

HARPER CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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Students for Life

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

Monday, October 13, 2025

6:00 PM – Regular Board of Education Meeting

Harper Creek Administration Building

7454 B Drive North, Battle Creek, MI 49014

<https://youtube.com/live/72Rz3MvCbOU?feature=share>

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. (Late due to Special Meeting running over)
- II. Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Bess led in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.
- III. Roll Call: Present- Mrs. Allwardt, Mr. Bess, Mr. Halverson, Mrs. Risner, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Wallace, and Mrs. Waterson.
- IV. Review and Approval of Agenda: There were no modifications to the agenda.
- V. Communications
 - A. President's Remarks:

Mr. Bess apologized for the late start and welcomed everyone to the Board meeting. First, Mr. Bess congratulated the Harper Creek Marching Band on the 1 rating at the MSBOA Festival in Vicksburg. Second, Mr. Bess congratulated the girls' golf team on their 2nd place finish at the regional competition, earning them a trip to the State tournament. Lastly, Mr. Bess stated that swimmer Ella Laupp recently broke a longstanding school record. Congratulations, Ella, who broke the 1987 record in the 500 free swim.
 - B. Administration:

Mr. Ridgeway stated that the Policy Committee will meet on October 20, 2025, to review policy changes from Thrun Law. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the Cardiac Response Task Force will meet to review procedures. Lastly, Mr. Ridgeway gave an update on events. On Friday, October 17, new members will be inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame. November 4, 2025, Harper Creek Community Schools will be the host school for a county-wide professional development. Harper Holly Days, the fundraiser for the BLE PTO, will be on Saturday, November 8, 2025, from 9:00 to 3:00 at Harper Creek High School.

C. Board Secretary:

Mrs. Allwardt recognized the donations of Dennis and Tena Johnson to the Harper Creek Radio Club and an anonymous donation to the Harper Creek Champions Project. In addition, Mrs. Allwardt advised the Board that their packets include communication of interest from Marshall Academy.

VI. Presentations

A. Audit 2024-2025 – Christine Kratzer, Willis and Jurasek

Mrs. Kratzer presented to the Board a report of the conclusion of the 2024-2025 audit done by the Willis and Jurasek firm. Mrs. Kratzer provided information to the Board itemizing the audit. She stated that the fund balance is currently 16.5%, the food service fund spend down plan, and a federal audit of Grow Your Own all resulted in a clean audit.

VII. District Updates

A. Curriculum

Mrs. Williams was out sick; therefore, Mr. Ridgeway highlighted her report. Mr. Ridgeway stated that the curriculum report is structured to align with the pillars of the strategic plan. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the celebrate student success section, which analyzed the fall 2024 and the fall 2025 reading and math NWEA data, showing an upward trend in the percentage of proficiency. Lastly, Mr. Ridgeway stated that MDE -MIMTTSS Center shows that Harper Creek Community School is eligible for the following 2024-2025 MiMTSS Recognition Awards:

School Behavior Implementation and Impact

Beadle Lake Elementary School – Tier 1: Bronze, Tier 2: Bronze

Harper Creek High School – Tier 1: Silver

Harper Creek Middle School – Tier 1 Silver

Sonoma Elementary – Tier 1 Silver, Tier 2 Bronze

Wattles Park Elementary School – Tier 1 Silver, Tier 2 Bronze

B. Facility:

Mr. Robinson submitted a report to the Board. He highlighted the work being done in the weight room at the high school, as the new flooring has been installed, and the equipment has arrived and will be set up by the end of the week. In addition, Mr. Robinson stated that the ordering for the Filter First project is underway, and his team will install it once the equipment arrives. Lastly, Mr. Robinson stated that he continues to work with the Steering Committee.

C. Finance:

Mrs. Obermyer submitted all the reports for the Board's review, highlighting the Cash Balance Report. Mrs. Obermyer purchased five CDs at 4% interest from Southern Michigan Bank. In addition, Mrs. Obermyer discussed the State Budget, which was finalized. Mrs. Obermyer estimated the changes to the bottom line, noting a fifty-dollar increase in the pupil foundation allowance, an estimated increase of thirty pupils from the spring count, and a retirement cut to revenue. Mrs. Obermyer will continue to update the Board on changes to the budget.

D. Technology:

Mr. Maynard submitted a report to the Board. Mr. Maynard highlighted the purchase of student devices, discussing the price difference between Chromebooks versus touchscreen devices. The touchscreens are more expensive and cannot be repaired due to the screen being glued.

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

IX. Consent Agenda - All items on this consent agenda were previously considered by the Harper Creek Board of Education, recommended by the Central Office, and will be acted upon in a single roll call vote of the Board. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a board member so requests, in which event the matter shall be removed from the consent agenda and considered as a separate item.

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

1. Approves September 8, 2025, Public Hearing- Naming of Facilities Meeting Minutes
2. Approves September 8, 2025, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes

3. Approves October 9, 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 Service Fund checks (School Lunch), and Student/School Activities Fund checks, in accordance with the list discussed.

