

School Board Organizational Meeting
Monday, January 8, 2024 5:30 PM

Austin High School Annex Recital Hall
205 4th Street NW, Annex Door #1
Austin, MN 55912

Agenda

1. Call to order/roll call
Speaker(s): 2023 Chairperson Green
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Request approval of agenda (Action)
Speaker(s): Chairperson
4. Election of officers
Speaker(s): Chairperson
5. Office of Chairperson
6. Office of Vice-chairperson
7. Office of Treasurer
8. Office of Clerk
9. Request approval of Columbus Day resolution (Action)
Speaker(s): Chairperson
10. Request approval of 2024 School Board meeting schedule (Action)
Speaker(s): Chairperson
11. Request approval of official newspaper (Action)
Speaker(s): Chairperson
12. Request approval of legal counsel (Action)
Speaker(s): Chairperson
13. Request approval of designated depositories (Action)
Speaker(s): Exec Dir of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg
14. Request authorization to lease, purchase and contract for services (Action)
Speaker(s): Exec Dir of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg
15. Request authorization of co-signers of checks and use of check signing machine (Action)
Speaker(s): Exec Dir of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg
16. Request approval of cost savings resolution (Action)
Speaker(s): Exec Dir of Finance and Operations Todd Lechtenberg
17. Request approval of school board member annual allowance for 2024 (Action)
Speaker(s): Chairperson
18. 2024 School Board committee assignments
Speaker(s): Chairperson
19. Adjournment



DATE: January 8, 2024

TITLE: Election of Officers

TYPE: Action

PRESENTER: Chairperson

BACKGROUND:

Nominations and appointments for the positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Clerk and Treasurer need to be made each year.

RATIONALE:

Elections are required to determine board leadership for the upcoming year.

RECOMMENDATION:

Elections for the positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Clerk and Treasurer be conducted in the following manner:

The acting Chairperson will start with the election of Chairperson. Once that person is elected, the newly-elected Chairperson will reside over the remainder of the meeting.

The Chairperson will call for nominations three times before closing the nominations for each office. If only one person is nominated, the Chair may declare that candidate elected. If more than one person is nominated, a vote will be necessary.



DATE: January 8, 2024
TITLE: Christopher Columbus Day
TYPE: Action
PRESENTER: Chairperson

BACKGROUND:

Per Minnesota Statute 645.44, Subd. 5, a resolution must be approved by the School Board to conduct business on the second Monday of October, recognized as Christopher Columbus Day.

RATIONALE:

While recognized as a federal holiday, the State of Minnesota provides authority to school districts and other entities in determining whether to recognize the second Monday of October, Christopher Columbus Day, as a holiday. By approving the recommendation of not recognizing Christopher Columbus Day as a holiday, public business be conducted thereon.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend authorizing Austin Public Schools to conduct school business on the second Monday of October, 2024, as outlined in Minnesota Statute 645.44, Subd. 5.



DATE: January 8, 2024
TITLE: 2024 School Board Meeting Schedule
TYPE: Action
PRESENTER: Chairperson

BACKGROUND:

The School Board meeting schedule is set for the upcoming year at the annual organizational meeting. Historically, regular meetings have been held the second Monday of each month at 5:30 pm and study sessions held the fourth Monday of each month at 4 pm.

RATIONALE:

A meeting schedule outlined for the entire year allows board members to plan their calendar to avoid meeting conflicts. In addition, it provides consistency for members of the public or staff wishing to attend or watch our meetings online. The schedule is published on the district website once approved. Changes to the schedule can be made on an as-needed basis.

RECOMMENDATION:

Please note our regular study session schedule would put our May meeting on Memorial Day. The Board can determine if an alternate meeting date should be set. In addition, Veteran's Day falls on our regular meeting date, so meeting would have to be moved from that date. I recommend the approval of the attached proposed 2024 School Board meeting schedule.

