

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Independent School District No. 820
Sebeka, MN 56477
March 9, 2026**

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. with the following members were in attendance: Jeannie Arthur, Kayla Frame, Rodney Huttunen, Cheri Kangas, Eric Nelson and JoAnn Olson. Absent: Nate Erickson. Also present were Superintendent Dave Kerkvliet; Business Manager Holly Paulson; staff members Jerome Meyer, Melissa Koch, Andrea Rusk from Sourcewell, Jenny Hoppe from the Sebeka Foundation and several members from the PTA, a few 5th grade parents and Review Messenger Reporter Dave Hanson.

Under Visitor and Delegation comments, several members of the PTA, Sebeka Foundation and 5th grade parents were in attendance. Jenny Hoppe from the Sebeka Foundation reported on what the Foundation does and noted that they have raised \$20,000 in seed money for building endowments and has received \$1,000 in donations and also secured an Initiative School Project grant in the amount of \$5,000. They were able to fund and award four teachers with projects by purchasing microscopes, acoustic guitars, solar cars and elementary sensory materials and were asking the school board to come together in unity to support an operating referendum to help with the school's funding. Jessica Rarick, a member of the Sebeka PTA, also spoke in favor of an operating referendum to help the school with funding and urging the school board to go forward with a referendum in November and Kim Thurston, a 5th grade parent, also voiced her opinion regarding the cuts that have been made and how those cuts have affected the 5th grade class. She noted that she would be in favor of an operating referendum if the board could give their assurance that moving forward, the school board would realize that K-6 education is very important and look for options as to what would be best for the students.

Also under Visitor comments, Andrea Rusk, Sebeka's Strategic Partner from Sourcewell, reviewed updates regarding Sourcewell's partnering with Sebeka School District to boost student success by participating in Metier, New Teacher Academy, Career Pathways and Effective Schools Blueprint Quick Look which helps districts identify the essential structures and practices of a strong educational system and utilizes data to prioritize and focus improvement efforts. She also reviewed the Sebeka School Service and Support plan for 2025-2026 regarding Education Solutions programs, student focused programs such as Metier, Student Competition (Knowledge Bowl, Spelling Bee), STEMbound, Students of Character Celebration, World Savvy Event, and student conferences; and the Educator Focused programs such as AVID, Educator Networks, Educators of Excellence celebration, READ Act, and New Teacher Training and Mentoring.

Frame moved, Kangas seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

The Budget Committee reported that they have met a couple of times and are in the process of working through ideas for budget savings including capital needs, cost contaminants, new revenue streams, capital facilities bonds, and Federal funding.

The Negotiations Committee reported that they have been meeting with Superintendent Kerkvliet to negotiate a superintendent contract.

The Pairing Committee met in Menahga on Wednesday, March 4th. The committee reviewed pairing agreements for updates, additions and changes. They approved the Fall Cross Country coaching assignments for Ed Heltunen, Nick Jasmer, Nicole Oyster and Steve Schreiber as a volunteer coach contingent upon a successful background check. Discussion was held on the following paired sports: wrestling season, noting the positive season and state meet results; reviewed the agreement for wrestling cheerleading and bringing coaches together to come up with a student centered program; future meets for Speech; future of sixth grade competing on the junior high team for golf; track coaches and any future changes to any shared/paired positions. Discussion was also held on the alignment of school calendars for the year, staff development, transportation departments, activities and training.

Business Manager Holly Paulson reported that ACA 1095 Forms for 2025 have been completed and submitted to the IRS; received the Workers Comp modification rating of 1.03 from .74 last year and noting that it reflects claims for 2022, 2023, and 2024 and that it takes three years to drop our rating to a lower score and due to the increase in the rating we will be paying a higher premium; received an email from MDE regarding the Compensatory Revenue for FY2027 and reviewed the "What If" report they sent showing a decrease in compensatory revenue for FY2027; working on the FY2026 final budget revision to present at the April or May board meeting; and completing the FY2027 insurance package with MarchMcLennan agency which is due March 19th.

