

# Highland Local School District - Regular Meeting

## Highland Local School District Board of Education

Middle School Robotics Room

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

6:00pm - 8:00pm

**Present:** Nate Huffman, Superintendent; John Messmer, Board President; Bill Short, Board Vice President; Eric Thacker, Board Member; Burgess Castle, Board Member; Kathy Belcher, Board Member; Jessika Roberts, Assistant Treasurer; Jason Fleming; Board Member, Board Member

### 1 Call to Order

President

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**Minutes:**

Mr. Messmer called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

**Attachments:**

### 2 Pledge of Allegiance

President

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**Minutes:**

Mr. Messmer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Attachments:**

### 3 Roll Call

President

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Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Minutes:**

Mr. Messmer called roll. All members present.

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 4 Approve Minutes

Resolution to approve the minutes for the January 8, 2025 Regular Board of Education Meeting and Organizational Meeting as presented.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-027 Approve Minutes

**Motioned:** John Messmer

**Seconded:** Bill Short

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

[00.01 Regular Meeting 01.08.2025.pdf](#)

[00.01 Organizational Meeting 01.08.2025.pdf](#)

## 5 Approve Financial Statements

Mr. Fleming

Resolution to approve the January 2025 Financial Statements as presented.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-028 Approve Financial Statements

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** Kathy Belcher

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 6 Public Participation

### Community

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In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an effective and efficient manner, a maximum of 30 minutes of public participation may be permitted at each meeting.

Each person addressing the Board shall give his/her name. If several people wish to speak, each person is allotted three minutes until the total time of 30 minutes has elapsed. During that period, no person may speak twice until all who desire to speak have had the opportunity. Persons desiring more time should follow procedure of the Board to be placed on the regular agenda. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the Board present and voting.

#### **Minutes:**

None wished to address the Board.

#### **Attachments:**

## 7 Move from Regular to Executive Session

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WHEREAS, as a public board of education may hold an executive session only after a majority of a quorum of this board determines by a roll call vote to hold such a session and only at a regular or special meeting for the sole purpose of the consideration of any of the following matters:

A. Consideration of the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official.

B. Investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or student unless such employee, official, licensee, or student requests a public meeting; except that consideration of the discipline of a Board member for conduct related to the performance of their duties or their removal from office shall not be held in executive session.

C. consideration of the purchase of property for public purposes, or sale or other disposition of unneeded, obsolete, unfit-for-use property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest.

D. Discussion with the Board's legal counsel of disputes involving the Board that are the subject of pending or imminent court action.

E. Preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of employment.

F. Matters required to be confidential by Federal law or regulations or State statutes.

G. specialized details of security arrangements and emergency response protocols where disclosure might reveal information that could jeopardize the District's security.

H. Consideration of confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance, or to negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance, provided that both of the following conditions apply:

1. The information is directly related to a request for economic development assistance that is to be provided or administered under one of the statutes referenced in R.C. 121.22(G)(8)(1), or that involves public infrastructure improvements or the extension of utility services that are directly related to an economic development project, and

2. An unanimous quorum of the Board or its subcommittee determines, by a roll call vote, that the executive session is necessary to protect the interests of the applicant or the possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the economic development project.

Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Highland Local Board of Education, by a majority of the quorum present at this meeting, does hereby declare its intention to hold an executive session on item(s) as listed above.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Minutes:**

The Board entered into Executive Session at 6:25 pm for items A (compensation of a public employee) and H (preparing for negotiations).

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-029 Executive Session

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** Kathy Belcher

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 8 Regular Session Reconvened

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**Minutes:**

Regular session reconvened at 6:41 pm.

**Attachments:**

## 9 Accept Resignation Letters From Personnel

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Resolution to approve the resignations of the following personnel

Shae Miller Intervention Specialist

Shawn Wilhelm Varsity Assistant Softball Coach

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-030 Accept Resignation Letters From Personnel

**Motioned:** Kathy Belcher

**Seconded:** John Messmer

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		

Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 10 Accept Retirement Letters From Personnel

Resolution to approve the following personnel for retirement

Lynn Thompson MS Dean of Students

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-031 Accept Retirement Letters From Personnel

**Motioned:** John Messmer

**Seconded:** Eric Thacker

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 11 Approve Trip Request

Resolution to approve the following trip request

Marching Band Orlando, FL January 27 - January 31, 2026

NJROTC Columbus, OH February 28 - March 1

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-032 Approve Trip Request

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** Bill Short

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		

Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 12 Approve Classified Subs

Resolution to approve the following classified substitutes

Joshua Swims      Custodian

Mary Cochran      Aide

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-033 Approve Classified Subs

**Motioned:** John Messmer

**Seconded:** Eric Thacker

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 13 Approve Home Instruction Tutor

Resolution to approve the following personnel for home instruction tutor.

