

## **SWEET HOME SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 55**

Sweet Home, Oregon

Board Vice Chairman Dale Keene called the **Regular meeting** of the board of Directors of Sweet Home School District No. 55 to order at 6:30 p.m. November 10, 2025.

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### **Board Members in Attendance**

Mike Adams, Dale Keene, Jenna Northern, Amanda Carter, Rachel Maynard, Dustin Nichol (ZOOM), Chris Hiaasen, Robert Webster : Absent: Mary Speck

### **Staff Members in Attendance**

Superintendent: Terry Martin; Administrators/Supervisors: Kevin Strong, Josh Darwood, Brian Brands, Barbi Riggs, Darel Bidwell, Ralph Brown, Josh Dargis, Todd Barret, Shelley Nurre, Nate Tyler  
Certified: Michelle Snyder, Stefani Brown; Classified: Michelle Bidwell, Sean McNellis; Board Recording Secretary: Julie Emmert

**Other Attendance:** Scott Swanson, New Era, Jim & Lisa Gourley, Clyde Rood, Chelsey Augsburger, ESPY parents and Grandparents

1. Called the meeting to order/pledge -ESPY Students led pledge
2. ESPY Awards- This award is given to students who are doing well academically and have an exceptionally positive attitude about school. They demonstrate respect and responsibility towards staff and their peers. They show courage by not conforming to Peer pressure and refuse to accept anyone who bullies. The School Board and the District want to recognize these students by celebrating their success at the beginning of each Board Meeting. Students received a Certificate, met each of our Board members and their names were announced on the web.
3. Public Comment- Clyde Rood, OSBA Candidate Position 10- shared a little about himself letting the board know he is available anytime. Has been working on the board policies so that the board can get the policies first. Caucus, working with people at the legislative level
4. Agenda approval/changes  
Chairman called for changes and/or approval of the agenda

***Motion No. 25-86: Board Member Dale Keene moved to approve the agenda as amended. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously***

Robert Webster- yes  
Chris Hiaasen -yes  
Rachel Maynard- yes  
Amanda Carter- yes  
Mike Adams- yes  
Dale Keene - yes  
Jenna Northern- yes  
Mary Speck - AB  
Dustin Nichol -yes

### **5. Student & Personnel Reports/Comments**

A. Certified & Classified Representatives- Michelle Snyder - short subs in our district. We really need more substitute teachers. Shared things that are happening at each school. High School Fed

50 families this month. High School play is coming up and all money raised will go to the projector room. 7:30 pm in the library 18 students will enter the Honor Society.

B. Student Report- Trinity Victor- Big month for the High School. 4 students have been chosen to be in an international math competition. Career day is coming up. Freshman will be taking a career field trip. Gave a report on the volleyball team, boys and girls soccer and cross country. Football made the playoffs for the first time in a long time. Cheerleading will be having a Fall Showcase.

C. Superintendent's Report

1. Enrollment/Attendance Update = Superintendent Martin reported another decline this month from 2203 to 2193 students enrolled. Our overall district attendance is at 90.95% and this month Hawthorne won the attendance award with 94.20%
2. Principal Report- Todd Barrett and Stefani Brown; shared information on Stand Up to Bullying day (October 6th) and Career Fair (November at the High School) cafeteria from 5:30 to 7:00. Open to all schools and families Bullying day went great and there is a video to showcase. This will be sent out to parents. Shared the attendance supports that they are working on at Oak Heights. Finding positive ways to help in behaviors.

Sean McNellis shared a Board Member's Guide to Understanding Phishing. He explained what phishing is, a digital scam and how to handle one if you receive one.

3. Strategic Plan Progress

*Pillar 1: Safe & Engaging Schools*

*A. Safety Information – Before and After*

- Walkthroughs completed at the District Office, Jr. High, and Oak Heights.
- 5 employee incidents reported.
- 45 student incidents reported (band-aids, bee stings, etc.).

*Foster – 16 | Hawthorne – 1 | Holley – 19 | High School – 3 | Jr. High – 4 | Oak Heights – 2*

- Fire drills completed at all sites.
- 1 lockdown.
- 1 earthquake drill ("Great Shakeout" at Hawthorne).

