



Board Retreat - Feb 11 2026 Minutes

Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 10:30 AM

Blair Educational Center

1. Call to Order

Member Reed called the Board Retreat to order.

2. Discussion

School Leadership Alliance

2.1 School Leadership Alliance

District leadership and building principals joined the Board for their retreat. Amy Jenkins started the meeting with an Icebreaker, What's the best vacation you've ever been on?

Norms help everyone contribute to the conversation

Vision and success is to strengthen leadership capacity.

Superintendent Huntsman reviewed the principal's feedback. The three questions asked were: Strengths, Opportunities and Efficiencies.

Themes for strength included: Increased connectivity and visibility, and direct engagement. Principal Howe and Principal Fine both agree that with the accessibility to the Superintendent, they feel very supported this year. Board Member Hill and Board President Reed are thrilled that we are heading in the right direction.

Themes for opportunities: Structural Alignment and "Less is More". Principal Dufner believes that everyone has done a great job of understanding the goals and clarification of the supervision of roles. Principal Howe talked about the dual supporting roles and the fact that principals need the information or to be looped in. Principal Fine said that the dual supervised roles can cause frustration. Board President Reed understands this and said some of these things just take time. Principal Wilbourne said that instructional realignment causes frustration, and less is more.

Themes for Efficiencies include: The Trail Report, Centralized Messaging, and Departmental Improvements. Principal Folau expressed that we have the right people in place and the ship is turning in the right direction. We are on the right track. Principal Howe said it is incredible to feel an army behind you to help when needed is incredible.

Superintendent Huntsman asked principals what they need now for next year. Principal Dufnerr said the conversation regarding technology use is going to be a big topic in the community. We need to be thinking about how this is going to affect our district. Principal Fine said he thinks technology has to be balanced. Board Member Gallagher said that the Board's job is to communicate to the community. Can the principals send them the talking points?

An activity, What do you wish they knew was introduced to the three groups: Board, Executive Leadership, and Principals. The group reconvened after a break and reviewed the responses.

A couple of common themes were that everyone is working hard, and we all share the common goal of educating our students. ...

Principal Howe explained the negative impact of the DLI discrepancies. Traditional vs. DLI. We're excited for more community partnerships and collaboration. We appreciate

you being here with us and on our side... The DLI discrepancy is impacting the ability to be successful. We are not able to evenly split classrooms, so we have a school within a school. With only one traditional class, it is much like a one-room schoolhouse until 5th grade. The families in the traditional classes are having negative conversations in the community. They want it to be equitable, but there is no ability with only one traditional class.

Superintendent Huntsman said the district will look at DLI next year and hopefully have a plan for the 27/28 school year.

Principal Huntsman indicated that they will begin identifying strategic priorities for 26/27.

Principals were excused at 1:25 p.m.

Dr. Synan presented the Recap for Executive Leadership sessions. She wanted to point out just four of the bullet points, which included:

Building our team, Accountability, PCBL, and Budget.

Executive Leadership has identified key indicators, which include:

The Why:

Student Success

Establish structures & systems that will outlast us

System-wide vision

Accountability

Human centered

What We Do:

Improving practices

Managing resources

Hand-holding, scaffolding, building capacity

Mitigating emotions & perceptions

What's most important:

Urgent-Clarify priorities for the budget

Gap analysis in the system

Accountability

Jim Quigley, Founder, School Leadership Alliance provided some perspective. If you want to connect with someone, you need to go where they are, and he emphasized key strategies on the pyramid:

Clarity Culture Communication Courage Capability

Believe Belong Behave

As one behavior

Out of 350 top schools, four main drivers are: belief that all students can learn; high expectations; leaders who can inspire; and teachers who support and mentor.

Member Britton asked, when time is limited, how to get everyone on the same team, as one. Jim said that comes with engagement and commitment to executing the strategy.

NUES Executive Director, Piper Riddell, presented next and shared How Will We Succeed? People who use their strengths every day are: 6X more likely to be engaged, 8% more productive, and 15% less likely to quit their jobs. Important to recognize your strengths. Challenge yourself to leverage your strength.

Member Reed was excused at 3:15 p.m.

Superintendent Huntsman thanked everyone for taking the time to meet today. We have done a lot in a year, but our work is not done. Everything should be centered around our students. What is best for kids?

3. Adjourn

Member Gallagher made a motion to adjourn. Member Goldberg seconded the motion. Motion passed

Moved by: Eileen Gallagher

Seconded by: Susan Goldberg

Carried

Board President

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

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