Mr. Lillquist's AD report included that the Park Region Conference has decided to go with Bound for our scheduling platform for activities and noting that it will be more user friendly and will be better for displaying the calendar and events on our website; and he has not received any applications for the Summer Rec Director position so he is willing to do it for one more year and then will need to look at making some changes to the position so we can get some applicants.

Principal Westberg's report included that she did a podcast with Sourcewell about our Career and College Readiness program; attended the "I Love U Guys" workshop with Mrs. Kern; our "820online" school is getting closer to being live, noting that we have started 4 Credit Recovery with our seniors and Mrs. Kern is working on making a course catalog and researching what most schools do for forms noting that most schools use two types of forms, an interest survey which gives the school a general idea of who the student is and once submitted then parents would be contacted to explain how 820online works and if it is a good fit then enrollment papers, records request and open enrollment forms if needed would be sent out.

Superintendent Kerkvliet reported on the Sebeka Foundation noting that they have obtained some grant funds and was able to support projects in Science, Music and Special Education; reviewed a new policy from MSBA that addresses AI in schools; attends MREA meetings on Mondays to stay informed on legislative updates; MASA is also providing legislative updates with federal level support; applied with MDE to create a new school site for our online option; scheduled roof replacements for the multipurpose room and the 1957 gym with Herzog for July and coordinated the gym floor maintenance; will be working on contracts for next year for the transportation supervisor and transportation mechanic as they were on a one-year contract; noted that Principal Westberg participated in Sourcewell's "Ed Soul" podcast to present on the great programming we have implemented with Trojan Pathways; attended a Freshwater meeting on March 4th noting the main part of the discussion was if Freshwater should consider taking on PAWN (Park Rapids, Akeley, Walker, Nevis) and expand the territory; Principal Westberg and Mrs. Kern showcased the Trojan Pathways and CTE offerings within our master schedule for the Lead-CTE meeting in February; received a thank you note from the Joyce Olson family for the plant and recognition of her dedication to Sebeka School as an educator in her memory; and submitted a report to the state regarding the school mascot issue.

Under Discussion Items, the Board reviewed the online school plan with "Subject" for the 2026-2027 school year; reviewed an amended resolution amending and restating a prior resolution to state the intention of the school board to issue general obligation facilities maintenance bonds and capital notes in the amount of \$1,050,000.00 for roof replacement and purchasing school buses and Superintendent Kerkvliet noted that the Budget Committee has met a few times to review cost containments for the 2026-2027 school year. Some recommendations include approving an amended resolution to add a Capital Note sale for transportation vehicle purchases, Online school option approval, pass an operating levy referendum in November, program cost containments and staffing cost containments.

Huttunen moved, Frame seconded to approve the following consent agenda items: February 9th regular meeting minutes; Treasurer and Investment report for March; monthly bills at \$675,814.92; Spring Sports Coaches: Resignation of Jerome Meyer as Co-Head Softball Coach and thanked him for his years of service as a softball coach; Track - Head Tom Smith, Assistants Ed Heltunen and Thor Johnson; Baseball - Head Jeff Lake, Assistant Reggie Kiser, Jr High Jason Steinke and Tanner Burgau; Softball - Head Coach Jon Lillquist, Assistant Madison Kurzenberger, Jr.High Ryan Tuorila; and Golf - Head Tim Wurdock, Assistants Becca Pulju; and March enrollment at 415 students K-12. Motion carried unanimously.

Arthur moved, Olson seconded to approve the second reading of the 2026-2027 school calendar starting with new teachers August 26th and all staff on and all staff on the week of August 31st through September 3rd with the option of one floating day the week of August 24th; first student day starting on September 8th; Graduation and last student day on May 28, 2027 and teacher in-service on June 1st. Motion carried unanimously.

Frame moved, Kangas seconded to approve the resolution accepting the following donations - \$500 from West Central for tablets for the Track program. Motion carried unanimously.

Frame moved, Kangas seconded to approve a resolution amending and restating a prior resolution to state the intention of the school board to issue general obligation facilities maintenance bonds and capital notes in the amount of \$1,050,000.00 for roof replacement and purchasing school buses. Motion carried unanimously.

