

Minutes- Trego Public School District #53
5:30 Regular Meeting
January 14, 2026

Board Members Present: Kris Glover, Mark Spehar, Clara Mae Crawford, Stephanie LeDuc-Vanderyacht

Others Present: County Superintendent - Suzy Rios, Head Teacher - Cristina Leib, District Clerk- Karmen McKinney, Bus Driver- Bonnie A-Gold, Secretary clerk - Cindy Carrell, Aide – Sarah Hamelman, Nancy Wilkins (R), Leigh Ellen Caro-Leveritch (R), Heather & Jake Buker (R), Samantha McCurry (R), Chuck & Kathleen Hamilton, Kristie and Lee Eggebroten, Todd Swan, Casey Fuson, Kathy Lewis, Travina & Matt Lofholm, Fern & Mike Sartori

Call to Order: Kris called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM

Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge of allegiance was recited

General Public Comment: Todd Swan made the comment that the agenda did not include the issue of the closet between the preschool and library as he requested and wanted to know how that was acting in good faith per the Memorandum of Understanding between the school and preschool. Kris clarified that would be included in the discussion as part of the MOU listed on the agenda.

Minute Approval: Clara Mae made a motion to approve the minutes for December 3, 2025. Kris seconded, passed unanimously.

Claims Approval: A list of current claims and requested items were reviewed. It was pointed out that instead of buying \$194.00 in banker boxes, there were empty filing cabinets that could be used to store and sort records. Clara Mae made a motion to approve claims and requests, minus bank boxes, Mark seconded, passed unanimously.

Payroll: Clara Mae made a motion to approve the payroll report, Mark seconded, passed unanimously.

Budget Reports, Student Account Report, Miscellaneous Account Report: The budget report was reviewed. Karmen stated there was no change to the student and miscellaneous account reports.

Preschool Memorandum of Understanding:

Todd Swan (TS) stated he has a problem with the way the closet between the preschool and library issue was handled. He said it prohibits the success of the preschool, was not a board decision to take it away from the preschool, and does not follow a good faith understanding between the school and preschool.

Kris Glover (KG) said she would like to clarify what happened. She was notified by the school the closet was now being occupied by the preschool and space was needed for the library. She and Clara Mae went to talk to Casey about it after their (preschool) class. She never said they were going to take it away from the preschool. Kris left talking to Casey and went down to Cristina Lieb's (CL) class to talk to her. After a few minutes Casey followed and there was more discussion. Kris said she had the MOU to point out that the school maintains control of the building, that she did not speak for the board, it hadn't even been brought up before the board yet.

TS well that blows my argument out of the water

Casey Fuson (CF) stated her impression was that they were taking the closet from the preschool, because the MOU was presented and there was no other brainstorming.

Heather Buker (HB) asked why the MOU was brought before the board at this meeting, asking if there was another topic.

KG stated the MOU was on the agenda to review with ALL of the board. No decision had been made by the board. The preschool made the decision to clean out the closet, the board had not asked or told them to.

CF stated it made more sense to clean it out during the break. She did not like the way it was done, it did not feel good to her, and it should have been addressed in an email or a meeting.

TS stated it does not give a right to take a part of it (MOU) and affect the ability for the preschool to function

KG stated she did not make that decision. She never said they were taking back the closet.

Suzy Rios (SR) stated the library needs storage space

CF stated she was told they cannot share the space. She said the loss of the closet space did impact the preschool not having enough storage, that it prohibits the function of the preschool.

SR stated it is unfortunate that this issue is what brings us together, the MOU is written in the spirit of collaboration for mutual benefits for the school and preschool. The issue with the closet does not seem to be a collaborative effort, she does not see how the school is benefitting.

CF stated when statements are lead with “kick you out” it does not seem like good faith collaboration. Is there more to it?

SR Yes, actually there is a trust factor with the preschool. There was previous fraudulent reporting, and Facebook posts are a whole other story. Everyone is working hard and doing their best at Trego School, and it does not have to come to this with a community pre-meeting to the board meeting.

KG reiterated she came down to talk with Casey at the preschool. When it became “passionate” she walked away to avoid confrontation.

CF stated she thought that meeting was a good one. The second meeting was where she was informed she was losing the closet

Cristina Leib (CL) stated that was untrue. No one told her she had to “leave the closet”. And why is the closet now locked from the preschool side when it is supposed to be an unlocked pass-through for fire safety. And why are there now no shelves at all in the closet when originally there were. She was never told she had to get out of the closet.

Sarah Hamelman stated maybe her son had locked the closet as they were helping clean it out

CL said no, Sarah, this lock is up high where he cannot reach it.

CF I misunderstood when the MOU was read to me. She did not think 1 or 2 members could make that decision. She said it was hard to make it work with 15 kids, cleaning supplies etc. and it has impacted the program heavily, she is not sure she can continue the program.

KG stated the closet wasn’t locked before for fire egress.

Mark Spehar (MS) stated no changes should be made until the board makes a final decision

CF The preschool has moved everything out of it as they know the library needs the space.

SR the bigger issue is can’t we all get along, the situation is not personal, it’s a closet.

Clara Mae Crawford (CMC) stated if the school grows, we may have to take over the classroom. The whole goal included in the MOU is to grow.

