

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

Monday, May 12, 2025

6:00 PM - Regular Meeting

Harper Creek Administration Building

7454 B Drive North, Battle Creek, MI 49014

https://youtube.com/live/SDaFq_2zfXo?feature=share

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bess at 6:00 pm.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge was led by Mr. Bess, followed by a moment of silence.
- III. Roll Call: Mrs. Allwardt called the Roll. Present-Mrs. Allwardt, Mr. Bess, Mr. Halverson, Mrs. Risner, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Wallace.
Absent- Mr. Smith and Mrs. Waterson. Student Board Members – Sam Cook, Arabella Stanley, Alex Stiltner
- IV. Review and Approval of Agenda: There were no modifications to the agenda.
- V. Communications
 - A. President's Remarks: Mr. Bess congratulated and thanked the retiring staff on their years of service to Harper Creek Community Schools. Congratulations to Sharon Bailey, Melissa Barnes, Dianna Bartholomew, Cheryl Cunic, Jim Eckert, Nancy Eckert, Kris Gilbert, Ed Greenman, Deb Hall, Jennie Henrich, Joene Joostberns, Carrie Knight, Mark Lowrie, Michelle Migliacco, Michele Morgan, Kim Mowry, Ryan Renner, Mike Rio, Julie Robinson, Dar Smith, and Sharon Waltman. The Board wishes all years of happiness and joy.

B. Administration: Mr. Ridgeway discussed the many exciting events happening around the end of the school year, including the Seniors' last day and walk on Thursday, May 15, at 10:45 am at the high school, Senior Awards on Friday, May 16, at 7:30 am, and Girls on the Run on May 17. Mr. Ridgeway also discussed the upcoming Building Committee meeting on May 19, at 9:00 am in the administration building. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the Board Tour on May 23 at 9:00 am. The tour will be a behind-the-scenes look. Other events Mr. Ridgeway discussed include middle school awards on May 27 and 28, and an 8th-grade celebration on May 28 at 1:45 pm as well as the Distinguished Alumnus and Citizen awards on May 30 at 3:00 pm, honoring this year's recipients, Distinguished Alumnus Mike Katz and Distinguished Citizens Pat and LaNeta Dougherty. Another item Mr. Ridgeway discussed was that the amount of this year's PILT money was \$2,029,000.00.

C. Board Secretary: Mrs. Allwardt thanked the following individuals for their generous donations to Harper Creek Community Schools.

1. Grace Health, Ashley Roberts - \$500.00 for Beadle Lake Staff Appreciation
2. Benjamin Lincoln - \$25,000.00 for Harper Creek Basketball
3. Brad and Lynn Wilson - \$3,967.55 for Harper Creek Champion Project
4. Dave Ponscheck - \$2,861.55 for Harper Creek Champion Project
5. Kingscott, Rob Atkins - \$1,000.00 for Harper Creek Champion Project
6. Eddy Stanton, Stanton Interiors, \$5,000 for Harper Creek Champion Project
7. Tim and Sloane Hutson, \$750.00 for the Harper Creek Champion Project
8. Brandon Hutson, \$250.00 for the Harper Creek Champion Project

VI. District Updates

- A. Curriculum: Mrs. Williams submitted a report to the Board. The first item Mrs. Williams discussed is the coursebooks, which will be the action section of the meeting. It is required that coursebooks be Board-approved. In addition, Mrs. Williams highlighted testing season with students taking NWEA, PSAT, MME, SAT with essay, ACT WorkKeys, and MSTEP. Lastly, Mrs. Williams discussed Countdown to Kindergarten, stating that the event was successful with kindergarteners meeting in their home buildings and coming to the administration for testing.
- B. Facility: Mr. Robinson submitted a report to the Board. He discussed graduation preparations and summer planning. Mr. Robinson stated that his team has been working to keep up with spring sports. In addition, Mr. Robinson stated that his team is working on food service projects as well. Lastly, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the rental property is vacant, and the building committee will discuss how to proceed.
- C. Finance: Mrs. Obermyer submitted the monthly reports, including Board Breakdown, Cash Balance, and the Check Register. Mrs. Obermyer discussed the Cash Balance Report and interest earned through the MILAF+.
- D. Technology: Mr. Maynard discussed the technology purchase included in the Action portion of the meeting. The purchase of Chromebooks, MS carts, cases, licenses, projectors, staff laptops, an auditorium microphone, and band room AV will be purchased using PILT money.

