

**DOUGLAS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #27
DOUGLAS, ARIZONA**

Board Room
Central Administration Building

5:00 P.M.
December 2, 2025

**Regular Board Meeting & Executive Session
Minutes of the Board**

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Ray Borane, President

PRESENT: Mr. Kevin Smith, Member
Mrs. Jana Selchow, Member
Mr. Mitch Lindemann, Member
Mr. Mario Ramos, Member

Others Present: Ana C. Samaniego, Superintendent
Denise Cox, Assistant Superintendent
Cesar Soto, Chief Financial & Operations Officer
Zarib Rodriguez, Ex-Officio Student Member
Alma Valenzuela, Executive Secretary

Board Meeting Minutes not previously approved:

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the following minutes. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0. ¹

1. April 1, 2025 - Regular

**Summary of Current Events:
Superintendent**

Mrs. Samaniego addressed the Board and informed them about the following:

- Hopes everyone had a great Thanksgiving holiday. All District Offices were closed Thursday and Friday.
- As part of her Superintendent goals, has meet with the Certified Council, Classified Council, and Parent Council. Has had three (3) very productive meetings with lots of good feedback. Will also be meeting with the Student Advisory Council this month.

Superintendent's GEM Award

Mrs. Samaniego advised that Mrs. Nereyda Teran is the Superintendent's GEM Award recipient for November. Mrs. Teran is an Instructional Aide at Ray Borane Middle School. CONGRATULATIONS Mrs. Teran!

¹A unanimous (5/0) vote will show the members voting in this manner throughout the minutes:

Name	Aye	Nay	Absent
Mr. Kevin Smith	√		
Mrs. Jana Selchow	√		
Mr. Mitch Lindemann	√		
Mr. Mario Ramos	√		
Mr. Ray Borane	√		

Mr. Borane stopped the meeting at 5:05 p.m. to enter the Public Hearing.

Mr. Borane reconvened the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

Governing Board Members

Mrs. Selchow thanked Ray Borane Middle School National Honor Society students for the presentation they gave on the folding of the U.S. flag. It was well done.

Reports:

Ex-Officio Student Member – Zarib Rodriguez

Mr. Rodriguez provided the DUSD Schools Activity Report for the month of December.

Year to Date Budget Balance & Travel Reports – Cesar Soto

Mr. Soto commented that the Board was provided with the November reports. The number on the reports is the current number based on the revised budget.

Human Resources & Student Enrollment Reports – Denise Cox

Mrs. Cox addressed the Board and informed them about the following:

- Total student enrollment is 3,508 including preschool and ADM is 3,310.
- In November, had 17 new registrations and 20 withdrawals.
- In HR, there are 4 certified vacancies.

Mrs. Selchow asked out of the 17 new registrations, are they returning or new enrollments? Mrs. Cox replied that they are new enrollments.

Public Comments:

None.

II. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the consent agenda items as presented. Mrs. Selchow seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

1. Payroll and Expense Vouchers/Reports:

- a. Expense Vouchers: 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613
- b. Student Activities & Auxiliary Vouchers/Reports: 9002, 9003, 9004, 9005, 9006, 9007
- c. Payroll Vouchers: 10, 11

III. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Discussion/action on the approval of the Revision to the District Annual Expenditure Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

Mrs. Samaniego advised that a revision was not required but they felt it was appropriate due to some loss in enrollment and not wait until March. The only factor for the revision is the loss of enrollment.

Mr. Soto commented that the loss of enrollment is the main highlight for the revision. The difference in ADM (enrollment) since July until today is the loss of 61.36 weighted students. The

loss overall is \$328,219.00 and a gain in capital of \$2,273.00. Those are the main and only things that were changed in the revision.

Mr. Lindemann asked if the state changed the enrollment to the current enrollment; has that happened? Mr. Soto replied yes, it was changed a couple of years ago to current enrollment and not based on the 100th day.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the Revision to the District Annual Expenditure Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 as presented. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

B. Discussion/action on the approval of certified hires.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the certified hires as presented. Mrs. Selchow seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

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| • Arizdelcy Mazon | Emergency Substitute Teacher | \$105.00/day | M&O |
| • Camilla Altree | Substitute Teacher | \$125.00/day | M&O |

C. Discussion/action on the approval of classified hires.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the classified hires as presented. Mr. Ramos seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

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| • Jocelyn Rios Cifuentes | ESS Instructional Aide (Joe Carlson) | \$15.97 | M&O |
| • Brynna L. McCormick | ESS Instructional Aide (Stevenson) | \$15.97 | M&O |

D. Discussion/action on the approval of increase in hours.

Mr. Ramos motioned to approve the increase in hours as presented. Mr. Lindemann seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

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| • Selena Garcia | ESS Instructional Aide (Joe Carlson) from 6 hrs. to 6.5 hrs. (\$16.52) | M&O |
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E. Discussion/action on the approval of classified resignation.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the classified resignation as presented. Mrs. Selchow seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

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| • Nadine Daley Ramos | School Safety & Emergency Preparedness Secretary | Resignation effective 11/21/25 |
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F. Discussion/action on the approval of student observer.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the student observer as presented. Mrs. Selchow seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

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| • Emeterio (EJ) Hernandez | Hastings College Student Observer (Spring 2026; Districtwide) |
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G. Discussion/action on the approval of athletic addendums.

