



**MINUTES
SCOTT COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 26, 2026**

(1) CONVENE SCHOOL BOARD, CONVENE COUNTY BOARD

The Board of Commissioners, in and for the County of Scott, Minnesota, met in the County Board Room in the City of Shakopee, Minnesota, and convened at 6:00 p.m. The following members were present: Commissioner Weckman Brekke, Commissioner Wolf, Commissioner Brennan, Commissioner Beer, and Commissioner Ulrich. Commissioner Ulrich presided.

School Board Chair Krisi Peterson presided for the Shakopee School Board.

The following were also in attendance:

1. Lezlie Vermillion, County Administrator
2. Danny Lenz, Deputy County Administrator
3. Ron Hocevar, County Attorney
4. Barb Dahl, Health and Human Services Director
5. Jake Grussing, Transformation & Enterprise Services Director
6. Suzanne Arntson, Deputy Health & Human Services Director
7. Nikki Hallberg, Child and Family Services Director
8. Jen Schultz, Library Director
9. Dr. Tawnya Ward, Behavioral Health & Housing Director
10. Rocky Sodetani, Social Worker II
11. Jodi Leraas, Public Health Supervisor
12. Natalie Halverson, Public Health Supervisor
13. James Holden, Clinical Director
14. Lori Huss, Assistant Employee Relations Director
15. Elena Tran, Public Health Data Planner
16. Mary Kay Stevens, Public Health Supervisor
17. Krystal Boyechko, Community Planner
18. Katie Malecha, Quality Improvement Manager
19. Evan Cole, Business Info/Sys Specialist
20. Tracy Cervenka, Business Operations Manager

Guests:

1. Jesse Lara, Shakopee City Council
2. Emily Grove, Shakopee
3. Kristi Peterson, Shakopee School Board
4. Jeff Smith, Shakopee School Board
5. Joe Aldrich, Shakopee School Board
6. Caroline Valdez, Shakopee School Board
7. Tim Brophy, Shakopee School Board
8. Chad Johnson, Shakopee School Board
9. Nick Zitek, Shakopee School Board
10. Shaunya Kumar, Shakopee School Board student rep
11. Bryan Phan, Shakopee School Board student rep
12. Michael Redmond, Shakopee School Superintendent
13. Jim Miklausich, Shakopee Schools
14. Tiffany Olson, Shakopee Schools
15. Nika Summer, Shakopee Schools

16. Sarah Wehrenberg, Shakopee Schools
17. Jeff Pawlicki, Shakopee Schools
18. Julie Fred, Shakopee Schools

(2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those in the room said the Pledge of Allegiance

(3) WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The County Commissioners and School Board members introduced themselves.

(4) CONSIDERATION OF JOINT AGENDA AS PRESENTED - SHAKOPEE SCHOOL BOARD

Tim Brophy moved, seconded by Jeff Smith to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

(5) CONSIDERATION OF JOINT AGENDA AS PRESENTED - SCOTT COUNTY

Commissioner Beer moved, seconded by Commissioner Wolf to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

(6) SABER PRIDE

6.1 MSBA Statewide Conference, Supporting Student Learning

Shakopee Schools Director of Communications & Strategic Development Tiffany Olson, and student school board representative Bryan Phan presented information on the Minnesota School Board Association Statewide Conference.

(7) COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

7.1 Receive Information on Scott County Delivers Topic: Early Learning and Literacy

The Commissioners and School Board members received information on Scott County Delivers Topic Early Learning

7.2 Update on Collaborative Plan for Improving Educational Outcomes

Assistant Shakopee School Board Superintendent Jim Miklausich and Transformation and Enterprise Services Director Jake Grussing provided an update on the collaborative plan for improving educational outcomes. The two objectives in the plan are related to Early Childhood Screenings and Attendance. They provided information on the strategies and tactics for these two areas, including the work that has been done, is being done, and is planned. Related to the Early Childhood Screening Objective, there is work being done to expand the network of referral sources and enhance the existing referral process as well as to expand opportunities for families to participate in early childhood screening. In response to County Administrator Lezlie Vermillion's inquiry, Mr. Miklausich agreed that if children are at a WIC clinic, the School District is supportive of and appreciates that the early childhood screening can be completed there. For the Attendance Objective, work is in process of engaging a leadership team to drive proactive and innovative approaches to support consistent attendance. Mr. Miklausich talked about the tactics put in place for this. In addition, the group is working on ensuring timely referrals to existing prevention programs and to improve data collection, analysis, and communication of the results.

