Board of Education Work Session - Jul 28 2026 Minutes

Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 6:00 PM

Tooele County School District 92 Lodestone Way Tooele, Utah 84074

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1. Executive Session, 5:15 pm (Closed to Public)

Board Members Present: Melissa Rich, Robert Gowans, ValaRee Shields, Elizabeth Smith, Todd Thompson

Excused: Emily Syphus, Scott Bryan

Administration Present: Dr. Mark Ernst, Dr. Sarah Jarnagin, Dr. Cody Reutzel, Jackie Gallegos

Administration Excused: Jeremy Walker

At 5:18 pm, a motion was made to enter executive session.

1.1 Purchase, Exchange, or Release of Real Property

1.2 Pending or Reasonable Imminent Litigation

1.3 Collective Bargaining

1.4 Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of an individual

2. Work Session 6pm (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 decision or take any action during a work session. While open to the public, these sessions are more informal than the regular board meeting.)

2.1 Welcome and Roll Call

Board Members Present: Melissa Rich, Robert Gowans, Todd Thompson, Elizabeth Smith, ValaRee Shields

Excused: Emily Syphus, Scott Bryan

Administration Present: Dr. Mark Ernst, Dr. Sarah Jarnagin, Dr. Cody Reutzel, Brad Hranicky, Salon Jones-Miller, Heather Castagno, Dustin Nelson, Brett Valdez, Ian Silva

At 6:01 pm, President Rich called the meeting to order.

2.2 Business Administrator 90-day Report (Pulled)

Due to Jeremy Walker, Business Administrator, being out of town, this agenda item was pulled.

2.3 Tooele Education Foundation Report #

Keith Bird, Executive Director of the Tooele Education Foundation (TEF), presented an annual update to the Board on the Foundation's mission, accomplishments, financial support for students and educators, and goals for the coming year.

Mr. Bird explained that since its establishment in 2010, the Tooele Education Foundation has worked to promote excellence in education throughout the Tooele County School District by developing school improvement initiatives, supporting innovative programs, recognizing educational leadership, and providing student scholarships. He stated that the Foundation serves as a bridge between community donors and schools, helping meet educational needs that cannot be fully funded through district budgets.

Mr. Bird reviewed the Foundation's mission, emphasizing its three core pillars: Education, Resources, and Support. He also highlighted the Foundation's 2026 rebranding effort, noting that the new logo and visual identity reflect both the local landscape of Ophir Canyon and the Foundation's commitment to supporting student success.

The Board received an overview of the Ophir Canyon Education Center and Dalton Learning Lodge, which provides opportunities for summer classes, team and club activities, corporate retreats, field trips, youth programs, camping experiences, outdoor survival education, and partnerships with organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club.

Mr. Bird reported on TEF's fundraising and grant activities during the past year. He noted that Foundation staff researched and vetted **1**76 grant opportunities and submitted 69 comprehensive grant applications. As a result, the Foundation secured approximately $165,500 in grant funding, including support from organizations and businesses such as Living is Giving, Energy Solutions, Scholastic, Enbridge, Hughes Construction, Utah STEM Action Center, Walmart, and others.

Examples of grants in action included:

- STEM learning opportunities for elementary students at the Ophir Canyon Education Center.
- Employee Contribution Fund grants supporting classroom teachers.
- Community donations assisting the Tooele High School Drumline with new equipment and uniforms.
- Sponsorship of the District Teacher of the Year recognition banquet.

Mr. Bird also reviewed the Foundation's scholarship program. During the reporting period:

- $72,100 in scholarships was awarded.
- 86 students received scholarships.
- The average scholarship award was $838.37.
- 367 scholarship applications were received, representing a 32% increase over the previous year.

The Board was informed of the broad community support received by the Foundation. Major donors included Walmart, Stampin' Up!, Burger King, Sports Clips, YESCO, Transcript Bulletin, the Larry H. and Gail Miller Foundation, Hughes

Construction, Holiday Oil, KSL Quarters for Christmas, and numerous private donors.

Mr. Bird further highlighted the Foundation’s Students in Need initiatives, which provide weekend meal kits, hygiene kits, school supplies, and other assistance to students facing financial hardship. These efforts are supported through partnerships with organizations including the Elks, Kiwanis, Rotary, Holiday Oil, Select Health, local church groups, and private donors.

