

COOLIDGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 21
Governing Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2025

REGULAR MEETING

Date, Time, Place of Meeting

The Governing Board of Education held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 6:00 PM, 450 N. Arizona Boulevard Coolidge Arizona.

ROUTINE BUSINESS

Call to Order and Roll Call

Present at this meeting was President Michael Flores, II, Vice-President Linda Heath, Member George Arredondo and Member Victoria Quintero.

Approval of Agenda

Vice President Linda Heath MOVED, SECOND by Member George Arredondo, to approve the Board Agenda. President Michael Flores, II votes "yes", Vice-President Linda Heath voted "yes", Member Kris Gillespie voted "yes", Member George Arredondo voted "yes", and Member Victoria Quintero voted "yes"

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There is no public participation.

GOVERNING BOARD ORGANIZATION

- A. Discussion and possible approval of the draft 2025-2026 Governing Board Meeting Schedule.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge. It's been published. It reflects what it's been the past couple of years.

Member George Arredondo MOVED, SECOND by Vice President Linda Heath, to Motion to approve the 2025-2026 Governing Board Meeting Schedule. President Michael Flores, II votes "yes", Vice-President Linda Heath voted "yes", Member Kris Gillespie voted "yes", Member George Arredondo voted "yes", and Member Victoria Quintero voted "yes"

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

I. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **Approval of the Auxiliary Operations and Student Activities Reports for the month of February, 2025.**
- B. **Approval of the Donations Log for February, 2025.**

- C. **Approval of the Voucher Log for February, 2025.**
- D. **Approval of the Minutes of the February 12, 2025 Meeting.**
- E. **Other Consent Items**
 - 1. **Approval of the following personnel recommendations: Hiring, Position Changes/Transfers, Resignations/Terminations; Requests to rescind Resignation: Retirement Requests; Requests to Rescind Retirement; Request for Change of Salary of Grade; and Stipends for: Administrative, Certificated, Classified, Wage.**
 - 2. **Approval of Policy Advisory 809-818, 1st Reading.**
 - 3. **Approval of the "Summer Feeding Program" for June 2025.**

Vice President Linda Heath MOVED, SECOND by Member George Arredondo, to Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. President Michael Flores, II votes "yes", Vice-President Linda Heath voted "yes", Member Kris Gillespie voted "yes", Member George Arredondo voted "yes", and Member Victoria Quintero voted "yes"

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

INSTRUCTION (Action, Discussion, and Information Items)

- A. Approval of Course Name Change

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: We have a couple of course name changes to align with CAVIT and CAC. This will help as those courses transfer in as CUSD credits as well.

Member George Arredondo MOVED, SECOND by Vice President Linda Heath, to Motion to approve the Course Name Change. President Michael Flores, II votes "yes", Vice-President Linda Heath voted "yes", Member Kris Gillespie voted "yes", Member George Arredondo voted "yes", and Member Victoria Quintero voted "yes"

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

HUMAN RESOURCES (Action, Discussion, and Information Items)

- A. Discussion and possible approval of the Certified and Classified Renewal Lists for 2025-2026.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: This list being presented are employees that are being offered a contract for the 25-26 school year with a two percent increase. We've discussed this for some time now. If the state legislature approves a greater inflation increase or Prop 123 passes, we will make those increases as the monies become available. Ben, do you have anything else to add to that?

HR director Ben Armstrong: Anyone not on the list wasn't offered or they have decided to resign. Even though people are being offered, doesn't mean we won't get additional resignations, but getting this approved tonight allows us to issue those as early as 11.59 p.m. or 12.01 a.m. on Monday morning.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: The new state law says that we cannot issue a contract prior to March 15th.

Governing Member George Arredondo: Ms. Hodge, I was reading the paper that our averages, are not at the top, we're not at the bottom, we're kind of in the middle.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: Correct, as we looked at ours, there's a lot of factors that go into when they look at the average teacher's salary within a district. High school districts tend to be paid at a lot higher than the elementary districts. We also had a very large influx of either brand new teachers this year or teachers that were working on certification. So, they came in at the lowest salary. And the other piece is that if you have teachers that leave mid-year, that enters in as one FTE when they look at your salaries. Let's say they left three months into the school year; they might have only been paid \$12,000. But that still goes in as one salary. So, you have these outliers that impact the overall average. This will put us, I believe, right at about the \$60,000 mark as far as an average.

Governing Member George Arredondo: Is this going to keep us up on the average threshold

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: We're not going to be way up there, right, but we're going to be in the middle, which is if you look at all the ones that are the unified districts, we're all close. The high school districts tend to be a bit higher, and then your elementary districts tend to be at the bottom.

President Michael Flores, II: We've come a long way, haven't we?

Vice President Linda Heath: Oh, gosh, yeah. When I started teaching, it was like \$19,000 or \$20,000.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: But you guys were on the board. I think it was. It was like in the mid-30s, somewhere around there.

Governing Member George Arredondo: I just want to make sure we're working towards that upper tier. I know the budget's an issue, but.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: We are. And we're continuing to look at our administrative costs versus our classroom expenditures, and I believe that same article. talked about that we were one of the only districts that increased our classroom expenditures, and we reduced our administrative costs. I think you'll see that again when the next Auditor General report comes out for this school year; that we have reduced those

even further and placed more money into the classrooms.

