MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING – JANUARY 15, 2026

The Board of Education of the Lake Mountain School District met in a board meeting on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 6:01 PM. The board meeting took place in the boardroom of the Lake Mountain School District Office.

Board members present: President Julie King, Vice President Matt Isaacson, Charity Judkins, Joylin Lincoln, Julie Myers, Melissa Sauser, and Ilene Strong.

Also present: There were approximately 13 others in attendance.

President Julie King conducted the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Breanna Loniero.

INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT OR REFLECTION

An inspirational thought was given by Charity Judkins.

INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT

Joy Peterson, Library Coordinator with Alpine School District and Librarian at Sage Canyon, reported that she strives to make students feel welcome and valued in the library, creating an environment that feels like home. She noted that the library functions as a vibrant, active hub within the school, with both lively spaces for social interaction and quiet areas for those who need them. She emphasized the importance of students feeling safe, seen, and free to be themselves while learning. She reported that, due to a late selection of books for the school year, library staff organized games and prizes to engage students. When the library opened, they hosted a Glow-in-the-Dark party, which was well-received. She described additional efforts to encourage participation, including a Harry Potter-themed Quest and a lunchtime book club where students bring their lunch, read the genre of the month, and enjoy a small treat, creating connection opportunities for students. She stated that while the library is intended to be fun, it is also a place of learning, and project-based learning is frequently incorporated. Examples included a history lesson on world religions with artifacts, posters, and themed food, as well as a seventh-grade book project that included activities, food, and a walking tour. She noted that collaboration with teachers is important to create these immersive and engaging learning experiences. Ms. Peterson provided an overview of the LMSD secondary library book circulation year-to-date, comparing it to the previous year. She reported that new collections and library activities have contributed to increased checkouts and emphasized the need for healthy budgets to replace books, noting that the library requires new books annually rather than functioning as an archive or museum. She shared data showing that eBook checkouts are increasing relative to hard copy checkouts.
Board Member Sauser asked whether the new cell phone policy had impacted book checkouts. **Ms. Peterson** responded that she can evaluate that once the January numbers cab be pulled but that September and April typically see the highest checkout volumes.
President King thanked and commended Ms. Peterson for her work, noting her efforts to make reading and learning both engaging and enjoyable for students.

April Thompson, a teacher at Westlake High School with fifteen (15) years of experience, reported that she began teaching chemistry three (3) years ago and observed the struggles students faced, noting concern when many opted for easier courses to avoid chemistry. She stated that she researched programs used in other schools and higher education and identified a program that teaches chemistry through food, using food-based activities to engage students and illustrate the relevance of chemistry in everyday life. She noted that this approach makes learning chemistry enjoyable and helps students understand that chemistry is integral to many aspects of life. Ms. Thompson reported that she implemented this teaching technique in her classes at Westlake High School, and due to its success, she was asked to rewrite the program. She noted that three (3) additional districts are now exploring

adopting this approach. She reported observing increases in student interest and test scores and provided an overview of a unit on electrolytes, emphasizing that her goal is to develop scientifically literate students.
Board Member Sauser expressed appreciation for Ms. Thompson's work and passion for teaching.
Board Member Lincoln noted that her daughter is in Ms. Thompson's class and shared that the program is not only discussed by her daughter at the kitchen table, but also inspired her daughter to start cooking.

President King thanked Joy Peterson and April Thompson for their presentations, noting her appreciation for their enthusiasm and energy. She expressed gratitude for their work and the positive impact they have on students.

<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u>
There were no public comments.

<u>ROUTINE BUSINESS</u>
Board president Julie King recommended that the Board approve the routine business. Vice President Isaacson made the motion to approve the routine business, and it was seconded by Board member Strong. The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

<u>DISCUSSION ITEMS</u>

1. <u>Policy 200: Global Governance Culture (1st Reading)</u>
   Board Member Lincoln noted that this policy was directed to the Board and addressed how members will govern and conduct themselves. She stated that the guidance serves as an operational compass for all policies in the 200 section. She emphasized that the Board represents the community, provides leadership for the district, and holds itself accountable to students and taxpayers. She stated that the Board should govern with that accountability in mind when making decisions affecting the community.
   President King reported that she had not had an opportunity to fully review the material and noted that, while she believed the core elements were present, some items might conflict with current Board operations given the absence of staff. She asked whether discussion of these items could be postponed to a future meeting.
   Board Member Lincoln agreed, noting that additional language needs to be added, and stated that the Board is currently in a preoperational phase while handling many day-to-day operations in the absence of staff.
   Vice President Isaacson indicated he would send suggestions and questions and asked whether language regarding funding and claims, as well as approval of budgets, could be included. He noted that these tasks are typically handled by the business administrator, but the Board is serving in that capacity at this time, and he had questions about the approval process.
   Board Member Lincoln stated that such language would be included and noted that she preferred early-phase discussion to strengthen the policy and establish a tradition of strong governance.
   Board Member Sauser asked whether this item should be discussed in a work session or documented as notes.
   Board Member Lincoln stated that she was open to either option and deferred the decision to Board leadership.
2. <u>Policy 201: Governing Commitment (1st Reading)</u>
   Board agreed to move this Policy to the next meeting.