Looking ahead to 2027, Mr. Bird outlined several strategic goals for the Foundation, including:

- Securing a Tooele County Block Grant to support student-needs programs.
- Expanding funding for weekend meal kits, hygiene kits, and school supplies.
- Establishing a formal Foundation grant program offering larger grant opportunities for teachers.
- Supporting after-school programs in Title I schools through a $41,000 Ron McBride Foundation grant.
- Addressing student lunch debt.
- Expanding fundraising through bus advertising to help the district with lunch debt.
- community spirit-night partnerships for teams to fundraise.
- Constructing a new playground at Ophir through a Utah Outdoor Recreation grant opportunity.
- Adding a storage garage at Ophir through community donation from Heibar.
- Launching a "Friends of the Foundation" membership and support program.

The Board thanked Mr. Bird for the presentation and the ongoing work of the Tooele Education Foundation.

TEF Board Presentation 7.28.26.pdf

2.4 Grading , Students K-12 Policy #

Dr. Cody Reutzel, Assistant Superintendent, led the Board in a discussion regarding the proposed revisions to Policy 11012, Grading, Students K-12, as part of the second-read process. Dr. Reutzel reviewed the policy development process, noting that the revisions resulted from extensive formal and informal staff input, feedback from teachers and administrators across the District, and recommendations received following the first reading. The proposed changes were designed to improve consistency, accountability, and clarity in grading practices districtwide.

Dr. Reutzel explained the foundational principles guiding the revisions, emphasizing that grades should accurately reflect student proficiency, students should be provided multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning, accountability should remain part of the grading process, and grading expectations should be clearly communicated to students and families.

The Board reviewed several significant changes proposed in the policy. Discussion included updated provisions for makeup work and assessments following excused absences, including additional makeup time for extended absences and an increase in the assessment makeup window from three to five school days. The revised policy would also require that late work be accepted within 10 school days of the due date and establish a late-work penalty ranging from 5% to 15%, with specific expectations outlined in course disclosures.

Dr. Reutzel also reviewed proposed changes related to assessment retakes. The revisions would require teachers to provide at least one retake opportunity for assessments, with additional opportunities available at the teacher's discretion. The policy maintains limitations on retakes while reinforcing the importance of student preparation and academic growth. Teachers would be required to clearly outline retake procedures and any additional preparedness requirements in course disclosures.

The Board discussed proposed updates to grading calculations and attendance requirements. The revised policy would allow attendance to count for up to 10% of a course grade, provided attendance expectations are identified in course disclosures and excused absences are treated in accordance with policy requirements. The revisions would also update final grade-weighting requirements, including maintaining assessments at least 50% of a course grade, limiting homework to no more than 10%, and allowing attendance to be included as a grading component.

Additional discussion focused on revised elementary and secondary grading scales, the formal adoption of a pass/fail grading scale, grading turnaround expectations, and the requirement that grades be updated in the student information system weekly. Dr. Reutzel also highlighted revisions made between the first and second readings, including language clarifications, conceptual adjustments, and the addition of a requirement that students be given at least one assessment retake.

Board members asked questions and provided feedback regarding implementation and operational considerations. Dr. Reutzel explained the planned implementation timeline and noted that communication and guidance would be provided to teachers and administrators before the start of the school year to ensure consistent implementation of the revised policy. Board members discussed the proposed late work provisions for secondary students, including expectations for submission timelines, grading penalties, and implementation procedures. Concerns were raised about the need for clear guidance to ensure consistent policy application and minimize potential conflicts among students, parents, and staff. Board members emphasized the importance of providing clarity for families about late-work expectations and consequences.

The Board discussed the proposed minimum 5% grade deduction for late work. Support was expressed for maintaining a minimum penalty as a measure of student accountability and to reinforce the importance of meeting assignment deadlines. Questions were also raised about the ability to effectively monitor and audit policy implementation to ensure consistency across schools.

Overall, Board members expressed support for moving forward with implementing the policy in a timely manner rather than delaying its adoption.

Grading Policy_Board Work Session July 2026.pdf

3. Adjourn

At 7:36 pm, a motion was made to adjourn.

Adjourn the work session.

Moved by: Elizabeth Smith; seconded by: ValaRee Shields

3.1 Adjournment