

Board of Education Meeting
Southwest Public Schools
District 179
February 16, 2026

President Jason Neseth called the regular meeting of the Southwest Public Schools Board of Education to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, February 16, 2026, at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.

Present: John O'Dea, Jennifer McConville, Derek Meyers, Jason Neseth, Brooke Brooks, Superintendent Drew Billeter and Patricia Smith.

Absent: Duane Teter.

Visitors: Cris Charley, Sagen Carmen-Downer, Sasha Burton, Hillery Kennedy, and Cody Gerlach.

President Neseth observed Open Meeting Law requirements.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Meyers, to excuse absent board member, Duane Teter. Ayes: Neseth, O'Dea, McConville, Brooks, and Meyers. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to approve the board meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: Meyers, Brooks, McConville, Neseth, and O'Dea. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Notices of the meeting were posted at the Adams Bank and Trust in Indianola, the Stockmens Bank in Bartley, Post Offices in Bartley and Indianola, Southwest Elementary School in Indianola, Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley, and published in the Valley Voice newspaper and on the school website. Notice of the meeting was given in advance to all members prior to the meeting date.

Moved by Brooks, seconded by Meyers, to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2026, board meeting. Ayes: Meyers, Neseth, Brooks, and O'Dea. Nays: None. Abstained: McConville. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by Meyers, seconded by O'Dea, to approve the claims as presented. Ayes: McConville, Meyers, O'Dea, Brooks, and Neseth. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was presented to the Board.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Meyers, to accept the resignation of Alyssa Garrett. Ayes: O'Dea, Brooks, Neseth, Meyers and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by McConville, seconded by Brooks, to accept the resignation of Shannon Lovin. Ayes: O'Dea, Brooks, Neseth, Meyers and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by Meyers, seconded by McConville, to accept the resignation of Matt Springer. Ayes: O'Dea, Neseth, Meyers, Brooks, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to accept the resignation of Becki Keenportz. Ayes: O'Dea, Neseth, Meyers, Brooks, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Duane Teter arrived at the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to approve a contract for Tara Fries, the Elementary School Principal, for the 2026-2027 school year at a 4% increase. Ayes: O'Dea, Brooks, Neseth, Teter, Meyers, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

President Neseth asked that Action Item 6 of New Business, "Discuss and take appropriate action on a wage increase for classified staff for 2026-27 school year" be tabled until after the superintendent and principal's reports, allowing the Board to go into executive session.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Brooks, to offer contracts to certified staff for the 2026-2027 school year, which would be due March 16. Ayes: McConville, O'Dea, Brooks, Teter, Meyers, and Neseth. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to declare as surplus items and authorize the sale of the John Deere 4020 tractor, the Ford 8N tractor with attachments, and the Chevrolet handicapped mini bus. Ayes: O'Dea, Neseth, Teter, Meyers, Brooks, and McConville. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Superintendent Billeter discussed the projected 2026-2027 state aid to decrease approximately \$107,000.00 for the district, advertising for open certified positions, the non-renewal of the girls' wrestling coop by Cambridge Public Schools, possible options for replacing the 2010 Grasshopper mower, and the main gym floor replacement project within the next 2-3 years as the wood floor cannot be sanded and refinished again.

Superintendent Billeter also discussed the principal's reports concerning elementary parent-teacher conferences, NSCAS state testing which be held in the Spring and MAPS Growth testing in the Fall, and the ninth period study halls for junior-senior high students on the "downs list" each week. The end result being achieved is less students on the weekly ineligibility list.

Moved by McConville, seconded by O'Dea, that the school board go into closed session at 7:20 p.m. to discuss a possible wage increase for classified staff in the 2026-2027 school year for the protection of the public interest. Ayes: O'Dea, Brooks, Neseth, Teter, Meyers and McConville. Nays: None. Motion carried.

President Neseth repeated the motion that the school board go into closed session to discuss a possible wage increase for classified staff for the protection of the public interest at 7:20 p.m. Closed session ended at 7:28 p.m.

Moved by McConville, seconded by Brooks, to approve a 3% wage increase for classified staff for the 2026-2027 school year. Ayes: Brooks, McConville, O'Dea, Teter, and Meyers. Abstain: O'Dea. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Meyers, to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m. Ayes: O'Dea, McConville, Meyers, Brooks, Neseth, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Agenda for meetings will be kept continually current and available for public inspection in the office of the Superintendent.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, March 16, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.