



## Unofficial Minutes

USD 417 BOE Regular Meeting  
Monday, January 13, 2025 - 6:00 PM  
District Office Board Room  
17 Wood Street  
Council Grove, KS 66846

### Call to Order

President Terry Powell called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Terry Powell, Jamie Johnson, Patty Talley, Kelsey Hartman, Jay Troxell, Don Alderman, and TinaRae Scott

**Others Present:** Superintendent Tyson Eslinger, Amber Weeks, Matt Weaver, Dana Reddick, Adam Travis, Sarah Malcolm, Jay Doornbos, Jill Day, Cindy Jensen, Angela Picolet, Kelcy Bremer, Tom VanValkenburg, Jan Sciacca, Bryce Johnson, Valerie Gehrler, and Lori Pollock.

### Additions/Approval of Agenda

**Action(s):** I make a motion to approve the agenda as presented. This motion, made by TinaRae Scott and seconded by Jamie Johnson, Carried.

**Voting Detail:** Don Alderman: Yea, Jamie Johnson: Yea, Jay Troxell: Yea, Kelsey Hartman: Yea, Patty Talley: Yea, Terry Powell: Yea, TinaRae Scott: Yea

**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

### Student Spotlight - PHES 5th Grade Starbase Presentation

Mrs. Lori Pollock presented on the PHES 5th Grade STARBASE experience. STARBASE is a non-residential American military educational program that offers students practical applications of math and science. The students engage in activities and interact with military personnel to explore career options and witness real-world STEM applications.

### Consent Agenda

**Action(s):** I make a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. This motion, made by TinaRae Scott and seconded by Kelsey Hartman, Carried.

**Voting Detail:** Don Alderman: Yea, Jamie Johnson: Yea, Jay Troxell: Yea, Kelsey Hartman: Yea, Patty Talley: Yea, Terry Powell: Yea, TinaRae Scott: Yea

**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

- Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings - December 9th, 2024
- Financial Reports/Pay Bills in the amount of \$271,511.04
- Donations and Gifts
- Approve Monthly Policy Review Policies: JCE Complaints of Discrimination, JCEC Demonstrations, JDA Corporal Punishment, JDB Detention and KASB Policies and Forms: BDA Developing, Adopting, Amending, and Repealing Board Policy, CC Organizational Chart, CD Administrative Line and Staff Relations (DELETE), CG Administrative Personnel, CGI Administrator Evaluation (DELETE), CNA Preservation of Documents Pending Legal Action, DE Fraud Prevention and Investigation, DFAC Federal Fiscal Compliance, DFAC Grant Subrecipient Monitoring Procedures, Procurement Federal Program, Allowability of Costs, CASH Management, Types of Costs Obligations and Property Management, GAE Complaints, ICA Pilot Projects, IDACA Special Education Services, JGFGAA Stock Supply of Emergency Medication, JGFGBA Student Self-Administration of Medication, and KN Complaints.



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- Personnel
  - Resignations
    - Chasity Ehrlich - PHES ASP Director
    - Nancy Kempfer - CGES Teacher Aide
    - Butch Hayes - CGHS Head Football Coach
  - Retirement
    - Bruce Hula - CGJSHS PE Teacher/Online Course Facilitator, Head Boys Basketball Coach effective July 31, 2025

**Director Reports: Any further additions will be reported at this time.**

**Director of Facilities/Grounds - Tom VanValkenburg**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions.

**Director of Transportation - Matt Weaver**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions. Mr. Weaver mentioned that the new transit arrived just before the meeting tonight.

**Director of Health Services - Dana Reddick**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions.

**Director of Food Service - Becky Shearer**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions.

**Instructional Coach - Sarah Malcolm**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions.

**Administrative Reports: Any further additions will be reported at this time.**

**Council Grove Elementary Principal - Kelcy Bremer**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions.

**Prairie Heights Elementary Principal - Angela Harris**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions. Mrs. Harris presented the board with a Thank You poster signed by students at PHES.

**Council Grove Junior Senior High School Principal - Jay Doornbos**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions.

**Council Grove Junior Senior High School Activities Director - Matt Fox**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions.

**Director of Student Learning - Valerie Gehrler**

The report was provided in the packet, and the board had no questions. Mrs. Gehrler received a welcome back on her first day back to work in the office.



