

**Snake River School Board of Trustees**  
**Held at Snake River Community Library**  
**924 W. Highway 39, Blackfoot, ID 83221**  
**Wednesday, May 21, 2025**

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairman Lon Harrington called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other board members present were Josh Sorensen, Larin Mortimer, Carol Hepworth, and Toni Ibarra. Also attending was Superintendent Mark Kress and Board Clerk Terisa Coombs.

**2. PRAYER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Toni Ibarra opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**A motion was made by Carol Hepworth and seconded by Larin Mortimer to approve the agenda as presented. All board members present voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**4. PATRON FORUM**

There were no comments in the Patron Forum.

**5. ACTION ITEMS**

**a. Consent Agenda**

**Minutes:** Minutes of Regular Meeting of April 16, 2025

**Retirements/Resignations:** Rose Larson, School Psychologist (retiring); Isabel Hernandez, Migrant Liaison; Jennifer Vogler, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher; Natalie Brimley, SRO Special Ed Teacher; Kent Dance, High School Business Teacher; Lorena Corgatelli, SROHS Teacher; Camilla Brady, Middle School Special Ed parapro; Nathan Brady, Moreland Special Ed Parapro; Julia Fullmer, Bus Driver; Roger Turner, Bus Driver

**New Hires:** Ivy Kestner, Secondary Math Teacher; Marci Bradley, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher; Jamie Seeley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher; Emily Marble, Jr. High Special Ed Parapro.

**Payroll Status Changes:** Karrie Jayo, Jason Libberton, Troy Easterday, Sierra May, and Joseph Welker.

**Reconciliation Reports; Budget Report, Payroll/Claims Payable April 2025**

**Property Disposal:** 2015 Chevy 3500 and a 2013 Ford Fusion.

**A motion was made by Josh Sorensen and seconded by Carol Hepworth to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with a special thanks to those retiring for their years of service given to the district. All board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**b. ELA Curriculum**

The ELA curriculum adoption committee has recommended HMH and would like to enter a payment agreement to purchase "Into Reading, V3 K-5" for a six-year subscription in the amount of \$198,085.26, \$100,000 to be paid on or before May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and \$98,085.26 to be paid on or before August 15, 2025. The curriculum is a combination of digital curriculum and physical workbooks. It is on the State-approved list. Training of staff will begin over the summer and at a teacher in-service day at the beginning of the school year on August 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Carol Hepworth moved and Toni Ibarra seconded to approve the purchase of a six-year subscription with HMH for ELA Curriculum, "Into Reading V3 K-5" in the amount of \$198,085.26 with \$100,000 to be paid on or before May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and \$98,085.26 to be paid on or before August 15, 2025. All board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**c. Notice of Fee Increase, School Meals**

Snake River School District #52 is proposing to increase school lunch and breakfast program fees for the 2025-2026 school year. This increase in fees is to comply with the USDA required fee increase. This is to cover the cost of food, supplies, and employees. The Notice of Fee Increase was posted in the Idaho State Journal on May 9 and May 16, 2025.

**Larin Mortimer moved and Josh Sorensen seconded to approve the Snake River School District Lunch and Breakfast fee increases as presented. All board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**d. Alternative Authorization Request**

Sierra May needs to add the Secondary English endorsement to her certificate and the district is requesting that an alternative authorization be approved to allow her to teach with SROHS while she gets that endorsement.

**It was moved by Larin Mortimer and seconded by Toni Ibarra to approve the Alternative Authorization for Sierra May to add the secondary English endorsement to her certificate. All board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**e. Bus Purchase**

The Snake River School District would like to purchase a 72-passenger bus. Western Mountain is on the Sourcewell bidding state list, which allows us to purchase the bus without going through the bidding process. Please see the attached quote from Western Mountain.

**A motion was made by Larin Mortimer and seconded by Carol Hepworth to authorize the Superintendent to purchase a 72-passenger bus in the amount of \$137,496.00 from Western Mountain Bus Sales to be delivered and paid for after July 1, 2026. All board members present voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**f. Blue Cross of Idaho Grant for the CNA Program**

The Snake River School District is being awarded the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health grant for the 2025-2026 school year in the amount of \$49,928.00. This grant will cover the costs of the phlebotomy class and also covers the costs of instruction and materials. Kyle Buttars will be instrumental in carrying out the grant's terms.

**Carol Hepworth moved and Larin Mortimer seconded to approve the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health grant in the amount of \$49,928.00. Furthermore, I move to allocate 3% (\$1,500) of the total grant award from the general fund as compensation to Kyle Buttars for administrative and coordination duties associated with the grant. All the board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**g. Blue Cross of Idaho Grant for the Early Education Program**

The Snake River School District is being awarded the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation's Early Education and Schools grant for the 2025-2026 school year in the amount of \$50,000.00. Dr. David Sotutu will be instrumental in carrying out the grant's terms. With this grant, they will be purchasing a preschool curriculum for the English learner preschool, which is called "Frog Street"; hiring an additional preschool paraprofessional for the EL preschool classes; and enrolling "peer mentor" preschoolers for our preschool whose families would pay \$30/month tuition. The goal is to have 24 peer mentor preschoolers, 6 in each of the four preschool classes (AM & PM SpEd preschool and AM & PM EL preschool). This grant will also help support Story Time at the library and Play to Learn.

