

BLACK BUTTE SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 41
BOARD OF DIRECTORS RETREAT
House on Metolius
Camp Sherman, Oregon

BOARD RETREAT MINUTES
August 10, 2026 AS APPROVED

Board Members Present:

Bear Brown, Chair; Karen Lajoy, Vice-Chair;
Jennifer Green; Craig Mackie; Emma Prescher

Staff Members Present:

Delaney Sharp, Principal; Jane Petke, Business Manager;
Molly Schultz, Communication and Engagement Specialist;

Consultant/Community/Public Present:

None

OPENING OF BOARD RETREAT

This was an informal gathering with an agenda prepared by staff. It began at 10:00 a.m. and ended at 2:00 p.m. with additional time for a lovely walk on the House on Metolius property.

AGENDA

- Go over agenda and plan for the day.
- Warm-up activity: We each share a little about our own experience in school (any age or level is fine). What was one positive experience or memory and what was one challenge you faced in school? We all bring our own experiences in schools to this work, and it would be helpful to know more about those experiences to understand how we think about school/education.
- Review Vision and Mission Statements: What do we notice, like, or find confusing? This isn't the time to make a huge change to these statements but could be a chance to refine or clarify. If we still feel that they ring true, they will be the basis for our strategic plan.
- Review Board's role: Setting a vision. Where are we trying to go? What are the District's priorities? Then the staff can work on a plan on how to get there. The Board sets the What and the staff do the How.
- Put up poster papers that list some of the priorities. First ask if there are any priorities we want to add to the list. Each person puts up sticky notes on their top priorities, ten max. We then discuss what we notice and what we see as our main areas of focus.
- Lunch break. Thanks, Daniel, for picking up sandwiches at Camp Sherman Store, and other staff for bringing additional tasty items.
- Discuss next steps of trying to develop a strategic plan that provides clarity for all, more focused vision, and increased alignment. Read and look at other districts' strategic plans. Discuss how budget and Board goals can then align to this.

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- Discuss what we see as the key elements of our strategic plan. Where are we trying to go in the next five-plus years?
- Head out for an afternoon walk. Discuss the context of place-based learning and BBS.

CONTEXT

Here are some examples of what we are trying to do or could try to do:

- Academic achievement
- Social and emotional health
- Attendance rates
- Community engagement
- Environmental stewardship
- Quality curriculum: place-based knowledge/learning and project-based experiences including arts
- School safety
- Enrollment, student retention, ratio of transfers
- Balanced budget
- Preparing students for future academic success in middle school, high school, college
- Outdoor adventures and expeditions
- Getting involved in state-level policies/issues that affect us; advocacy
- Facility infrastructure; e.g., Internet, fire preparedness
- Quality working environment and staff retention

List these items on large poster paper and we all place post-it notes on them to visualize our priorities.

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- Strong academic performance
- Increased family/community engagement in recent years
- Stable finances
- Large wait-list of out-of-District students
- Low staff turnover
- New upgraded facility

CURRENT POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Insufficient in-District enrollment
- Increasing administrative workload
- Staffing non-teaching positions (facilities, transportation, counseling, business manager, SPED teacher, administrator)
- Developing curriculum scope and sequence between classrooms
- Uncertain finances in future

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- Student retention and year-to-year uncertainty with who our group will be

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Jane Petke, Recording Secretary

Marie Sheahan "Bear" Brown
Marie Sheahan "Bear" Brown, Board Chair

September 15, 2026
Date approved

