

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the State Board of Education

June 25, 2026



**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OLIVER HODGE BUILDING
2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD, SUITE 500 CR-2
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73105**

Meeting Minutes Thursday, June 25, 2026, 9:30 a.m.

The State Board of Education met in a regular meeting session at or about 9:30 a.m., Thursday June 25, 2026, in the Oklahoma State Department of Education Oliver Hodge Building 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Suite 500 CR-2 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105. The final agenda was posted at 9:29 a.m. on Wednesday, June 24, 2026.

The following were present:

Ms. Jacki Phelps, General Counsel to the Oklahoma State Department of Education
Mr. Ryan Leonard, General Counsel to the Oklahoma State Board of Education
Dr. Jennifer Hembree, Executive Secretary to the Oklahoma State Board of Education

Members of the State Board of Education present:

State Superintendent, Lindel Fields, Chairman of the Board

Ms. Becky Carson, Edmond

Mr. Brian Bobek, Oklahoma City

Mr. Chris VanDenhende, Tulsa

Mr. Mike Tinney, Norman

Mr. Ryan Deatherage, Kingfisher

Members of the State Board of Education absent:

Mr. Wes Nofire, Park Hill

Others in attendance are shown as an attachment.

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL:

State Superintendent Lindel Fields called the State Board of Education regular meeting to order on or about 9:30 a.m. Executive Secretary Jennifer Hembree called the roll and ascertained there was a quorum.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, OKLAHOMA FLAG SALUTE, MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Superintendent Fields welcomed everyone to the meeting and led Board Members and all present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag, a salute to the Oklahoma Flag, and a moment of silence.

**3. BOARD – ADMINISTRATIVE: State Board of Education—Administrative (Action)
Discussion and possible action on the minutes of the May 21, 2026, Regular Meeting of the State Board of Education and the minutes of the June 8, 2026, Special Meeting of the State Board of Education.**

Board Member Bobek moved to **ACCEPT** the May 21, 2026, board meeting minutes. Board Member VanDenhende, seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

(No action was taken regarding the minutes of the June 8, 2026, special board meeting)

4. SUPERINTENDENT REMARKS: Agency Update (No Action)

The Superintendent welcomed the Board members, agency staff, and members of the public in attendance. He acknowledged the superintendents present as part of their First-Year Superintendent training. Superintendent Fields recognized several distinguished Department employees, including Loan Nguyen, retiring after 22 years of service; Karen Davis, retiring after 37 years of service; and Amy Young, who was honored as Employee of the Month. He also highlighted the Department's recent partnership with the Oklahoma School Safety Institute. The Superintendent acknowledged and thanked Representative Dick Lowe for attending the meeting.

5. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES—DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENTS AND CHIEF OF STAFF—ADMINISTRATIVE: (No Action)

Dr. Romel Muex-Pullen, Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, provided an update on plans for the Summer Food Service Program for summer 2026, including an overview of program qualifications for student participation and the overall purpose and mission of the initiative. She also shared a comparison of sponsor-to-site ratios between 2025 and 2026. In 2025, 99 sponsors operated 557 sites statewide; for 2026, 97 sponsors are serving 574 sites.

Ms. Kristen Stephens, Deputy Superintendent of Operations, presented the Full-Time Employee (FTE) report for May, noting that the State Department of Education currently has 358 FTE. She explained that recent legislation and new state funding for various programs will result in an increase in the agency's FTE count. Ms. Stephens also reported that several staffing changes have occurred and that the agency will continue developing the monthly financial reports shared with the Board. She provided a detailed overview of projected FY27 financials and discussed new funding authorized by the Legislature, including allocations for literacy, math, school security, teacher salary, and compensation. In addition, she reviewed operating and facility cost considerations.

Mr. Tom Newell, Chief of Staff, presented an overview of the major legislation the State Department of Education will be implementing in the coming months. He highlighted several significant bills, including House Bill 1276, Senate Bill 1734, Senate Bill 201, Senate Bill 2045, House Bill 4268, Senate Bill 1437, Senate Bill 1778, House Bill 3151, and Senate Bill 3021, and provided a summary of their anticipated impact on agency operations and district requirements. Mr. Newell concluded by addressing questions related to the new recess law and its implementation in schools.

6. Waiver Request: Day-to-Hour Calendar (Fewer Than 166 Days for 2026–2027):

Discussion and possible action on day-to-hour calendar waiver requests for fewer than 166 days for the 2026-2027 academic school year under 70 O.S. § 1-109 for Forest Grove Public Schools.

Board Member Bobek moved to **ACCEPT** the request of Forest Grove Public Schools to use a day-to-hour calendar of fewer than 166 days for the 2026-2027 academic school year.

Board Member Deatherage seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

7. Alternative Education Cooperative Waiver:

Discussion and possible action on statutory waiver requests under 70 O.S. § 1210.568, allowing districts with fewer than ten Alternative Education students to operate their own programs rather than enter into a cooperative agreement.

