

# Minutes

## **Regular Board of Education Meeting Unified School District No. 473, Chapman, KS**

**October 13, 2025**

**Brenda Edleston, School Board President, called the Regular Meeting of the USD 473 Board of Education to order at 6:30 pm at the Education Center located at 822 N. Marshall, Chapman, KS.**

**Other Board Members Present: Jessica Murphy, Adam Elliott, Betsy Edwards, Dana Obermeyer and Jennifer Elliott**

**Also Present: Kevin Suther – Superintendent, Michele Sutter - Board Clerk Kyle Cook, Kara Wilkins, Tyler Wilkins, Keaton Wilkins, Christy Bogart, Carter Bogart, Emily Bogart, Ashley Stearns, Dawn Sholtz, Katie Wieters, Kate Thornton, Kristin Portelli, Stacy Smiley, Savannah Smiley, Margot Steerman, Caroline Steerman, Marissa Steerman and Afton Diehl**

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**Before adopting the Agenda, Brenda Edleston made a motion to add an item right after 5.03 "Site Council Liaison" as "Smoky Hill Board Update" making it 5.03 1/2. Betsy Edwards seconded the motion to amend and approve the Agenda. Motion carried 6-0.**

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Jennifer Elliott made the motion to approve the consent agenda. Jessica Murphy seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

- Approve the minutes from the Regular September 8th, 2025 BOE Meeting**
- Financial Reports: Treasurer, Food Service & Petty Cash**
- Payment of Bills**
- Public Participation**

### **SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS:**

#### **Rural Center Elementary Presents to the Board**

**Principal Kara Wilkins spoke to the Board about the events and activities going on at Rural Center Elementary. Mrs. Wilkins said she was pretty sure she said this same thing last year, but her staff cares about what they do and they do it well! "Shout out to the staff!"**

**Mrs. Thurlow took her class to the Eisenhower Center for Constitution Day and**

**they really enjoyed it. The Presidential Library at the Eisenhower Center is so close and they appreciate the opportunity to take a field trip to learn about our local community's impact at the National level.**

**She shared some pictures of the Chapman's FFA students and told how they come out to see them once a month. This has included so far bringing animals for 4-H week and pumpkin carving with more activities to come.**

**She said last Friday morning the entire school took a trip to Rainbow Meadows, which is a place for rescued and retired horses. The older students took time to practice reading a book to the horses to keep them company. She said they took the entire school and though most of the younger kids can't read yet, they really enjoyed getting to go and it was a fun experience for all.**

**Mrs. Wilkins brought several students with her to demonstrate how their morning routine takes place as a whole school. She said that the entire school begins the day by going to their classrooms upon arrival and then they meet in the gym for a character focused trait once all the breakfast eaters have finished. They demonstrated two games they play to build relationships and cooperation among groups who are mixed together from PreK to 5th grade. They also do daily announcements but mostly have FUN!!! The students who demonstrated were Keaton Wilkins, Caroline Steerman, Tyler Wilkins, Emily Bogart, Margot Steerman, Carter Bogart and Savannah Smiley. The games demonstrated were called "Heads or Tails" and the "Zoom" game. It is an opportunity for the bigger kids to show the little kids the Rural Center way of helping each other as a family approach.**

**Kara also announced their Family Fun Nite which is this Saturday, October 18th beginning at 3:00 pm and said it's a good time for all so come on out! The night also helps to raise money for student activities or supplies.**

**Another event coming up soon will be the Halloween special breakfast and costume parade on Thursday, October 30th beginning at 7:45 am.**

### **Parents as Teachers Program Presentation**

**Kristin Portelli came to talk about the P.A.T. Program she is in charge of for the USD 473 School District. This is her 8th year in this position and she said that the program is an Evidence Based Education Program which is FREE to ALL who sign up. She works with pre-natal to Kindergarten entry level. Mrs. Portelli stated she goes into homes or if they'd rather, she meets them at her office in Chapman. The program provides exposure to hands on activities at every visit for areas like motor skills and academic growth early in their development. The point of the visit is for parents to learn how to play and interact with their children getting them ready for Kindergarten. One of the unique features was to make sure all the materials are made from household items which does not require having to purchase a lot of additional supplies.**

**One of the examples was using a cupcake pan to put tennis balls in for a counting and problem solving activity. They also read a book at each visit. The purpose of the P.A.T. program is to build strong communities, thriving families, and children who are healthy, safe, and learning.**

