269 by 2027 requiring eleven (11) full-size classrooms. **Board member Judkins** asked whether the current computer lab would need to be repurposed. **Mr. Woodhouse** advised that it would most likely be eliminated to be used as a classroom and explained that reaching capacity would also put stress on restrooms and lunchrooms and any adjustments at full capacity would impact everyone. He emphasized that once complaints about being at capacity begin, options for addressing them are very limited.

Board member Sauser asked about class size concerns and what class sizes would look like if CVE were closed. **Mr. Woodhouse** shared projected class sizes for specific grade levels and explained that larger schools offer more flexibility. In a bigger school, additional FTEs can be added and staffing can be adjusted to maintain consistent class sizes. Small schools do not have the same capacity to make these adjustments.

Vice President Isaacson noted that the information presented was compelling and questioned why the district would consider closing a school when additional classrooms are needed elsewhere. He stated that the rationale did not seem to align and asked how this would impact the new school at Brylee Farms. **Mr. Woodhouse** responded that **Mr. Farnes** could provide detailed enrollment projections, but current estimates show Brylee Farms remaining under 1,000 students. Mountain Trails is expected to be slightly higher, but additional portables can be added if needed. He also noted that if projected growth continues as expected, the district could build a new school in the Fire Fly area, which would allow that neighborhood to remain together.

Mr. Farnes asked whether the question was regarding projected enrollment at the new elementary school.

Vice President Isaacson confirmed and added that his concern is why the district would close a school only to move students to a school that is already full. **Mr. Farnes** explained the three (3) boundary options that had been reviewed and posted for consideration. **Vice President Isaacson** said he had spent time reviewing the options and enrollment numbers and wants to give the decision careful consideration. **Mr. Pulley** noted that the new school would exceed 1,000 students if all classrooms held 28 students. The building has 38 regular classrooms, not including the computer lab or gym, and does not currently have a

satellite or portables. **Vice President Isaacson** acknowledged that the school may not open at full capacity but asked what enrollment would look like after one (1) year. **Mr. Farnes** responded that under Boundary Option B, projected enrollment for 2029 is approximately 1,131 students.

Board member Sauser asked what would happen to the teachers and staff if the school were to close.

President King responded that this had been discussed directly with the faculty. All contracted employees fall under a RIF process, which guarantees them a position elsewhere in the district. These employees receive priority placement before any openings are posted to the public. **Board member Strong** added that, in her experience, the district is generous and works to accommodate employee preferences. While staff may lose their current location, they will continue to be employed.

Vice President Isaacson asked whether the projected cost savings over three (3) years from closing the school would meaningfully contribute toward building a new school. **President King** clarified that these funds come from two (2) separate budget categories. She explained the difference between capital funds and M&O funds. Savings from a school closure would not go toward capital projects but could support additional teacher hires, special education resources, or other operational needs. **Vice President Isaacson** asked if there was an estimate of the potential savings. **President King** said the numbers had not been calculated, but similar schools average about \$1.1 million in annual operating costs based on FY25 data. FY26 costs would likely be slightly higher due to an increase in salaries and benefits. **Vice President Isaacson** noted that this could mean roughly \$3 million in savings over three (3) years and asked for clarification: is it impossible to add a satellite even if parking is lost? Is there simply no space? **Mr. Pulley** responded that while adding a satellite is technically possible, the challenge is determining where it could be placed. Putting it in the parking lot or on the playground would displace those essential areas – something would have to be sacrificed to make it work.

Mr. Woodhouse expressed appreciation for the thoughtful consideration being given to the issue, noting that it is appropriate for the Board to struggle with such decisions. He emphasized that there are no easy or clear-cut answers, and competing priorities must be weighed. He reminded the Board that their responsibility is to determine which priorities matter most. He added that the difficulty of the decision reflects the Board's commitment to the community, and that the community deserves this level of careful deliberation.

