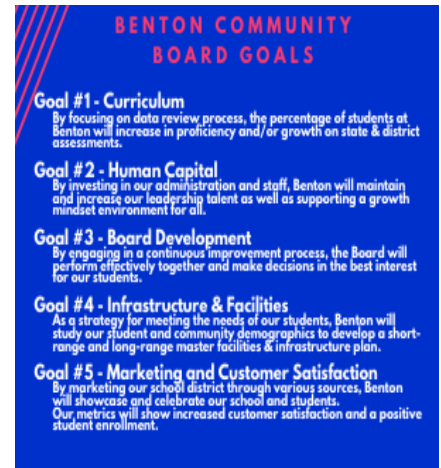


TO: BENTON COMMUNITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: DR. JAMES BIESCHKE, SUPERINTENDENT
RE: REGULAR BOARD MEETING
TIME: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026
6:00 p.m. - Regular Meeting
PLACE: Central Office - Board room
304 1st Street
Van Horne, Iowa 52346



REGULAR MEETING

CALL TO ORDER - 6:00 PM

Directors Present: Becker, Klein, Nolte, Schanbacher, Shaw, Thompson.

Directors Absent: Kaiser

A quorum was declared present.

Also present: Dr Bieschke, Anna Selk and Melisa Venneman

DELEGATIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, CONSIDERATIONS OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR THE AGENDA

Add the Approval of the 2026-2027 School Calendar to the agenda.

ACTION ITEM #79 - APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Schanbacher, seconded by Shaw, to approve the agenda with the 26-27 School Calendar addition.

MOTION CARRIED

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

PUBLIC HEARING FOR 26-27 CALENDAR - NO COMMENTS

OPEN FORUM - NONE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

[Legislative Update](#)

ACTION ITEM #80 - APPROVAL OF 2026-2027 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Motion by Klein, seconded by Becker, to approve the 2026-2027 School Calendar.

MOTION CARRIED

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

ACTION ITEM #81 - BUDGET GUARANTEE

The Budget Guarantee program ensures that school districts experiencing declining enrollment do not suffer drastic, immediate budget cuts. It guarantees a district's authorized spending authority for the current year is at least 101% of the previous year's "Regular Program District Cost" (RPDC). The budget guarantee is a funding mechanism that uses property taxes to support schools when supplemental state aid (SSA) doesn't keep pace with declining enrollment. There has been discussion in the legislature this session for the state to cover all budget guarantees for school districts.

Motion by Schanbacher, seconded by Nolte that Be it RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Benton Community School District, will levy property tax for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the regular program budget adjustment as allowed under section 257.14, Code of Iowa and **Approve the Budget Guarantee for fiscal year 2027.**

MOTION CARRIED

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

[Administration Report](#)

FY27 CERTIFIED BUDGET DISCUSSION

This agenda item is discussion only with no action. This is a time for the board to look at different variables impacting the budget and to have a conversation among themselves and the opportunity to ask questions.

Proposed Budget Hearing Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Earliest Publication Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026

Last Publication Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026

Budget Adoption Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2026

Earliest Publication Date: Thursday, March 26, 2026

Last Publication Date: Sunday, April 5, 2026

DUE TO THE STATE - April 30, 2026

Certified Budget File information

Current FY27 Certified Budget information: Benton CSD FY 27 Budget presented at a property tax rate of **\$10.53** currently for FY 27 (\$10.32 in FY26) comprised of General Fund Levy (Property Tax \$7.79), Instructional Support Levy w/ 4% Income Surtax (Property Tax \$.53), Management Levy (Property Tax \$1.10), PPEL (Property Tax \$.33), and Voted PPELw/ 4% Income Surtax (Property Tax \$.78) for a total Tax of \$10.53 for FY 27 Budget Publication.