Vice President Linda Heath: The article you're talking about was in the Arizona Public?

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: It was, yes.

President Michael Flores, II: And how are we compared to the Gophers?

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: They're around \$59,000, \$60,000 I want to say.

Governing Member George Arredondo: We're a couple of grand below that.

Member George Arredondo MOVED, SECOND by Vice President Linda Heath, to Motion to approve the the Certified and Classified Renewal List for 2025-2026. President Michael Flores, II votes "yes", Vice-President Linda Heath voted "yes", Member Kris Gillespie voted "yes, Member George Arredondo voted "yes", and Member Victoria Quintero voted "yes"

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

OTHER (Action, Discussion, and Information Items)

- A. Approval to allow students who live within the boundaries of the Coolidge Unified School District and attend an online school outside of the district, to participate in athletics for the 2025-2026 school year.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: This is a new thing. It is generally understood that if you live within the district boundaries and the school you attend does not offer athletics, that you are allowed to participate, in the public-school athletics or extracurriculars if there is room for you to participate. First come, first serve with the students that attend the district, and then if there are openings, people outside the district could do that. AIA has recommended, because there are a lot of online entities and with the influx of charter schools that we actually put something that has been approved by you saying that if a student lives within our district boundaries, and they attend an online school, that we do not currently run, that they could still be allowed to participate in athletics if we have room for them to. They would still have to adhere to possibly a pay-to-play depending on whether they utilize the empowerment scholarship. It's something that we've always done. It's just making it formalized.

Governing Member George Arredondo: I think this is great. Getting kids involved is important, number one. And number two is making sure there's equity between our students and those that come in.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: Correct, yes. So as far as an eligibility standpoint, those students would have to submit grades, as our students here must submit the grading criteria as well.

Vice President Linda Heath MOVED, SECOND by Victoria Quintero, to Motion to approve to allow students who live within the boundaries of CUSD and attend an online school outside of the district, to participate in athletics for 2025-2026 school year. President

Michael Flores, II votes "yes", Vice-President Linda Heath voted "yes", Member Kris Gillespie voted "yes", Member George Arredondo voted "yes", and Member Victoria Quintero voted "yes"

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

B. Governing Board and/or Superintendent's Report and Update.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: Well, we've made it to spring break. It goes so fast. On the horizon, we have state testing. Our sites are gearing up for that. We will be continuing with our incentive program for students that get a proficiency, in any of those state tests, like just like we did last year. We'll be publicizing that to our students. The other thing is the federal government has now started working on shutting down the Department of Education by laying off about 50% of the workforce. I just want to make sure that everybody understands that we are still obligated to provide free and appropriate education to every single student that enters our doors. So anything with special education, English language learners, any of our migrant or homeless students, all of our traditional students, those services are not going away.

The way they're funded, we don't know what that might look like next year, but we are still obligated to provide all of those services, regardless of what is happening at the federal level. So just to put people's minds at ease that those things are not going away.

Governing Member George Arredondo: On the funding part, that's going to be the next cycle? We won't know the ramifications of that at this time?

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: Correct, And in fact, the federal government has put that off. We generally will know by the end of March, especially with those title grants. We generally will know what they are. We will not know at this time what those are going to be because they're going to be allocated to the state, and then the state will then allocate those out.

President Michael Flores, II: Did anyone else say anything else about 8th grade promotion last board meeting? Because I was not here.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: No, not a word.

Vice President Linda Heath: Not one single comment.

Governing Member George Arredondo: In that same venue, though, I would like to make sure we have an idea that things will be different for the high school. So that information will be laid out or informed to people.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: Yeah, we actually have a planning meeting coming up the first full week of April to discuss high school graduation. Once we have a solid plan, we will get that out as soon as we possibly can, and make sure that everyone is notified well in advance as to what that will look like for high school graduation.

Vice President Linda Heath: It should be beneficial because we're giving them a lot more seating.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: Absolutely, but you know how it is with any type of change, so we want to make sure that we give people a lot of forewarning. prior to, and allow them to give us some feedback on how we can implement the best we can.

Governing Member George Arredondo: I just want to appreciate all the updates with the community.

Superintendent Dawn Dee Hodge: You probably feel bombarded sometimes, and I don't ever expect a response. I just want to make sure that you all stay updated, just in case you're asked.

Vice President Linda Heath: The last thing we want is to be blind sided.

Governing Member George Arredondo: But we're reading them.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Linda Heath MOVED, SECOND Member George Arredondo. To Adjourn the meeting at 6:13PM. President Michael Flores, II voted "yes", Vice-President Linda Heath voted "yes", Member George Arredondo voted "yes" and Member Victoria Quintero voted "yes"

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Andrea Felix and approved on April 9, 2025.

Governing Board	Title	Date
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Public Notice of Governing Board Meeting Procedures.

The Coolidge Unified School District Governing Board Meetings are open for members of the community/public to join in-person. We will continue to operate our livestream services through the Coolidge Schools Vimeo account with the exception of meetings during school breaks. Visit our website for direct access:

https://www.coolidgeschools.org/gb_members