Vice President Isaacson noted that they had been warned this would be one of the hardest decisions they would face, but he did not fully realize how difficult it would be. He asked Mr. Woodhouse whether anyone on his team disagreed with closing CVE. **Mr. Woodhouse** responded that the question should not be framed as being "in disagreement", but rather whether the Board agrees on the competing factors and whether keeping the school open makes sense. He explained that the district's rapid growth and the limited flexibility of the site make the challenges significant. He also reminded the Board that they are creating a new district, which eliminates the economies of scale they previously relied on, resulting in a different budget reality. He added that all three (3) new districts are evaluating how to best use their existing buildings, which is why more boundary studies are being conducted than ever before – none of the new districts have the funding to build additional schools easily. He emphasized that decisions to build or close a school are equally difficult and should be weighed the same. Ultimately, the key question is whether the solution is long-term or short-term. The committee's recommendation remains to close the school.

Vice President Isaacson thanked Mr. Woodhouse, his team, and the staff they represent for the significant work put into this process, noting that he recognizes how much effort it required. He stated that their recommendation carries substantial weight for him. He also remarked that he did not anticipate how political the role would be and acknowledged the considerable pressure they are facing, especially with future budget constraints driven by legislative changes and an increasingly tight financial outlook.

Board member Sauser noted that the impact on transportation had not been fully discussed and asked what that impact would be – both if the school remains open and if it is closed – and where the funding would come from. **Mr. Woodhouse** explained that students who live more than a mile and a half from school qualify for busing. The district receives some state funding for these routes, but it does not cover the full cost, requiring the district to subsidize the remainder. In this case, these students are eligible and would receive transportation funding for travel to and from school.

Board member Strong thanked Tyler for his courage and expressed her admiration for his willingness to speak up for himself, his friends, and his school. She stated that she would take a personal interest in following up with him and his peers to ensure they do not experience any bullying during the transition.

Board member Judkins emphasized that the weight of this decision is fully understood by her and the entire Board. She noted the many hours spent on research and in conversations with the community, stressing the Board's commitment to listening to community perspectives to ensure decisions are well-informed and serve the majority. She shared a personal experience, expressing that her heart is deeply involved and heavy, as these decisions are incredibly difficult. She thanked community members and staff for their input and for helping the Board remain informed. She reiterated that no one is taking this decision lightly, as it affects what matters most – children – and the Board is striving to do what is best for as many students and families as possible.

Board member Sauser stated that the data clearly shows a need for additional schools in the area as soon as possible and emphasized the importance of planning for that now. She noted that the district must look ahead, strengthen logistical planning to account for continued growth, and establish backup plans and flexibility to reduce uncertainty and better prepare for future needs.

President King acknowledged how difficult it can be for those in the audience to feel as though only a small amount of effort has been put into this process. She emphasized that she has been deeply involved for months and that alternative options were extensively explored, even if that work is not always visible to the public. She noted that hundreds of hours have gone into this effort, including meetings she and Board member Lincoln held with a developer to review potential land options. She stressed the Board's strong commitment to long-term planning, noting the district's need of five high schools, five middle schools, and fifteen elementary schools and the rapid growth in the area. Having lived in the community for twenty (20) years and having had her children attend four (4) different elementary schools, she acknowledged that growth is challenging but unavoidable. She reiterated that none of these decisions are easy and that every Board member has devoted countless hours to this issue. The Board is committed to maintaining stability while adapting to meet the community's needs. She expressed her love for CVE, its community, and its traditions, and offered heartfelt gratitude to the staff, students, families, and community for making CVE what it is today.

Statement from Board member Julie Myers, who could not be present.

