

# Minutes

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

**January 12, 2026**

**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, Favio Garcia, Dana Obermeyer, Kyrsten Day and Jennifer Elliott**

**Also Present: Kevin Suther – Superintendent, Michele Sutter - Board Clerk Jennifer Tiller, Becky Cable, Kate Thornton, Kara Wilkins, Skye Roberts, Ashley Stearns, Addison Stearns, Brice Stearns, Stacy Smiley, Doug Lindahl, Mary Wright, Afton Diehl, Laurie Rutherford and Addie Sherraden**

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**Jennifer Elliott made the motion to adopt the Agenda. Kyrsten Day seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.**

*(Adam Elliott in at 6:32 pm)*

### **RESOLUTIONS:**

**Jessica Murphy made the motion to approve the Election of Board Officer's Resolution. The elections for President and Vice-President will be moved to the first regular meeting in July of 2026. Dana Obermeyer seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.**

**Adam Elliott made the motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting Resolution to hold all meetings on the second Monday of each month with the exception of July which will be held on the 3rd Monday of the month. The meetings will be at the USD 473 Education Center starting at 6:30 pm. Jessica Murphy seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.**

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

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

**Jennifer Elliott made the motion to approve the items under the Consent Agenda as presented. Kyrsten Day seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.**

## **SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS:**

### **Chapman Elementary presents to the Board**

**Ashley Stearns presented to the Board about several events that have been going on at Chapman Elementary this year.**

**CES had Grandparent's Day in September, which is always a huge success. They set up 3 stations of activities that took about 30 minutes a piece.**

**New to CES this year is their "Spotlight Wall" and the students love it. This wall is dedicated to photos of students and their activities that take place outside of school. This highlights students for all to see what's going on in their lives. Some examples of pictures are 4-H activities, rodeos, sports activities and much more. The students appreciate seeing themselves on the wall and knowing that someone was paying attention.**

**Math Night was also well attended this year. Some of their activities were a coin dig for the Pre-K kids, interactive posters, pizza coupons for a scavenger hunt and estimation buckets. The buckets included Hershey Kisses and Starburst candies. The families were also served a meal before they left.**

**For Halloween the entire staff dressed up as dalmatians while Mrs. Stearns was Cruella Deville. Preschool teacher, Rylee Schlesener, took her classes around the school to teach them how to trick-or-treat so they would be ready with their families. Some of the students aren't able to trick or treat so this gives them the Halloween experience. The school also does a Halloween parade for families outside of their building so everyone can see all the costumes. Grades 3rd - 5th were able to walk down to the nursing home and hand out candy to the residents.**

**There was a "balloon bombing" that took place in Mrs. Stearns' office where every day she was welcomed by new balloons until they finally filled her office. Mrs. Stearns and the students really got a kick out of it which was for recognizing her for National Principal's Month.**

**There is a "Shared Activity" that takes place once a month in the gym at morning meeting. The 5th grade team up with 2nd grade, the 4th grade teams up with the 1st grade and the 3rd grade is with the Kindergartners to cooperatively work together on a task. This helps them get to know each other in a larger school.**

**The Thanksgiving feast is always a popular event that seems to grow every year in numbers. This year there were three different times that families could come in to eat with their student(s).**

**Mrs. Stearns once again participated in the "Elf on the Shelf" activity. She appeared in just about every place you could think of to make it fun for her students to see where she would be that morning like on the roof or sign out front.**

**She also shared their aReading data from FastBridge which shows growth and movement in the right direction in all grades.**

**Next up, 5th grade teachers Skye Roberts and Becky Cable told about the**

keyboarding class that the technology teacher Brett Koster leads for their 5th graders. Mr. Koster approached them and said he observed that the Middle School students struggle with hand placement and speed in typing. He hoped if they created a new class to teach the 5th graders in our District, by the time they entered Middle School they would be so much better in their typing skills. Student Addie Sherraden, demonstrated to the Board on the big screen a few of their assignments showing how she is learning keyboarding with fun games and repetition.

CES shared their highlights from the Star Base program. Mrs. Roberts and Addison Stearns presented on the different activities they did. They attend 5 days total from 9 am to 2 pm with a 30 minute lunch and the days are each jam packed. The activities are based off the Kansas State Standards which included printing 3-D rockets, numerous experiments, making elephant toothpaste, using the CAD program to build a Mars rover, a giant scavenger hunt, plus experimenting with electricity and circuits.

Addison was asked what her favorite day was and she said where she launched her rocket because it got 3rd farthest.

Star Base is a federally funded program and you have to be a Title 1 school to qualify and elementary buildings have to reapply every year.

**UPCOMING EVENT @ CES:**

**Mr. Popper's Penguins - All school book club**

### Food Service Director Update

Jennifer Tiller who is our Food Service Director and Opa! employee shared some information with the Board. She said Opa! is now in 9 states and growing strong. Other local schools that use them that are near by like Solomon and Abilene is helpful in case we need to share food with each other. Opa! does many things for our community, including special breakfasts and lunches.

As far as our breakfast program overview, we are feeding 40% of our students for breakfast and 70% for lunch on average throughout the district. Our goal of course is to feed every student, every meal every day!

Jennifer is the only Opa! employee. All other cooks are employees of USD 473. Our food service teams are amazing and work very hard to make sure every child is fed and that there is always something that every student will eat. Jennifer goes above and beyond to make sure she knows all the kids and their allergies and survey about their opinions. Every month there are special meals and activities taking place in the district that happen because of Jennifer Tiller. The district is very grateful to her and the entire food service team.