### **Elementary Schools Counselor's Presentation**

**The elementary Support Services Coordinators, Dawn Sholtz & Katie Wieters, presented the steps set in place for training, awareness for parent/guardians, and procedures to follow to help staff when it comes to suicide prevention and mandatory reporting to keep students safe. This includes the Jason Flatt Act and the Mandatory Reporting requirements set in place by law which is adapted to fit the needs for USD 473. This will become part of the approved USD 473 Crisis Plan. The District has annual Greenbush video training before the start of each school year for both of these areas for staff. The updated Crisis Plan, Jason Flatt Act Plan, and the Mandatory Reporting Plan will all be linked on the USD473.net website and parents/guardians will be made aware annually of these resources. The support service team will help to explain the procedures to the District Level Team plus the buildings in the beginning of the year in order to feel more comfortable on who, what, when and how to handle a situation that arises.**

**Brenda Edleston made the motion to approve the USD 473 Crisis Plan with updated procedures for the Jason Flatt Act and Mandatory Reporting. Adam Elliott seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

### **CIPA Internet Safety Procedures**

**The USD 473 IT Director, Kyle Cook, presented about the internet safety measures and policies established by the district for informational purposes and to gain any feedback at the Board of Education meeting. Mr. Cook said the district has always been compliant about making sure to bring awareness on the benefit it has brought our district when it comes to the filters and software used for student protections. This is a requirement for CIPA, the Children Internet Protection Act, for any public school and mandated for federal funding involving E-Rate plus the cyber insurance policy used by the district. He explained that at enrollment, parents/guardians are asked to sign off to allow students to use any Google products plus approved third party vendors. Some of the software utilized by the district is Bark and Linewize which help to give warnings to the administrators when concerning language is used in documents, emails and other sources that could cause concern for areas like bullying, inappropriate content, or self-harm. Teachers have access to the software to allow for certain sites to be blocked or opened for research when needed. Students are educated in classes by not only the technology department but also by the library media specialist when it comes to social media, interactions online and how to be safe in choices**

**made when using communication platforms.**

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Donations**

**Jennifer Elliott made the motion to approve all donations as presented. Jessica Murphy seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

**Holm Chevrolet donated \$350.00 to all (6) of our schools totaling \$2,100.00.**

**Blue Ridge Elementary received a grant from The Community Foundation for \$5,000.00 for their After-School-Program.**

**The Chapman Middle School received \$2,250.00 in donations for this year's Color Run activities.**

### **911 Mapping Memorandum of Agreement**

**Dickinson County is cooperatively working with the local school districts and government entities to apply for a grant which will help to digitize all the maps for buildings for first responders and helps to develop safety & security plans. After providing the paperwork for the MOU, the Dickinson County Network Administrator will submit the grant application. USD 473 will not incur any costs unless the Board of Education approves further funding for any software obtained by the county not funded by the grant or to choose to proceed on our own. The current plan is to not continue if full funding is not granted. The MOA is for 12 months. Superintendent Suther said that if we do participate, we must notify the Dickinson County Office 60 days in advance to cancel partnership before the automatic renewal in order for us to terminate the contract.**

**Betsy Edwards made the motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement for necessary safety. Adam Elliott seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

### **Site Council Liaison**

**Brenda Edleston is serving as the Board's Site Council Liaison this year. She shared about attending several meetings and was very impressed with the topics the councils have for their buildings. She said these groups are working well together to bring new ideas to the schools. Their goals were directly tied to the district when giving input or making decisions. Brenda enjoyed hearing about lots of great programs and activities taking place in the buildings plus recognitions. It was shared by administrators that the attendance has**

been good this year with a lot of positive interaction among parents, community business owners, staff and students. So far, her visits have been to Chapman High School, Blue Ridge Elementary and Enterprise Elementary.

### Smoky Hill Board

Brenda Edleston serves on this executive board on behalf of the USD 473 District and said the Smoky Hill Service Center serves many surrounding districts, but not all have a member from their School Board serving. Chapman is a charter member and has been from the beginning when the service center was established. She pointed out that the 36th annual legislative luncheon is on Friday, November 7th in Salina and tickets are \$25 with reservation. Mr. Suther said he tries to attend every year to hear directly from our area representatives and board members are welcome to attend.

Brenda talked about the Patterson Family Foundation and encouraged our district to check into this to see what they can offer and what we can gain by it. There are opportunities to apply for grants that help rural communities in the field of education, healthcare, and community engagement. One of the focus areas that could help USD 473 would be for Career and Technical Education capital projects or STEM courses.

### KASB Voting Delegate

Both board members, Jessica Murphy and Brenda Edleston, are attending the KASB Conference in Wichita in November this year. One designated member needs to be approved to vote on behalf of USD 473 when it comes to decisions on who represents for our designated area and possibly any of the association's constitutional changes. Brenda did volunteer to be the representative this year and to have Jessica attend with her to learn more about the process.