VII. Comments Related to Agenda Items

VIII. 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.

Approve the following list of Meeting Minutes.

- B. Approves May 8, 2025, Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mrs. Risner,

That the Harper Creek Board of Education approve 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:

- Approve the May 8, 2025, Budget Meeting Minutes

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

Motion Carried: 5-0.

IX. Information and Discussion

- A. Safety Committee Update: Mr. Ridgeway discussed the safety
committee's review of the pick-up and drop-off procedures at
Wattles Park Elementary. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed
the secure mode situation at Wattles Park Elementary and was
debriefed with the team. Also, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the
added support for events, including graduation and Girls on
the Run. Lastly, Mr. Ridgeway discussed bus discipline and
safety procedures.
- B. Biennial CISD Board of Education Election: This item was
discussed at the Public Hearing for Naming of Facilities so that
it may be voted on in this meeting.
- C. Budget Update: Mrs. Obermyer updated the Board on the
budget. The final budget will come to the Board at the end of
June. Mrs. Obermyer stated that the spending freeze from
February to May had made a positive impact on the 2024/2025
budget, with the largest impact coming from transportation
and facilities. Another item Mrs. Obermyer discussed is that
there was a better estimate of retirements at the end of the

year. In addition, Mrs. Obermyer discussed the 2025/2026 projected budget as of May 2025 using assumptions in foundation allowance, student count, left retirement revenue and expenses, insurance estimate, At-Risk and transportation grant, and the Special Education CISD indirect rate of 10.44%. Lastly, Mrs. Obermyer and Mr. Ridgeway discussed the adjustment of nine positions through attrition; three high school teachers, two elementary teachers, and four general funded paraprofessionals. An adjustment will be made to decrease technology, transportation, and maintenance.

- D. New Hires: Mr. Ridgeway discussed the new hire, Laurie Cathcart. Ms. Cathcart has a Master's degree from the University of Dayton and will teach Developmental Kindergarten at Beadle Lake Elementary.
- E. Course Books: Mr. Ridgeway stated that the course books are recommended for approval, including elementary, middle school, high school, and Edmentum (online) for the 2025-2026 school year.
- F. Food Service Contract: Mr. Ridgeway stated that the Board of Education must approve the annual renewal of the food service contract. This is currently year two of a five-year contract. Mr. Ridgeway stated that Chartwells continues to do a very good job.
- G. Weight Room Project: Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the fundraising for the Champion Weight Room Project is ongoing. The current amount raised is \$154,000. With that portion secured, the Board needs to approve the bids for flooring and order a significant amount of weight equipment. Mr. Ridgeway recommends the low bidder for flooring, Sorinex, at \$71,378.16, and the purchase of weight equipment from Direct Fitness Solutions for \$77,765.45.
- H. Bus Purchase: Transportation Director Stacy Hendon is recommending the purchase of a lift-equipped bus for our

special needs, wheelchair bound students. The bus will be purchased using PILT money. Mr. Ridgeway recommends the purchase of a new lift bus from Midwest Transport at a cost of \$185,850.00.

- X. Comments From the Audience: Ashley King, WPE parent, discussed the Secure Mode safety call from last Thursday. She commended all who supported and did an excellent job keeping students safe. She offered suggestions for increased safety.

