

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
{{MeetingType }} MEETING
September 10, 2026 at 6:30 PM - District Main Conference Room
800 Devillen
Royal Oak, Michigan 48073**

MINUTES

PRESENT: President Tim Ciechorski; Vice President Erika Alexander; Secretary Deb Anderson; Treasurer Michelle Cook; Trustee Lauren Jasinski; Trustee Maryanne VanHaitsma; Trustee Matt Wickey; and Student Representatives Charles Francis and Leilani Hamilton

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Mary Beth Fitzpatrick; Executive Director of Finance & Operations Kathy Abela; Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction Joe Youanes; Executive Director of Staff & Students Services Patrick Wolynski and Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & Board Paula Sutterfield

ABSENT:

1. OPENING / CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR JIM SULLIVAN
4. STANDING APPROVAL ITEMS

1. Acceptance of Agenda

The President asks for approval of the agenda, including all attached documents, which may be accessed on the Royal Oak Schools website. Are there any additions or deletions?

"The agenda is approved as presented."

OR

"The agenda is approved with the following additions/deletions" by consensus.

2. Approval of Minutes

Recommendation:

Resolved that the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education approves the following minutes:

August 6, 2026, Special Meeting (Finance & Facilities)

August 13, 2026, Special Meeting

August 13, 2026, Regular Meeting

August 24, 2026, Workshop

5. PROCLAMATIONS

1. Hispanic Heritage Month

Recommendation:

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month is a month-long celebration of Hispanic and Latino history and culture and is important because it provides an opportunity to celebrate the integral part the Hispanic/Latino community has had in growing and strengthening our democracy; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month provides an additional opportunity to explore the incredible impact Latinas and Latinos have had on the United States, Michigan, and Royal Oak for generations;

and

WHEREAS, the Latino presence in America spans centuries, predating Spain's colonization of what is now part of the United States, and they have been an integral part of shaping our nation since the Revolutionary War; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month began as a week-long celebration in 1968 under President Johnson and was expanded to a month by President Reagan 20 years later in 1988. The month-long celebration provides more time to properly recognize the significant contributions Hispanic/Latino Americans have made in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month does not cover one single month but instead begins in the middle of September and ends in the middle of October. The timeframe of this month is significant because many Central American countries celebrate their independence days within these dates, beginning on September 15 with Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. By aligning with these independence dates, Hispanic Heritage Month honors the resilience and determination of the Hispanic community; and

WHEREAS, we will continue to advocate for Hispanics/Latinos as representation matters. Latinos and Latinas continue to shape our nation, as business owners, activists, artists, public servants, and more. From serving in the US military to being champions in the fight for civil rights, Latinas and Latinos remain strong leaders and changemakers;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education does hereby proclaim September 15-October 15, 2026, as Hispanic Heritage Month for Royal Oak Schools.

2. Remembrance Resolution Recommendation:

WHEREAS, on September 11, 2001, the United States of America was subjected to a series of terrorist attacks that resulted in the tragic loss of nearly 3,000 innocent lives at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and aboard United Airlines Flight 93; and

WHEREAS, these attacks claimed the lives of men, women, and children from all walks of life, transcending race, religion, and national origin, forever changing the lives of their families and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, in the face of this incomprehensible tragedy, countless first responders, ordinary citizens, and service members acted with extraordinary courage, selflessness, and valor, risking and, in many cases, sacrificing their own lives to save others; and

WHEREAS, the heroes of that day, including firefighters, police officers, emergency medical personnel, and the brave passengers of Flight 93, demonstrated the unwavering spirit of the American people, inspiring the nation to unite in resilience and resolve; and

WHEREAS, it is the solemn responsibility of the Royal Oak Schools to educate the next generation about this pivotal moment in our nation's history, ensuring that the victims are never forgotten and that the lessons of unity, courage, and service are taught;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education, on this day of remembrance, honors and commemorates the memory of all those who were lost on September 11, 2001, and extends its deepest gratitude to the heroes who acted with such courage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we affirm our commitment to educating our students about the events of September 11, 2001, and the enduring values of freedom, compassion, and patriotism that define our community and our country.

3. Suicide Prevention Month

Recommendation:

WHEREAS, suicide is among the leading causes of death in the United States, resulting in about one death every 11 minutes. Additionally, suicide attempts result in an even larger number of non-fatal, intentional self-harm injuries. In the US, it is the second leading cause of death for people 10 to 34 years of age, the fourth leading cause among people 35 to 44 years of age, and the fifth leading cause among people 45 to 54 years of age; and

WHEREAS, September is known as Suicide Prevention Month, a time in which mental health advocates, individuals, prevention organizations, survivors, allies, and communities around the country unite to promote suicide prevention awareness; and

WHEREAS, September 6-12, 2026, is National Suicide Prevention Week with World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Royal Oak Schools publicly places its full support behind those who work in the fields of mental health, education, and law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, all Royal Oak residents are urged to play a role in suicide prevention and promote mental health and wellness as we strive towards reducing suicides; and