"I want to clearly outline why keeping Cedar Valley Elementary open is not only reasonable, but responsible. First, we already know the building can safely and effectively serve up to 300 students. Our current enrollment is about 130 – meaning we have room to grow without any major investment. Second, Firefly families do not want to leave CVE. They are deeply connected to this school and this community and that matters. Third, the overcapacity schools in Eagle Mountain want CVE to remain open. They do not have room for 200 additional students. Keeping CVE open gives our district a necessary pressure-release valve. Fourth, we have strong developer support for keeping this school operating. If CVE stays open until it reaches capacity or until a new school is built, the Lake Mountain School District stands to receive: Either a lot in Firefly at a discounted price, or if approved, BLM land donation for a future school site – valued at over \$1.5 million. Sewer infrastructure extended to the lot, estimated around \$6 million, paid for by the developer. These are extraordinary community benefits tied directly to keeping this school open a little longer. With opportunities like this, building a small additional structure onsite – if ever needed – becomes far more realistic. Fifth, CVE is not far from financial parity with the rest of the district. At our current enrollment, the cost is about \$13,000 per student, which aligns closely with many districts statewide. We only need 200 students to be fully in line with Alpine's average, and all projections show we will reach that number soon. Finally, growth concerns have a solution already built in. A charter school is opening in the Firefly development in 2027 and the district plans for another elementary in Firefly by 2029. That means CVE will not be overwhelmed. We can comfortably support students until the new school opens – without major changes to the building. I also want to address our teachers, because their voices matter. It's been said that the entire staff wants to move together to a new school – but that is not accurate when referring to the Brylee Farms school now under construction. At least two (2) of our teachers have already stated they would stay at CVE if it remains open, but they will not make the move to Brylee Farms. They live in Orem and if they are forced to relocate, they will simply transfer to a school closer to home. As for the rest of our staff, they are united in wanting to stay together

and transition specifically to the future Firefly school, not to the Brylee Farms boundary. Keeping CVE open allows our staff to remain stable and transition together when the time is right. In short, CVE is needed, financially reasonable, supported by families, supported by neighboring schools, and tied directly to millions of dollars in community benefit. This school can bridge the gap until Firefly's new elementary is built – and the community is asking for exactly that.”

The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Open Business Administrator Search

Board member Sauser made a motion to open the Business Administrator search, and it was seconded by Vice President Isaacson. The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Initiate the Process to Create School District Foundation, 501c3

Vice President Isaacson made the motion to initiate the process to create the school district foundation, 501c3, and it was seconded by Board member Judkins. The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Appoint Chair of School District Foundation, 501c3, Committee

Vice President Isaacson nominated Board member Judkins to be the Chair of the school district foundation, 501c3, committee, and it was seconded by Board member Strong. Board member Judkins accepted the nomination. The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Updated Board Meeting Schedule

President King reviewed the updated board meeting schedule, noting that there will be an open meeting before any closed session meeting. She stated that not all of the listed meetings are expected to be held. She explained that the highlighted sections differ from the calendar approved last week and include updates related to candidate discussions and interviews. The September and November dates were clarified, and she noted that all items marked in yellow represent amendments to the original calendar. **Board member Judkins made the motion to adopt the updated board meeting schedule, and it was seconded by Board member Strong. The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

REPORTS

1. Construction of High School/Brylee Farms

President King invited **Frank Pulley**, Director of Physical Facilities, up to provide an update on the new high school construction. He reported that underground utilities have been completed and concrete work is underway. The building will have three (3) levels, with the gyms and auditoriums located on the basement level. The academic wings are stacked vertically and the gyms and auditorium will not have a second floor above them. He noted that this is a new model for the district – similar in concept to the middle school design but on a larger scale.

Board member Strong asked about the location of the football field and **Mr. Pulley** pointed out the field and parking lot on the site photos.

Board member Judkins asked about the location of the soccer field and **Mr. Pulley** outlined the locations of the soccer, baseball, softball, and other athletic fields on the site photos.

Board member Strong asked whether the road would be completed and **Mr. Pulley** explained that discussions are ongoing between the church, various cities, and a private developer regarding a potential connection. He noted that the road is not required, but would be a convenience for some families.

Board member Sauser asked about school entrances and exits and overall traffic flow and **Mr. Pulley** outlined the planned roads for entering and exiting the school. **Board member Sauser** inquired about traffic management during large events, such as football games. **Mr. Pulley** stated it would function like any other large event, possibly requiring a few extra minutes for entry and exit. **Board member Sauser** raised a concern about emergency access and potential choke points. **Mr. Pulley** confirmed there are

multiple access points for entering and leaving the site, and he reviewed the roads and parking lot exit points again.

