

Minutes in Brief SOUTHERN OREGON EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

Call to Order The regular meeting of the Southern Oregon Education Service District Board of Directors was held in the downstairs conference room of the SOESD administration office in Medford and by video/audio conference on Wednesday, September 17, 2025. Chair Mannenbach called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Attendance Board members in attendance: Board members absent:
Mary Barton No members were absent
Ariel Bloomer (via video conference)
Brian Clark
Jessie Hecocta (via video conference)
Rhonda Lawrence (via video conference)
Ana Mannenbach
Bob Moore (via video conference)
Rebecca Mueller
Richie Owens

SOESD staff members and guests in attendance:

Mark Angle-Hobson	Katie Kelley (video conf)
Tom Bigboy	Liz Littleton
Shannon Bilbao	Daniel NLN (video conf)
Christopher Brown	Justine NLN (video conf)
Celine Buczek (video conf)	Allison Orton (video conf)
Daniel Burdis (video conf)	Susan Reynolds (video conf)
Karla Clark	Derek Sossic
Stephanie Cossey	Amelia Stirewalk
Isobel Evergreen	Ryan Swearingen
Forest Evergreen	Amy Szeliga (video conf)
Erin Green	Angie Thompson (video conf)
Barbara Griffin (video conf)	Ruth Thompson
Kylee Harrison	Kristy Thorson (video conf)
Susan Hermes	Andrea Townsend
Louise Horn	Carlie Wiley-Wolter (video conf)
Jacquee Jacquette (video conf)	Jeanetta Woodside

Comments from Representatives of the Association Amy Szeliga, president of the licensed association highlighted ongoing bargaining efforts, stressed the importance of Article 17, Working Conditions and remote work policies, shared an employee’s pay cut story to illustrate staffing challenges, and urged the board to prioritize better compensation.

Isobel Evergreen, co-president of the classified association, thanked the administration for a collaborative bargaining experience.

Requests to Address Agenda Item

Celine Buczek, Request to Address Agenda Item 4.C: Contracts for Staffing Services
Ms. Buczek spoke regarding SOESD’s use of independent contractors and requested that the board closely evaluate the impact of these staffing contracts.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consisted of the following items:

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of Minutes:
 - Organizational Meeting, July 16, 2025
 - Special Meeting – Board Retreat, August 18, 2025
- C. Personnel Report
- D. Financial Report

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MUELLER, SECONDED BY MEMBER BARTON TO:
Approve all items on the consent agenda with an error noted in the footer of the special meeting minutes reflecting an incorrect date of January 18, 2023.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Member Mary Barton | Aye |
| Member Ariel Bloomer | Aye |
| Member Brian Clark | Aye |
| Member Jessie Hecocta | Aye |
| Member Rhonda Lawrence | Aye |
| Member Ana Mannenbach | Aye |
| Member Bob Moore | Aye |
| Member Rebecca Mueller | Aye |
| Member Richie Owens | Aye |

MOTION PASSED 9-0

Communications

- A. Superintendent’s Report
Superintendent Angle-Hobson noted the meeting’s full agenda and provided a brief update on the Superintendent’s report, inviting questions from the board.
- B. Student Focal Groups Presentation
Andrea Townsend, School Improvement Coordinator, presented an overview of the department’s support for five focal student groups: English Learners, Migrant Education, Indian Education, LGBTQIA2S+, and a new Talented and Gifted initiative. She highlighted district partnerships, professional development, and technical assistance. Key services include early learning, tutoring, graduation support, cultural programming, and inclusive engagement. The department offers interpreter training, regional coordinator collaboration, and partnerships for Black youth leadership. Program successes include the Unity Conference and Native Student Unions.

Business Affairs

- A. Phoenix Reconstruction Update Presentation
Emily Stirewalt, Project Manager with HMK Company, provided an update on the SOESD Phoenix Campus reconstruction project, confirming it was on time and on budget. Key milestones include the installation of skylights and switchgear connections that will provide power to the building. The project is ahead of schedule for interior finishes, and exterior work is progressing well.

Substantial completion is anticipated for March 2026. Photos of the site showed the progress made since the start.

