

MINUTES OF THE STUDY SESSION – September 24, 2026

The Board of Education of the Aspen Peaks School District met in a Study Session on Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 4:01pm. The Study Session took place in the boardroom at the Alpine School District office in American Fork, UT.

Board members present: Board President Diane Knight, Vice President Amber Bonner, Nicki Brammer, Jeanne-Marie Burrows, Jason Hart(arrived @ 4:03pm), Steven Sparti(arrived @ 4:07pm), and Jason Theler(arrived @ 4:27pm).

Also present: Superintendent Perkins and Business Administrator Bea Twede. There were approximately 10 others in attendance.

AGENDA

1. Student Services - Wasatch Behavioral Health Partnership - David Lund and Kevan Baker
 - a. Eric Woodhouse stated he is grateful for the systems that we have in place to help our students with their social and emotional health. He is excited to work with our Student Services team, under the direction of Directors David Lund, Melissa Bostwick and Kimberly Moore, and the work that they do to help our students with their social and emotional health. He is also grateful for our partnership with Wasatch Behavioral Health and the services that they provide for our students.
 - b. David Lund is grateful for the partnership that we have with Wasatch Behavioral Health. He is grateful for the opportunity he has to help students with their behavior needs and make a positive impact in our students' and their families lives.
 - i. The number one request that Student Services gets from our schools is they need help with behavioral issues.
 - ii. He stated that the partnerships that we have with outside agencies and businesses allows us to collaborate and deal with the hard issues that we see our students facing today.
 - iii. Vision for Student Services moving forward - We want to be in a preventive space before a crisis happens.
 - iv. Aspen Peaks School District and Wasatch Behavioral Health Partnership
 1. A Critical Piece of the Continuum - Student mental-health support is increasingly a system question - not a single-provider question.
 - a. Access - Families may face long waits or barriers to community care. School-based connection can shorten the time between need and help
 - b. Capacity - Schools and districts bring relationships, prevention and behavior support. Wasatch adds licensed clinical capacity and crisis resources.
 - c. Clarity - Clear roles help staff know what can be addressed at school, what requires clinical therapy, and when to connect families to outside care.
 - d. The vision is to strengthen the interconnectedness between school supports, clinical services, families and community resources.
 2. Benefits of the Wasatch Behavioral Health Partnership - Key operational, clinical and resource benefits for school-based therapist coverage.
 - a. Financial & Coverage
 - Liability insurance - WBH covers full liability insurance for therapists.
 - Benefits & Pay - WBH pays therapist benefits and compensation.
 - Cost Efficiency - Reduces direct administrative overhead for the district.
 - b. Clinical & Wrap-Around

- Professional Development - Timely training based on research, state requirements and best practices.
 - Wrap-Around Support - Direct connection to after-hours and summer support (MCOT, Vantage Point, etc.).
 - c. Capacity Need
 - Benchmark - Research districts target 1 therapist per school for behavioral and health needs.
 - Current Reality - Our ratio is 1:2, 163 spreads licensed therapists very thin.
 - d. Partnering with WBH provides essential clinical infrastructure, liability coverage, and crisis support.
- 3. Why does the partnership matter to Aspen Peaks? - Four outcomes connect the partnership to student and system needs.
 - a. Earlier connection - Bring support closer to students before larger barriers to learning, attendance or school engagement.
 - b. Appropriate level of care - Match school-based supports with clinical services and outside resources according to student and family needs.
 - c. Continuity - Create clearer handoffs between school staff, therapists, families and community providers.
 - d. System resilience - Build workforce pathways, crisis capacity and community relationships that can support multiple schools.
- 4. A three-part student support system model with distinct roles - Each partner contributes capabilities the others do not fully replicate.
 - a. Aspen Peaks / Schools
 - Daily relationships with students
 - Early identification & prevention
 - Behavior / MTSS supports
 - Family communication
 - School-day context
 - b. Wasatch Behavioral Health
 - Licensed clinical services - restricted services
 - School-based therapy
 - Crisis response capacity
 - Clinical supervision and intern supervision (DOPL requirements)
 - Community behavioral-health network
 - Resource navigation
 - c. Families + Community
 - Parent partnership
 - Primary care and outside providers
 - Community agencies and businesses
 - Continuity beyond school
 - d. The value is not simply “more services”, but better coordination (bridge) across the student’s support system.
- 5. What Wasatch adds to the school environment - Services can be designed around the school setting while remaining connected to a broader behavioral-health system.
 - a. Licensed clinical care - Clinical therapy delivered by appropriately licensed professionals with defined scope. HB281 Restricted services.
 - b. Crisis response - A behavioral-health response for urgent situations (Tier 3) and coordinated next steps. Think Tier 4 and 5.
 - c. Supervision & workforce - Clinical supervision, internship pathways and a structure for developing future providers.

