

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING – JANUARY 29, 2026

The Board of Education of the Lake Mountain School District met in a board meeting on Thursday, January 29, 2026, at 6:01 PM. The board meeting took place in the boardroom of the Lake Mountain School District Office in Saratoga Springs, UT.

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

Also present: Superintendent Carter and Deputy Superintendent Bollinger. There were approximately 38 others in attendance.

President Julie King conducted the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board member Lincoln.

INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT OR REFLECTION

An inspirational thought was given by Vice President Isaacson.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT

Jessica Stauffer, an ASD Community Outreach Coordinator assigned to Cedar Valley High School, presented on the district's community outreach programs, their mission, vision, and purpose. She emphasized their efforts to address the physical, mental, and emotional needs of the district's students and their families. As the team learns more about students and the educational barriers they face, they begin by developing individualized plans for support, using the community schools framework as a guiding model. This framework transforms the school into a collaborative hub where educators, community partners, families, and students work together to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy development. Through this approach, the team coordinates in-school and out-of-school resources, supports, and opportunities for students and their families, guided by six core frameworks. The initial focus is on building relationships with students and their families. Through staff referrals, translation services, and direct outreach, the team identifies family needs and barriers to student success. Using the community schools framework, they established an outreach team designed to best serve students and families and to foster partnerships that expand resources, programs, and support systems to address identified needs. Examples of available supports include Pizza with Parents and study groups, tutoring, translation services, after-school classes, career pathway planning, an on-site food pantry, holiday assistance, new student breakfast groups, the Cinderella Project, and assistance with healthcare and vision care. These efforts are intended to cultivate a culture of safety, belonging, and care. Actionable data specific to Lake Mountain School District and Cedar Valley High School was presented. A success story was shared involving a teenage student who was new to the country and spoke no English. The student was referred by the counseling office for registration assistance, during which additional family needs were identified, including food and clothing support, English language classes, medical insurance, employment credential assistance, and housing instability that qualified the family for McKinney-Vento services. Through coordination with school staff and community partners, the family was connected with external resources, supported in navigating school systems, and provided in-home assistance. As a result, the student overcame multiple barriers, passed the LITA assessment, obtained medical insurance to participate on the Ballroom Dance Team, is on track to graduate early, and is pursuing the Seal of Biliteracy. Additionally, the team coordinated three vision clinics in partnership with Eye Care for Kids, hosted at school sites to provide eye exams and glasses to students who could not otherwise afford them. Multiple student and family engagement events were also held at schools, including activities supported by grants that assist families in obtaining Chromebooks for use at home. There are multiple onsite food pantries located at sites like Vista

Heights, Silver Lake, Frontier, and Cedar Valley High School that include delivery services to families who do not have transportation. Each member of the team is working on a targeted framework at their schools with faculty students and families.

President King thanked Ms. Stauffer and expressed appreciation for her and her team for their continued dedication and impact. She noted that Ms. Stauffer was instrumental in initiating this work as the first individual serving in this area and that the program has since expanded under her leadership. President King commended her leadership, initiative, and ability to connect with and support individual students, emphasizing that the work she and her team do is critical to keeping students engaged in school and providing meaningful opportunities. She further highlighted the value of the programs and classes she helps facilitate and their importance to the community, and again expressed her gratitude for her service and contributions.

Board Member Sauser asked how members of the community can contribute to and support the outreach efforts.

Ms. Stauffer explained that QR codes are available for direct donations to the Food Pantry through the Alpine Foundation and noted that this information would be provided to Breanna Loniero for posting with the Lake Mountain Board meeting documents. She also shared that the upcoming Cinderella Project welcomes donations of formal wear, which can be delivered directly to Cedar Valley High School's counseling office. Additionally, Ms. Stauffer offered to provide the Board with contact information for school coordinators if members are interested in supporting a specific school.