WHEREAS, September is recognized across the United States as Suicide Prevention Month and provides the opportunity to educate our community about the warning signs for suicide and how to reach out and connect to those experiencing an emotional crisis; As the world joins together to honor the memories of those we lost to suicide and their loved ones, may we recommit to ensuring that help and support are accessible to all of our citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, Royal Oak Schools does hereby proclaim September 2026 as Suicide Prevention Month and September 6–12, 2026, as Suicide Prevention Week.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

If you would like to make a public comment:

- A person may address the Board on an agenda item by completing a note card located inside the Board Room and placing the card in the basket prior to the citizen public comment period. You will have an opportunity to comment on items *not* on the agenda at the end of the meeting.
- Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes. If you need more time, you are offered a second opportunity to address the Board at the end of the meeting for an additional three (3) minutes.
- Please address the Board as a whole and not individually.
- Please avoid mentioning specific staff members by name.
- Public comment is not intended for the exchange of dialogue. This is a time for members of the public to express their views. We are paying attention to your comments and appreciate them. However, school board members do not respond to public comment during the meeting.
- Questions that arise from public comment shall be referred to the superintendent, or their designee, for review, study and possible future response.
- Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

7. RECOGNITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / REPORTS

1. Introduction of New Student Board Members

John Tafelski

2. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Ashley Phillips

3. Audit Review

Jamie Rivette, Yeo & Yeo

1. Acceptance of Audit

Recommendation:

Resolved, the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education hereby accepts the Independent Audit Report

as presented by Yeo & Yeo for the 2025-26 fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2026. Yeo & Yeo completed their audit with an unmodified opinion, and a complete report has been presented to the Board of Education. The audit report and resolution indicating acceptance will be filed in accordance with state and local laws.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

Board of Education Secretary

9. *CONSENT AGENDA (*Personnel / Instruction / Business*)

The consent agenda generally consists of routine matters as well as items we have covered during this meeting or another board or committee meeting. All items are documented in the minutes, which are published following the meeting at which they were approved. All of our committee and board meetings are open to the public and public comment is an item on each agenda. We invite members of the public to join our committees.

1. *Payment of Expenses

Recommendation:

Resolved that the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education hereby approves expenditures as processed in the amount of \$7,749,947.64, for the period of August 1, 2026, through August 31, 2026.

2. *Field Trips

1. *Choir Field Trip to New York City

Royal Oak Schools Board of Education approves the request from Royal Oak High School's Grade 9–12 Choir to travel to New York City, NY from February 3–6, 2027.

2. * Model UN Field Trip to New York City

Royal Oak Schools Board of Education approves the request from Royal Oak High School's Model UN Club to travel to New York City, NY from March 16–20, 2027.

3. *Wrestling Team Field Trip to Lombard, IL

Royal Oak Schools Board of Education approves the request from Royal Oak High School's Wrestling Club to travel to Lombard, IL from December 11–13, 2026.

10. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. Superintendent

John Tafelski

1. Updates and Remarks

2. Curriculum & Instruction

Joe Youanes

3. Finance/Facilities and Bond

Kathy Abela

1. City of Royal Oak and YMCA Contract

Recommendation:

Resolved, that the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to finalize and sign a joint agreement with the City of Royal Oak and the YMCA for the City Aquatics program.

2. Johnson Controls Contract Award

Recommendation:

Resolved, that the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education approves the contract award to Johnson Controls Buildings Solutions LLC in the amount not to exceed \$66,000, under the emergency purchasing provision due to the refrigerant issue in the chiller at Royal Oak Middle School. This follows the emergency procedures in MCL 380.1267(1).

4. Staff and Student Services

Patrick Wolynski

1. Personnel Changes

Recommendation:

Resolved, the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education approves the regular personnel changes as presented in the board packet.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

If you would like to make a public comment:

- A person may address the Board on any non-agenda item at this time.
- Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes.
- Please address the Board as a whole and not individually.
- Please avoid mentioning specific staff members by name.
- Public comment is not intended for the exchange of dialogue. This is a time for members of the public to express their views. We are paying attention to your comments and appreciate them. However, school board members do not respond to public comment during the meeting.
- Questions that arise from public comment shall be referred to the superintendent, or their designee, for review, study and possible future response.
- Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

12. BOARD COMMENTS / LIAISON REPORT

Health & Wellness Committee—Maryanne VanHaitsma

Arts & Preservation Committee—Deb Anderson

Communications Committee—Matt Wicky

September 15, JEDI Council Meeting—6:30pm

September 15, League of Women Voters Candidate Forum—6:00pm (Main Conference Room)

September 25, ROHS Homecoming Game—7:00pm

September 29, Soup w/the Super—11:30am (RO Senior Center)

October 6, Arts & Preservation Committee—7:00pm

October 7, Fall Band & Orchestra Concert (ROHS)—6:00pm

October 7, Finance & Facilities Meeting—6:00pm

October 8, School Board Meeting—6:30pm

13. ADJOURNMENT (approval by consensus)

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Anderson

Secretary, Board of Education