Frame moved, Arthur seconded to approve an MOU with Wadena County DAC for the use of transportation and shelter in case of an emergency. Motion carried unanimously.

Huttunen moved, Kangas seconded to approve a quote from Herzog Roofing in the amount of \$171,200.00 for roof replacements for the multipurpose room and the 1957 gym. Motion carried unanimously.

Arthur moved, Kangas seconded to approve changing the April 13th board meeting to Monday, April 20th at 6:00 p.m. in the District Office. Motion carried unanimously.

JoAnn Olson,
Clerk of Sebeka School District.

Review Messenger
5-27c

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Independent School District No. 820
Sebeka, MN 56477
Special Meeting April 8, 2026**

The special meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. The following members were in attendance: Jeannie Arthur, Nathan Erickson, Kayla Frame, Rodney Huttunen, Cheri Kangas, JoAnn Olson and Superintendent Dave Kerkvliet.

Arthur moved, Kangas seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Activities Director Jon Lillquist presented a recommendation to the board regarding a non-renewal of the Head Girls Basketball coach stating lack of players on the varsity and moving up 7th and 8th grade to fill a JV and varsity squad. Superintendent Kerkvliet respectfully forwarded the recommendation to the school board for consideration.

Huttunen moved, Erickson seconded to approve the non-renewal of the Head Girls Basketball Coach. A roll call vote was taken and the following members voted in favor of the non-renewal, Rod Huttunen and Nate Erickson; the following members voted against the non-renewal, Jeannie Arthur, Kayla Frame, Cheri Kangas and JoAnn Olson; absent: Eric Nelson; therefore, the motion failed on a vote of 4 against and 2 in favor.

Erickson moved, Kangas seconded to adjourn the special meeting at 6:04 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

JoAnn Olson
Clerk of Sebeka School District

Review Messenger
5-27c

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Independent School District No. 820
Sebeka, MN 56477
Regular meeting April 20, 2026**

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the District Office with the following members in attendance: Jeannie Arthur, Nathan Erickson, Kayla Frame, Rod Huttunen, Cheri Kangas, and JoAnn Olson. Absent Eric Nelson. Also present were Superintendent Dave Kerkvliet; K-12 Principal Amie Westberg; Business Manager Holly Paulson; AD Jon Lillquist, several community members with concerns about the 5th grade program and Girls Basketball; and Review Messenger Reporter Dave Hanson.

Kangas moved, Olson seconded to amend the agenda under Old Business by adding 8.1 Consideration of Activities Director's Recommendation to Non-Renew the Varsity Girls Basketball Head Coach.

Huttunen moved, Kangas seconded to approve the agenda with the following additions: 7.5.11 Resignation of Wade Hukriede as National Honor Society Advisor; 7.5.12 Contract for Transportation Supervisor Anni Olson; 8.1 Consideration of Activities Director's Recommendation to Non-Renew the Girls Varsity Head Coach and 9.7 Consider MOU with Park Rapids, Menahga and Sebeka to Coordinate FFA transportation. Motion carried unanimously.

Under Visitor or Delegation Comments, several community members and staff were present to comment on the 5th grade and Girls Basketball Head Coach position. Kim Thurston, a 5th grade parent, voiced her opinion regarding the cuts that have been made and how those cuts have affected the 5th grade class and wondering what the plan would be for the 2026-2027 school year. Also voicing their opinions regarding pros and cons for the non-renewal of the head Girls Basketball Coach were Head Coach Mike Heino, Curt Ronneberg, Mason Heino, Molly Heino, Melissa Huntington and Megan Olson-Lehner.

The Budget Committee has met to review ideas for cost containments and budgeting for the 2026-2027 school year and discuss the idea of an operating levy referendum.

The Negotiations Committee met with Superintendent Kerkvliet to discuss contract terms.

Business Manager Holly Paulson reported on: received third quarter Title funds in the following amounts: \$42,332.47 in Title I; \$6,271.26 in Title II and \$4,817.00 in Title IV; completed and submitted first quarter payroll reports; attended the annual health insurance renewal meeting at LCSC and noted that health insurance will have a 7.2% increase on the Medica Plan; Delta Dental had no increase and Ameritas for our Vision plan had a minimal increase and will send out the information for the upcoming year to employees for open enrollment beginning May 4th; and working on FY2027 initial budget.