Discussion on:

FY 27 Tax Certification Page

FY 27 Proposed Tax Hearing Notice Mailed to the Community

Income Surtax Options

FY26 School Tax Rates

New Money Calculator

Benton Budget Calendar

ACTION ITEM #82 - INCOME SURTAX RATE, TAX NOTICE & SET HEARING DATES FOR FY27 CERTIFIED BUDGET

After discussion of the FY27 budget parameters, the board needs to approve through a motion the income surtax rate, the proposed tax rate, and the hearing dates. I would recommend 4% income surtax rates for both the Instructional Support Levy (ISL) and the Voter Approved Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (VPPEL). This would create a tax rate of \$10.53.

Motion by Nolte, seconded by Shaw, to set the income surtax at 4% for the Instructional Support Levy and the Voter Approved Physical Plant and Equipment Levy, the auditor's published levy rate at \$10.52692, and set the hearing dates for the proposed budget as March 25, 2026 and the budget adoption as April 15, 2026 for the FY27 certified budget.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

ACTION ITEM #83 - BUSINESS SERVICES

A. WARRANTS

[WARRANTS](#)

ADDITIONAL WARRANTS
SUMMARY OF WARRANTS

B. FINANCIAL REPORTS

GENERAL FUND
ALL FUNDS REPORT

Motion by Schanbacher, seconded by Klein, to approve the warrants and financial reports as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

ACTION ITEM #84 - CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda includes common topics.

*ALL HIRES ARE CONTINGENT ON BACKGROUND CHECK, PROPER LICENSING, AND RELEASE FROM CURRENT CONTRACT IF APPLICABLE

- i) HIRES
 - (1) Kristi Wright- Transportation Director
 - (2) Angela Von Ahsen - Co-Ed Asst Varsity Track
- ii) RESIGNATIONS - None
- iii) VOLUNTEERS
 - (1) Jareth Schmuecker
- iv) MEETING MINUTES
 - (1) [January 21, 2026](#)
 - (2) SIAC Meeting - [January 28, 2026](#)
- v) CONTRACTS - None
- vi) [SPRING PAY SCHEDULE](#)

Motion by Shaw, seconded by Nolte, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

ACTION ITEM #85 - POLICY REVIEW

- 603.12 - [Postsecondary Education Counseling](#) (2nd Reading)
- 601.03 - [Types of School Organization](#) (Rescind, no IASB policy)
- 604.02 - [Individualized Instruction](#) (Change to align with IASB)
- 604.03 - [Program for Talented and Gifted Students](#) (Change to align with IASB)
- 604.04 - [Program for At-Risk Students](#) (No change, aligns with IASB)
- 604.05 - [Religious-Based Exclusion from a School Program](#) (Change to align with IASB)
- 604.06 - [Instruction at a Post-Secondary Educational Institution](#) (Change to align with IASB)
- 604.07 - [Dual Enrollment](#) (Added IASB NOTE to bottom, no change to IASB policy)
- 604.08 - [Foreign Students](#) (Added IASB NOTE to bottom, no change to IASB policy)
- 604.09 - [Home School Assistance Program](#) (No change, aligns with IASB)
- 604.11 - [Appropriate Use of Online Learning Platforms](#) (1st Reading-Mandatory IASB policy)
- 604.12 - [ESL Program](#) (Rescind, no IASB policy)
- 604.12-E(1) - [ESL Program - Student Language Survey](#) (Rescind, no IASB policy)
- 605.04 - [Technology and Instructional Materials](#) (Added IASB NOTE to bottom, no change to IASB policy)

605.05 - [School Library](#) (Change to align with IASB)

Motion by Becker, seconded by Schanbacher, to approve the updated and revised policies as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- Legislation
- Negotiations Timeline

EXEMPT MEETING

Exempt Session: IOWA CODE 21.9

A meeting of a Board to discuss strategy in matters relating to employment conditions of employees who are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. I.C. 21.9

(There is no action with exempt sessions. As we have done in years past, the Board typically provides a range for collective bargaining).

ACTION ITEM #86 - ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Nolte, seconded by Schanbacher, to adjourn the board meeting at 8:00 PM

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE