

MINUTES
Pendleton School District 16R Board of Directors
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

September 21, 2026
6:00 p.m. | District Office | 107 NW 10th Street, Pendleton, OR 97801

Present: Anne Keeler, Board Chair
Beth Harrison
Ryan Lehnert
Jill Pace
Ryan DeGrofft
Michelle Jones, Director of Business Services
Ronda Thornburg, Executive Secretary
Michelle Jensen, PhD, Superintendent
Matt Yoshioka, Assistant Superintendent

Absent: Mason Murphy (with prior notice)
Patrick Gregg (with prior notice)

The meeting was in person and offered virtually.

1. Opening and Call to Order *Board Chair*

Chair Keeler welcomed everyone and called the regular board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1.1. Pledge of Allegiance

The group stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.2. Meeting Audio and Video Recorded

Chair Keeler stated that this meeting is being audio and video recorded.

2. Approve Board Agenda *Board Chair*

Director Lehnert moved to approve the September 21, 2026, Regular Board Meeting agenda. Director Pace seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approve Consent Agenda *Board Chair*

3.1. Board Meeting Minutes

August 11, 2026 Work Session

August 17, 2026 Regular Board Meeting

3.2. August 31, 2026 Financial Report

Expenditures:

All expenditures for the month of August are usual and customary and in line with month/yearly budget projections.

Revenue:

Revenue for the month of August is in line with current budget projections.

3.3. Human Resources Report

EXTRA DUTY	Enrichment	Blakely Rudolph	After School Enrichment Coordinator	SMS
RETIREMENT	Certified	Brian Johnson	Teacher	PHS
		<i>(Effective 10/1/2026. Contract back to 6/11/2027)</i>		
		Kim Richards	Teacher	Homestead
		<i>(Effective 10/1/2026. Contract back to 6/11/2027)</i>		
		Jess Cooper	Teacher	PHS
		<i>(Effective 10/1/2026. Contract back to 6/11/2027)</i>		
		Nicole Erwin	Teacher	SMS
		<i>(Effective 10/1/2026. Contract back to 6/11/2027)</i>		
RESIGNATION	Classified	Nicole Kellas	Paraprofessional	SHES
		<i>(Effective 9/22/2026)</i>		

Director Harrison motioned to approve the September 21, 2026, consent agenda as presented. Director Pace seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Recognition and Good News Superintendent**

A tradition that hasn't returned since the pandemic started back up today. PHS Student Leadership at Rotary. They will provide updates about high school activities and bring a student voice to Rotary meetings.

5. **Board Communications Board Chair**

5.1. **Pendleton Association of Teachers PAT Representative**

Andrew Sneed, Biology Teacher at PHS and President-Elect of the Oregon Science Teachers Association (OSTA), shared that the OSTA annual conference on science education is October 9-10, 2026, hosted at Pendleton High School. It has been more than 25 years since it was held in Eastern Oregon. This ensures that teachers in this region have the same opportunities to access the professional development, resources, and connections that this conference provides. This year's theme, 'Interconnections – Integrating Land, Community, and Cultural Knowledge in Place-Based Science', is a great fit for Eastern Oregon and reflects the many ways our land, communities, and cultural knowledge can shape meaningful science learning. Four distinct workshops offered Friday afternoon are The Art of Noticing: Place-Based Learning Through Schoolyard Investigations, Let's Get Your Students Outside, Energy, Electricity, and Engineering in Action – Connecting STEM to Your Students' World, and Using the School Garden to Connect Science, School Nutrition, and Community. The keynote speaker is Paul Andersen from Bozeman, MT.

OSTA Awards are also a part of the conference. Mr. Sneed highlighted Pendleton School District employees receiving an award. Classroom teacher – Marty Campbell, FFA, and Jess Cooper, 42 years of teaching science. The highest award is the Distinguished Service Award. This award is named in honor of Fred Fox, a distinguished and well-loved teacher educator from Oregon State University (1957-82). The award honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to mentoring and developing new teachers. This award honors and recognizes your significant contributions to science education by supporting and motivating the next generation of science teachers. Pat Dutcher, former Principal of Pendleton High School, has been a steadfast champion of science education and student opportunity. He consistently finds ways to support the science department, whether by securing funding for the annual Science Coast field trip or helping develop the dual-credit Anatomy and Physiology program for future healthcare professionals. Pat recognizes the importance of providing advanced learning experiences that are not available at many schools and works to turn those opportunities into reality. Through his vision and support, students can earn up to 27 college biology credits, including the full biology sequence for majors and the college-level Anatomy and Physiology sequence, preparing them for future success. These awards will be handed out at the banquet in the Roy Raley Room.