Mrs. Samaniego advised that these are for Paul Huber Middle School sports.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the athletic addendums as presented. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

• Priscilla Polanco	Boys' Basketball Coach (PHMS)	\$1,000.00	M&O
• Milarose Tajo	Boys' Basketball Assistant Coach (PHMS)	\$750.00	M&O
• Gabriel Sanchez	Girls' Soccer Coach (PHMS)	\$1,000.00	M&O

H. Discussion/action on the approval of volunteers.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve volunteers as presented. Mrs. Selchow seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

• Francisco Lugo	Boys' Basketball (DHS)
• Sofia Castillo	Girls' Soccer (DHS)

I. Discussion/action on the approval of donations received for DUSD #27:

- *Donation of 20 tote bags and 20 journals from Lakeshore to DUSD Teachers (est. value \$259.98).*

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the donations received for DUSD #27 as presented. Mrs. Selchow seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

J. Discussion/information on Budget Considerations for Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

Mrs. Samaniego advised that in looking at the projections and the continued loss of student enrollment, need to start having conversations and plan ahead of time. The uniqueness in the decline in student enrollment is not only a Douglas issue, it is also regional, it is statewide, and nationwide. There are many school closures in Tucson, Phoenix, and Sierra Vista. She is very aware of the situation and in discussions with the leadership staff, they are looking at projections they can make and planning. There are also factors such as the city economy, the decline in birth rate, the price in housing in Douglas, and the fact that many people are leaving Douglas for employment reasons. Also, the district is the only public school district in Douglas and we have very strict registration guidelines for proving residency, which sometimes keeps potential students from enrolling in the district. Everyone has to have proof of residency. Most of the funding is based on ADM (enrollment), so fewer students equal less money. Fixed costs and salaries do not decline at the same rate of enrollment. While enrollment is down, the fixed costs (such as transportation, maintenance of buildings, and salaries) do not decrease. This creates a budget gap as there are costs and revenue coming in and out. In the budget, 85% is salaries and another big percentage is health benefits. The utilization rate for health insurance has been really high starting with the 2024 school year and that is what the renewal increase is based on. As of right now, there are three (3) employees that have utilized 174% in health insurance benefits. Because of the high utilization rate numbers, BlueCross BlueShield is not seeing the district as a money maker and next year will be a renewal period. We will need to go out for an RFP next year and hope that insurance companies will submit a proposal for health benefits. The consultant company is estimating a 30% to 40% rate increase with BlueCross BlueShield for next year. The following are concerns she and the leadership team have: staffing costs, underutilized facilities, the sustainability and funding of programs (such as middle school sports), and transportation costs. Her recommendation is to create an internal budget committee made up of different members of the staff, including Board members. This is going to take some creative planning and thought process, difficult conversations, and she can't do it by herself. After the holidays, will begin

working on this and look at all areas: programs, staffing, budget, and enrollment. Will work together to come up with recommendations. The decline in enrollment is a reality.

Mr. Soto commented that they have to look at all of the expenditures and the areas they don't want to affect are programs that benefit students in the instructional side of things. Need to adjust to what we have, as we don't have the luxury. In regards to health benefits, the committee will look for something affordable and be paid from M&O funds and not utilize additional funding. It is going to be challenging, but be strategically minded in terms of the areas that will be looked at, such as vacant positions. Will need to be financially stable with the revenues we have. Having the committee will help, as we don't want to look at how to fix the budget problems but create some revenue, projects, or programs that can help generate revenue. Mr. Borane asked Mr. Soto to provide information as to what the current budget is now, as he is having to subsidize the M&O with other funds. When the Board approved monies to be taken from other sources, Mr. Soto assured the Board that as soon as he found out what the revenues would be (which will be very minimal again this year), he would put it back into M&O. Mr. Soto commented that this year, the Board approved to utilize \$500,000 from other funds (MIPS, lease money) to help with health benefits as no more revenues are coming in. The situation for next school year will probably be the same or worse because the ESA vouchers keep growing. The district cannot count on additional monies coming from the state to help districts. The goal is to avoid having to use the extra funds to help out M&O. The district wants to be financially solvent for the next school year. The Board approved using \$500,000 from the other funds and will likely use the whole amount. He was hopeful that the district would receive additional funds from the state but they never sent out additional funds and probably won't be any next school year. Also, the minimum wage increase is something the district will also need to look at in January. It is not a huge impact, but it is approximately \$60,000.00 that will affect the M&O side in addition to losing enrollment. Mrs. Samaniego commented that MIPS is a fund that generates money, as it is how Medicare is billed but doesn't want to depend on it. With the insurance cost, are hoping to get a good proposal that is reasonable to the district and able to provide a good health insurance plan for staff.