President King asked if the school is expected to open on time and **Mr. Pulley** confirmed it is scheduled to open in Fall 2028. **President King** then asked about the planned locations for satellite buildings and **Mr. Pulley** displayed the satellite locations, noting that the current plan can accommodate sixteen (16), with the capacity for two additional satellites.

Vice President Isaacson asked about the school's capacity and **Mr. Pulley** replied that he has not run exact numbers, but a typical high school without additions accommodates around 2,500 students.

Mr. Pulley provided an update on School 133 at Brylee Farms reporting that the concrete has been poured and interior framing is currently underway. He highlighted several areas of the school under construction and noted that the front entryway has been completed.

President King asked if this school is the same design as Desert Sky and inquired about the differences in the kindergarten classrooms. **Mr. Pulley** explained that previous designs included restrooms in each kindergarten classroom, making them slightly larger. In this model, restrooms were removed, allowing for a full-sized classroom and more flexibility in placement. This approach is more cost-effective and allows kindergarten classrooms to be located anywhere in the school. **President King** asked about the playground and **Mr. Pulley** stated that there is not a dedicated kindergarten playground; instead, the playground is split and fenced, with one half for smaller students and the other for larger students.

Board member Strong asked if the project is on schedule and **Mr. Pulley** confirmed it is, noting that the school is set up for four (4) portable classrooms in the future if needed. **Board member Strong** asked whether electricity was pre-installed for future portables and **Mr. Pulley** confirmed that conduits are installed, with wiring left until later to prevent damage.

President King remarked that the project has gone smoothly despite its complexities and that everything is on track for opening. She asked if the building will be dried in within the next week or two and **Mr. Pulley** confirmed it is nearly 100% dried in.

Board member Sauser acknowledged the rationale for planning satellite buildings but encouraged created approaches in future planning to minimize the need for satellites. She also asked if Brylee Farms would be included in the Board's field trip on Friday.

President King replied that the trip will include a drive-by, but the Board cannot go on-site, but can be scheduled for later in the construction process.

Board member Sauser suggested a possible collaboration with Cedar Valley High School drone students to conduct a drone-based construction site visit. **Mr. Pulley** responded that the district already uses construction drones but welcomed student collaboration, noting that site visits can inspire future contractors.

2. Naming Committee

Board member Strong noted that 2,088 suggestions were received, including many strong ideas, and expressed appreciation for the community's involvement. She encouraged the Board to begin reviewing the submissions to become familiar with the input. The committee will narrow the list to three (3) options and present the four (4) names at the next board meeting. The review session is scheduled for Saturday, December 13th, at 1:00pm at Thunder Ridge Elementary, with the presentation prepared for Monday, December 15th.

3. Board Members

Vice President Isaacson shared that he participated in the paper screening process for the new administrative hiring of principals and assistant principals at both the elementary and secondary levels. He noted that the process is dramatically different from past practices and requires a significant amount of work, often involving late nights, but he is glad to serve. A rubric is used to score candidates and determine who advances to the next stage. The screening committee includes board members, community members, principals, and administrators, and is organized by the three (3) districts. He emphasized that this process allows district leadership to have input in selecting their future administrators.

Board member Sauser reported meeting with Richard Stowell of USBA on Monday to assist with the Superintendent application process. They are preparing a brochure for the position, and the application process is nearly finalized, with plans to release it by the end of the week. Drafts will be sent to the Board for review. She also requested time on an upcoming Board session to discuss the timeline and to engage community expert involvement in the progress.

President King reported that the City of Saratoga Springs approved the sale of the building last night. She stated that a \$5 million contract was signed today, officially giving them a district office. She expressed gratitude to City of Saratoga Springs for partnering with the district and thanked City of Eagle Mountain for providing them interim housing.

Board member Lincoln noted that their first motion was made in the council chambers of their building and how exciting that was.

Board member Judkins praised the collaboration up to this point, noting that the process was seamless and exemplified community teamwork. She emphasized that both parties want each other to succeed, commended everyone involved, and expressed that she was extremely impressed.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Board member Judkins and seconded by Board member Strong, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM. The Board voted in favor, the motion passed unanimously.