<u>ACTION ITEMS</u>

1. <u>Policy 702: Naming of a School (2nd Reading)</u>
   Board member Lincoln noted that a comprehensive policy has not yet been established in this section but stated that it will need to be developed. She reported that a school requires a name in the near future

and indicated that the only proposed change at this time is to add a student representative to the list of committee members.
Board member Strong motioned to approve Policy 702: Naming of a School with the suggested changes, and it was seconded by Board member Judkins.
Board member Strong noted that the Board will be naming schools frequently and expressed appreciation to Board Member Lincoln for her work in drafting policies.
Board member Judkins stated that the Board will have multiple school naming opportunities and emphasized the value of involving students in the process. She expressed gratitude for the work completed on the policy.
The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Policy 703: Community Committees and Public Advisory Groups (2nd Reading)
Board member Lincoln noted the importance of establishing this policy proactively to ensure community involvement and to encourage participation from a diverse group of individuals rather than the same participants each time. She reported that she had proposed a few changes, including clarifying that the policy applies only to Board committees. She stated that if there is insufficient voluntary interest in serving on a committee, the Board should have the authority to nominate and appoint members as needed. She further clarified that hiring committees are separate and fall under a different classification than other Board committees.
Board member Sauser requested that the language previously distributed be read aloud to ensure it is reflected in the official record.
Board member Lincoln read the policy language as, "If, after reasonable outreach, there is insufficient community interest to fill committee positions, the Board/Superintendent may appoint an individual who has served within the previous calendar year to ensure the committee can function and complete its work. This participation rotation requirement does not apply to hiring, screening, or employee selection committees, including committees established for the recruitment or selection of the Superintendent, which may require continuity, subject-matter expertise, confidentiality, or Board-directed governance oversight".
Board member Judkins noted a discrepancy in the policy numbering, stating that it was listed as Policy 701, whereas the correct designation is Policy 703.
Board member Lincoln confirmed that the policy will be listed on the website as Policy 703.
The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Board member Lincoln expressed gratitude, noting that her favorite part of writing policy is the discussion process. She stated that she values honest and authentic dialogue and emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for public feedback. She further noted that accountability and transparency are essential and expressed that she feels honored to participate in this process.

Board member Sauser reported that the superintendent search had been underway all week in the new office, beginning Monday afternoon. She noted that screening sessions ran from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. throughout the week with Board members present. She stated that thirty (30) community members participated in screening superintendent applications and expressed appreciation for all applicants, noting anticipation for the next steps in the process.

Board member Judkins reported that the Foundation Committee is in the early stages of creating the district foundation. She noted that the application process has been completed and that the committee is currently reviewing initial requirements to move the project forward.

Board member Strong reported that the Branding Committee is actively working on branding the district. She noted that a big reveal is upcoming and expressed enthusiasm for the project.

Vice President Isaacson reported that a closed session had been scheduled for the following day but would be cancelled. He asked Board member Sauser if she would like to announce the change at next week's meeting.

Board member Sauser reported that interviews are scheduled for the following week and that, on Thursday at 6:00 p.m., the finalists will be brought to Sage Canyon to meet the community. She encouraged public attendance and noted that an email would be sent with a request to RSVP.

President King reported that the Operations and Facilities Committee has been conducting field visits and exploring district facilities. She noted her appreciation for the camaraderie with other districts across the state and expressed that she was impressed with how helpful everyone has been in assisting the district's startup efforts. She stated that meetings with municipalities regarding long-term banking strategies have reinforced the sense that all parties are on the same team, focused on serving students and collaboratively finding solutions.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Vice President Isaacson and seconded by Board member Judkins, the meeting adjourned into a closed session to discuss litigation matters, acquisition of real property, or authorized personnel issues at 6:53 PM. The Board members who voted in favor were President Julie King, Vice President Matt Isaacson, Charity Judkins, Joylin Lincoln, Julie Myers, Melissa Sauser, and Ilene Strong. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE CLOSED SESSION – JANUARY 15, 2026

The Board of Education of the Lake Mountain School District met in a closed session on Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 7:03 PM. The meeting took place in the boardroom of the Lake Mountain School District Office.

Board members present: President Julie King, Vice President Matt Isaacson, Charity Judkins, Joylin Lincoln, Julie Myers, Melissa Sauser, and Ilene Strong.

The purpose of the closed session was to discuss personnel, property, litigation, and collective bargaining.

ADJORNMENT

On motion by Board member Sauser and seconded by Board member Judkins, the meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.