Activities Director Jon Lillquist reported on: Spring sports numbers: Baseball grades 7-12 have 29 boys and 8 in 6th grade; Softball grades 7-12 have 30 participants and nine (9) sixth graders; Track 7-12 has 11 participants (4 boys, 7 girls) from Sebeka and 29 (13 boys, 16 girls) from Menahga and Golf has 4 (2 boys, 2 girls) from Sebeka and 24 from Menahga (6 girls, 18 boys); and approve Baseball Volunteer Coach Kolby Kiser; Softball Volunteer Coach Jessica Funk and Alayna Day as Golf Assistant Coach.

Principal Westberg's report included: MCA testing started the week of April 13th with Reading MCA's for grades 3-8 and 10; week of April 20th with Math MCA's for grades 3-8 and 11 and week of April 27th with Science MCA's for grades 5,8 and 10; Elementary pizza fundraiser totaled 3000 pizzas sold; May will be busy with elementary field trips, Ninja Anywhere, Day of Caring and the Color Run; reviewed of what will be on the Local Literacy Plan noting that it now has 16 sections and will be available to fill out beginning May 1st and due June 15th; and will be using the Capti test to indicate characteristics of dyslexia for the Local Literacy Plan this year.

Superintendent Kerkvliet reported on: updated legislative information from MREA, MSBA and MASA; waiting for MDE to list our online school option; Custodial Department - will plan to finish up the year with a few staff helping out the custodians at the end of the day and then will hire a regular custodian for the next school year; Food Service Department had their inspection with a few minor details reported; will be considering an MOU for transportation with Park Rapids, Menahga and Sebeka for FFA transportation; will be considering a change to Sebeka School District Policy 9.7 DISTRICT REIMBURSEMENT TO STUDENTS REPRESENTING SEBEKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR COMPETITIVE EXTRA-CURRICULAR, CO-CURRICULAR, AND ACADEMIC STATE, AND NATIONAL SCHOOL EVENTS by eliminating district funding support for national events for cost containments; completed a survey of support programs with Sourcewell that is planned to be used within our comprehensive package next school year; Freshwater superintendents voted against a merger with PAWN at this time but was in favor of hiring two Freshwater employees that will work at the Walker Level 4 program and be funded by the Walker Level 4 and will provide an opportunity to assess whether a merger would be beneficial to Freshwater; drafted a letter to be presented at the April 17th Wadena County meeting to encourage continued focus on pro-growth decisions that support new business development and residential homestead construction with the idea that with new development a reduction of tax burden in the county would be realized; reviewed a staff analysis report from the CESO studies that provides insight to staffing levels and compares them to other districts noting that there were some gaps in information and inconsistencies with how districts reported their information which complicated arriving to an accurate comparison; Northern Pines has acquired more funding support so we will see a reduction of \$1.125 in addition to the 18.5% reduction from last year for counseling support; noted that the CRG (Critical Response Group) mapping is completed and is ready to be added as a

piece to our emergency crisis plan; and thanked all of the staff, students and extended Sebeka School family for their prayers, support and kindness in support for the Rife family.

Under Discussion Items, Mr. Kerkvliet gave an update of the online school plan noting that the webpage, advertising and a handbook are being developed and close to going live and once completed, work will be done on advertising and enrollment; discussed budget options such as maintaining our current staffing levels, making some program cost containments, launching our online option and considering running an operating referendum in the fall; and end of year responsibilities noting that the last student day will be May 22nd with graduation at 7:30 p.m. that evening.

