

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING – JUNE 16, 2026

The Board of Education of the Alpine School District held a public hearing on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:22 PM regarding the tentative FY27 budget. The public hearing took place in the boardroom at the Alpine School District office.

Board members present: Board President Julie E. King, Vice Presidents Stacy M. Bateman and Emily B. Peterson, Sarah L. Beeson, Dr. Mark J. Clement, Joylin Lincoln, and Ada S. Wilson.

Also present: Superintendent Robert W. Smith and members of the administrative staff. There were approximately 20 others in attendance.

Vice President Bateman made the motion to open the public hearing, and it was seconded by Vice President Peterson. The Board Members who voted in favor were Ada Wilson, Joylin Lincoln, Dr. Mark Clement, Stacy Bateman, Julie King, Emily Peterson, and Sarah Beeson.

Board Julie King declared the public hearing open at 6:22 PM.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Sarah Beeson made the motion to close the public hearing, and it was seconded by Dr. Mark Clement.

Dr. Mark Clement explained that state law requires separate public hearings for specific budget and tax-related matters and clarified that the hearing process is established by statute. He encouraged community members to provide input not only during public hearings but also at any time by contacting Board members directly regarding these or other issues. Dr. Clement noted that while there may appear to be limited discussion during budget hearings, the Board has spent significant time reviewing and working through budget matters throughout the year and is familiar with the details of the budget. He stated that the Board strives to balance the interests of taxpayers with the needs of District employees. He explained that the current budget year presented significant financial challenges, as much of the available funding was allocated to step and lane increases and rising insurance costs, leaving limited resources for additional compensation adjustments. He further noted that the Board has worked to prepare for the transition to the new districts without creating financial obligations that would be difficult to sustain. Because state law requires the new districts to maintain the existing salary structure at the outset, the Board sought to ensure that compensation decisions would be financially feasible for the new districts moving forward. Dr. Clement acknowledged the challenges associated with the budget process and stated that the Board explored opportunities to provide additional salary increases whenever possible. He offered these comments to provide context for the Board's budget decisions and the considerations that informed them.

Board President King added that the budget development process is extensive and involves the contributions of many individuals across the District. She noted that a large team collaborates on budget-related matters, particularly those involving capital outlay, maintenance, and operations. President King expressed appreciation to the Business Services and Operations teams, specifically recognizing Craig Carter, Crystal, Robert, and Ryan for their efforts. She highlighted the significant amount of work completed behind the scenes to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements, as well as the legal obligations associated with the public hearing process. President King stated that preparing the budget is a substantial undertaking each year and acknowledged that, while the budget packet is smaller this year, it still requires considerable time, coordination, and effort. She concluded by expressing her gratitude to the entire Business Services team for their dedication and hard work. **Superintendent Smith** echoed the appreciation expressed for the Business Services team, describing them as dedicated professionals who consistently work to maximize resources while providing thoughtful guidance and recommendations. He specifically thanked Craig Carter for his leadership and steady influence, noting that it has been a privilege to work with him. Superintendent Smith referenced several slides from the budget presentation that help explain the District's current financial circumstances. He noted that developing the budget has been particularly challenging due to declining enrollment, a trend affecting many districts across the state and nation. He

explained that the District has experienced a loss of nearly a thousand students over the past two years, resulting in a significant reduction in state funding, the District's primary source of revenue. Despite these financial challenges, the District remains committed to supporting employees and their families while continuing to meet the needs of students. Superintendent Smith also expressed appreciation to Robert, Ryan, Crystal, Krystal, and the entire Business Services team, commending their expertise, professionalism, and commitment to advising and supporting the District. He concluded by thanking them for their ongoing efforts and contributions.

Dr. Mark Clement noted that, in addition to their regular responsibilities, the Business Services team has been heavily involved in supporting the District transition and the creation of the new districts. He explained that responsibilities have been redistributed among the new districts, requiring team members to assume new positions, responsibilities, and roles throughout the process. Dr. Clement expressed appreciation to those who have stepped into unfamiliar roles and taken on additional responsibilities to support the transition. He described the work as a significant undertaking under normal circumstances and noted that many individuals are accomplishing it while adapting to new positions and expectations. He thanked the team for their dedication and professionalism, emphasizing that they have continued to perform at a high level despite the challenges associated with the District reorganization.

The Board Members who voted in favor were Ada Wilson, Joylin Lincoln, Dr. Mark Clement, Stacy Bateman, Julie King, Emily Peterson, and Sarah Beeson.

Board President King declared the public hearing closed at 6:29 PM.