**Larin Mortimer moved and Carol Hepworth seconded to approve the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health grant in the amount of \$50,000.00. Furthermore, I move to allocate 3% (\$1,500) of the total grant award from the general fund as compensation to Dr. David Sotutu for administrative and coordination duties associated with the grant. All the board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**h. DEQ Grant (Jr. High Lead Abatement)**

The Snake River School District has received the lead remediation funding from the DEQ in the amount of \$400,000 from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF). Superintendent Kress, Principal Rich Dunn, and Maintenance Director Paul Groesbeck have been instrumental in carrying out the grant's terms.

**A motion was made by Josh Sorensen and seconded by Carol Hepworth to approve the lead remediation funding from the DEQ in the amount of \$400,000 from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) in the amount of \$400,000 and to allocate 3% of the total grant award to be split between Superintendent Kress, Principal Rich Dunn, and Maintenance Director Paul Groesbeck (\$4,000 each), for administrative and coordination duties associated with the grant. All board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**i. Negotiations, Salaries, Benefits, and Superintendent Contract**

The District and the SREA met on May 13, 2025 to discuss salaries and benefits. Chairman Lon Harrington and Trustee Josh Sorensen represented the Board. Superintendent Kress explained the changes to the negotiated agreement, the proposed certificated salary schedule, and Steps 15-19 or the AP 1-5 rungs. The proposed salary schedules for Administration (6%) and Classified employees (average 5-6%) were also discussed. Superintendent Kress and the board talked about his contract. Chairman Harrington suggested that a 6% increase for the superintendent would be appropriate as that was what the administration received.

**Larin Mortimer moved and Josh Sorensen seconded to approve the 2025-2026 Negotiated Agreement between the District and the Snake River Education Association, as presented; and also moved to approve the 2025-2026 Classified and Administrative salaries as presented. A roll call vote was taken: Lon Harrington, aye; Larin Mortimer, aye; Josh Sorensen, aye; Toni Ibarra, aye; and Carol Hepworth, abstained. Motion passed 4-0.**

**Carol Hepworth moved and Larin Mortimer seconded to approve a 6% increase to the superintendent's contract for the 2025-2027 school years. All board members voted aye. All board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**j. Amend 2025-2026 School Calendar**

The 2025-2026 Snake River School District calendar needs to be amended to change the teacher in-service dates and also to add "flex days" if there are no emergency closures in the school year. Superintendent Kress would like to have a full week of spring break if there are no emergency closures. It will be determined in the March meeting if flex days can be used.

**A motion was made by Larin Mortimer and seconded by Toni Ibarra to approve the amendments to the 2025-2026 school calendar as presented. All board members voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.**

**6. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**a. Superintendent Report**

- 1. Moreland Roof Repair Update:** The roof is currently being fixed and is close to being finished.
- 2. COPS/RUS Grant Update:** Larry Seymour and Sherrilynn Bair have been working on this \$625,000 grant that is due in about a month and a half. They are hoping to be able to apply for this grant but if things don't go as planned, they will apply for the grant next year.
- 3. Spring Sports/Activities Report:** Baseball, track, softball, and golf completed their seasons. Boys and girls track teams were district champs and the boy's golf team was district champs and got second at state.
- 4. Preliminary Testing Scores:** Great gains were made in testing scores with about 85% student growth.
- 5. Property Values:** Superintendent Kress discussed the trends in property values.

6. **Just Serve Report:** The Blackfoot West Stake did a service project around campus at the high school to make it look good and clean it up in time for graduation. The district is very grateful and appreciative for the amount of work they did and their efforts.

c. **Upcoming Events**

1. Teacher Inservice for grades K-6 is May 22<sup>nd</sup>
2. SREF Color Run will be May 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.
3. Last Day of School for Seniors/Graduation is May 28<sup>th</sup>; SROHS Graduation is May 27<sup>th</sup>.
4. Last Day of School for students is May 29<sup>th</sup>
5. Last Day for Teachers is May 30<sup>th</sup>

7. **POLICY READINGS**

**First Readings (Policy Updates from ISBA)**

**Policy 1313-Conflicting Policies and Procedures:** This correction clarifies that the superintendent promulgates policies.

**Policy 3570P—Student Records:** This update narrows the types of student records that must be kept permanently. It removes discussion of responsibilities carried out by people beyond the district's/charter school's authority. It revises the circumstances under which a person under 18 years of age takes over rights related to their records from their parents in accordance with advice from the attorney ISBA consulted about this policy. It removes parent/guardian names and addresses from the list of directory information that can be shared publicly, in accordance with more current practices and sensibilities around privacy. Finally, these updates include material moved from Form 3570F1 to this procedure.

**Policy 3570F1—Notification to Parents' and Student's Rights Concerning a Student's School Records:** Most of these changes are deletions of material now covered by 3570P. The edits include changes bringing it into alignment with the procedure's guidance on individuals under 18 years of age taking over responsibility for their records from their parents. It also includes some general cleanup of language to provide greater clarity and specificity.

