



EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT 112

COUNTIES

CLARK
COWLITZ
KLICKITAT
PACIFIC
SKAMANIA
WAHIAKUM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SUSAN BARKER
KEVIN DAVIS
JOHN DEEDER
MARK HOTTOWE
MEL NETZHAMMER
HEIDI ROSENBERG
DARLENE STICKEL

SUPERINTENDENT

TIM MERLINO

ESD 112 Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 25, 2026

ESD 112, 2500 NE 65th Avenue, Vancouver, WA 98661

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The ESD 112 Board of Directors' Business Meeting was called to order by President Heidi Rosenberg at 3:00 pm on August 25, 2026, with a quorum of five members present. Attendees were welcomed to the meeting.

- 1.1 Roll call of members present: Heidi Rosenberg, President; Susan Barker, Kevin Davis, Mel Netzhammer, and Darlene Stickel.
- 1.2 Cabinet members present: Marnie Allen, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources & School Liability Programs; Monique Dugaw, Executive Director of Communications & Public Engagement; Gavin Hottman, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Financial Officer; Mike Nerland, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching & Learning; Jeffrey Niess, Executive Director, Specialized Student Services; Jodi Wall, Executive Director, Early Care & Education; and Kathy Whitlock, Executive Director, Student & School Success.
- 1.3 Guests present: Dr. Joshua Fritts, Director of Therapeutic Programs
- 1.4 Members of the public: None Present
- 1.5 Superintendent present: Tim Merlino

2. CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

- 2.1 Board Meeting Minutes
 - 2.1.1 ESD 112 Board of Directors' Business Meeting – June 23, 2026

- 2.2 Personnel and Finance Reports
 - 2.2.1 ESD Personnel Activity Report – June & July 2026
- 2.3 ESD Expenditure Reports
 - 2.3.1 ESD GF Budget Status Report – June & July 2026
 - 2.3.2 ESD GF Expenditure by Object Summary – June & July 2026
 - 2.3.3 ESD GF Warrant Log – June & July 2026
 - 2.3.4 ESD Accounts Payable Check Register - June & July 2026
 - 2.3.5 Amended Financials
- 2.4 Early Head Start Budget Status/Expenditure Reports
 - 2.4.1 EHS Credit Card Report – June & July 2026

Vouchers are audited and certified by the auditing officer as required by RCW 42.24.180, and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 have been recorded on a listing made available to the board.

- 2.5 **ACTION:** A motion was made by Darlene Stickel and seconded by Kevin Davis to approve the consent agenda items listed above. **Motion passed.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- 3.1 Public Comments: None

4. REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Program Highlight – Therapeutic Educational Programs: Jeffrey Niess, Executive Director of Specialized Student Services, introduced Dr. Joshua Fritts, Director of Therapeutic Programs, to share an update on program growth. The programs have grown by 50-70 students per year. The Curae Center, Florens Academy, and Gorge Academy programs doubled in size last year. The programs have increased focus on parent/caregiver collaboration. There has also been a focus on supporting staff growth, as well as providing training and support to educators within the region and beyond. An update was provided to the board of directors on the therapeutic facilities.
- 4.2 Early Head Start (EHS) & ECEAP Monthly Report: Jodi Wall, Executive Director Early Care & Education, shared highlights of this month's report. An update was shared on the children served and services provided in the 2025-2026 school year which included 667 students served and 2,757 home visits completed. All Staff Professional Development Days were held on August 24-25, 2026, which were attended by approximately two hundred staff members. The program was informed that they will be visited by DCYF for an onsite review in January. Jodi also shared that the

Early Care & Education program has submitted a grant seeking funds to expand the Nova program if awarded. An update was also shared on Transitional Kindergarten funding reductions in the region.