Mr. Smith commented that there are going to have to be a lot of hard decisions made in the future. The main purpose is educating children and as they start looking at places where they need to cut stuff, all areas are looked at. Is the district administration an area being looked at, where jobs can be combined and eliminate some of the personnel and help the budget? Some of the money is helping to cover the health insurance, but health insurance is something that needs to be looked at. Maybe a possibility: decrease what is paid by the Board and the employee pays a higher percentage; hopefully this can be avoided.

Mrs. Selchow commented that in consolidating jobs, taking programs and splitting them off, or even considering rebuilding differently. So much of what has always been done in the district has always been done but may need some change. If changes need to be made, look at different things so that the children don't get shorted, that they get the very best. Need to look at also what the parents want; their input is huge too. There is a reason families are leaving Douglas and we need to know why.

Mr. Lindemann asked if it ever came through from the state to not fund absences? Mrs. Samaniego replied yes, they are not funding. He commented that the reorganization of the organizational

chart needs to be looked and start with the administration. He doesn't want to belittle the administration but the further away from the students, for the cuts, the better. Maybe have to look at combining positions, eliminating some of the positions. He personally feels that if someone has a teaching certificate, then they should be in a classroom. That is his philosophy and he's always thought that. Also, look at travel; we don't need to be doing that. He doesn't want to see elimination of anything of the students. We are here for the students and they shouldn't be affected. Student programs should be fully funded and not be affected.

Mr. Ramos commented that he's been with the district for many years and has been through very bad times and good times. The worst thing that can happen is when you have to start using credit to make payroll. Several years ago, our enrollment was high and overspending, which had a big impact on the district. Now, the loss of funding is due to the loss of enrollment. We need to figure out why and where the students are going. Need to find ways to keep the students and families from leaving the district and Douglas. Mrs. Samaniego commented that during a recent meeting with Mr. Joel Todd, Cochise Technology District, it was brought to their attention that there are about 88 students in Douglas showing up as voucher students. This doesn't necessarily mean they were district students, just students in Douglas. Mrs. Cox commented that there are only nine students who are homeschooled. From July to November, the district has lost approximately 297 students.

Mr. Smith commented that he agrees that they need to look at making cuts but also why are families deciding to leave the district to go to a charter school or homeschool. What is driving that dynamic? What can the district do to turn that around? Can the district advertise to bring those families back? There are several CTE classes at Douglas High School; maybe work with local contractors and work with them on possible internships. The students would be able to get experience, school credit, and money. Look at dual enrollment credit and how to promote and expand it. Need to market all of the opportunities students have to try to get families to stay and/or enroll. For families moving out of Douglas due to jobs, there isn't much the district can do to keep them. But families that are here but wanting to go to a charter or homeschool, we need to try to keep them.

Mrs. Selchow commented that the district has a great CTE program and dual enrollment credit opportunity. These are two great programs and benefits at the high school level but we don't have anything at our middle schools or elementary schools. Also, middle school sports are very important as they are feeder programs for the high school. Maybe having after-school programs at all of the schools and if teachers are not able to cover, maybe have other staff or community members volunteer. Academics is a top priority, but also having other programs that students may want to be part of is very important. Think outside the box.

Mr. Lindemann commented that advertising is budget-related and the district has to put out all the great things that we offer. The district offers a very good education and many programs but how is that information shared? He doesn't see that much about the district on social media and it needs to be shared.

Mrs. Samaniego commented that she will take the recommendations and work on the budget committee. She will be working with the leadership team and committee to bring recommendations to the Board.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Governing Board may vote to convene into executive session, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A)(1) for the following personnel matter:

A. Denise Cox, Assistant Superintendent

No Board action is taken during executive session. Should the employee wish to have the executive session dealing with the matter pertaining to that employee held in open session, it shall be conducted in open session following the executive session at this point in the agenda.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to enter into executive session. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0.

Meeting moved into executive session at 6:13 p.m. Return to open session at 6:47 p.m.

V. INFORMATION ITEMS:

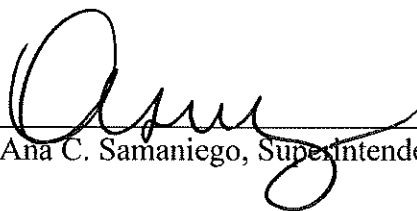
A. Announcements

- Early Release & Last Day of Quarter December 19
- Winter Break (No School) Monday, December 22-Friday, January 2
 - All District Offices Closed Wednesday, December 24-Thursday, January 1
- Annual Organizational Meeting January 6, 2026

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Mr. Lindemann motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Selchow seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Alma Valenzuela, Executive Secretary. The Board at their meeting on September 1, 2026, approved these minutes.



Ana C. Samaniego, Superintendent