**Policy 3570F2—Permission to Use Likeness:** These updates add additional protections for the district/charter school and provide some clarification and cleanup.

**Policy 4600F2—Volunteer Confidentiality:** These updates add more restrictions on the sharing of information about students by school volunteers. It also removes a list of types of information that are classified as directory information, replacing it with a reference to Procedure 3570P.

**Policy 5825—Evaluation of School Bus Drivers:** This update notes that the State Department of Education's model procedure, as well as their model form, will be used when evaluating bus drivers.

**Policy 7400—Miscellaneous Procurement Standards:** These edits remove in-text references to other policies that are already included among the cross references.

**Policy 8100--Transportation:** This update adds clarification about the possible reimbursement implications of transporting students from daycare. It also adds required policy language about disaster preparedness and transportation.

**Policy 8115—Hours of Service Drivers:** New language clarifies that the "employing motor carrier" refers to the district/charter school or their transportation provider. It also adds a caveat about certain documentation of transportation only being required for trips of more than 100 miles.

**Policy 8120—Bus Routes, Stops, and Non-Transportation Zones:** In addition to some changes to this policy for clarity and conciseness, these edits add required language on choosing bus stop locations. We've also added required language about the loading and unloading of passengers.

**Policy 8140—Student Conduct on Buses:** This update adds new required language about approaching student safety systematically and clarifying the roles of students and drivers in ensuring student safety. At the suggestion of the attorney we consulted about this update, we've also added more detail about involving parents/guardians in transportation discipline matters.

**Policy 8160—Contracting for Transportation Services:** We've corrected this language to indicate contracts for transportation services must be approved by the State Department of Education Director of Student Transportation, rather than the State Superintendent. The policy now also notes that this director must also approve these contracts.

**Policy 8170—District-Owned Vehicles:** This policy now includes a paragraph about pre-trip and post-trip inspections. It includes requirements about documenting these inspections and lists the minimum requirements for what these inspections must include.

**Policy 8170P—District-Owned Vehicles Procedure:** These updates are relatively minor clean-up aimed at improving brevity and readability.

**Policy 8180—Driver Training and Responsibility:** We've added some new required language about driver interactions with students. This update also includes extensive new language about bus driver training requirements, which vary based on whether they have previous experience as a driver with the district/charter school or with another district/charter school.

**Policy 8180P—Driver Training and Responsibility—Responsibilities When Operating a School Bus:** This new procedure outlines bus driver responsibilities, which must be stated in policy or procedure. It covers such topics as driving safely, ensuring passengers don't engage in dangerous behavior or bring dangerous items onto the bus, what to do in the event of a bus breakdown, and helping students cross the street.

**Policy 8190—Emergencies Involving Transportation Vehicles:** This update adds a lot of new required material on instructing students on safety when riding the bus, evacuating from it in the event of an emergency, and appropriate behavior when riding the bus. It also adds a requirement to have an emergency procedure that covers transportation emergencies. There is a new subsection about bus evacuations, including such aspects as having a plan and including every student possible in evacuation drills. Finally, the updates include restrictions on bringing objects onto the bus that could block the aisle or otherwise pose a danger. The word semester was changed out to state twice a year.

**Policy 8195—District Vehicle Idling:** This update provides more detailed guidance on when school buses are and are not allowed to remain stationary with their motor running

**(Delete) Policy 3430—Distribution of Fund Drive Literature through Students** We recommend deleting this policy because it is redundant. Everything covered here is already covered in Policy 4240.

A motion was made by Josh Sorensen and seconded by Carol Hepworth to approve the first readings of Policy 1313-Conflicting Policies and Procedures; Policy 3570P—Student Records; Policy 3570F1—Notification to Parents’ and Student’s Rights Concerning a Student’s School Records; Policy 3570F2—Permission to Use Likeness; Policy 4600F2—Volunteer Confidentiality; Policy 5825—Evaluation of School Bus Drivers; Policy 7400—Miscellaneous Procurement Standards; Policy 8100—Transportation; Policy 8115—Hours of Service Drivers; Policy 8120—Bus Routes, Stops, and Non-Transportation Zones; Policy 8140—Student Conduct on Buses; Policy 8160—Contracting for Transportation Services; Policy 8170—District-Owned Vehicles; Policy 8170P—District-Owned Vehicles Procedure; Policy 8180—Driver Training and Responsibility; Policy 8180P—Driver Training and Responsibility—Responsibilities When Operating a School Bus; Policy 8190—Emergencies Involving Transportation Vehicles; Policy 8195—District Vehicle Idling; and Deletion of Policy 3430—Distribution of Fund Drive Literature through Students and accept the changes suggested by Superintendent Kress. All board members present voted aye. Motion passed 5-0.

**8. CLOSING INFORMATION ITEMS**

The next regular Board Meeting/Budget Hearing will be June 18, 2025 at Snake River Community Library at 7:00 p.m.

**9. ADJOURN**

Toni Ibarra moved and Larin Mortimer seconded to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Terisa Coombs

Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lon Harrington

Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
June 18, 2025

Date