- 4.3 Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Tim Merlino briefed the board on the following:
- 4.3.1 Superintendent Merlino shared information on the social media lawsuit that the board of directors will be asked to consider regarding harm caused to students by addictive algorithms in social media platforms.
 - 4.3.2 AESD Annual Retreat: Superintendent Merlino, Gavin Hottman, Chief Financial Officer; and Mike Nerland, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning attended the AESD Annual Retreat in Yakima this month. The retreat largely focused on maintaining relevance in a time of budget shortfalls and expansion of regional services to benefit school districts.
 - 4.3.3 An opportunity to partner with ESD 101 to house a Managed Hosting Facility was shared. Gavin Hottman, Chief Financial Officer, provided information regarding the proposed services. The Board gave the superintendent authority to enter into a purchase and sale agreement for a facility to support a managed hosting facility if negotiations warrant.
 - 4.3.4 An update was shared on school districts in the region.
 - 4.3.5 Vancouver Public Schools approved a resolution to enter binding conditions. An overview of the ESD's role in supporting the district was provided.
 - 4.3.6 The ESD received a contract for the Washington Department of Health to launch a Rural Healthcare Academy, a program designed to give rural students a head start on medical careers before they graduate from high school, as well as a new contract to provide a Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team for Klickitat and Skamania Counties.
 - 4.3.7 Washington State is expecting a \$3 billion budget shortfall. Legislation may be introduced to address cell phone usage in districts and FAFSA requirements.
 - 4.3.8 Superintendent Merlino shared plans for early legislative outreach in the region.
 - 4.3.9 A Back-to-School Staff Meeting is planned for August 28, 2026, at 2:00 pm. The meeting will feature student voices from direct service programs.

- 4.4 Employee Acknowledgements & Recognitions: Monique Dugaw, Executive Director of Communications and Public Relations, recognized the ESD-U Team and faculty, Katherine Livick, Instructional Technology Coordinator; and staff from the Patricia Nierenberg Early Learning Center. The center was awarded a Level 5 Early Achievers rating, which is the highest possible quality rating in Washington State's rating and improvement system for early childhood education.

5. ACTION ITEMS

- 5.1 *ACTION*: A motion was made by Darlene Stickel and seconded by Susan Barker to approve ESD 112 entering an agreement with the Singleton Schreiber law firm to pursue claims related to adolescent/teen social media addiction. **Motion passed.**
- 5.2 *ACTION*: A motion was made by Susan Barker and seconded by Kevin Davis to approve the 2026-27 Open Doors School Improvement Plan. **Motion passed.**
- 5.3 *ACTION*: A motion was made by Susan Barker and seconded by Kevin Davis to approve Resolution R.26.01 – In the Matter of Approving Temporary Out of Endorsement Conditional Certificates Special Education Assignments. **Motion passed.**
- 5.4 *ACTION*: A motion was made by Susan Barker and seconded by Darlene Stickel to approve Resolution R.26.02 – In the Matter of Approving Out of Endorsement Assignments for Youth Services Teachers. **Motion passed.**
- 5.5 *ACTION*: A motion was made by Darlene Stickel and seconded by Mel Netzhhammer to approve Resolution R.26.03 – In the Matter of Approval of 2025-26 ESD budget extension in the amount of \$132,891,500. **Motion passed.**

6. BOARD COMMENTS

- 6.1 Correspondence: This month's correspondence included a letter from Dr. Elizabeth West, Longview Public Schools, to Dr. Joshua Fritts, Director of Therapeutic Programs.
- 6.2 Board Participation in Events:
6.2.1 None in July or August.

7. CALENDAR ITEMS

- 7.1 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – September 22, 2026
- 7.2 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – October 27, 2026

- 7.3 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – November 17, 2026
- 7.4 AESA Annual Conference – Orlando, FL – December 2-4, 2026
- 7.5 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – December 8, 2026
- 7.6 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – January 26, 2027
- 7.7 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – February 23, 2027
- 7.8 Board of Directors Annual Retreat – TBD – March 22, 2027
- 7.9 Board of Directors Business Meeting – TBD – March 23, 2027
- 7.10 AESD Annual Conference – Cle Elum – April 14 - 16, 2027
- 7.11 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – April 27, 2027
- 7.12 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – May 25, 2027
- 7.13 Board of Directors Business Meeting – ESD 112 – June 22, 2027

8. ADJOURNMENT

- 8.1 The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 pm.



Heidi Rosenberg, President



Tim Merlino, Superintendent