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### Superintendent - Tyson Eslinger

- Coffee with the superintendent will be a pilot community engagement event held every other month. This will provide an opportunity for community members to engage with the superintendent.
- The Strategic Plan audit conducted by Cultivate Education will be presented at next month's board meeting.
- Discussed health insurance and retirement savings options.
- The legislative session started today, with expectations that it will conclude by the Easter break.
- Met with the administration today to discuss the budget planning process and the timeline for the budget.
- Update on school transportation: Due to a shortage of bus drivers, we have combined some routes and moved a bus stop from the Americus pumphouse to the Dunlap fire station. We are actively seeking to hire more bus drivers.
- A special shout-out to Tom and his crew for their hard work over the past week during what could have been a top-five storm in our area.

### Discussion Items

#### FY23-24 Audit Presentation

Cindy Jensen presented on the FY23-24 Financial audit and had no concerns.

#### C&C Group Energy Audit Presentation

Adam Travis from C&C Group presented the findings of our recent energy audit, which aimed to reduce facility operating energy costs. The projected annual savings are estimated to be \$63,388, resulting in a total savings of \$1,238,564 over 15 years. This will be added as an action item for approval at the February board meeting.

#### Trimester Presentation

CGJSHS Principal Jay Doornbos presented information about the CGJSHS trimester schedule, discussing its origins, motivations, and benefits. He explained the differences between trimester and semester systems. Due to budget cuts and a decrease in enrollment, the school had to eliminate 7.5 to 9 positions, making it difficult to staff the current setup with existing personnel; additional staff would be required.

Feedback from the staff indicated that out of 34 responses, 30 (88%) preferred the trimester schedule, while 4 (12%) favored the semester system. Staff shared both advantages and disadvantages of each schedule. Student feedback was also collected, revealing that out of 125 responses, 100 students (80%) preferred the trimester schedule, and 25 students (20%) preferred the semester schedule. Students provided their own lists of pros and cons for the trimester format.

CGJSHS Counselor Jill Day shared her perspective, stating that the trimester system is not a hardship for her. She noted that it offers more opportunities and that the difference between semester and trimester schedules does not pose challenges for colleges or Advanced



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Placement (AP) courses. She also explained the value of enrichment courses.

Mr. Doornbos explained the challenges involved in switching to a semester schedule and proposed several enhancements aimed at improving student success. These include increasing staffing for English classes, implementing a "Brave" period, enhancing the placement process for newly enrolled students, and conducting regular reviews of the schedule.

### **Discuss Policies: JDC Probation, JDD Suspension and Expulsion Procedures, JDDA Drug-Free Schools, JDDAA Student Misuse of Medication, and DFH Fundraising Activities.**

Superintendent Eslinger presented several student policies, including JDC Probation, JDD Suspension and Expulsion Procedures, JDDA Drug-Free Schools, and JDDAA Student Misuse of Medication. The DFH Fundraising Activities policy was removed from the consent agenda for further discussion with the administration. These policies will be added to the agenda for approval at the February meeting.

### **District Cell Phone Policy**

Superintendent Eslinger discussed the report from the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Student Screen Time. The state recommends removing personal devices from students. Taking away their phones will have a significant impact on their health, mental health, and overall well-being. Students become accustomed to this. The CGJSHS administration supports implementing more restrictive measures. Chanute recently introduced a policy that also includes students' smartwatches. The board has requested information on the cost of magnetic pouches (Yondr). Additionally, they will review policies from Herington, White City, and Chanute.

### **2025-2026 and 2026-2027 School Calendar**

Superintendent Eslinger discussed the draft school calendar for the next two years and highlighted the importance of Professional Development days. We must grow and develop our staff; if we don't, how can we expect our students to improve? The proposed changes include Talent Development, moving to late starts instead of early dismissals, and rescheduling Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTC) to occur earlier in the school year in September and the second Parent-Teacher Conferences for elementary students to January and the junior/senior high to March. The calendars will be added for approval at the February meeting. Additionally, the wording in the draft calendar for 2026-2027 needs to be corrected to state "late start" instead of "early dismissal." Jamie has requested a discussion about providing breakfast on late start days or offering a grab-and-go option.

### **Facilities Improvement**

Superintendent Eslinger discussed the need for future work related to traffic flow and parking at CGES and budgeting for these plans. He held a recent meeting with KVK. Additionally, a roofing inspection by engineers was postponed due to weather conditions. Tom VanValkenburg was asked about leaks in the roofs following the storm. He noted that the main concern was with the boiler roof, which has been addressed by removing the snow.



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### School Board Recognition Month

Superintendent Eslinger presented the board members with certificates as a thank you during School Board Recognition Month.