- B. Contract for Ramsey Building Update Presentation
Administration requested the board award a contract to Vitus Construction, Inc. for the Ramsey Avenue Renovation Project in Grants Pass where SOESD provides Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) services. David McKay, of HMK Company, answered the board's questions regarding the bid process. Mr. McKay noted that while only one bid was received, Vitus Construction is a competitive contractor in the region for these types of projects.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MUELLER, SECONDED BY MEMBER OWENS TO:
Award a contract to Vitus Construction, Inc., not to exceed \$1,043,807.00 for the Ramsey Avenue Renovation Project.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

- C. Contracts for Staffing Services
There was discussion on ongoing challenges in filling specialized staff roles, such as school psychologists and sign language interpreters. Many positions remain vacant and are posted on the district's website long-term. There are statewide staffing shortages, prompting the district to hire from staffing agencies to maintain service continuity. Chief Human Resource Officer Ryan Swearingen noted that contractors can be somewhat more cost-effective, but the SOESD would prefer to hire permanent employees. Board members' questions centered on recruitment strategies, a shortage of experienced specialists, and pay scales. Broader workforce issues were discussed, including the need to develop more training programs through Oregon universities. There are efforts to advocate for these issues through professional statewide associations. Assistant Superintendent Harrison highlighted state stipends for speech-language training and the SOESD's Grow Your Own program to support sustainable staffing. Superintendent Angle-Hobson noted that specialist stipends are included in the licensed bargaining agreement. Ms. Harrison explained that while permanent staff offer consistency for students, staff retention remains a challenge; the goal is to build a stable workforce.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER CLARK, SECONDED BY MEMBER BARTON TO:
Approve entering into agreements for staffing services not to exceed the amounts presented.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye

Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

Administration

- A. Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement between Southern Oregon ESD and Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) Chapter #104
 The tentative agreement reached with the classified association to settle the 2025-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement was provided to the board for review prior to the meeting. Superintendent Angle-Hobson expressed appreciation for the collaborative tone during classified negotiations. He noted that minor errors in the tentative agreement, including a missed update to discretionary leave on page 15 and unclear language in section 13(1) will be corrected by Peggy Stock, the district’s bargaining representative, in coordination with the association’s representative when they meet to review the final document together.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER MUELLER, SECONDED BY MEMBER OWENS TO:

Approve the 2025-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement between Southern Oregon ESD and OSEA Chapter 104 with the understanding that 8.3 and 13.1 will undergo further clarification.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

- B. Appointment of Chief Financial Officer
 On June 18, 2025 the Board appointed then District Controller Jeanetta Woodside to serve as the Acting Chief Financial Officer (CFO) while the CFO and District Controller positions remained posted. A District Controller has now been hired, and Superintendent Angle-Hobson recommended officially appointing Jeanetta Woodside as SOESD’s Chief Financial Officer.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER BARTON, SECONDED BY MEMBER CLARK, TO:

Appoint Jeanetta Woodside as CFO.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye

Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

C. Nominations for OSBA Legislative Policy Committee

The Board discussed the upcoming elections for OSBA’s Legislative Policy Committee. Members Mueller and Owens expressed interest in serving. Both shared their motivations, with Member Mueller emphasizing rural representation and solutions-focused advocacy, and Member Owens highlighting youth perspective, special needs advocacy, and prior lobbying experience.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER OWENS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BLOOMER TO:

Nominate myself (*Member Owens*) for the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee for Southern Region 5.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Abstain

MOTION PASSED 8 – 0, with one abstention.

D. Nominations for OAESD Governance Council

The Board discussed serving on the OAESD Governance Council. No nominations were received. Member Owens expressed interest in serving if not elected to the Legislative Policy Committee. Superintendent Angle-Hobson will request additional information on serving on the Governance Council from Sam Breyer, the OAESD Executive Director.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER OWENS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BARTON TO:

Postpone the nomination until after October 20, 2025.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

E. LGBTQIA2S+ Caucus Letter of Support

The Board reviewed a proposed letter of support for the LGBTQIA2S+ Caucus within OSBA. The letter affirms support for transitioning the group from an