HB stated she attended to support Casey and the preschool, not animosity. She doesn’t care about a closet. She feels it is misrepresentation to say the preschool is just a cool thing to have. It has mutual benefits. The entire playground was moved, improvements to the building were made and Casey has brought a nice rejuvenated life to the school.

SR No one is disputing it. She does not want to downplay the preschool. Her concerns are the animosity which needs to stop.

CF People here support the preschool. Two people invested a lot of their own money. She is incredibly grateful to the community and the sense of comradery. Three months into it she feels bombarded. The clerk said the board would be looking at having a legal contract.

Karmen McKinney stated she did not speak for the board. The board had not even been approached with the idea yet. When talking to Casey in the hall it was suggested that a legal document (more legal than the MOU) be considered to avoid problems like this. And that she, Casey, agreed to the idea. If something should happen in the preschool, who would get sued. There are legal issues to consider.

CF stated her insurance policy would cover anything and the school would not be held liable.

Unknown the closet serves as an extension and representation of what the community wants to see - the kids and the school be successful for all of our benefit.

MS We will walk through and see if something can be done to make it work.

Stephanie Leduc-Vanderyacht (SL) suggested a locking cabinet

CF stated cleaning supplies were the biggest issue

MS The board can get together and come up with ideas and make a decision

Unknown asked if there were plans to get rid of the preschool

The Board said no

KG stated she does not know where that came from

CF stated that's how she felt

Unknown asked what the intent of bringing up the MOU was

KG So that everyone had the same information and was on the same page; so that misconceptions were cleared. Will the school outgrow the current spaces occupied? We don't know. It was never the intent to kick the preschool out. The intent was to be collaborative.

CF stated she didn't expect it to happen until the school had 30-40 kids

Lee Eggebroten (LE) If the intent was to be collaborative why was Casey told by Cristina she (Casey) could not talk to the librarian about the closet.

CL stated the conversation was with her (head teacher) not the librarian. She did not want to involve more people, let's see what we can do. She said what was told was not what took place. What was put out in the community was not what took place, that was not being collaborative.

CF she thought she was told one thing

SR public schools are run differently. It is not based on emotion. The school answers to the 15% of the MT READS grant, the school is the one accountable for the grant.

CF do we feel at all that the Michelle (site coordinator) stuff affected communications

SR it was a conflict of interest

CF was that part of it, was something not communicated to her, did she miss something, was the closet not part of it?

Unknown does not agree that the preschool has no value to the school

SR the school is run by a budget, set by federal and state laws. Preschools are run differently than public schools.

CF she has more flexibility in the funding, anytime she hears about a need, she has a nonprofit group to help

Kristie Eggebroten (KE) Is there a board policy on how to deal with these conversations that are collaborative when there is passion and miscommunication? Why could Casey not talk to the librarian?

CL She followed protocol. She is the head teacher. She was told about an issue from a school employee, she then told Kris, the board chairman, Kris approached Casey. No decision or request to vacate the closet was made. Correct chain of command was followed.

Unknown asked if it could be dealt with at a lower level

SR they followed policy and it was done exactly right

Unknown is there a policy to inform Casey – following the chain of command.

SR it's common sense

CF the closet discussion should have waited until the next board meeting

SH is there a problem with sharing a closet

SR yes

CF Insurance regulations state 3 year olds cannot co-mingle with the older kids

KG co-mingling supplies is not a good idea

CF stated she still likes Judy (library). Restated the storage needs she has no room for and that it prohibits the success and operation of the preschool.

Bonnie Gold (BG) suggested the old library closet

MS the board will take a look and put it on the next meeting agenda

Mark made a motion to have the MOU reviewed by legal counsel. Clara Mae seconded it, passed unanimously.

School Rental: Amber (K-1 teacher) is interested in renting the teacherage. There is still work that needs to be finished and clean up. It was suggested maintenance could finish the work. Karmen provided the board with MASBO information on the laws that pertain to schools renting to teachers. Mark made a motion to table it until the next meeting, Clara Mae Seconded, passed unanimously.

Board Liaisons: Kris stated in the past, the board worked as liaisons for the school in different departments. She felt the board should go back to that. Mark suggested figuring out needs to assign different categories to and then go from there. Kris said she would get a draft together. Mark suggested transportation, safety, staff evaluations, preschool etc. Clara Mae made a motion to table until the next meeting, Mark seconded, passed unanimously.

Michelle Lynam resignation: Kris read Michelle's email to the board. Clara Mae made a motion to accept Michelle's resignation, Kris seconded, passed unanimously. Casey asked if the school was going to replace Michelle's position as site coordinator. Kris stated no, we have a team working on the grant.

Election Deadline: The deadline to file as a board member is February 9th. The deadline is earlier this year as has been in years past, there are 3 positions open- 2 three- year terms and 1 two year-term. Karmen informed the board that the county election administrator (Melanie Howell) has permission from the state to print an informational pamphlet of all board candidates prior to the election (candidate biography page). Melanie said they are the first in the state to have permission to do so. It is not mandatory.

School Email Accounts: Karmen informed the board that the school email accounts were all cleaned up. Employee accounts that were no longer employed have been canceled, some dating back a long time.

Kris adjourned the meeting at 6:57 PM

The next board meeting is scheduled for January 28th, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Chairman of the Board –Kris Glover _____

District Clerk – Karmen McKinney_____