XI. ACTION

A. Biennial CISD Board of Education Election

**RESOLUTION OF THE HARPER CREEK COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION**

WHEREAS, the biennial election of the Board of the Calhoun Intermediate School District will be held on Monday, June 2, 2025, at a meeting of representatives from constituent school boards.

WHEREAS, Section 614(2) of the Revised School Code requires a constituent school board to designate its representative and identify the intermediate school board candidate the board supports for each position to be filled on the board by a resolution adopted not earlier than 21 days prior to the date of the election, [Note- May 12, 2025, is the earliest date that a constituent school board may designative its representative and identify the candidate that the board supports] and

WHEREAS, Section 614(2) prescribes the method for passage of a resolution, including the requirement of considering the resolution at not less than one public meeting before adopting the resolution, and

WHEREAS, the Board previously considered the resolution at an open meeting conducted in a manner prescribed under the Open Meetings Act on May 12, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Board designates Chae Waterson as its representative to serve on the June 2, 2025, electoral body responsible for electing members to the Calhoun Intermediate School District Board of Education and Barry Smith as alternate representative in the event the designated representative is unable to attend.
2. The Board directs its representative, Waterson, to vote for candidates 1) Kenneth Ponds, 2) Jean Goodrich [insert candidate names equal to the number of vacancies] for a term of six years; at least on the first ballot taken at the June 2, 2025, election.
3. The Board authorizes and directs its secretary to file this resolution with the secretary of the Calhoun Intermediate School Board.

Ayes: Members Mr. Halverson, Mrs. Risner, Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Allwardt,

Abstain: Members Mr. Bess

Nays: Members

Resolved this 12 day of May 2025.

B. New Hires:

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

- Laurie Cathcart, Beadle Lake Elementary Developmental Kindergarten, Master's Degree, University of Dayton, MA20.

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

Motion Carried: 5-0

C. Course Books:

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mr. Halverson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the
following Harper Creek coursebooks: High School, Middle
School, Elementary, Edmentum for the 2025-2026 school year,
as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Bess Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Smith A, Mrs.
Waterson A, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Risner Y, Mr. Halverson Y.
Motion Carried: 5-0.

D. Food Service Contract:

Motion by Mrs. Risner, supported by Mrs. Wallace,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approve the annual
Food Service Contract Renewal with Chartwells as discussed
and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs. Waterson
A, Mrs. Risner Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mr. Smith A, Mr. Bess Y.
Motion Carried: 5-0.

E. Weight Room Project:

Motion by Mr. Halverson, supported by Mrs. Risner,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approve the low
bidder for the weight room flooring, Sorinex at \$71,378.16, and
the purchase of weight equipment from Direct Fitness
Solutions for \$77,765.45.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Bess Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Smith A, Mrs.
Wallace Y, Mrs. Risner Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Waterson A.
Motion Carried: 5-0.

F. Student Device Purchase:

Motion by Mrs. Risner, supported by Mr. Halverson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approve the technology
purchases as presented by Technology Director Jim Maynard
using PILT funds for the 2025-2026 school year.

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

Motion Carried: 5-0.

G. Naming of Facilities:

Motion by Mr. Halverson, supported by Mrs. Risner,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approve the
recommendations by the Naming Committee to name the
service drive Matt Byrne Way, as discussed and reviewed.

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

Motion Carried: 5-0

H. Bus Purchase:

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mrs. Risner,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education authorizes the
purchase of a lift bus from Midwest Transport at the cost of
\$185,850.00.

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

Motion Carried: 5-0.

XII. Closed Session – section 8(c) – Collective Bargaining

Motion by Mr. Halverson, supported by Mrs. Risner,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education meet in closed session
under section 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act, for strategy
connected with collective bargaining.

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

Motion Carried: 5-0.

A. Discussion: Closed session 6:57 pm

B. Return to Open Session

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mr. Halverson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education resumes in open
session.

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

Motion Carried: 5-o.

XIII. Items for the Next Meeting – New Staff Orientation on August 15, 2025.

XIV. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 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.