

Winterquist Partners in Education (PIE)

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 10, 2026 • 5:30- 6:40 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Amanda Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held in the school board room.

2. Members Present

Officials. Amanda Johnson, Chairperson; Kim Huberty, Co-Chairperson; Celeste Brandt, Secretary/Fundraising Chair; Ty Gangelhoff, Treasurer

Parents, Faculty and Staff: Kristine Baird; Tiffany Kuchar; Kris Glesener, Jess Uecker, Christine Ringat, Brian Harker, Steve Krueger.

3. Approval of May 2026 Meeting Minutes

The May 2026 meeting minutes were reviewed.

MOTION: *Brian Harker moved to approve the May 2026 meeting minutes. Tiffany Kuchar seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Motion carried.*

4. Board Updates

Playground. The playground project was completed in June 2026. The agenda reports that 75% of the project cost, \$15,111.16, was funded by previous Esko PIE fundraisers, with the remaining 25% funded by Esko Community Education. The project update was posted to Facebook. The Omni Spinner was reported to be popular, and small playground equipment was repaired during the summer. Tony Compo (head custodian) completed those repairs. Kris Glesener asked whether PIE should establish a savings plan or master plan for future playground improvements. Discussion noted that the current playground dates to approximately 2009 or 2010 and that the last major playground remodel cost approximately \$120,000, with PIE and the school sharing the cost equally.

Kindergarten and New Student Welcome Bags. The kindergarten welcome bags were coordinated, purchased, compiled, and distributed for a second year. Bags included PIE information, pencils, mini notebooks, Play-Doh, and PIE giveaways such as keychains and bracelets. Christine Ringat (K-4 counselor) also included information about Mabel's Labels. New-student welcome bags contained similar items, without pencils and mini notebooks. The agenda records a \$97.76 reimbursement to Tiffany Kuchar on August 2, 2026.

Open House Night. PIE hosted an information table at Open House, including a bulletin board with PIE photographs and information, flyers with meeting dates and the apparel sale, sign-up sheets, and giveaways.

Social Media. The former Facebook page was shut down on July 28, 2026, and the new PIE Facebook page was promoted. The agenda records 293 followers as of September 9, while the minutes record 294. The school also transitioned to a new website, and Bridget Peterson (k-12 media specialists) assisted with updates to PIE information.

5. Fundraising

McTeacher Night. The May 13, 2026 event raised \$427.50 in cookie sales and \$1,168.83 in digital sales, for a total of \$1,596.33. The next McTeacher Night was being planned for December 3, 2026,

pending confirmation. The event would use the same 4:00–7:00 p.m. time, with planning approximately one month in advance and coordination with Sam Engen (elementary secretary) for the sign-up sheet. McDonald's stickers were also to be obtained. Celeste Brandt was identified as the point person. She needs to confirm with new McDonald's McTeacher Night coordinator concerning dates as there was a change in coordinator. New McDonald's contact is Cody Brown (general manager of Cloquet McDonald's).

CreativEdge Clothing Fundraiser. Sales were discussed. The agenda records \$50 in second-quarter fundraising revenue; 35 items sold at donation amounts of \$3–\$10 per item generated \$177, less three \$55 logo-embroidery digitizing fees, leaving \$12 profit, while CreativEdge waived the online store setup fee and issued PIE a \$50 check. The minutes noted that custom items were difficult and that more items should be placed on the store page. Kim Huberty was identified as point person for additional item coordination.

Fall Fundraiser. Ty Gangelhoff was identified as the point person. Staff were to be informed by email, and the fundraiser was planned as a two-week campaign beginning September 28. Posters are to be placed at the office and playground doors and updated with the amount raised. Progress could also be posted on Facebook and represented on a community chart. The project was described as smaller and less intensive than prior fundraising efforts. The top-earning grade would receive donuts for all students; the top-earning class would receive an ice cream party; and the top-earning student would receive gift cards. Brian Harker suggested asking Kayla Johnson, a designer, to donate poster-making assistance. Additional posting locations suggested were outside the library and at parent pickup doors. Celeste Brandt would update, edit, and print the Fill the E fundraising posters (700 copies). Kayla would be asked to create a thermometer poster.

6. Treasurer's Report / Current Budget and Recent Expenditures

The National Bank of Commerce account and School District-held funds were reviewed. The agenda lists the National Bank of Commerce balance at \$9,420.25 after the August 19, 2026 withdrawal for gift cards for the top two fall fundraiser earners. The School District-held funds balance is listed at \$7,259.63 after playground expenditures. A \$664.24 Scholastic News subscription for all four third-grade classrooms was noted as a fall 2026 expenditure placeholder, consistent with the May 2026 approval.

7. Proposed 2026–2027 Budget

The proposed budget was discussed. The agenda lists a proposed total of \$9,025. During discussion, the minutes record that I Love to Read Month could be reduced to \$1,100; \$400 from I Love to Read Month could be directed toward roller skating. Science Night would also drop from \$1000 to \$600 to also help fund roller skating with a \$400 fund shift. Roller skating would be funded at up to \$1,370, covering up to \$5 per student. The total budget line would be increased from \$9,025 to \$9,125 to address a \$100 difference.

A pending \$450 Valley Fair sixth grade expenditure from May/June 2026 was confirmed by Mrs. Ringat as no longer being needed and the encumbrance can be removed.

MOTION: Ty Gangelhoff moved to approve the 2026–2027 budget with the discussed changes. Tiffany Kuchar seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

8. PIE / Teacher Requests

Previously approved requests were reviewed, including \$664.24 for Scholastic News subscriptions for all four third-grade classrooms and up to \$1,000 for Nashke Native Games/Professional Development. Ms. Uecker requested \$152.91 for a whole-grade-level book to support writing. An additional \$200 Extra Math request was also recorded.

MOTION: *Tiffany Kuchar moved to approve the request(s). Amanda Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.*

Phy. Ed. teacher Mrs. Vesel-Johnson requested \$5 per student x 274 students = \$1370 to help fund the grades K-2 roller skating unit.

MOTION: *Amanda Johnson moved to approve the request(s). Ty Gangelhoff seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.*

9. Community / School Board Candidate Forum

Ty Gangelhoff reported that Melanie (Mel) Rice (Community Education Director) requested a partnership for a school board and township candidate forum. PIE accepted the partnership. The event is scheduled for Thursday, October 22, 2026, in the High School auditorium, with school board candidates from 6:30–7:30 p.m. and Town Board candidates from 7:45–8:45 p.m. Mel Rice is leading event organization, and Ty Gangelhoff is serving as PIE’s event liaison.

10. Other Business

Kris Glesener and other members of the Science Night committee indicated they were willing to take over Science Night. The budget discussion retained Science Night funding at \$600.

Tiffany Kuchar volunteered to assist with Track and Field Day preparedness, especially as it pertains to weather.

On Esko days, ducks sold by Christine Ringat numbered nearly 300. Volunteers are needed next year to catch the ducks downstream after release. Tiffany Kuchar volunteered to assist if needed.

11. Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the boardroom. The remaining 2026–2027 meeting schedule listed on the agenda includes November 5, December 3 (McTeacher Night noted as tentative), January 7, February 4, March 4, April 1, and May 6.

12. Adjournment

MOTION: *Ty Gangelhoff moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 PM. Amanda Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.*