Board Member Deatherage moved to **ACCEPT** the requests of Arkoma Public Schools, Carnegie Public Schools, Central Public Schools, Davis Public Schools, Hennessey Public Schools, Perkins-Tryon Public Schools, and Quapaw Public Schools for the 2026 academic year only. Superintendent Fields seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

8. Alternative Education Program Waiver K-8 Districts:

Discussion and possible action on requests from elementary school districts for a waiver from the requirement to implement and provide an alternative education program pursuant to 70 O.S. § 1210.568(F); districts may request a waiver with an assurance that they have no students in need of alternative education services, and districts granted a waiver are not eligible to receive statewide alternative education funding for that school year.

Board Member Bobek moved to **ACCEPT** the requests, as listed in the meeting agenda, of Balko Public Schools, Midway Public Schools, Shady Grove Public Schools, and Ryal Public Schools. Board Member VanDenhende seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

9. Library Media Services Deregulation:

Discussion and possible action on Library Media Services Deregulation requests under 70 O.S. § 3-126, including district requests for reduced library hours or supervision by a library aid, with services to be provided through alternative means.

Board Member Carson moved to **ACCEPT** the requests of Arapaho-Butler Public Schools, Dewey Public Schools, Fairview Public Schools, Kremlin-Hillsdale Public Schools,

Newkirk Public Schools, Pawnee Public Schools, Pittsburg Public Schools, Shady Grove Public Schools, Sequoyah Public Schools, Sperry Public Schools, and Tyrone Public Schools for the 2026 academic year only. Board Member Tinney seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

10. Library Media Specialist Waiver:

Discussion and possible action on a request for exemption from Library Media Teacher Certification requirements pursuant to 70 O.S. § 3-126, allowing a certified teacher to serve as the librarian while pursuing Library Media certification for Muldrow Public Schools.

Board Member Carson moved to **ACCEPT** the request of Muldrow Public Schools. Board Member Deatherage seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

11. Requests for Emergency (Provisional) Teacher Certification:

Discussion and possible action on emergency (provisional) certification requests under 70 O.S. § 6-187(G). Names are included in handouts.

Board Member Tinney moved to **ACCEPT** the requests from all districts listed in the materials issued to the State Board of Education subject to expectations of improvement expressed by board members. Board Member Bobek seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

12. Adoption of a Policy on Policies:

Discussion and possible action on the adoption of a Policy on Policies for the Oklahoma State Board of Education. The Board adopts policies pursuant to its constitutional and statutory authority to govern public education in Oklahoma under Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes and Article XIII of the Oklahoma Constitution.

Board Member Bobek moved to **ADOPT** the Policy on Policies proposed by Superintendent Fields effective July 1, 2026. Board Member Deatherage seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

13. Adoption of a Contract Approval and Reporting Policy:

Discussion and possible action on adoption of a Contract Approval and Reporting Policy for the Oklahoma State Board of Education. The policy is adopted pursuant to the Board's authority under 70 O.S. § 3-104, with additional authority in 70 O.S. § 1-105(C), 70 O.S. § 3-107, 62 O.S. § 34 et seq., and OAC 260:115.

Board Member Deatherage moved to **ADOPT** the Contract Approval and Reporting Policy proposed by Superintendent Fields effective July 1, 2026. Board Member Bobek seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**

14. Contract Review:

Discussion and possible action to approve contracts over \$150,000 to be entered into by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Under 70 O.S. § 3-104 and OAC 210:1-1-3, the State Board of Education has authority to oversee agency operations, including the review and approval of contractual agreements. (No Action)

15. **Impact Athletics – Not to exceed 20 minutes per side:
Hearing pursuant to 75 O.S. 311 Impact Athletics' participation in the Summer Food Service Program, OSDE case number 55-N008. (No Action)**
16. **Discussion and possible action to convene into Executive Session pursuant to 25 O.S. § 307(b)(4), (7), and (8) for the purpose of discussing possible action on the following issues:**
Board Member Bobek moved to **CONVENE** into Executive Session. Board Member Van Dendende seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**
17. **Vote to Return to Open Session:**
Superintendent moved to **RETURN** to open session by voiced consent of the board. The motion was approved with all members voting in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. **APPROVED.**
18. **Discussion and possible action on matters discussed during Executive Session:**
Board Member Bobek moved to **ACCEPT** the applications to suspend the certificates and certificate numbers of Michelle Francis, Ashley Johnson, Mike Arnold, Sr. and to set the matters before an administrative law judge. Board Member Deatherage seconded the motion. **The motion carried** with the following votes: Mr. Deatherage, yes; Mr. VanDenhende, yes; Mr. Bobek, yes; Ms. Carson, yes; Mr. Tinney, yes; Superintendent Fields, yes. **APPROVED.**
19. **New Business (Any business not known about which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of posting of the Agenda pursuant to Title 25 O.S. § 311.)**
None
20. **ADJOURNMENT:**
Board Member Bobek moved to adjourn the meeting. Board Member VanDenhende seconded the motion. **The motion was approved** with all members voting in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. **APPROVED.**

The next regular meeting of the State Board of Education will be held on Thursday, July 23, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. The meeting will convene at the State Department of Education, 2500 North Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Lindel Fields, Chairperson of the Board

Jennifer Hembree, Executive Secretary