

HARPER CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
EDUCATE • EMPOWER • EQUIP
Students for Life

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

Monday, March 10, 2025

6:00 PM - Regular Meeting

Harper Creek Administration Building

7454 B Drive North, Battle Creek, MI 49014

<https://youtube.com/live/o-DjBSPb1Cs?feature=share>

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance: President Bess led the Pledge followed by a moment of silence.
- III. Roll Call: Present – Mrs. Allwardt, Mr. Bess, Mr. Halverson, Mrs. Risner, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Waterson, Student Board Member Sam Cook.
Absent Student Members: Arabella Stanley and Alex Stiltner. Mrs. Risner left at 7:00 PM.
- IV. Review and Approval of Agenda: Mr. Ridgeway added to the agenda the ETSA sick time policy update as Information and Discussion item H and Action item F.
Motion by Mr. Smith, supported by Mrs. Wallace,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education add a motion to the agenda, ETSA Sick Time Policy Update as Information and Discussion item H. and Action item F.
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Smith Y, Mrs. Risner Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Bess Y.
Motion Carried: 7-0.
- V. Communications
 - A. President's Remarks: President Bess welcomed everyone to the meeting. President Bess congratulated the choirs and bands on their festival performances. In addition, Mr. Bess mentioned the High School robotics team and their recent competition where they received the quality award. Lastly, Mr. Bess stated that spring sports started.
 - B. Administration: Mr. Ridgeway stated that Harper Creek Community School Sonoma Elementary Teacher, Lindsey Cook, is the teacher of the year for Region 7. This is a great accomplishment and we are proud of Mrs. Cook. Another item Mr. Ridgeway discussed is this month all of our buildings are celebrating **March is Reading**. Events throughout the

buildings are getting students and staff excited about reading. Next, Mr. Ridgeway stated that the High School will be putting on the musical, **Once Upon a Mattress**, on March 21, 22, and 23. The students love to see the auditorium filled so please come out and support. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the Building Committee will be meeting on March 19, 2025, at 9:30 AM. Also, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the Beadle Lake Elementary Showcase will be held on March 20, 2025, at 1:30 PM. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed Countdown to Kindergarten. Each elementary school will host Countdown to Kindergarten on Thursday, March, 20, and Tuesday, April 15, from 6:00-7:00 PM. Next, Mr. Ridgeway updated the Board on the retirees for 2025 stating that currently there are thirteen teachers scheduled to retire, seven elementary teachers, and six high school. Lastly, Mr. Ridgeway mentioned that spring break is from March 31 through April 4.

- C. Board Secretary: Mrs. Allwardt recognized and thanked the following donors for their generous donations; Rebecca and David Wieseler \$500.00 for the Harper Creek Theatre program, US Petroleum Partners, LLC \$500.00 for Harper Creek Schools, Seth Votava, Justice Fence \$350.00 for the Harper Creek Theatre program, Michael Glass \$350.00 for the Harper Creek DECA program, and Collette Pifer, Epic Nutrition \$800.00 for the Harper Creek Theatre program.
- D. Student Board Member: Sam Cook discussed the previous survey about traditional high school scheduling that was conducted before Mr. Greenman and his staff discussed the benefits and concerns. The Student Board members hope to do a survey since conversations have taken place centered around the transition.

- VI. State of the District Presentation: Principals and Teacher Coaches presented to the Board on Building Excellence at Harper Creek Community Schools using the 2025-2027 strategic roadmap to direct the goals and outcomes. The first pillar is to **Drive Student Achievement** with a focus on student-curriculum, educator training, and celebrating student success. In ELA education DK-5th grade are implementing Amplify CKLA and 6th through 8th are using Imagine Learning. The team discussed the intentional alignment of priority standards across grade levels. The new curriculums adopted by the Board have embedded support through trainers and online resources. Math highlights include the utilization of early release, trainers twice a year, and mini grade level PD. Buildings are finding ways to celebrate student achievements including game days, and LEAD parties. Social-emotional