Kate Watson, an art teacher at Harvest Elementary with 26 years of service in Alpine School District, including 25 years teaching art, shared her professional background and philosophy of arts education. She holds a master's degree in Art Education and an endorsement in instructional coaching. Ms. Watson explained that the arts have been transformative in her own life and that she strives to create similar transformative experiences for her students. She noted that students are often highly motivated to attend art classes, which can contribute to reduced absenteeism, and that integrating the arts into core subjects can deepen learning and foster creative, "out-of-the-box" thinking. Ms. Watson summarized her research on general education teachers' personal artistic confidence and how it influences their willingness to integrate art into their classrooms. Her findings indicated that students who had positive art experiences between fourth and eighth grade were more likely to develop an open mindset toward the arts and creative thinking. She discussed child development during this period, noting that students begin to rely more on peer and teacher feedback than on family input, underscoring the importance of how teachers respond to and support student expression. She emphasized that students need a safe environment to express themselves, experiment, and move beyond simply replicating what they are shown. Ms. Watson highlighted the importance of allowing students to experience failure in a supportive setting, learn how to adapt, and view failure as a desirable and essential part of growth and learning. She explained that the arts naturally provide this safe space, where students are more willing to take risks than they might be in subjects such as math or spelling. Ms. Watson concluded by stressing that teaching a growth mindset through visual arts, particularly in the early years, equips students with lifelong skills to learn, persevere, recover from setbacks, and ultimately thrive across all areas of learning.

President King shared that she has had the opportunity to observe Ms. Watson's classroom and described the bioluminescence creature art project as a favorite example. She noted that students used glow-in-the-dark paint and worked under black lights to create their projects, creating an engaging and memorable learning experience. President King highlighted how BTS and the arts effectively integrate core standards, resulting in deeper student understanding of the content. She emphasized that it is dedicated and exceptional educators like Ms. Watson who ensure strong support for the arts and enrich student learning, and expressed gratitude for her contributions.

SUPERINTENDENT OATH OF OFFICE

Board President King administered the Oath of Office to Dr. Vicki Carter, who was appointed Superintendent of the Lake Mountain School District effective July 1, 2026.

ROUTINE BUSINESS

Board president King recommended that the Board approve the consent agenda. Board member Lincoln made the motion to approve the consent agenda, and it was seconded by Board member Judkins. The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Policy 704: Media and Public Relations

Board Member Lincoln discussed the importance of adopting a policy governing media relations and public communications. The policy establishes clear definitions, outlines its scope, and specifies when it applies and when it does not. She reviewed key provisions of the policy, including the respective roles of the Superintendent and the Board in engaging with the media, with authority for delegation as appropriate. Additional topics included protections for student and employee privacy, protocols for crisis communications—emphasizing that situations should be addressed before public communication occurs—and procedures for responding to records requests. Board Member Lincoln noted that the policy’s effectiveness will be measured by accurate, lawful communication practices that respect student and employee privacy, comply with applicable laws, including FERPA, and appropriately address GRAMA requests.

President King expressed several concerns regarding the proposed policy, particularly related to the definition of “news media.” She noted that with the prevalence of blogs and podcasts, it may be difficult to distinguish legitimate news outlets and suggested tightening the definition to clearly differentiate established media organizations from individual or informal platforms. She emphasized that outlets such as KSL should be treated differently than private individuals. President King also raised questions about how the policy applies to Board members, noting that while the policy addresses employees, it should not be interpreted in a way that limits Board members’ ability to express themselves or requires all communication to be funneled exclusively through the Board President. She referenced Section 1.2, which states that individuals do not represent the district unless expressly authorized by the Board, and expressed concern about potential misinterpretation in situations such as legislative testimony, where a Board member may speak without formally representing the Board. Additionally, President King recommended that references to the Superintendent throughout the policy be updated to include “or their designee,” particularly in Section 2.2. She noted this is important for practical situations such as media interviews with students at athletic events or concerts, which may not reasonably be routed through the Superintendent. She requested that the language be revised to address these concerns and provide greater clarity.

Board Member Lincoln asked for clarification regarding the use of definitions within the policy, specifically whether the language “Superintendent or their designee” should be formally applied throughout each policy section or addressed only within the definitions section, noting that this approach has been used in several previously adopted policies. **President King** responded that she was uncertain about the use of the term “formally,” particularly as job responsibilities and needs can change over time. She questioned whether “formally” implies an administrative designation and expressed concern about how the term might be interpreted. **Board Member Lincoln** clarified that her understanding of “formally” refers to an explicit communication or designation from the Superintendent to an individual, rather than an informal situation where, for example, a teacher speaks on behalf of the district without authorization.

President King raised concerns regarding the section addressing access to district property, noting that while it references high expectations of privacy, additional clarification may be needed to further protect students with 504 plans or Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). She emphasized the importance of ensuring that students are not identified or singled out based on having an IEP or 504 plan and suggested that this language be strengthened. President King also addressed Section 5.3, which prohibits employees from providing endorsements or promotional statements for third-party organizations during contract hours. She noted that in situations where a grant is awarded, a teacher’s expression of gratitude to the granting organization could potentially be interpreted as an endorsement. She expressed concern that numerous appropriate third-party interactions occur within the district and recommended that the policy include clear exceptions to account for these circumstances.