*Pillar 2: Thriving Students & Prepared Citizens*

*B. Total Bullying / Peer Conflict*

*Reports: 20 total K-12 Founded: 1 founded*

*Site Reports Founded*

*Foster 1 0*

*Hawthorne 0 0*

*Holley 0 0*

*Oak Heights 12 (6 bullying; 4 peer conflict; 1 harassment; 1 bullying) 0*

*Jr. High 6 0*

*High School 1 0*

*Pillar 3: Academic Success for All*

*C. Professional Learning*

- *Early Literacy for Reading – Solution Tree (Grant Funded)*
- *K–2 grade levels attended conferences in Seattle and Salt Lake City*

*Pillar 4: Connected School Community*

*D. Family & Community Engagement – Conferences*

*Site Attendance Percent*

*Foster 239 / 263 90.9%*

*Hawthorne 258 / 266 97%*

*Holley 150 / 153 98%*

*Oak Heights K–6 = 96.66%*

*Junior High 42%*

*High School 25%*

*National Comparison: Elementary – 70% | Middle – 61% | High – 50%*

*On Thursday, 11/6, 40 people came to a meeting at D.O. to talk about the issue of food insecurity in the community. Businesses have committed \$15K so far, with more to come, and volunteers are getting prioritized for our food banks to help keep them open. Rural Food Banks are receiving 1,500 lbs less food per week, which is 6,000 lbs per month due to USDA cutbacks. SNAP impacts 757,000 Oregonians, which is 450,000 households, including 150,000 children. Even with the return to benefits, families are getting 50% of the benefits expected thus far. The food banks have been hit really hard. The Linn Benton Food Share can acquire and distribute 5 meals for every dollar donated. Locally, according to one participant, up to 80% of food donated is expired, and therefore most banks cannot use it. Instead of donating a handful of canned goods, if you can donate \$5–10 dollars, that proves to be much more useful. Food insecurity is real, and it impacts our community. This meeting was a joint meeting called by me, as Superintendent, Mayor Susan Coleman, and Chamber of Commerce Director Lagea Mull.*

6. Consent Agenda

- A. Approved minutes from the October 13, 2025 School Board Meeting and Work Session

***Motion No. 25-87: Board Member Dale Keene moved to approve the consent agenda. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously***

**Robert Webster- yes**

**Chris Hiaasen -yes**

**Rachel Maynard- yes**

**Amanda Carter- yes**

**Mike Adams- yes**

**Dale Keene - yes**

**Jenna Northern- yes**

**Mary Speck - AB**

**Dustin Nichol -yes**

7. Information/Discussion

- A. Budget Update/State School Fund Formula: Kevin Strong gave the budget update to date and shared information on the State School Funding. Mr. Strong also shared information on School Districts bracing for Midyear State Funding cuts. A former state data analyst has filed a wrongful termination lawsuit against the State of Oregon and the Legislature, alleging that he was dismissed after raising concerns about flaws in the state's school funding formula. His research found that the formula, intended to provide additional support to districts with higher poverty rates, instead allocates more money per student to wealthier districts.

An article published today in the Oregonian specifically names Sweet Home among the high-poverty districts that the state's current formula underfunds. The article also notes that state officials have been reluctant to make changes because doing so would reduce funding for districts with lower overall poverty levels, including Portland, Beaverton, and Bend.

- B. Property Tax Information; Business Manager shared that the Linn County has published the 2025-26 property tax rates. The Sweet Home School District's total property tax rate continues to decline, decreasing by \$0.02 per \$1,000 of assessed value compared to the prior year. The district's permanent rate and local option levy rate remain unchanged, while the bond rate declined.

The District's initial bond was approved by voters in 2001. During the 2001-02 property tax year, the bond rate was \$1.91 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Since that time, the rate has steadily declined to \$1.45 per \$1,000 due to both refinancing outstanding bonds at a lower interest rate and the continued growth in assessed property value. The current bond rate is also lower than it was prior to the May 16, 2017 bond election, which primarily funded renovations at Sweet Home Junior High School, when the rate was \$1.62 per \$1,000. Shared graphs in the packet show the district's tax rates from 2013-2014 forward.