### OLD BUSINESS:

#### Approve the 2026-2027 School Calendar

All the teachers were given an opportunity to vote and the results were in favor of

approving Option A. This means that the parent teacher conferences will take place in October on Monday, October 19th and Tuesday, October 20th. The conferences also are a week earlier than last year so it does not conflict with middle school sports which took away some teachers and parents of students playing. The voting results were 66.2% in favor of this option.

Jennifer Elliott made the motion to approve Option A for the 2026-2027 school calendar year. Dana Obermeyer seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.

### Future Work Session Planning

This was a discussion item for the Board's future meetings. It was decided to begin a new protocol starting in February with an agenda item at the very end before the adjournment. This will be a way for the Board to allow for time in the agenda to discuss a chosen topic from the month before in further detail to give direction on how to proceed in the future. A suggested time for this agenda item will be 30 minutes. The format followed will be similar to the PLC meeting process that the teachers use which will be adapted to cover the positive steps in progress, why it is important to pursue, how to accomplish the goal or task and finally extend further on what to research further.

### NEW BUSINESS:

#### Facilities Assessment

Superintendent Suther shared some of the major projects in the past, currently and for the future for the 5 year plan:

1. Approved visitor bleachers during 1st semester for the summer of 2026.
2. Requesting to approve LED replacement lights at Track/Football field for summer 2026.
3. TRANE will present the final stage of the 5-year HVAC project for CES Controls in April for summer 2026.
4. Need to purchase a leased or new 29 passenger bus to replace our multiple aged out buses.

Jennifer Elliott made the motion to approve the replacement of the Track & Football Field lights with and LED Retrofit System through DCS Services with the Musco Company using the Greenbush Cooperative Contract. Favio Garcia seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.

#### E-Rate Category 2

Superintendent Suther explained that last year we accepted a bid for this exact project but the company was unable to get approved for the required Federal Service Provider Identification Number. Our district uses the Smoky Hill Learning

Center services for the E-Rate documentation support for Category I (Mainly internet service for each building) and Category 2 (IT equipment upgrades). The switches replacement project for all buildings is under the Category 2 designation and means that the Federal Government will pay 70% of the project while USD 473 will be responsible for 30%. Since this was built into the budget, we are requesting to accept the lowest bid from NCS out of Manhattan, Kansas to perform the work. The total for equipment and labor is \$45,735.33 which will result in USD 473 paying \$13,720.60.

Adam Elliott made the motion to accept the lowest bid by NCS for the Category 2 E-Rate switches project. Kyrsten Day seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.

### KASB December 2025 Policy Updates

Superintendent Suther briefly went over each policy update for the Board. These policies are updated every June and December by KASB. He is recommending pulling the AI Policy change for now. More research on this will take place over time while working with the staff and committees like site councils to make it fit for USD 473.

Jessica Murphy made the motion to approve all of the December 2025 KASB Board Policy biannual updates as presented except for the AI Policy example so it can be reviewed further to fit the USD 473 needs. Adam Elliott seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.

### Donations

Kyrsten Day made the motion to approve the donation presented. Jessica Murphy seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.

Memorial Health System - \$857.00 for USD 473 students who need help paying their lunch balances.

### Director Evaluation Forms

New evaluation tools were developed by Superintendent Suther to match their job descriptions better. Adam Elliott made the motion to approve the updated USD 473 Director and Coordinator evaluation tools starting for the 2025-26 school year. Dana Obermeyer seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.

### Board of Education Recognition

#### **USD 473 Board Members Leading for Success**

January is School Board Recognition Month, a great opportunity to say thank you to the USD 473 Board of Education who are committed to the success of every student in our community.

Our Board of Education includes Brenda Edleston, Jessica Murphy, Jennifer Elliott, Dana Obermeyer, Adam Elliott, Kyrsten Day and Favio Garcia.

**These seven community leaders volunteer many hours attending meetings, reading reports and discussing plans and programs to support educational achievement.**

**The Board members develop policies and make complex decisions that shape the future of our education system. They are accountable for an annual budget of over \$20 million dollars, approximately 1100 students, over 200 employees and six school buildings.**

### **Executive Session - Personnel**

**Jessica Murphy made the motion for the Board to have a 5 minute break beginning at 8:20 and then go into Executive Session for 30 minutes in order to discuss personnel items pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA, and the open meeting will resume in the Board room at 8:55 pm. Superintendent Suther is invited into the session. Jennifer Elliott seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.**

**The Board returned to open session at 8:55 pm**

**Jessica Murphy made the motion for the Board to go back into Executive Session for 10 additional minutes in order to discuss personnel items pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA, and the open meeting will resume in the Board room at 9:05 pm. Superintendent Suther was invited to stay in the session. Dana Obermeyer seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.**

**The Board returned to open session at 9:05 pm**

### **Personnel**

**Favio Garcia made the motion to approve all personnel items presented. Jennifer Elliott seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.**

#### **Retirements:**

Vicki Lexow - Blue Ridge 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher

Christina Shehi - Enterprise and Blue Ridge Elementary Music Teacher

Jacquelyn Dautel - Enterprise Elementary Title I Teacher

#### **Resignations:**

Pat Murray - Rural Center Elementary Physical Education Teacher

Kiah Keller - Chapman Middle School 8th Grade English Teacher

Andrea Koster - Chapman Middle School Assistant Volleyball Coach

#### **New Hires:**

#### **Substitutes**

Stephanie Kreinbihl

**Adjournment**

**Jennifer Elliott made a motion for the Board to adjourn. Jessica Murphy seconded the motion; motion carried 7-0.**

**Meeting Adjourned - 9:08 pm**

*Brenda Edleston*

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**Brenda Edleston, Board President**

*Michele L. Sutter*

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**Michele Sutter, Board Clerk**