learning is important for self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, Morning Circle, LEAD, and Trails are used in our classrooms. Social Emotional Learning benefits our students by improving academic performance, emotional well-being, stronger relationships, and reduced stress and conflicts. Students use a universal screener as tier-one support. The celebrations are connected with attendance as students want to be at school when these activities take place. The second area is **Invest in Our People** to successfully recruit and retain the best talent. The District has several initiatives in recruiting. Grow Your Own allows staff members to pursue a bachelor's degree or additional certifications at no cost. This program is sought out by employees wishing to further their education making Harper Creek Community Schools appealing to many candidates. The PLC community builds teamwork and collaboration for improvement and quality evaluations give evidence-based feedback. Having a leadership succession plan is vital in developing future leaders. Harper Creek Community Schools seeks to retain the best talent through recognition, family culture, staff morale surveys, competitive salaries, and benefits packages. The third pillar is when teachers and staff work together to foster teamwork, actively engage parents to establish a volunteer program, and work with local non-profit and corporate partners to **Create a Culture of Collaboration**. Building principals and coaches worked together to establish short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals and action plans. A fourth focus is on **Improved Communications** through connecting with parents, the community, and using a transparent tool for training. The last pillar is **Create Our Future**. This will focus on facilities projects, fiscal responsibility, and expanding early childhood programs.

VII. District Updates

- A. Curriculum: Mrs. Williams highlighted areas of her Board report including the High School Coursebook 2025-2026. The coursebook has tools for parents to see the scope and sequence. Another item Mrs. Williams discussed was the parent survey. The results are being tabulated and will be in for the April meeting. Next, Mrs. Williams discussed April's presentation to the Board will be centered around Hatching Results, Career Pathways, and PBIS. Lastly, Mrs. Williams brought attention to the new course offering at the high school Honors Algebra II/ Precalculus for Board members to review before the April meeting where it will be an action item.

- B. Facility: Mr. Robinson discussed the report he submitted to the board. First, Mr. Robinson discussed the autonomous machines that the custodian service is using to clean at the high school and middle school in large common areas easing the workload on the staff. In addition, Mr. Robinson discussed spring sports and getting fields and practice facilities ready for the season.
- C. Finance: Mrs. Oberymer reviewed the monthly reports. In addition, Mrs. Obermyer discussed the upcoming negotiations. Mrs. Obermyer also stated that next month the Board will receive the CISD Budget.
- D. Technology: Mr. Maynard reported classroom notification and clock project updates and cameras. In addition, Mr. Maynard stated that it is time to consider student devices for the 2025-2026 school year.

VIII. Comments Related to Agenda Items: There were no comments.

IX. Consent Agenda

- A. Approve the General Fund checks, School Services Fund checks (Food Service), and Student/School Activities Fund Checks, in accordance with the list discussed.

Approves the following list of Meeting Minutes.

1. Approves February 10, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes
2. Approves February 17, 2025, Joint Board Meeting Minutes
3. Approves March 5, 2025, Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion by Mr. Smith, supported by Mrs. Waterson,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the consent agenda as follows:

Approve the General Fund checks, School Services Fund checks (School Lunch), and Student/School Activities Fund checks, in accordance with the list discussed.

Approve the following minutes as reviewed:

- Approves February 10, 2025, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes.
- Approves February 17, 2025, Joint Board of Education Meeting Minutes.
- Approves March 5, 2025, Budget Committee Meeting Minutes.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Bess __Y __, Mrs. Risner __ A __, Mrs. Wallace __Y __, Mrs. Allwardt

__Y __, Mrs. Waterson __Y __, Mr. Halverson __ Y __, Mr. Smith __Y __.

Motion Carried: 6-o.

