



Board of Education Work Session - Feb 24, 2026, Minutes

Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 6:00 PM

Tooele County School District 92 Lodestone Way Tooele, Utah 84074

- 1. Work Session 6 pm (A work session is intended to provide opportunities for board members to study issues in depth, gather and analyze information, and clarify situations and potential solutions. The Board will not make a decision or take any action during a work session. While open to the public, these sessions are more informal than the regular board meeting.)**

Board Members Present: Melissa Rich, Robert Gowans, Scott Bryan, ValaRee Shields, Emily Syphus, Todd Thompson (6:03 pm), Elizabeth Smith (6:40 pm).

Administration Present: Superintendent Ernst, Dr. Cody Reutzel

- 1.1 Welcome and Roll Call

At 6:01 pm, President Rich called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance.

- 1.2 Recognition of Lark Reynolds, Business Administrator

The Board recognized Lark Reynolds, Business Administrator, for his dedicated service to the district since July 1, 2012, and acknowledged his upcoming departure as he accepted a new position with Kane County.

- 1.3 Operations Director Report

Point of Contact: Ian Silva, Operations Director

Ian Silva, Operations Director, presented the 2026 Operations Report, highlighting major accomplishments and ongoing needs across the department's functional areas, including Child Nutrition, Transportation, Central Warehouse, Facilities and Grounds Maintenance, Energy Management, Custodial

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Services, Code Compliance, and Building Rentals. He emphasized the department's continued commitment to supporting student success through efficient and reliable operational systems.

Mr. Silva reported that Child Nutrition continues to experience financial strain, noting that federal reimbursement rates have not kept pace with a 33% increase in food costs since COVID-19. Increasing student meal participation remains a key priority for improving program sustainability.

Transportation Director Chlorissa Goddard confirmed that the department is fully staffed with a driver for every route. Recruitment and retention efforts continue to support staffing stability.

Mr. Silva expressed appreciation to the Board and Administration for approving two additional maintenance positions. He stated that the added staffing has significantly improved the department's ability to operate proactively, enabling increased preventive maintenance and a reduction in overall work orders.

Energy Management will review its current policy, with a focus on reducing unnecessary energy use. In response to a question from Member Thompson regarding more aggressive alternative-energy initiatives, Mr. Silva noted that such efforts are not currently underway and that there is room for future growth in this area.

Custodial operations continue to face rising costs, with consumable expenses increasing 50% since COVID-19. Mr. Silva acknowledged the efforts of Custodial Supervisor Phil, who continues to explore cost-saving measures and vendor options. In response to Member Syphus's inquiry regarding custodial overtime, Mr. Silva reported that a new timekeeping system is expected to improve oversight of overtime and better align staffing with building needs.

Mr. Silva reported that the Building Rentals program ended the previous year with a deficit of \$24,996.33. While the program's goal is to break even, Board members expressed

interest in moving the program toward a positive balance and reviewing potential adjustments to rental fees.

[Operations Report 2026.pdf](#) 

1.4 Communications Director Report

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Point of Contact: Brett Valdez, Communications Director

Brett Valdez, Director of Communications, presented an update on district communication efforts, reporting on metrics and progress across social media, website performance, and the newly implemented ParentSquare platform, which had reached 99.5% of families. He shared data demonstrating significant growth in digital engagement, improvements in website usability, and enhanced search optimization, along with key insights drawn from recent analytics. Mr. Valdez also provided an update on the district's Communications Plan, outlining the partnership with CESA 6 to conduct a Culture & Communication Needs Assessment to gather confidential feedback and guide strategic improvements to strengthen internal communication, transparency, and community trust.

[Communication Directors Report.pdf](#) 

1.5 Policy Director Report

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Point of Contact: Chantel Cowan, Director of Policy and Math Curriculum

Chantel Cowan, Director of Policy and Math Curriculum, presented an overview of the district's policy review and revision process. She highlighted current priorities, focusing on policies that had not been reviewed in more than five years, as well as those affected by recent legislative changes. Cowan emphasized the importance of aligning policy language with actual district practice, clarified key terminology used in policy development, and outlined the step-by-step workflow for policy updates, including departmental review, legal alignment, formatting, comparison documentation, and required submissions to designated committees. She also reviewed the established monthly timeline for Policy Committee deadlines and

discussed future prioritization categories intended to ensure that all district policies remain current, compliant, and reflective of operational needs.

[Director of Policy Report.pdf](#) 

2. Adjourn

2.1 Adjournment

At 7:41 pm, a motion was made to adjourn.

Adjourn

Moved by: Scott Bryan

Seconded by: Robert Gowans

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

Motion Carries 7-0