### Executive Session - Personnel

**Action(s):** I make a motion to recess for 5 minutes and then go into a 10-minute Executive Session in order to discuss an individual employee's performance pursuant to non-elected personnel exception under KOMA with the board, and Superintendent Eslinger. The open meeting will resume in the board room at 9:06 p.m. The board recessed from 8:51 p.m. and returned at 8:56 p.m. The Board went into Executive Session at 8:56 p.m. The Board returned to Open Session at 9:06 p.m. This motion, made by TinaRae Scott and seconded by Kelsey Hartman, Carried.

**Voting Detail:** Don Alderman: Yea, Jamie Johnson: Yea, Jay Troxell: Yea, Kelsey Hartman: Yea, Patty Talley: Yea, Terry Powell: Yea, TinaRae Scott: Yea

**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

### Action Items

#### Approve FY23-24 Audit

**Action(s):** I make a motion to approve the FY23-24 Audit as presented by Cindy Jensen, CPA. This motion, made by Jamie Johnson and seconded by Patty Talley, Carried.

**Voting Detail:** Don Alderman: Yea, Jamie Johnson: Yea, Jay Troxell: Yea, Kelsey Hartman: Yea, Patty Talley: Yea, Terry Powell: Yea, TinaRae Scott: Yea

**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

#### Approve FFA Trip

**Action(s):** I make a motion to approve the FFA trip for 7 students and their sponsor to Nevada, Missouri, from January 29th to 30th, 2025, for the Missouri Welding Institute's Welding Competition. This motion, made by TinaRae Scott and seconded by Kelsey Hartman, Carried.

**Voting Detail:** Don Alderman: Yea, Jamie Johnson: Yea, Jay Troxell: Yea, Kelsey Hartman: Yea, Patty Talley: Yea, Terry Powell: Yea, TinaRae Scott: Yea

**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

#### Approve JAG-K (Jobs for America's Graduates-Kansas)

**Action(s):** I make a motion to approve the JAG-K program as presented to begin for the 2025-2026 school year. This motion, made by Jamie Johnson and seconded by Patty Talley, Carried.

**Voting Detail:** Don Alderman: Yea, Jamie Johnson: Yea, Jay Troxell: Yea, Kelsey Hartman: Yea, Patty Talley: Yea, Terry Powell: Yea, TinaRae Scott: Yea

**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

#### Approve EMC Coverage

**Action(s):** I make a motion to approve the quote from EMC for \$135,259 for the insurance renewal period of January 1st, 2025 - June 30th, 2025. This motion, made by TinaRae Scott and seconded by Patty Talley, Carried.



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**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

**Reaffirmation of Resolutions - Meeting Dates and Officer Elections**

**Action(s):** I make a motion to reaffirm the meeting date and officer election resolutions from July 2024. This motion, made by Jamie Johnson and seconded by Jay Troxell, Carried.

**Voting Detail:** Don Alderman: Yea, Jamie Johnson: Yea, Jay Troxell: Yea, Kelsey Hartman: Yea, Patty Talley: Yea, Terry Powell: Yea, TinaRae Scott: Yea

**Voting Summary:** Yea: 7, Nay: 0

**Good News by Board of Education Members**

- TinaRae Scott expressed that we made the right decision to keep both kids and staff at home for their safety. She extended a huge shout-out to everyone involved in the rescheduling, acknowledging that it was a significant request of the teachers and appreciating their flexibility.
- Don Alderman mentioned that he has been on the school board for one year now and has learned a great deal. He noted that we are surrounded by people who are dedicated to doing the right things, and that we are fortunate to have them.
- Jay Troxell offered a big shout-out to Mr. Bruce Hula for teaching kids how to drive for 26 years. It is much appreciated!
- Kelsey Hartman commended the maintenance and custodial staff, noting that she has been to multiple other sports facilities, and ours are significantly cleaner. Kudos to the team! Patty Talley recognized the PHES PTO and PHES students for their recent soup supper and music program, stating that it feels good to be a part of such events.
- Jamie Johnson expressed her gratitude for prioritizing safety before sending kids back to school. She greatly appreciated the effort put into this decision.
- Terry Powell highlighted the excellent work done by our maintenance department over the past week. He also gave a shout-out to Coach Butch Hayes and senior Ace Monihen for their involvement in the Kansas Shrine Bowl. Kudos to them!

**Adjournment**

President Terry Powell adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

**Next Regular BOE Meeting - February 10, 2025**

APPROVED:

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Amber Weeks, USD 417 Board Clerk

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Terry Powell, President, BOE