On behalf of the Pendleton High School PAT union members, Mr. Sneed made a formal request to be added to an executive board session agenda item to discuss union stakeholders' concerns with district administration and policies.

5.2. **Oregon School Employees Association** *OSEA representative*

Liesl Follett, OSEA President, shared that they are actively recruiting building representatives for Sherwood, McKay, and PHS, due to retirements at the end of last year. They are also updating their communication structure.

5.3. **PL874/Indian Education** *Kendall Rosario*

No report.

6. **Public Comment** *Board Chair*

No comments.

7. **Superintendent's Report** *Michelle Jensen*

In the same vein of returning to traditions, the PHS band returned to the Westward Ho Parade on Friday of Round-Up. In addition to the band, students were visible and engaged in the community, including FFA, volleyball, culinary arts, and community youth programs, with volunteerism as the theme. Elementary and Middle School Open Houses were well attended, joyful, and community centered. Attendance teams are in place at each school this year, analyzing data and systems to support students and their families. The district website modernization effort is focused on usability, transparency, and accessible communication to strengthen trust and community engagement.

Chair Keeler attended three Open Houses, and what stood out was that families were sticking around this year. They were conversing with other families, meals were provided, and there was a real community focus, including haircuts at the PELC for students. Sending a big thank you to the staff for all the extra time and work.

8. **Reports & Discussion**

8.1. **2025-26 Integrated Plan Annual Report** *Matt Yoshioka*

Annually, ODE requires districts to present this report to the Board for information, providing an update on improving academics and other areas of education. The purpose of the update is to look both forward and backward, reflecting on the district's progress in Year 1 of the biennial update to the Integrated Plan. It is a compilation of the goals and activities designed to meet the aspirations of Oregon's Student Success Act (SSA) and related initiatives. Mr. Yoshioka was available for questions.

8.2. **Nixyaawii Community School (NCS) Staff** *Michelle Jensen*

Per the charter agreement, required to present the Nixyaawii Community School staff each year.

Nixyaawii Community School Staff Qualifications

As of 9/1/2026

Name	Title	Qualifications	Assignments
Heinrich, Ryan	Principal	BS in Science; Master's in Education; Professional Administrator Licensure	Principal
Kelm, Katelyn	Teacher	BS in History; MA in Teaching; Oregon Preliminary Teaching Licensure	Subjects taught: World History, US History, Government, Economics, Leadership

Kennedy, Jewel	Teacher	MTE (Master Teacher Educator), Bachelor of Science, major in biology, minor in Chemistry, endorsed in integrated science and biology Professional Teaching Licensure	Subjects taught: Physical Science, Biology, Integrated Science, Forensic Science, Anatomy
Noisey, Aaron	Teacher	BS Elementary Education Charter School Registry	PE, Health, T and C, freshmen Connection
Thomas, Christina	Teacher	BS, Education Preliminary Teaching Licensure	Success, Careers, Intro to Education, CTE classes
White, Cammila	Teacher	BS, Pre-professional Education-Language Arts II; MS-Education Information Technology; MA in Teaching-Secondary Language Arts Preliminary Teaching Licensure	ELA, Foods
Wildbill, Weyekin	BSS		Behavior Support Specialist
Zubiria, Alison	Teacher	BS and MA in Education/K-8 with Math Professional Teaching Licensure	Alg. 1 Financial Alg. Integrated Math, New Media

8.3. Suicide Prevention Month *Rebecca Marshall*

September is Suicide Awareness Month. In alignment with Senate Bill 52 (SB 52, 2019) and OAR 581-022-2510, the Pendleton School District has a Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Crisis Response Plan (2023). The plan is posted on the district website. Rebecca Marshall shared the procedures, processes, and practices the district takes to prevent suicide, how we respond when a student is in crisis, and what we do when there has been a death by suicide.

9. Board Business – Action Items

9.1. Superintendent *Michelle Jensen*

9.1.1. Policies – Second Reading & Approval

- 9.1.1.1. BBAA – Board Members' Authority and Responsibilities
- 9.1.1.2. BD – Board Meetings, Notices and Communications
- 9.1.1.3. BDC – Executive Sessions
- 9.1.1.4. BDD – Board Meeting Procedures
- 9.1.1.5. BDDG – Recordings and Minutes of Board Meetings
- 9.1.1.6. CBA – Qualifications and Duties of the Superintendent
- 9.1.1.7. CBG - Evaluation of the Superintendent
- 9.1.1.8. GBA – Equal Employment Opportunity
- 9.1.1.9. GBA-AR – Veteran and State Servicemember Preference
- 9.1.1.10. GBN/JBA – Sexual Harassment
- 9.1.1.11. GCBDA/GBDA-AR(1) – Family and Medical Leave
- 9.1.1.12. JBA/GBN – Sexual Harassment
- 9.1.1.13. KL – Public Complaints
- 9.1.1.14. KL-AR(1) – Public Complaint Procedure
- 9.1.1.15. KNA – Immigration Enforcement on District Property
- 9.1.1.16. KNA-AR(1) – Interactions with Immigration Enforcement
- 9.1.1.17. KNA-AR(2) – Federal Immigration Enforcement Request Log

Director Harrison moved to approve the above-listed policies and ARs as presented. Director Pace seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

9.1.2. Policies – Deletion

BBAA – Individual Board Member’s Authority and Responsibilities.

Replaced with new policy BBAA: Board Member’s Authority and Responsibilities

BD/BDA – Board Meetings

Replaced with new policy BD: Board Meetings, Notices and Communications

BDC – Executive Sessions

Replaced with new policy BDC: Executive Sessions

BDD – Board Meeting Procedures

Replaced with new policy BDD: Board Meeting Procedures

BDDG – Minutes of Board Meetings

Replaced with new policy BDDG: Recordings and Minutes of Board Meetings

Director Pace moved to approve the deletions of the above-listed policies as presented. Director Harrison seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

9.2. Business Services *Michelle Jones*

9.2.1. Approve Long-Range Facility Planning Consultant

On August 10, 2026, the District issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Long-Range Facility Planning Services to include district-wide facilities assessments. The district received three responses to the request for proposals. Consertus + HMK Company was the successful proposer recommended by the RFP evaluation committee. The evaluation of the proposals was conducted and scored in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in the solicitation document. The contract period for these services is October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027, pending board approval.

Director Pace moved that Consertus + HMK Company be approved to provide Long-Range Facility Planning Services for the Pendleton School District. Director Lehnert seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

9.2.2. Approve Resolution 2027-02 Pension Obligation Bond

The District is requesting authorization of a resolution to proceed with the sale of PERS Pension Obligation Bonds as the District’s existing PERS bonds approach expiration. Authorizing the resolution at this time provides the District with the flexibility to move forward when market conditions are most favorable.

Because interest rates and market conditions can change quickly, having the resolution authorized in advance allows the District, in consultation with its financial advisors and bond counsel, to monitor the market and execute the sale when/if conditions provide the greatest potential benefit to the District. This approach allows us to be prepared to act without unnecessarily committing the District to a sale if market conditions are not advantageous.

Director Harrison moved that Resolution 2027-02 be approved as presented. Director Pace seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Board Member Comments *Board Chair*

Director Harrison had a good visit at the McKay assembly with the Round-Up Court and Bucky. A few classrooms have been moved to better meet students’ needs.

Chair Keeler extends a thank you to Round-Up and Happy Canyon for providing volunteer opportunities for student and youth organizations. They learn soft skills, including how to interface with adults.

Director Lehnert appreciates the opportunities given for programs to raise funds to offset costs during Round-Up.

11. Adjournment *Board Chair*

With no further business brought forward for the good of the order, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Anne Keeler, Board Chair

Michelle Jensen, PhD, Superintendent

Ronda Thornburg, Executive Secretary

Date