Board member Lincoln clarified that her comment referred to situations in which a teacher is engaged in work outside of their official job responsibilities, such as developing a book or other publication, and uses their classroom to record a video or related content. She stated that she would work to refine and clarify the policy language to address this scenario.

President King expressed appreciation for the language included in Sections 6.1–6.3, noting that situations have occurred in which parents become upset when their child contacts them during an incident. She emphasized that the district’s first responsibility is to ensure the safety of all individuals, which may require a delay in communication while student safety is being addressed, and stated that the added clarity in these sections is valuable. She also raised a question regarding the crisis communication language in Section 4.2, asking whether it could be interpreted as a violation if a teacher were to communicate with a spouse about an incident, and suggested clarifying the language to avoid misinterpretation.

Board member Lincoln advised regarding that point, sharing a text with a spouse such as “the school is on lockdown, I’m okay” does not compromise safety or ongoing investigations.

Board member Lincoln commented that anyone listening or reviewing the meeting is welcome to provide feedback to the Board for consideration.

Vice President Isaacson requested clarification on the distinction between policy provisions and policy procedures, as well as between Board actions and district actions.

Board member Lincoln advised the policy provisions reflect the Board’s role in establishing the “why” and overall parameters. Procedures address the “how” and daily operations, managed by the Superintendent. Both are presented together to make it clear to the public that the Board and the district are aligned. Administration or the Superintendent can bring forward changes to policies that are not working, ensuring the Board and community are informed.

Vice President Isaacson asked whether the district has the flexibility to adjust policy as needed and whether the Board consents to such adjustments. **Board Member Lincoln** confirmed that the Board does approve the full policy document. **Vice President Isaacson** then inquired whether provisions still require Board approval, or if both provisions and procedures must be approved. **Board Member Lincoln** explained that the Board approves the entire policy, but the Superintendent has the ability to adjust the procedures section as necessary and may bring any changes back to the Board for review at any time.

Vice President Isaacson – stated agreement with including language that references the Superintendent and/or their designee wherever “Superintendent” appears. Regarding Policy & Provisions Section 1, he noted that while it looks well-written, certain items, such as 1.1, are already addressed in other policies and could create redundancy. He suggested striking 1.1, as the same topic is covered in Section 3.1. **Board Member Lincoln** responded that because Section 1 specifically addresses interactions with the press, it may be necessary to include the information here, as the media is unlikely to reference multiple policies.

Vice President Isaacson added that Sections 3.2 and 3.3 appropriately outline media access as being limited and under supervision. He emphasized avoiding overlap with other policies and requested clarification on when a principal may respond to media requests directly, proposing language to allow site-level responses without going through the Superintendent. **Board Member Lincoln** explained that such authority would fall under the Superintendent’s delegation but indicated that the language could be refined to clearly define what principals are permitted to do.

Board member Sauser suggested adding links to other policies where topics overlap to make navigation easier. **Board member Lincoln** agreed that it is a great idea and noted that it can be incorporated as more policies are developed.

2. Policy 203: Board Member Code of Conduct

President King suggested updating the language under Definitions for “conflict of interest,” replacing “impair” with “influence.” Regarding Section 2, Policies and Provisions, she noted that in 2.1, the phrase “shall avoid conflicts of interest” should be revised to “shall disclose,” as elected officials may have conflicts of interest that are legally required to be disclosed. In Section 2.4, she recommended changing “shall withdraw” to “they are encouraged to withdraw.” **Board member Lincoln** noted that rules for legislators and boards differ and stated that, to her understanding, board members may need to leave the room, but she will verify the applicable code.

Board member Strong asked for clarification on what it means to withdraw, specifically whether a member can listen to the discussion but not vote, or if they must physically leave the room. **President King** explained that recusal requires a member to refrain from commenting, participating in discussion, or voting. **Board member Strong** asked if leaving the room is an option. **President King** confirmed that leaving the room is acceptable if the member prefers.

President King noted that Section 3.2, Authority and Role Clarity, noting that the LBA is technically separate from the Board and operates under a different authority. She also referenced RDAs, such as the Texas Instruments deal with ASD, where certain actions could be considered outside official Board action but remain relevant.

Board member Sauser suggested including language such as “unless authorized by Board leadership or a designee.” **President King** indicated that this approach could work for RDAs but not for the LBA. **Board member Lincoln** stated that she considered this when including language about actions outside official Board action, allowing the Board to take action if assigned to an RDA, and noted she will refine the language further.

