MINUTES OF THE EAST UNION COMMUNITY SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The East Union Community School District Board of Directors met in regular session on Monday, September 22, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Collaborative Learning Center with all members present: Sam McKnight, Adam Tallmon, Jamie Buffington, Amber Tate, and Carol Eckels.

The agenda was approved on a motion by McKnight, seconded by Tate. Motion carried 5-0.

The consent agenda was approved on a motion by Tate, seconded by Buffington. Motion carried 5-0. Items approved included the minutes of August 25, 2025, financial reports, payment of invoices, staff resignations, and new staff contracts. The Board approved the hiring of three student associates/paraprofessionals for the Early Childhood program: Olivia Findley, Josie Chew, and Kayla Haag, each at $13.50 per hour. Open enrollment requests were accepted, and several contracts were approved including the IHSSA Individual Speech Contest Hosting Agreement for February 28, 2026, an updated Joyful Sparks contract, and a special education services agreement with Corning CSD.

Online Learning Facilitator Clarissa McCollough provided a wrap-up of the district's recent student trip to Greece and Italy. She also presented a proposed itinerary for a 9-day student trip to Japan in 2028. On a motion by Buffington, seconded by Tate, the Board authorized advertising the trip and allowing fundraising efforts at school. Motion carried 5-0.

Administrative and board reports followed. The Early Childhood Center reported that enrollment continues to be strong, with improvements noted in the 3- and 4-year-old classes compared to the previous year. Although two grant applications were not awarded, staff will reapply next year.

Elementary Principal Gordon presented a detailed report on enrollment and back-to-school activities, including a strong start to the year, professional development focused on teamwork and embedded learning strategies, and new membership within the PTO. He highlighted homecoming week activities and recognized the generous donation of a drum set to the band program by Brandon and Jessicia Hysell.

Secondary Principal Riley reported on staff and student activities, with the Student Council update delivered by Gwen Nixon. He noted the high level of school spirit during homecoming week, upcoming FFA District Soils competition, leadership boot camp for Student Council officers, preparations for the fall play scheduled November 7–8, and a blood drive.

Board Secretary and School Business Official Tessum reported on September business office tasks and state deadlines that had happened in September, including the certification of the Certified Annual Report (CAR), the Annual Transportation Report (ATR), and the Special Education Supplement (SES) to the Iowa Department of Education. Also reported on how the reorganization of job duties in the business office were going.

Superintendent Kuehl discussed upcoming policy reviews, updated the Board on planning for the West Wing with input from architects and Board President Tallmon, recognized the work of new front office secretaries, and praised the positive atmosphere and school spirit during homecoming week. Board President Tallmon echoed those sentiments and noted how encouraging it was to see the high level of student and community involvement.

The Board next considered transportation time limits under state regulation. Current limits allow 75 minutes for high school students and 60 minutes for elementary students. Districts may extend ride times by up to 15 minutes following a public hearing. On a motion by McKnight, seconded by Eckels, the Board authorized publication of a notice of hearing to be held in October. Motion carried 5-0.

Fuel bids were reviewed from Agriland and New Coop, both of which included the company providing fuel tanks on site. While both companies noted that prices may decrease, McKnight requested consideration of a contract that sets a ceiling price while still using market pricing. On a motion by Tallmon, seconded by McKnight, the Board tabled the matter until October to allow comparison of different contract options. Motion carried 5-0.

The Board approved the 2025–26 Early Childhood Center fee schedule, which included modest increases highlighted in the proposed schedule. Motion by Eckels, seconded by Buffington. Motion carried 5-0.

Two major heating and cooling repairs were approved. On a motion by Tate, seconded by McKnight, the Board approved replacement of the compressor in Heat Pump #21 for $9,773.85. Motion carried 5-0. On a motion by Buffington, seconded by Tate, the Board approved replacement of the compressor in Heat Pump #40 for $19,102.62. Motion carried 5-0.

On a motion by Eckels, seconded by McKnight, the Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Afton for installation and operation of a security camera near the East Union sign. The City will provide, install, and maintain the equipment while the district will provide access to power. Motion carried 5-0.

On a motion by Eckels, seconded by Buffington, the Board approved the hiring of Justin Bane as Building and Grounds Director at a salary of $60,000. Bane brings experience in construction, code enforcement, corrections, and warehouse management. Motion carried 5-0.

The Board approved submission of an allowable growth request to the State of Iowa for the district's special education deficit. For the 2024–25 school year, East Union reported special education revenues of $1,084,514.92 and expenditures of $1,582,305.88, leaving a negative balance of $497,790.96. The allowable growth request restores spending authority in that amount and qualifies the district for supplemental state aid. This process does not generate new funds but is required so the district has the legal authority to spend enough to cover the actual cost of services provided to students with special needs. On a motion by Eckels, seconded by Tate, the request was approved. Motion carried 5-0.

No correspondence or additional comments were presented.

The next regular meetings will be held October 20, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. and November 17, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m. on a motion by McKnight, seconded by Tate. Motion carried 5-0.

Adam Tallmon, Board President Rhiannon Tessum, Board Secretary
Pending Approval

Board goals remain Growth & Achievement, Engaging Partnerships, Optimal Climate (Culture), Quality Staff, and Resources.