2024 School Board Meeting Schedule

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Monday, January 8, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, January 22, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, February 12, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, February 26, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, March 11, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, March 25, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, April 8, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, April 22, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, May 13, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, May | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, June 10, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, June 24, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, July 8, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, July 22, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, August 12, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, August 26, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, September 9, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, September 23, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, October 14, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, October 28, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Tuesday, November 12, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |
| Monday, November 25, 2024 | 4:00 pm Study Session | AHS District Office Conf Room |
| Monday, December 9, 2024 | 5:30 pm Regular Meeting | AHS Annex Recital Hall |



DATE: January 8, 2024
TITLE: Official Newspaper Designation
TYPE: Action
PRESENTER: Chairperson

BACKGROUND:

School districts are required to select an official newspaper for the purpose of publication of official notices and meeting minutes.

RATIONALE:

School districts are legally and morally responsible for keeping the public informed of business being conducted.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Austin Daily Herald meets the requirements for an official newspaper designation and has served as Austin Public School’s official newspaper designation for many years. It is recommended the board approve the Austin Daily Herald as the school district’s official newspaper for 2024 at a rate of \$5.64 per column inch for display ads and a rate of .32 per word for public notice line ads. The rate remains the same as 2023.



DATE: January 8, 2024

TITLE: Legal Counsel

TYPE: Action

PRESENTER: Chairperson

BACKGROUND:

In order to ensure the District is doing everything within its power to handle difficult matters in a fair and lawful manner, legal counsel is sought on an as-needed basis.

RATIONALE:

The law firm of Ratwik, Roszak & Maloney has provided trusted legal advice to the District for numerous years, allowing us to build a strong business relationship with their firm.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend the law firm of Ratwik, Roszak & Maloney continue to serve as the District's legal counsel for 2024. Counsel is used only by District level administration and only after receiving superintendent approval.

DATE: January 8, 2024

TITLE: Depositories

TYPE: Action

PRESENTER: Todd Lechtenberg, Executive Director of Finance & Operations

Background:

A government entity that receives and disburses funds may deposit the funds only in financial institutions designated by its governing body. The governing body may authorize its treasurer or chief financial officer to make such designations. The government entity may deposit funds in amounts that are federally insured or, if it deposits more than this amount, it must either have the depository furnish a bond or assign collateral to protect the excess deposit.

Rationale:

Each calendar year the School Board establishes official depositories in accordance with Minnesota Statute 118A.02 subd. 1.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the school board designate the following banks as depositories for the School District's checking accounts:

Bremer Bank
Home Federal Savings Bank
US Bank

And the following banks and financial institutions as depositories for the investment of School District funds:

Bremer Bank- Austin
US Bank – Austin

Wells Fargo Bank – Austin
Sterling State Bank – Austin
Home Federal Savings Bank – Austin
Security State Bank – Austin
First Farmer’s State Bank – Austin
MBT – Austin
Wells Fargo Bank – Minneapolis
MN School District Liquid Asset Fund Plus – PFM Asset Management – Harrisburg, PA
Putnam Investor Services – Providence, RI
PMA Financial Network – Naperville, FL
MN Trust – Albertville, MN

And that the Superintendent, Executive Director of Finance and Operations,
Controller, and Financial Specialist to be authorized to deposit and withdraw money on
behalf of the District to the checking and investment accounts.

DATE: January 8, 2024

TITLE: Authorization of Contract Signers

TYPE: Action

PRESENTER: Todd Lechtenberg, Executive Director of Finance & Operations

Background:

The School Board may resolve to delegate the authority to lease, purchase, and contract for goods to management as allowed under Minnesota Statute. The School Board of Austin Public Schools has historically delegated this authority to the Superintendent, Executive Director of Finance and Operations, and the Controller each January.

Rationale:

The School Board authorization allows management to conduct the daily business affairs of the District between the business meetings in an effective and efficient manner.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the School Board of Independent School District #492 authorize Joey Page, Superintendent; Todd Lechtenberg, Executive Director of Finance and Operations; and Amy Hauser, Controller, to lease, purchase and contract for goods and services within the budget as approved by the School Board, provided any transaction in an amount exceeding the amount for which bids are required, must first be authorized by the School Board and fulfill other applicable requirements pursuant to Minnesota Statutes governing municipal contracting.