- C. Bond and OSCIM Grant Opportunity; Kevin Strong and Josh Darwood shared the Bond and OSCIM grant opportunity to make significant school improvements while maintaining the tax rate. They shared the background, progress and key reasons for a potential 2026 Bond Measure. They also shared what the next steps are if the board is supportive of proceeding. Discussion on the opportunity of this grant for Sweet Home. Kevin Strong explained that yes, this is a great opportunity. We would only go out to get the Awesome Grant if we would get this for sure. His recommendation at this time would be to fix things at the High School and then do things to others if needed. High School has the most needs.
- D. Crawfordsville Gym Bowstring Truss- Kevin Strong and Josh Darwood gave an update on the Crawfordsville gym bowstring trusses. The facilities team discovered that one of the bowstring trusses supporting the roof of the Crawfordsville gym experienced a truss member fracture. The gym was immediately closed to all use, and a structural engineer was called to assess the situation.

The engineer developed a shoring plan, which has since been implemented by a licensed contractor to stabilize the structure. The engineer further advised that the gym remain closed.

In addition, the Sweet Home Charter School was notified, whose gym was constructed using similar methods, and encouraged them to have their facility evaluated by a structural engineer as well.

Discussion on who is using this building. All groups using the building will need to be placed in other buildings. There are conditions to the land and we will need to look into this and other things to figure out what we will do in the future.

Move to the district to look into the options for Crawfordsville School

**Motion No. 25-88: Board Member Dale Keene moved to direct District staff to look into the options for the future of Crawfordsville School. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously**

Robert Webster- yes  
Chris Hiaasen -yes  
Rachel Maynard- yes  
Amanda Carter- yes  
Mike Adams- yes  
Dale Keene - yes  
Jenna Northern- yes  
Mary Speck - AB  
Dustin Nichol -yes

- E. Board Policies - First Read
  - IGBAB/JO-AR - Education Records/Records of Students with Disabilities
  - JO/IGBAB-AR - Education Records/Records of Students with Disabilities
  - JOA- Directory Information

- 8. Action Items
  - A. OSCIM School Safety and Facility Improvement Grant

**Motion No. 25-89: Board Member Jenna Northern moved to direct District staff to apply for a \$12.2 million OSCIM Safety and facility improvement grant. Board Member Rachel Maynard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously**

Robert Webster- yes  
Chris Hiaasen -yes  
Rachel Maynard- yes  
Amanda Carter- yes  
Mike Adams- yes  
Dale Keene - yes  
Jenna Northern- yes  
Mary Speck - AB  
Dustin Nichol -yes

- B. OSBA - Vote for Linn/Benton/Lincoln Board of Directors Position 10/Legislative Policy Committee Position 10

**Motion No. 25-90: Board Member Dale Keene moved to appoint Clyde Rood as the Board of Director Position 10, and appoint Jason Curtis as Legislative Policy Committee Position 10. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously**

Robert Webster- yes  
Chris Hiaasen -yes  
Rachel Maynard- yes  
Amanda Carter- yes  
Mike Adams- yes  
Dale Keene - yes  
Jenna Northern- yes  
Mary Speck - AB  
Dustin Nichol -yes

- 9. Board Comment- Dale Keene shared information from the OSBA Conference that was held November 6-8, 2025. Baseball fundraiser for the High School is coming up.

Superintendent Evaluation was passed out for the next meeting. January will be the evaluation time.

10. Late Items

11. Future Agenda Items

- A. November 11, 2025 - No School- Veterans Day
- B. November 26-28, 2025- Thanksgiving Break
- C. December 1, 2025 - Board Officers Meeting - 3:30 in the Superintendents Office
- D. **December 15, 2025** - Board Meeting \*Date Change from 12/8 to 12/15

12. Adjournment at 7:58 pm

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*Signature, Board Chairman*

*Julie Emmert, Board Recording Secretary (This meeting was also recorded and saved supt/board/audio)*