Jessica made the motion to designate Brenda as the USD 473 KASB voting delegate. Adam seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.

### Scheduling Report as stated in Article XI Scheduling of the Negotiated Agreement

The September 22nd count day took place along with submitting each individual Principal Building Reports and the Superintendent SO66 report to KSDE by October 10th. The PreK students only get counted towards funding at .5 FTE if they meet a criteria of At Risk or have an IEP. The non-resident new student approvals who are attending totaled 25 throughout the district for 2025-26.

The legislators allowed for a Three-Year Average for headcount since

**we are an Impact School with declining enrollment. But, the overall numbers went down for our enrollment for the last 4 years. This is a trend that many schools have experienced with low Kindergarten numbers, low birth rates in the county and higher secondary numbers graduating. It will be important to adjust the budget as we go along for any savings that can take place. We did make a decision in the last three years to dissolve some positions when possible like one CES Kindergarten teacher, one CES 5th Grade teacher, a district custodian and a nurse aide.**

**Our numbers have dropped from:**

**2022: 1126.5 FTE students**

**2023: 1094 FTE students**

**2024: 1078 FTE students**

**2025: 1042 FTE students**

**\*\*We are able to use this year's three year average of 1099.5**

### **Capital Outlay Purchase**

**Superintendent Suther shared a powerpoint to give the Board pictures and reference to the condition of our visitor bleachers and some of our home bleacher seats. DCS Services, LLC is the company he has been using for project management out of Wichita. They coordinated with Heartland Bleachers to develop a design, performed a laser level for the area to determine the slope, and will arrange for any demolition needed. Heartland is a Greenbush Cooperative Purchasing company that is pre-approved for bidding with the lowest possible cost. There is a 3 inch drop-off from the front to the back which means either we level it out with all concrete or we change the material to a tubing instead of a straight iron design. It was determined that the tubing design option is the best cost savings option.**

**This is the last planned large item above \$20,000 for this year but we can never know for sure. Mr. Suther stated the district has been spending below the revenue brought in over the last several years to be able to make some larger purchases for projects from the capital outlay fund. We will still have additional HVAC expenses and some building repairs throughout the year when needed. Mr. Suther said he is meeting with Musco next week to look at the cost options for replacing our lighting to LED at the football field. This would be a possible summer project on next year's budget. The Board of**

**Education has discussed the visitor bleacher upgrade for many years. The project is needed to allow for ADA access, plus the safety and comfort for our visiting teams. It also allows for an elevated fenced barrier in the front with the new design to create a separation from lane 7 for track meets.**

**Betsy Edwards made the motion to approve the DCS and Heartland Seating bid proposal to move forward with the visitor bleachers project. Brenda Edleston seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

### **Superintendent Evaluation**

**The Superintendent Evaluation will be completed for all Four Categories this semester. The schedule will be as follows:**

**October 13, 2025 Board Meeting: Receive the Superintendent's Self-Evaluation and each individual board member start to fill out the evaluation tool.**

**November 10, 2025 Board Meeting: Each Board member brings their completed evaluation tool. Executive Session for Personnel.**

**December 8, 2025 Board Meeting: Executive Session for Personnel with Superintendent Suther invited in.**

**\*Vote in open session for Superintendent Contract extension options**

### **Personnel**

**Jessica Murphy made the motion to approve all personnel items that were given. Dana Obermeyer seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

#### **Resignations:**

Laeth Bender - USD 473 Bus Transportation Oil Change, Lube, and Tire Technician

Amanda Harmison - Chapman High School Head Volleyball Coach

#### **Transfers:**

John Gladden - Chapman Elementary Custodian to District Gym/Middle School Custodian

Linda Cosio - District Gym Custodian to Chapman Elementary Custodian

Sara Cook - Chapman High School Assistant Volleyball Coach to Head Volleyball Coach

#### **New Hires:**

Keegan Mantle - Chapman Elementary Custodian

Rachel Woodcox - Chapman Elementary PreK Teacher's Aide

Jodi DeArmond - Chapman High School Assistant Volleyball Coach

Kendyll Prunte - Chapman High School Dance Sponsor

Gabe Corbett - Chapman High School Assistant Boys' Basketball Coach

Gladys Swaim - Chapman High School Part-Time Kitchen Staff

Carey Long - USD 473 Bus Driver

Travis Robinson - USD 473 Bus Transportation Oil Change, Lube, Tire Technician

**Adjournment:**

**Betsy Edwards made the motion to adjourn. Jennifer Elliott seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

**Meeting Adjourned - 8:44 pm**



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**Brenda Edleston, Board President**



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**Michele Sutter, Board Clerk**