OSBA advisory committee to a caucus, which would grant voting rights and a budget. Members discussed the caucus structure and its distinction from advisory committees, noting similar groups within OSBA such as the Oregon Rural School Board Members Caucus and the Oregon School Board Members of Color Caucus.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER BARTON, SECONDED BY MEMBER OWENS TO:

Approve the letter of support for the LGBTQIA2S+ Caucus as presented.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

F. Superintendent/Board Operating Agreement

The Board reviewed the draft Superintendent and Board Operating Agreements developed during the August 18, 2025 Special Meeting – Board Retreat. The agreements reflect the discussions during that meeting.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER HECOCTA, SECONDED BY MEMBER CLARK TO:

Approve the Superintendent/Board Operating Agreement as presented.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

G. OSBA Superintendent Evaluation and Targeted Feedback Survey Tool

The Board reviewed the proposed OSBA Superintendent Evaluation and Targeted Feedback Survey Tool for 2025–2026, previously discussed at the August 18, 2025 Special Meeting – Board Retreat. The survey tool aims to gather input from constituents, SOESD staff, and others. Some dates remain to be determined, and estimated costs were outlined. Superintendent Angle-Hobson emphasized the importance of including external feedback as part of his annual evaluation.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER HECOCTA, SECONDED BY MEMBER BARTON TO:

Adopt the OSBA Superintendent Evaluation and Targeted Feedback Survey tool as the official evaluation instrument for the Superintendent.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye

Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

H. Superintendent’s Goals

The Board reviewed Superintendent Angle-Hobson’s proposed goals for the year, aligned with seven of the eight OSBA standards. Standard four was intentionally left blank due to limited access to student achievement data, which is more relevant to K–12 districts. Members discussed using the goals as a baseline for evaluation this first year. Superintendent Angle-Hobson noted that many of the standards align with his entry plan and the work he plans to do as part of his first year, with some having already produced artifacts. Board members emphasized honoring the work already completed and suggested incorporating district feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and newsletters, to support an inclusive culture. Superintendent Angle-Hobson agreed to add these elements and clarified that existing regional superintendent meetings could also serve as feedback opportunities.

IT WAS MOVED BY MEMBER BARTON, SECONDED BY MEMBER OWENS TO:

Approve the Superintendent Goals as presented.

Member Mary Barton	Aye
Member Ariel Bloomer	Aye
Member Brian Clark	Aye
Member Jessie Hecocta	Aye
Member Rhonda Lawrence	Aye
Member Ana Mannenbach	Aye
Member Bob Moore	Aye
Member Rebecca Mueller	Aye
Member Richie Owens	Aye

MOTION PASSED 9-0

I. First Reading of Proposed SOESD Board Policies

The Board reviewed proposed policies prepared by OSBA with the Cabinet's recommendations on bracketed language. Members raised questions about specific policies, including the Non-Discrimination and Administrator Evaluation policies. Superintendent Angle-Hobson will highlight Cabinet recommendations in future drafts and adjust formatting for readability.

Policies JFCEB, JFCEB-AR, along with policies KL, and KL-AR were discussed in first reading to meet the requirement of Executive Order 25-09 that a student cell phone policy be adopted and in place by October 31, 2025. A consistent cell phone policy for Career Center students was emphasized, and the Board agreed to update policies to remove gendered language.

Miscellaneous

A. Strategic Planning Committee Meeting – September 30, 2025

- B. Next Regular Meeting: October 15, 2025, 6:00 PM, SOESD Administration Office
- C. OSBA Fall Regional Dinner Meeting, Monday October 20, 2025, Ashland Hills Hotel, 5:30– 8:00 pm.
A buffet dinner will be served at 6:30 pm. *Please RSVP to the board secretary if you plan to attend.*
- D. OSBA Annual Convention Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront, November 6-8, 2025
Board members interested in attending are asked to let the board secretary know as soon as possible so that lodging and conference registrations can be made.
- E. HB 2805 (2023) requires all ESD and school board members to complete public meeting training once per term of office. The recording of OSBA’s webinar provided on February 6, 2025 is available to board members through the OSBA/PACE membership portal. It is each board member’s responsibility to ensure they complete the mandatory training at once per term.

Adjournment

The regular meeting of the SOESD Board of Directors adjourned at 8:06 PM.