- d. Community connections - Relationships with outside agencies and community outreach that help families navigate beyond school.
Currently all resources are vetted through the Wasatch therapy team.
- 6. The SBMH Implementation Roadmap - A six-phase framework for student mental health
 - a. Building foundational supports
 - b. Early identification strategies
 - c. Assessment and triage
 - d. Service delivery and referral pathways
 - e. Crisis Response Protocol (CRP)
 - f. Follow-up procedures
- 7. The role of clinical therapy is becoming more explicit - Utah's 2025 HB 281 created specific requirements around in-school mental health therapy and parental consent.
 - a. HB281 - Practical implications
 - Defines "authorized personnel" to include certain USBE-licensed school psychologists and social workers, as well as specified DOPL-licensed professionals and supervised personnel.
 - Restricted services must remain within the scope of the relevant license.
 - b. What this means for the partnership
 - Clear boundaries matter: School counseling, generalized crisis response and restricted mental-health services are distinct functions. HB281 also establishes parent-notification requirements after restricted-service sessions, with specified exceptions.
- 8. School-based Mental Health (SBMH)
 - a. Counseling Services - Promotes wellness, emotional health and coping skills
 - Short term and solution focused counseling
 - Classroom instruction skill building
 - Crisis prevention and support
 - Examples are: school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists - all licensed by USBE
 - b. Mental Health Services and Therapy - Restrictive Services
 - Assessment and evaluation
 - Diagnosis
 - Treatment plan
 - Individual therapy
 - ONLY DOPL (Division of Occupational Licensing) licensed mental health professionals may provide mental health therapy. School psychologists and school social workers may be licensed by both USBE and DOPL and the services they provide must be within their scope of licensure.
- 9. Scale of the partnership since 2015 - Growth of the partnership increased dramatically when TSSA funds were opened up to use for "purchasing extra days" determined by schools.
 - a. 19706 encounters with families/students
 - b. We went from 2 therapists to 29 therapists
 - c. We have had 51 extra school-paid days
 - d. 29 Alpine schools are paying for their therapist with TSSA funds

10. The gap between need and community availability - School-based access can complement—not replace—community care.
 - a. 1 - 2 weeks is the current wait time to see an outside therapist in Utah County. 6-8 weeks for speciality or testing.
 - b. School-based bridge - School-based clinical services can provide a point of access while families navigate longer-term care. Clinical supportive services can also benefit the student for crises between sessions with outside therapists.
 - c. Community network - Wasatch provides a managed/vetted resource list and relationships with agencies to help families move from “we need help” to “here is the next step.”
11. Vision for the Future - a more balanced approach
 - a. Capacity
 - We need to reduce ratios
 - Expand 2nd-year internships
 - Aspen Peaks current projection is 12 full WBH and 5 interns (ratio 1880/1)
 - b. Family
 - Offer increased parent empowerment/psychoeducation.
 - Increase parent/family participation/communication in goal-setting, therapeutic sessions
 - Explore a family center model where therapists are available one night a week to work in the evenings with families.
 - c. Integration
 - We need to do a better job of assessments, treatments and therapy plans.
 - Clarify needs for more time in session and get buy-in from school personnel
 - Clarify how Tier 4-5 resources connect to school supports.
 - d. Identification
 - Use a consent screener and progress-monitoring approach (OQ screener/analyst/chromebook/computer access that integrates with “Q” in each SBT office.
 - Create a shared referral and follow-up process that SEW and SST teams follow with more exactness to be able to show EPE.
12. Questions / Suggestions
 - a. Why don't we have chromebooks in the schools so that certain programs can be used to help our students with behavioral issues?
 - We need to purchase additional chromebooks for that specific purpose, purchase license and software for the programs.
 - b. Community Partnership
 - Family Centers, Lehi Cares, AF Cares, etc. - Lehi Cares has mental health partners attend their meetings. We have to be careful due to HB281 and the restrictions about what we can and can't talk about with the students.
 - c. Does the county have a liaison that comes to all the meetings with Lehi Cares, AF Cares, etc...? David Lund stated that he thought that was phased out but Jeanne-Marie said a representative from the county does attend their Lehi Cares meeting.
 - d. Amber Bonner suggested Resilience Night at our schools. We MUST involve our parents as partners with us.
 - e. Strengthening families nights were done in the past but Wasatch stopped doing them due to cost.

- f. What is going on with SafeUT? - We are currently piloting a program with Primary Children's Hospital. When a student enters the ER they send a message relaying that a student has been in crisis and inform the principal, counselor and therapist of the incident.