X. Information and Discussion

- A. School Safety Update: Mr. Ridgeway updated the Board on the School Safety meeting. Mr. Ridgeway stated that the Emergency Operation Plan has been reviewed and will come to the Board at the April meeting for approval. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that Harper Creek will receive Safety/Mental Health funds from the State. Lastly, Mr. Ridgeway discussed touring the buildings for building representatives.
- B. High School Choir Trip: Mr. Ridgeway stated that the high school choir is seeking approval to visit Nashville, Tennessee, from Wednesday, March 11, 2026, through Saturday, March 14, 2026. Choir Director Alex Port will raise funds for the trip with the choir. Mr. Ridgeway recommends approval.
- C. HS Woodshop Campus Visit Trip: Mr. Renner, a woodshop teacher, is requesting approval for an out-of-state trip to visit the University of Northwestern Ohio in Lima, Ohio on April 11, 2025. Approximately 30-40 students will attend at no cost. Mr. Ridgeway recommends approval.
- D. Bridge Building Field Trip: Mrs. Jenkins, Bridge Building Advisor, requests approval for an overnight competition for the Bridge Building Teams at the Amway Grand in Grand Rapids from April 9 to April 10, 2025. Twelve students will attend, and there is no cost. Mr. Ridgeway recommends approval.
- E. New Hire: One of the Grow Your Own teachers has completed all coursework and certification, and Harper Creek Community Schools will officially hire Jenny Fry, MA1, for 2nd grade at Beadle Lake Elementary.
- F. Food Service Ovens: Mr. Ruemenapp is requesting the purchase of new ovens at both the middle school and the high school using the spend-down plan. The middle school oven will cost approximately \$40,000.00 and the high school oven will cost approximately \$50,000.00. Mr. Ruemenapp will obtain bids per school policy. Mr. Ridgeway recommends the approval pending bidding at a cost not to exceed \$90,000.00.
- G. Naming of District Facilities: Mr. Ridgeway called for the formation of a committee to process the request to name district facilities. One Board member shall serve on this committee along with an administrator, teacher or coach, parent, and community member. Mr. Smith has volunteered to serve on this committee.

H. ETSA Sick Time Policy Update: A revision of the ESTA policy has been implemented specifying that absences and time off will be recorded using the smallest increment we typically apply. The main changes expand the list of covered family members and a broader range of allowable leave reasons. Mr. Ridgeway recommends approving the updated policy.

XI. Comments From the Audience: There were no comments.

XII. ACTION

A. High School Choir Trip

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mrs. Waterson,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the High School Choir Trip to Nashville from March 11, 2026, through March 14, 2026, with Guardian Travel Group, as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Risner A, Mr. Bess Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mr. Smith Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y.

Motion Carried: 6-o.

B. High School Woodshop Campus Visit Trip

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mrs. Waterson,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the Harper Creek Woodshop trip to the University of Northwestern Ohio in Lima, Ohio on April 11, 2025, as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote:

Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mr. Smith Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Risner A, Mr. Bess Y.

Motion Carried: 6-o

C. Bridge Building Field Trip

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mr. Halverson,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the Harper Creek Community Schools Bridge Building Trip to Grand Rapids from April 9, through April 10, 2025, as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote:

Mrs. Risner A, Mr. Bess Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mr. Smith Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Halverson Y.

Motion Carried: 6-o.

D. New Hire

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mr. Halverson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the following New Hire:

Jennifer Fry, 2nd Grade Teacher Beadle Lake Elementary, MA1 Master's
Degree from Western Michigan University (Grow Your Own Staff Member)
As discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote:

Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mr. Bess Y, Mr. Smith Y,
Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Risner A.

Motion Carried: 6-o

E. Food Service Ovens

Motion by Mrs. Waterson, supported by Mr. Halverson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the purchase of an oven
for the middle school and an oven for the high school using food service
funds in the amount not exceeding \$90,000.00, pending bid results as
discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote:

Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mrs. Risner A, Mr. Bess Y, Mr. Smith Y,
Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Wallace Y.

Motion Carried: 6-o.

F. ETSA Sick Time Policy Update

Motion by Mr. Halverson, supported by Mrs. Waterson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the ETSA Sick Time
Policy update as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Smith Y, Mrs. Risner A, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mr. Bess Y,
Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs. Wallace Y.

Motion Carried: 6-o

XIII. Items for the Next Meeting: WIFI concerns

XIV. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Education in public for the purpose of conducting the
School District's business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time
for public participation during the meeting as indicated on the agenda.