President King expressed concern with Section 7.2, noting that information could be shared on social media before it has been formally presented in a public meeting. She stated that any Board member could inadvertently do this, and that the current language feels overly restrictive. She recommended updating the verbiage to avoid unnecessarily limiting the Board’s ability to communicate with the public.

Vice President Isaacson suggested that the policy statement could be more concise, noting a few areas of redundancy that could be removed or combined rather than spread across multiple sections. He expressed concern with the use of “shall” in Section 2.4. Regarding Section 3, he noted that the content may be addressed elsewhere and is not specifically a code of conduct issue. For Section 4.4, he recommended replacing “value” with “respect” as a more appropriate term. In Section 7, he suggested using “sensitive information” to clarify that such information should not be released to the public.

Board member Lincoln noted that this policy does not include procedures, as it is intended specifically for the Board.

Board member Strong noted that while reviewing Policies 3.2 and 3.4, the Board still functions as staff and there is not yet a separation of operations. Asked whether these policies are being developed with the future in mind. **Board member Lincoln** acknowledged the challenge, explaining that the policies and norms need to guide operations for the next 18 months, with the understanding that slight adjustments may be needed once the Board becomes fully operational. Suggested using an effective or expiration date to manage this. **Board member Strong** expressed concern about having to rewrite policies later. **Board member Lincoln** stated that changes can be tracked and implemented at a later date as needed.

Board member Sauser suggested updating Section 8 to align with the same process outlined in other sections for consistency. She also recommended considering how Superintendent evaluation fits into the future goals of the policy and how it could be better integrated.

Board member Lincoln expressed enthusiasm for the discussion and the policy development process. She thanked the Board for their comments and stated that she looks forward to incorporating the feedback and bringing the revised policy back for further consideration.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Resolution 2026-001: Disposition of School Buses

President King explained that under SB 188, the disposal of district assets acquired after the creation of the district must follow a specific process. All three (3) new Boards must approve the disposal before ASD can take action. She noted that there are approximately 25 buses in the “bone yard,” some of which have not been operational for several years, lack air conditioning, or would require significant repairs.

Vice president Isaacson motioned to approved Resolution 2026-001, Disposition of School Buses and it was seconded by Board member Sauser.

Board member Sauser thanked the transportation staff for the level of transparency in the training provided and for the detailed information shared with the Board.

Board member Strong asked whether district buses are equipped with heaters. **Eric Woodhouse** responded that, to his knowledge, the buses do have heaters and are not operated in mid-winter without heat.

ASD Transportation Staff member shared firsthand experience, noting that while buses have heaters, some units experience mechanical issues, including air conditioning that does not consistently function and need extended warm-up times. The staff member expressed support for removing buses with ongoing operational issues.

The Board voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Board member Sauser, as Chair of the Superintendent Search Committee, thanked the Board members who staffed the District Office from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. during the process, as well as the public who attended the forum. She also expressed appreciation to all applicants and to everyone who participated in the search process.

Board member Strong noted that the district is in the process of developing its logo and defining its purpose, including planning a future reveal. She shared that meetings are underway with multiple companies and that efforts are focused on narrowing options. She added that she will work with the Superintendent and review plans with her as they move forward.

Vice President Isaacson provided an update on the naming committee, noting that a group of community members helped narrow down the district name and suggesting that the committee continue into the branding phase to participate in that process. He also reflected on the Superintendent search, stating that the district received an exceptional pool of applicants and expressing appreciation for the enthusiasm, reach, and engagement throughout the process. He noted the extensive time and thoughtful discussion involved, including preparation for the possibility of selecting from multiple highly qualified candidates. He expressed enthusiasm that Dr. Bollinger is present as the Deputy Superintendent, and stated that having two outstanding leaders join the team is a significant accomplishment for the district.

Board member Judkins expressed strong satisfaction with the outcome, stating that the Board could not have asked for a better result or a stronger leadership team. She noted the collective support and enthusiasm surrounding the district’s development and described the process of building the district’s foundation as meaningful and ongoing. She shared that the application process for the foundation is underway, involves multiple components, and will take several months to complete. She added that progress is being made and that she will continue to provide updates as additional information becomes available.

President King provided a legislative session update, noting that as of the previous evening there were 657 bills drafted and numbered and that the session was on day 10 of 45. She encouraged Board members to engage with legislators by reviewing proposed bills and staying informed about legislative activity. She emphasized that government is a collective effort and that citizens have a responsibility to participate in the process and communicate their perspectives to elected officials.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Vice President Isaacson and it was seconded by Board member Judkins, the meeting adjourned at 7:21 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.

APPROVED