Amber Billings      Teacher Hourly Rate

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-034 Approve Home Instructor Tutor

**Motioned:** Kathy Belcher

**Seconded:** Eric Thacker

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
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John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 14 Approve FMLA Request

Resolution to approve the following FMLA request

Jill Adams ES Paraprofessional

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-035 Approve FMLA Request

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** John Messmer

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 15 Middle School Assistant Principal Salary Schedule

Resolution to approve the Middle School Assistant Principal Salary Schedule.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-036 Middle School Assistant Principal Salary Schedule

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** John Messmer

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		

Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 16 Approve Classified Contract

Resolution to approve the following classified contract.

Troy Stewart Elementary Custodian (Step 0) Effective 1-24-25

Trish Harmon High School Custodian (Step 0) Effective 1-10-25

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-037 Approve Classified Contract

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** Kathy Belcher

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 17 Approve Supplemental Contract

Resolution to approve the following supplemental contracts

Kathleen Davis Head Girls Volleyball Coach (Year 4)

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-038 Approve Supplemental Contract

**Motioned:** Kathy Belcher

**Seconded:** John Messmer

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
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John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 18 Contract Amendment

Resolution to approve the HVAC Assistant's amended contract.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-039 Contract Amendment

**Motioned:** Kathy Belcher

**Seconded:** Eric Thacker

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 19 Contract Amendment

Resolution to approve the Treasurer's amended contract.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-040 Contract Amendment

**Motioned:** John Messmer

**Seconded:** Eric Thacker

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		

Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 20 META Solutions Cooperative Bus Bids

Resolution to approve participation in META Solutions Cooperative advertising and receipt of bids for school bus chassis and bodies for 2024-2025.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-041 META Solutions Cooperative Bus Bids

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** Kathy Belcher

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 21 NJROTC Severance Rate

Resolution to approve the payment of Master Chief Shipley's severance at the full daily rate (Navy and Highland combined rate) and at 25% of his sick leave balance (no more than 25% of 248 days) upon furnishing evidence of retirement from the applicable retirement system.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-042 NJROTC Severance Rate

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** Kathy Belcher

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		

Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 22 NJROTC Severance Policy

Resolution to approve the NJROTC severance pay at 25% of the instructors sick leave balance (no more than 25% of 248 days) upon furnishing evidence of retirement from the applicable retirement system. The rate to be applied in contract years 2025-2026 and forward is only the rate in which Highland is responsible. Severance will not be paid on the portion of the daily rate in which the Navy reimburses the district.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-043 NJROTC Severance Policy

**Motioned:** Eric Thacker

**Seconded:** Bill Short

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member		X	
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 23 Payment in Lieu of Transportation

Resolution to approve payment in lieu of transportation for the following students who live in the Highland District and attend a private school within 30 minutes of the Highland District. Transportation has been deemed impracticable.

Riley Hancq                      Gilead Christian

Rebekah Hancq                Gilead Christian

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-044 Payment in Lieu of Transportation

**Motioned:** Kathy Belcher

**Seconded:** John Messmer

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**

## 24 Adjourn this Meeting and Confirm Next Meeting Date

Resolution to adjourn this meeting and schedule the next meeting of the Highland Local School District Board of Education to be held Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the middle school robotics room.

Roll Call: Kathy Belcher\_\_\_ Burgess Castle\_\_\_ John Messmer\_\_\_ William Short\_\_\_ Eric Thacker\_\_\_

**Minutes:**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:52 pm.

**Result:** Approved

**Resolution:** 25-02-045 Adjournment

**Motioned:** Bill Short

**Seconded:** Kathy Belcher

Voter	Yes	No	Abstaining
John Messmer, Board President	X		
Bill Short, Board Vice President	X		
Eric Thacker, Board Member	X		
Burgess Castle, Board Member	X		
Kathy Belcher, Board Member	X		

**Attachments:**