Approve the following minutes as reviewed:

- Approves September 8, 2025, Public Hearing Naming of Facilities Meeting Minutes
- Approves September 8, 2025, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes

- Approves October 9, 2025, Budget Meeting Minutes
- Roll Call Vote: Mr. Bess Y, Mrs. Risner Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mr. Smith Y.
- Motion Carried: 7-0.

X. Comments from the Audience: There were no comments from the audience.

XI. Information and Discussion

A. School Safety:

Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the safety committee will prioritize safety initiatives for the bond, including window film, shades, and door locks. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the WPE pick-up/drop-off. The committee is considering options to increase safety. Mr. Ridgeway will discuss options with Officer King to get the law enforcement perspective.

B. Strategic Plan Update:

Mr. Ridgeway discussed succession planning with Grow Your Own staff members as well as administrators. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the team has conducted round one assistant superintendent interviews and plans on having a second round later in the month. Also, Mr. Ridgeway discussed that he is working with K-12 Media, making videos to prepare for the bond. Videos will highlight fiscal stewardship among other topics.

C. Bond Discussion:

Mr. Ridgeway discussed that the Steering Committee is continuing to meet. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway is meeting with staff from each building to understand the priorities that they see. Mr. Ridgeway will also be attending township meetings. The goal is to bring a Bond recommendation to the Board in January. The next Steering Committee meeting will be on November 5, 2025, at Sonoma Elementary. This meeting will be a walking tour of the facility.

D. Summer Tax Levy Resolution:

Mr. Ridgeway stated that to collect summer taxes, the Board of Education must act to notify townships before December 31, 2025. Harper Creek collects school tax in the summer only to help with cash flow, so we do not need to borrow money to get through September.

E. School of Choice 2nd Semester:

Under Michigan law, schools can choose to open school of choice for the second semester. Harper Creek has not opened second semester for several years

F. Programming:

Mr. Ridgeway discussed potential programming for our district, including advanced placement testing, a middle school athletic director, and e-sports. In addition, Mr. Ridgeway discussed the Ford Blue Oval -Fab Lab grant. This grant purchases the equipment and provides training for a project-based learning program to be housed in the high school.

XII. ACTION

A. Summer Tax Levy Resolution Resolution

Harper Creek Community Schools, Calhoun County, Michigan (the District)
A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the District (the “Board”) was held in the Harper Creek Community Schools Administration Building, within the boundaries of the District, on the 13th day of October 2025, at 6:00 o’clock in the PM. (the Meeting).

The Meeting was called to order by Mr. Bess, President.

Present: Mrs. Allwardt, Mr. Bess, Mr. Halverson, Mrs. Risner, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Waterson

Absent: None

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member Mrs. Wallace and supported by Member Mr. Halverson.

WHEREAS:

1. This Board desires to request that each city and/or township in which the District is located agree to collect the summer tax levy of 100% of annual school property taxes, including debt services, upon property located within the District for 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Superintendent or designee is authorized and directed to forward to the governing body of each city and/or township in which the District is located a copy of this Board’s resolution requesting that each such city and/or township agree to collect the summer tax levy of 100% of annual school property taxes, including debt services, upon property located within the District for 2026.
2. The Superintendent or designee is authorized and directed to negotiate on behalf of the District with the governing body of each city and/or township in which the District is located for the reasonable expenses for collection of the District’s summer tax levy that the city and/or township may bill under the

Revised School Code. Any such proposed agreement shall be brought before this Board for its approval or disapproval.

3. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution are rescinded.

Ayes: Mr. Halverson, Mrs. Risner, Mrs. Waterson, Mrs. Allwardt, Mrs. Wallace, Mr. Smith, Mr. Bess

Nays: None

Resolution declared adopted.

Mrs. Allwardt
Secretary, Board of Education

The undersigned, duly qualified and acting Secretary of the Board of Education of Harper Creek Community Schools, Calhoun County, Michigan, hereby certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board at the Meeting, the original of which is part of the Board's minutes. The undersigned further certifies that notice of the Meeting was given to the public pursuant to the provisions of the "Open Meetings Act" (Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended).

Mrs. Allwardt
Secretary, Board of Education

B. School of Choice 2nd Semester

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mr. Halverson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education decline participation in the Schools of Choice, Section 105, for the second semester of the 2025-26 school year.

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

Motion Carried: 7-0

C. 2024-2025 Audit Approval

Motion by Mrs. Wallace, supported by Mr. Halverson,
That the Harper Creek Board of Education approves the 2024-2025 Audit completed and presented by the auditing firm of Willis and Jurasek, as discussed and reviewed.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Bess Y, Mr. Halverson Y, Mrs. Risner Y, Mrs. Wallace Y, Mrs. Waterson Y, Mrs. Allwardt Y, Mr. Smith Y.
Motion Carried: 7-0.

- XIII. Items for the Next Meeting: The Board requested to review the Discipline Policy, which can be found on the District's website, and Board members can also find the policy in Boardbook.
- XIV. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Education in public for 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.