Kangas moved, Arthur seconded to approve the following consent agenda items with the exception of 7.5.10 Approve a three-year leave of absence for Jerome Meyer: regular meeting minutes from the March 9th regular meeting; Treasurer and Investment report for April; monthly bills at \$830,339.49; assignment of Jon Lillquist as Summer Rec Director; Peer Coaches Emily Crabb and Nicole Oyster; assignment of Ashe Hoepfer as Summer Technology Assistant; Summer Contracts for Instrumental Music and Agriculture; Two-year contract with Superintendent Kerkvliet; assignment of Transportation Mechanic for Casey Strayer; assignment of K-12 Secretary for Kristy Steinke; Summer Rec workers Jaylin Lillquist, Max Lake, Kyla Watson, Vyolette Lysne and part-time Emma Ness and Hudson Nelson; resignation of Vicki Makela as Custodial Helper and thanked her for her years of service to the custodial department; resignation of Wade Hukriede as National Honor Society advisor and thanked him for working with that program; Transportation Supervisor contract for Anni Olson and K-12 enrollment at 417 students. Motion carried unanimously.

Huttunen moved, Erickson seconded to approve a three-year leave of absence for 5th grade teacher Jerome Meyer beginning with the 2026-2027 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Kangas moved, Frame seconded to approve the recommendation of the Activities Director to non-renew the varsity GBB head coach position. A roll call vote was taken and the following voted in favor of the non-renewal of the Girls Basketball Head Coach: Arthur, Erickson, Frame, Huttunen, Kangas and Olson; against: none; absent Nelson. Motion passed unanimously.

Erickson moved, Kangas seconded to approve the resolution accepting the following donations: 1. \$400 from Menahga VFW for Prom; 2. \$25 from Peterson Farms Seed to FFA; 3. \$250 from R.D. Offutt Farms Co. to BPA for Nationals; 4. PTA fundraiser donations: \$1,420 to 12th grade; \$1,245 to 11th grade; \$1,490 to 10th grade; \$1,140 to 9th grade; \$1,525 to 8th grade; \$1,910 to 7th grade and \$1,350 to 6th grade. Motion carried unanimously.

Arthur moved, Huttunen seconded to approve the following budget cost containments as recommended for FY26-27: pause National support through policy change; continue summer band lessons funded privately; continue reduced summer ag contract; continue delay on uniform purchases; eliminate non-conference long distance games; post CESO transportation study and continue to look for cooperative transportation savings with Menahga transportation; convert to head custodian model with direct support of facilities management within the superintendent position; continue with MARS/EDFI coordinator to minimum days as needed and provide appropriate paraprofessional support depending on child specific needs. Motion carried unanimously.

Huttunen moved, Arthur seconded to approve a change in the District Policy 9.7 District Reimbursement for State and National events by eliminating district funding support for national events for cost containments. Motion carried unanimously.

Kangas moved, Erickson seconded to approve the first reading MSBA Policy 625 - RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE. Motion carried unanimously.

Arthur moved, Erickson seconded to approve an intent to run an operating levy referendum on the November 3rd election. Motion carried unanimously.

Kangas moved, Arthur seconded to approve the 820Online handbook as presented by Mrs. Westberg and Superintendent Kerkvliet thanked Mrs. Westberg for all the work she has done for our 820Online plan. Motion carried unanimously.

Olson moved, Arthur seconded to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to coordinate FFA transportation with Park Rapids, Menahga and Sebeka Schools. Motion carried unanimously.

Erickson moved, Kangas seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:24 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

JoAnn Olson
Clerk of Sebeka School District

Review Messenger
5-27c



WADENA COUNTY PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENTS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the County Commissioners of the County of Wadena, Minnesota (the "County"), will hold a public hearing at a meeting of the County Commissioners beginning at 9:30 am on June 9th, 2026, to be held at the Wadena County Courthouse, Small Courtroom, 415 Jefferson St S, Wadena, MN, 56482 on the proposal that the County will abate property taxes levied by the County on the following property identified as a tax parcel identification number (the "Property"):

07-002-1020

The total amount of the taxes proposed to be abated by the county on the Property for up to a 5-year period is estimated to be not more than \$15,000. The County Commissioners will consider the property tax abatement to promote growth and housing within the County. All interested persons may appear at the public hearing and present their views to the County Commissioners orally; or if in writing, contact the County Auditor/Treasurer at Wadena County. Written comments must be received prior to the public hearing by Monday, June 8th, 2026.

Heather Olson, Wadena County Auditor/Treasurer for the Wadena County Board of Commissioners

5-27c

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