

	Regular School Board Meeting	
	Date: March 9, 2026	
	Location: Circle of Life Academy	Time: 5:00pm

1. CALL TO ORDER: Time: 5:00__ PM ▾
2. MISSION STATEMENT: Our Circle of Life Academy is immersed in Anishinaabe Mino-Bimaadiziwin for our children and community while providing the highest quality of education.
3. ROLL CALL: a. Board Members Present: Yes ▾ Trista Ayers, Chair Yes ▾ Loretta Solmon, Vice Chair Yes ▾ Chris VanWert, Secretary Yes ▾ Dorothy Zima No ▾ Fawn Roy b. Others Present i. Seth Houglum ii. Heidi Harstad c. Quorum Present? Yes ▾
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA a. Motion: Chris VanWert ▾ b. Second: Dorothy Zima ▾ c. In Favor:3 d. Opposed:0
5. RECOGNITIONS - STAFF OR STUDENT a. Jennifer Stangel and Heidi Mertens, WE Finance - for assisting with financial reporting b. Daren Karsten, PE teacher - willing to be flexible when needed c. Paraprofessionals - continuing professional growth with para apprenticeship

6. COMMENTS OR REQUESTS FROM VISITORS *(limit of 5 minutes per person)*

- a. Chairman Michael Fairbanks
- b. Secretary/Treasurer Michael LaRoque
- c. District I Representative Henry Fox
- d. District II Representative Eugene Sommers
- e. District III Representative Laura Lee Erickson
- f. Rob Tibbetts, White Earth Culture Coordinator
- g. Xavier Baraza, Represents Tribally-Controlled Ogalala Schools

7. PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS

- a. None

8. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Action is requested on the following items of the consent agenda. Consent agenda items are typically adopted without discussion of the individual items because they are routine or ordinary in action. Board members are asked to preview documents prior to the scheduled meeting. Any consent agenda item may be removed for further discussion and deliberation by any member of the board.

- a. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes** -
 - i. Regular Meeting - [February 10, 2026](#)
- b. **HR / New Hires Report:**
 - i. No new hires
- c. **Facilities Report**
 - i. [Report Link](#)
 - 1. Plow issues - possibly look at getting serviced elsewhere (not fleet?)
- d. **NASIS and Transportation Report**
 - i. [Report Link](#)

Approval of Consent Agenda

- ii. Motion: Chris VanWert ▾
- iii. Second: Loretta Solmon ▾
- iv. In Favor:3
- v. Opposed:0

9. STUDENT DATA & ACHIEVEMENT

a. Student Enrollment Update

As of 3/03/26	Currently Enrolled	Wait List	Transferred Out
KG	2	0	0
1st	8	0	1

2nd	7	0	1
3rd	3	0	2
4th	3	1	4
5th	8	0	1
6th	11	2	1
7th	6	0	4
8th	5	0	1
9th	9	1	8
10th	5	0	7
11th	0	0	4
12th	5	2	7
TOTAL	72	6	41
Feb 10, 2026			71
Jan 7, 2026			72
Dec 9, 2025			72
Nov 10, 2025			81
Oct 8, 2025			83
Sep 16, 2025			72

Discussion: Enrollment continues to fluctuate. Students are leaving the district due to personal reasons and need for alternative/flexible programs. COLA continues to receive student applications and is staying vigilant with reviewing and accepting applicants thoroughly.

b. SPED Report

- i. [Report Link](#)
- ii. [Second Link on OT](#)

c. Student Data & Assessment Report

- i. [Report Link](#)
- ii.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

a. Principal Report

- i. [Report Link](#)

b. Culture & Language Dept Report

- i. Vince in Person with report - [Link](#)

c. Finance Report

- i. Official report still in transition phase
- ii. Job posted, but no applicants as of 3/04/26

11. **ACTION ITEMS:** Action items receive individual attention because of the nature of the issues, the need to discuss or review the information prior to taking action, or the specific kind of action required for the action.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

a. Adaptive Life Therapy Contract

Discussion: Proposed contract with Adaptive Life Therapy for in-person Occupational Therapy services at COLA.

- i. Motion: Chris VanWert ▾
- ii. Second: Loretta Solmon ▾
- iii. In Favor:3
- iv. Opposed:0

12. DISCUSSION TOPICS, EVENTS, AND ACTIVITIES

a. **Book Study:** *Great on Their Behalf: Why School Boards Fail, How Yours Can Become Effective*

- i. Report on Step 3,4, and 5 - What stood out? Any action items coming to mind?
 - 1. If there's any magic taking place in public education, it doesn't happen in the admin offices or even in school board meetings - its happening in the classroom through the connection between the educator and the learner.
 - 2. Committees shouldn't meet just to meet. They should be structured and purposeful.
 - 3. Modifying agendas to have a stronger focus on student outcomes
 - 4. No one wants to hear bad news in a monitoring report, but as board members, its important to hear it and face it.

5. Self evaluation for board makes us more effective

- b. **Update: IT meeting** with Monte Bellanger - Erate Meeting - Monday, March 2nd - bid evaluations with Monte and Chris Stone went through the bid process with 5 different companies. IT made the decision. No update on the social media issue.
- c. **Update:** Discussion with WOWE regarding partnership for athletics. Dorothy reported that WOWE declined.
- d. **Update:** Discussion regarding Senior Portraits and how to fund them. Check with Jennifer S. (finance).
- e. **Update:** Youth Language Camp plans. First meeting last week. More info to come.
- f. Proposed **KG Round-up** - Looking to schedule with Head Start.
- g. BIE is offering **New Board Member Training** (online) starting in January. They also offer monthly Lunch & Learn sessions. Here is the [schedule](#) and registration links. Also sent out an email to all Board members on 1/07/26.
- h. Following up on **wild rice donation request** - Rec'd 20 pound donation from White Earth RBC
- i. Drafting proposed **Vision Statement and school values**. Bring your drafts of proposed Vision Statements.
- j. **Programmatic & Fiscal Review visit** - March 23-26, 2026. The Board will need to be prepared for interviews.
- k. **BIE Expanding Educational Opportunities Grant**
 - i. Grant was approved by RBC and submitted on Friday, January 30th
 - ii. If we're successful, we'll be notified on February 27, 2026
- l. **Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Program 2026-2031**
 - i. Trista emailed out a link for the Leadership Team and Board to register, if possible, and view the information
 - ii. Is this something we want to pursue?
- m. 5k sponsored by Public Health
 - i. More discussion tomorrow

13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS

- a. Agenda Items
 - i. Principal's Eval due in April
 - 1. The principal will need to complete self-evaluation prior to final evaluation by the Board. Will send him the information asap.
- b. Meeting Schedule: **Moved to the 2nd Monday of each month**
 - i. March: 9th

- ii. April: 13th
- iii. May: 11th
- iv. June: TBD
- v. Summer Board Retreat: TBD

14. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Motion: Dorothy Zima ▾
- b. Second: Loretta Solmon ▾
- c. In Favor: 3
- d. Opposed: 0

Time: 7:31____ PM ▾