

SOUTHWESTERN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
January 14, 2026

Members Present: John Blue, Jonathan Deater, Blake Newkirk, Dustin Simpson, Brad Stamper, Derrek Tennell, and Daryl Thomas
Member Not Present:

I. Call to Order

A. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

Mr. Tennell called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. in the Southwestern Consolidated Administration building. He led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

B. Welcome, introductions and recognitions

Dr. Wilkins welcomed everyone in attendance.

Mr. Tindail recognized the IASP Rising Star recipients for this year. These students included Landon Drake, Bruce O'Brien, Ethan Sipes, and Jayden Thurston. These juniors were recognized for leadership and academic strength and scholarship qualities.

Mrs. Haehl recognized Violet Alexander as a student of the month of December from the Elementary School.

II. Board Election

A. Election of Board Officers for board of trustees and board of finance.

This election was facilitated by school attorney Amy Mathews. Ms. Matthews let board members know that a recent change in the law allowed board elections to take place by January 31st each year instead of the previous date of January 15th each year.

Mr. Stamper nominated Mr. Deater to serve as the board president for 2026. Mr. Blue seconded the motion. Carried 7-0

Mr. Tennell nominated Mrs. Newkirk to serve as the board vice-president for 2026. Mr. Blue seconded the motion. Carried 7-0

Mr. Tennell nominated Mr. Simpson to serve as the board secretary for 2026. Mrs. Newkirk seconded the motion. Carried 7-0

B. Appointment of Blue River Career Program Representative

Mrs. Newkirk nominated Mr. Thomas as the board representative to BRCP. Mr. Tennell seconded the motion. Carried 7-0

C. Appointment of School positions:

Attorney: Church, Church, Hittle, and Antrim,

Board Executive Secretary & Business Manager: Bonnie Thopy

HR Specialist: Jessica Blackwell

Corporation ECA treasurer: Amber Mitchell

Mr. Stamper moved and Mr. Tennell seconded to approve the positions. Carried 7-0

D. Set the Board and Board Secretary Salaries.

Dr. Wilkins explained that the 2025 rates were \$2000 per year for board members and \$60 per meeting for the board secretary.

Mrs. Newkirk moved and Mr. Stamper seconded to keep the current rates in effect. Carried 7-0

III. Agenda Modifications

None

IV. Public Comments

Mr. Paul Baute congratulated Southwestern sophomore, Jay Utley, for recently setting a new school record for 3 point shots during a single basketball game.

Mrs. Rosie Pung thanked the board members for awarding her the community Tip Of The Spear award last month. She thanked everyone for the support at the recent alumni association fund raiser chili supper. She offered special thanks to Jami Guy and Brisha Dunbar for their hard work. Mrs. Pung let board members know that the alumni association was looking for ways to help with repairs to the track. She also offered condolences to families of several community members and past employees that had recently passed away.

V. Consent Items and Claims

A. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting

Mr. Simpson moved and Mr. Tennell seconded. Carried 7-0.

B. Approval of accounts payable vouchers

Mrs. Newkirk moved and Mr. Stamper seconded. Carried 7-0.

VI. Business and Financial Reports

A. Financial and Cafeteria Reports

B. Extracurricular Account Report

Dr. Wilkins informed the board that the financial reports were in their packets. No questions were asked regarding the report.

VII. New Business

A. Recommend the acceptance of donations and grants.

a. Donation from Mt. Auburn Christian Church in the amount of \$50 for the Spartan Food Pantry.

b. Donation from Mt Gilead Baptist Church in the amount of \$300 for the Spartan Food Pantry.

c. Donation from Clark Estate crop income in the amount of \$13,474.85 for the Agricultural Department.

Mr. Stamper moved and Mr. Tennell seconded. Carried 7-0.

B. Recommend approval to pay Moake Park Group in the amount of \$205,555.00 for SCSD High School & Elementary MEP Renovations.

Mr. Tennell moved and Mr. Stamper seconded. Carried 7-0.

- C. Recommend approval of Year-End Transfers.**
Mr. Simpson moved and Mr. Blue seconded. Carried 7-0.
- D. Recommend cancellation of outstanding checks:** Any checks that have not cleared the bank within two years of the date of issue may be cleared after December of that year.
Mr. Blue moved and Mrs. Newkirk seconded. Carried 7-0.
- E. Discussion and Approval of Preschool Fee Options for 2026-27 school year.**
Mr. Tennell moved to approve the modified amounts with the expectation to increase rates again the following year. Mr. Stamper seconded. Carried 7-0.
- F. Recommend approval to pay Tecton in the amount of \$12,500.00 for Southwestern Consolidated GO bond (24-12) Project.**
Mr. Stamper moved and Mrs. Newkirk seconded. Carried 7-0
- G. Recommend moving the April 8 board meeting to April 15.**
Mrs. Newkirk moved and Mr. Simpson seconded. Carried 7-0.
- H. Recommend to approve Southwestern Food Service Department for purchasing from KLIC Contracts.**
Mr. Stamper moved and Mr. Tennell seconded. Carried 7-0
- I. Recommend to approve contract for SLP services between Beck Speech Therapy and Southwestern Schools.**
Mr. Simpson moved and Mr. Tennell seconded. Carried 7-0
- J. Other**
Board members received a copy of the overtime report.

VIII. Reports and Presentations

None

IX. Personnel

A. Leaves/Resignations/Terminations

B. Recommendations to Hire

- a. Recommend to hire Brooke Burbrink as 7th grade girls basketball coach for 25-26 school year at \$1860.

Mr. Tennell moved and Mrs. Newkirk seconded. Carried 6-0-1. Mr. Deater abstained.

X. Superintendent Comments

Dr. Wilkins shared the results of a recent survey sent to parents following elearning days. He reported that 71 people had completed the survey and that most were pleased with the recent changes to how elearning was presented. A high percentage of people completing the survey found it easy to log in and appreciated being able to get support from the teachers. Dr. Wilkins noted that 84.5% of those surveyed preferred elearning instead of adding days at the end of the year. Some areas where respondents felt could be improved included parent availability, technology and connectivity issues, and classroom behavior.

Dr. Wilkins also shared that Mr. Meredith had reported a decrease in discipline referrals. He stated that the rate for this year was just over half of the rate at this time last year. Mr. Meredith also reported that the overall attendance rate had increased by 11% over last year.

The board members discussed the upcoming legislative changes to the cell phone policies for schools and what that change will look like for Southwestern.

XI. Board Member Comments

Mr. Blue congratulated the new officers and the students that had been recognized. Mrs. Newkirk also extended congratulations and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She also reminded everyone about the upcoming all colors of cancer night at the basketball game on February 13th, letting everyone know there would be a silent auction held that night along with other fund raising events.

XII. Adjournment

Mr. Deater adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m.