Shakopee School District Directors of Learning, Teaching & Equity Nika Summer and Sarah Wehrenberg and Scott County Library Director Jen Schultz provided information about where the Shakopee Public Schools and the Scott County Library are partnering in programming including a focus on early literacy, automatic access to Scott County's Library via virtual student library card, access to live tutors online, and a focus on adolescent and teen programming. Ms. Summer highlighted other opportunities being planned, including expansion of the Readmobile services and expansion of Library services to school sites. In the near future, this group will be

obtaining book club kids for media specialists, collecting student feedback on high-interest tween/teen programming, scheduling dates for opening school libraries over the summer, and meeting to explore programming options and a tutoring model.

Scott County Attorney Ron Hocevar and Shakopee High School Principal Jeff Pawlicki presented information on the collaboration to install vape detectors and a disposal bin that the Scott County Drug Prevention Task Force (formerly Choose Not to Use) funded. Mr. Pawlicki also highlighted a student assembly to reinforce prevention messaging. In response to School Board member Brophy's question, Mr. Pawlicki shared information about resources within the District for students wanting to address chemical dependency.

Mr. Miklausich and Scott County Child & Family Service Director Nikki Hallberg reviewed the collaborative work done to improve attendance and target approaches to improving individual student attendance outcomes. Scott County had funded a position to support students who are considered chronically absent. That funding has now ended. Ms. Hallberg provided information about the PASS (students under 12) and PATH (students over 12) programs. The goal of this work is to reduce the need for involuntary services and reduce disparities.

Shakopee Schools Director of Special Services Julie Fred, Scott County Clinical Director James Holden, and Student School Board member Bryan Phan provided information about the Connect Therapy program. Mr. Phan commented on the student perspective of this program. Mr. Holden talked about the number of students seen and the importance of bringing these services into schools which allows students to remain in school. Ms. Fred also talked about how services are provided to students during the summer months. Mr. Holden provided information about the professional development sessions provided to staff on topics such as mental health, addiction in the family, and suicide prevention. In response to School Board Chair Peterson's inquiry, Ms. Fred did note that there is a wait list for these services. She also commented on the hiring practices that have brought the right people in the roles. Commissioner Brennan recommended this presentation be given to the Scott County Mental Health Local Advisory council. School Board member Nick Zitek talked about the tie between attendance and mental health, and providing services to help both.

7.3 Mandates

Mr. Grussing reviewed a matrix identifying some of the prevention/intervention services (optional) and mandated services within Health & Human Services. He noted that the prevention/intervention items that are not mandated or those who drive positive outcomes. He also talked about the funding and lack of funding by the state for many of these mandated programs. The programs that are not funded by the state are funded using property taxes. Mr. Grussing talked about the shift of \$980,000,000 to Minnesota counties due to the loss of federal funds being passed from the state to counties, who need to pay for them using property tax dollars. In response to Commissioner Beer's inquiry, Mr. Grussing confirmed that this information has been provided by the State of Minnesota. School Board Chair Kristi Peterson noted that these shifts also affect students in all schools who receive these services. She also noted the task force on special education. There is fear this may not be funded moving forward, though required to provide the services. School Boards are asking for notice for changes in mandates, and that changes must have a fiscal note showing both state and local. Superintendent Redmond also talked about the things we do that provide great value we cannot afford as our organizations need to pay for mandated items that are not funded by the state. School Board member Nick Zitek asked about the potential impact on the residents due to this upcoming shift of funding for programs. Ms. Dahl responded that the shifts would come at different times, with probably \$2-3 million that Scott County will need to pay for. Commissioner Weckman Brekke talked about the importance of remembering that legislation that helps one level of government may hurt another.

(8) ADJOURN COUNTY BOARD, ADJOURN SCHOOL BOARD

On a motion by School Board member Smith, seconded by School Board member Brophy, the Shakopee School Board meeting adjourned 8:42 p.m.

On a motion by Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner Brennan, the Scott County Board meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

County Board Chair

**Clerk to the Board/County
Administrator**

Deputy Clerk to the Board