DATE: January 8, 2024

TITLE: Authorizing Cosigners of Checks

TYPE: Action

PRESENTER: Todd Lechtenberg, Executive Director of Finance and Operations

BACKGROUND:

The district is required to designate co-signers of checks and the use of their signatures on its check signing machine.

RATIONALE:

With the change in school board officers, comes the need to update the signatures for the District issued checks and its check signing machine. The co-signers are the newly elected chair, clerk and treasurer of the board.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend the newly elected chair, clerk and treasurer of the board be designated co-signers of checks and their signatures be used for the check signing machine.



AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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DATE: January 8, 2024
TITLE: Cost Savings and Efficient Operations Resolution
TYPE: Action
PRESENTER: Todd Lechtenberg, Executive Director of Finance and Operations

BACKGROUND:

School Districts are required to comply with Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.83 – Expenditure Limitations, which requires that a district must limit its expenditures so that the calculated net unreserved general fund balance or “operating debt” as of June 30 does not constitute Statutory Operating Debt (SOD). According to Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.81, subdivision 2, SOD exists if the school’s operating debt is more than 2 ½ percent of the most recent fiscal year’s (FY) expenditure amount.

RATIONALE:

The School Board holds fiduciary duty over the financial stability of the District. Administration is charged with implementing the budget as approved by the School Board. In efforts to foster this work between the School Board and Administration, the following resolution presents expectations for efficient and effective operations in alignment with the strategic priorities of the District.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend the School Board approve the “Resolution Directing the Administration to Make Recommendations for Cost Savings and Efficient Operations.”

Member Dube introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE ADMINISTRATION TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR COST SAVINGS AND EFFICIENT OPERATIONS**

WHEREAS, the School Board of Independent School District No. 492, Austin, anticipates that it will need to reduce programs and positions and/or reorganize departments due to financial limitations and operational needs;

WHEREAS, the School Board would like the administration to explore methods to run a more efficient and effective operation;

WHEREAS, among other things, the School Board would like the administration to explore the cost savings that could be realized by restricting departments, eliminating positions, and/or reassigning duties;

BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 492, as follows:

The administration is directed to make recommendations that will result in a more efficient and effective operations and to present such recommendations at a future School Board meeting.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Member McAlister and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

Green, Dube, Kroc, Leathers, McAlister, Sorenson, Young

And the following voted against: --

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.



DATE: January 8, 2024
TITLE: Board Annual Allowance
TYPE: Action
PRESENTER: Chairperson

BACKGROUND:

The Board established an annual allowance of \$4,000 per board member. The Board added \$1,200 to the annual allowance for the position of Chair. The annual allowance is dispersed over 26 pay periods.

Current Big 9 School Board Annual Allowances

| | <u>Board Member</u> | <u>Chairperson</u> |
|------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Albert Lea | 3,600 | 4,200 |
| Austin | 4,000 | 5,200 |
| Faribault | 3,300 | 3,600 |
| Mankato | 3,400 | 4,000 |
| Northfield | 3,300 | 3,900 |
| Owatonna | 3,500 | 4,100 |
| Red Wing | 3,200 | 3,900 |
| Rochester | 16,000 | 17,600 |
| Winona | 1,500 | 1,800 |

RATIONALE:

The Board is required to set their annual allowance for the year.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend the Board establish an annual allowance of _____ per board member with an additional _____ allowance for the position of Chair for the year 2024.

2023 Austin School Board Committee Appointments

School Board Committees

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Curriculum/World's Best Workforce | Katie Baskin | Cece Kroc Don Leathers Kathy Green |
| Facilities | Todd Lechtenberg | Carol McAlister Don Leathers Peggy Young |
| Finance | Todd Lechtenberg | Kathy Green Cece Kroc Evan Sorenson |
| Personnel | Katie Baskin | Cece Kroc Kathy Green Carolyn Dube |
| Wellness | Jen Lawhead | Kathy Green Carol McAlister |

Representatives

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Austin Albert Lea Area Special Education Cooperative | Don Leathers |
| Austin Aspires | Cece Kroc |
| Austin Leaders Council | Peggy Young |
| Austin Park and Recreation Board | Cece Kroc |
| Austin Public Education Foundation | Carolyn Dube |
| County Collaborative | Carolyn Dube |
| Minnesota State High School League | Evan Sorenson |
| Schools for Educational Equity (SEE) | Cece Kroc Don Leathers |

Advisory Council

| | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| Activities Council | Katie Carter | Carol McAlister Don Leathers Evan Sorenson |
| Calendar Council | Katie Baskin | Carolyn Dube Peggy Young |
| Community Education Council | Jen Lawhead | Carol McAlister Carolyn Dube |
| Early Childhood Family Education Council | Jen Lawhead | Evan Sorenson Carolyn Dube |
| Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) | Sheri Willrodt | Cece Kroc Don Leathers |
| Technology | Amy Thuesen | |

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

Activities Council – Committee of board members, coaches, parents and students who discuss policy and procedure as well as ways to improve the co-curricular experiences for our students. Meeting schedule to be determined.

Austin Albert Lea Area Special Education Cooperative – Meets as needed in Austin or in Albert Lea (often via Teams) to review bills, budget and other business.

Austin Leaders Council – Meet with area business leaders the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 am in the lower level of the Chamber office to discuss community issues.

Austin Park and Recreation Board - Serve as liaison with Park and Recreation Board. Meetings held the first Wednesday of each month at 5:15 p.m. Appointment approved by City Council.

Austin Public Education Foundation – Meets the first Tuesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at AHS.

Calendar Council – Meets annually to establish calendar for upcoming school year.

Community Education Advisory Council – This council of APS staff and community members meets every other month at Woodson Kindergarten Center. The purpose of this advisory council is to promote Community Education in the community, seek opportunities for partnership, and gather feedback on current programming. Remaining meetings for 2023-24 school year include 4:00 pm on February 8, 2024 and May 9, 2024.

County Collaborative – Quarterly meetings with area superintendents typically held in the afternoon. The purpose of the committee is to develop a comprehensive system of collaborative service delivery to improve the ability of families to meet the needs of their children.

Curriculum/World's Best Workforce – Committee is established by Minnesota law to provide parents and community members' involvement and input in respect to school programs and curricular offerings. Committee consists of parents, community members, staff, teachers, administrators and school board members. Meetings held every other month from 4 – 5:30 pm in the AHS Conference Room A.

Early Childhood Family Education Council (Council for Little Packers) The purpose of this advisory council is to seek input from parents and community members to guide programming and learn about and be an advocate for early childhood in the community. Remaining meetings for 2023-24 school year are 5:30 - 6:30 pm on January 11, 2024 and April 11, 2024 at Southgate Elementary.

Facilities - Meets as needed to review district facilities and discuss needed improvements. Meetings currently scheduled for 4 pm on February 19 and May 20.

Finance – Meets as needed to discuss school finance issues. Meetings currently scheduled for 4 pm on March 18 and June 17.

Minnesota State High School League – Districts are required to have a designated school board representative who is an authorized voting member of the MSHSL. No meetings to attend.

Personnel – Meets the Tuesday prior to each regular monthly school board meeting at 1:30 pm to discuss personnel issues. Additional meetings scheduled as needed. Also serves as Meet and Confer representatives for meetings taking place two to three times per year.

Schools for Equity in Education (SEE) – General membership meetings held approximately 3 times a year in Minneapolis and regional meetings held three times a year in Owatonna. Meetings include idea sharing, legislative updates and other speakers on important school topics.

Special Education Advisory Council – Meetings held October thru May on the first Tuesday of the month in the District Office Conference Room. All meetings run from 12:00 – 1:00.

Wellness –The committee consists of staff and community members who work to promote healthy practices throughout the district. Remaining meetings for the 2023-2024 school year are February 13, 2024 and April 9, 2024 from 4:00 - 5:30 in the District Office Conference Room.