2. Board Governance Handbook

a. Continuation of Section 6 - Communication Norms

i. With the Public

1. Constituents will reach out by email, in line at the grocery store, at school events. Listen.
2. Acknowledge the concern.
3. Do not commit.
4. Forward substantive concerns to the Superintendent's office.

ii. Where a parent concern should go - most concerns that reach a Board member should have been resolved at a level below the Board, and usually can be. The District's escalation ladder:

1. The teacher or staff member closest to the issue.
2. The principal
3. The relevant District administrator
4. The Superintendent
5. The Board
6. What this means for you. When a parent brings you a concern, your job is to route it, not to resolve it. Ask where they are in the ladder, tell them who owns the next step, and forward the concern to the Superintendent's office so it is tracked rather than depending on the parent to repeat themselves. Do not skip levels on a parent's behalf, and do not carry a concern directly to a principal or teacher: it looks like Board pressure even when it is meant as help. Two things always go straight to the Superintendent regardless of level: anything involving student or staff safety and anything alleging illegality.
 - a. Dr. Perkins wants to add a page on the website that has information on who to call and address certain issues with at the school or district. This will allow for a district member to follow up with the person who is raising the concern.
7. Commitments a Board member should never make - worth keeping in mind any time a constituent, vendor or staff member is making a request:
 - a. Never promise how you will vote on an upcoming issue.
 - b. Never promise employment to anyone.
 - c. Never promise that an employee will be dismissed or disciplined.
 - d. Never promised a specific outcome for a particular student or family.
 - e. Never promise a vendor a contract.
 - f. Never promise to share confidential information.
8. With Media - The Board President is the designated spokesperson on Board matters under Policy 1030. If a reporter contacts you:
 - a. On a personal-view question, you may speak as an individual Board member. Make clear you are speaking for yourself.
 - b. On a Board decision or policy, refer the reporter to the Board President.
 - c. On any sensitive matter (litigation, personnel, student safety), refer to the Superintendent or the Board President first.
9. Social Media - the policy on social media (Policy 1030) is the rule. The handbook adds practical norms:
 - a. It is fine to share district news and celebrate student and staff accomplishments on personal social media.
 - b. Do not comment on staff performance, personnel matters or pending litigation.

- c. Avoid extended public arguments. If a constituent disagrees with you online, you may respond once with a substantive answer; do not need to engage further.
- d. Do not attack other Board members publicly. Disagreement among Board members is appropriate inside meetings; it is not appropriate on social media.
- e. Assume that everything you post, or message privately, will be screen-captured. The Board's effectiveness depends in part on the Board's external dignity.
- f. Do not share information obtained in private or closed settings, including committee meetings and meetings with the Superintendent.
- g. Consider how your online activity reflects on the Board and the District as a whole.
- h. A Board member is no longer solely a private citizen. When you speak or write, the message will likely be read as representing the Board and the District. Be discreet and prudent in public expression.
- i. Board members, staff and administrators generally consider personal conversations with each other to be private. Posting one would breach trust and damage the Board's working relationships.
- j. Comment threads are a rolling-quorum risk. If several Board members are replying to the same post about a Board matter, the conversation has become deliberation in public without a meeting. Stop and take it to the Board.

- We need some clarification from Doug Larson on rolling quorums. Some board members feel that it is okay to speak with other board members on issues that the board is addressing. We just want to be in compliance with OPMA.

b. Section 7 - Working with the Superintendent

- i. The Superintendent-Board President Channel - the Board President is the Superintendent's primary point of contact between meetings. Most Board-Superintendent communication flows through this channel.
 - 1. Weekly check-in calls or meetings between the Board President and Superintendent during the school year.
 - 2. The Superintendent has direct access to the Board President for urgent matters.
 - 3. Items needing full-Board attention are surfaced through the Board President to the agenda.
- ii. When you have a concern about the Superintendent - the escalation pattern, consistent with Policy 1500 and the contract language it preserves.
 - 1. Raise the concern with the Board President in confidence.
 - 2. The Board President decides whether the concern warrants Board-level discussion.
 - 3. If yes, the Board discusses it in lawfully convened closed session on the ground stated in Utah Code §52-4-205(1)(a), following the procedure in §52-4-204.
 - 4. Action, if any, is taken by the Board as a body in open session.
 - 5. Do not raise concerns about the Superintendent informally with other staff, in social settings, or in public statements. This protects both the Superintendent and the Board's effectiveness.
- iii. When the Superintendent has a concern about you - The Superintendent will sometimes have concerns about a Board member's conduct, usually about communications with staff, public statements or interactions with the community. The norm is for the Superintendent to raise such concerns first with the Board President who then decides whether and how to address them with you.

1. If the Superintendent raises a concern with you directly, treat it seriously, listen and respond honestly. The conversation is rarely about a single event; it is usually about a pattern you can adjust. Consider how your actions reflect on the Board and District, and make adjustments as needed.
- iv. Mid-Cycle conversations of the evaluation
- v. Supporting the Superintendent - the Board's job is not only to hold the Superintendent accountable. It is also to support the Superintendent in doing the work the Board has set:
 1. Be visible at District events. Your presence signals that the Board cares about the work of the schools.
 2. Speak well of the District publicly. Disagreements about specific decisions belong inside Board meetings; outside, the Board's posture is supportive of the District as a whole.
 3. Recognize good work. The Superintendent and staff carry significant weight, and positive feedback from the Board is a meaningful resource.
 4. Defend the Superintendent's authority within the Board's delegation to manage operations. When a Board member begins to direct staff or override an operational decision, the appropriate response from the rest of the Board is to redirect.
- c. Section 8 - The Annual Calendar - a typical Board year follows roughly this rhythm. Specific dates depend on the District's adopted calendar and the school year.
 - i. January through May
 1. Develop the Superintendent and Business Administrator focus areas and performance measurements collaboratively, for Board approval, per the Superintendent Employment Agreement and Policy 1500.
 2. Annual Board self-evaluation under Policy 1210, including a look back at how the Board's meeting time was split between outcomes-focused discussion and operations, per Policy 1300.
 3. Begin the budget review cycle.
 4. USBA annual conference attendance.
 - ii. Summer
 1. Adopt the annual budget.
 2. Strategic planning work as scheduled.
 3. Governance Retreat, if scheduled in summer.
 4. Prepare for the start of the school year.
 5. Plan Board training for the coming year.
 - iii. August through December
 1. Open the school year; receive the Superintendent's report on opening.
 2. Mid-cycle check-in between Board leadership and the Superintendent and Business Administrator on focus areas (informal, no Board action).
 3. Begin community survey work, if scheduled.
 4. Complete the annual Superintendent and Business Administrator evaluation per the Superintendent Employment Agreement. If the Board adopts a written evaluation framework, that framework may specify whether the written evaluation is completed in December or in January after the calendar-year cycle closes.
 - iv. Throughout the Year
 1. Monthly regular Board Meetings, Study Sessions and Work Sessions.
 2. Committee meetings, typically monthly or bimonthly.
 3. Continuing education and training, against the 12 to 20 hours per member target, including the short training segment in each study session.
 4. Community engagement, school visits and public-facing events.
- d. Section 9 - Engaging the Community - the Board represents the public's interest in the District's education work. Community engagement is part of the role, not separate from it.

- i. School visits - visit schools regularly, not as inspectors, but as guests.
 - 1. What type of visit is it?
 - a. Show up and support - no appointment needed.
 - b. A substantive visit - schedule it through the Superintendent's office
 - 2. In any visit:
 - a. Attend school events when your schedule allows.
 - b. Share observations with the Superintendent afterward. Useful, accurate, never directive.
 - c. Attend PTA and School Community Council meetings when your schedule permits.
 - d. Remember what you are: a guest with no authority to direct anything you see. If you observe something that concerns you, it goes to the Superintendent, not to the staff member in front of you.
- ii. Public events and town halls - the Board may host public events or town halls on specific topics: the budget, a major policy proposal, the strategic plan. When the Board is hosting:
 - 1. The Board President typically chairs.
 - 2. All board members are expected to attend if the event is publicized as a Board event.
 - 3. OPMA applies if a quorum is present and district business is discussed.
- iii. Community Advisory Committees - the Board may establish standing or ad-hoc community advisory committees under Policy 1220 and Policy 1310. Each is created by Board action with a written charge specifying its purpose, membership, authority, reporting cadence and expected duration. Advisory committees work when the charge is clear and the reporting cadence is real.
- iv. Community survey - the Board may direct the Superintendent to conduct a community survey on satisfaction, priorities and perceived areas needing improvement. Results are reported to the Board, with specific response actions incorporated into district priorities.
- v. Student voice - the Board may establish a mechanism for ongoing student voice under Policy 1310 when the district is ready. The form is the Board's to choose by Board action.
- e. Board Policies that are referenced in the Board Governance Handbook draft
 - i. Pg. 25: Policy 1030 - Board Member Communication: Social Media
 - ii. Pg. 27: Policy 1500 - Superintendent: evaluation
 - iii. Pg. 28: Policy 1500 - Superintendent: evaluation
 - iv. Pg. 29: Policy 1500 - Superintendent: evaluation
 - v. Pg. 29: Policy 1210 - Board Self-evaluation
 - vi. Pg. 29: Policy 1300 - Board Meetings
 - vii. Pg. 32: Policy 1220 - Board Committees
 - viii. Pg. 32: Policy 1310 - Community Engagement Mechanisms: advisory committees/student voice

The meeting adjourned at 5:31pm.