

**Independent School District #771
Chokio-Alberta Public School
Official Minutes**

Regular School Board Meeting

**Monday, January 26, 2026
7:00 p.m. Chokio**

The meeting was called to order by Matt Westerman at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Christina Pederson, Matt Westerman, Heidi Brethorst, Steve Howe and Chandler Erickson. Others present: Tate Jerome, Rachel Schott and Amanda Baxter. Members absent: Mark Gibson.

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Heidi Brethorst to approve the agenda.

Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0).

Election of Officers

Chairperson: Nomination of Christina Pederson by Matt Westerman.

Seconded by Steve Howe. (*Christina Pederson abstained*)

Motion Carried Unanimously (4-0).

Vice-Chair: Nomination of Matt Westerman by Steve Howe. Seconded by Heidi Brethorst. (*Matt Westerman abstained*)

Motion Carried Unanimously (4-0).

Clerk/Treasurer: Nomination of Mark Gibson by Christina Pederson.

Seconded by Chandler Erickson. (*Mark Gibson not present*)

Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0).

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Christina Pederson to approve the date, time, and location for regular meetings as follows:

Date = 3rd Monday (except January & February – 3rd Tuesday)

Time = 7:00 pm

Location = Chokio-Alberta School

Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0).

Motion by Heidi Brethorst seconded by Steve Howe to approve the Chokio Review as the official newspaper for the district.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0).

Motion by Christina Pederson seconded by Chandler Erickson to approve Dacotah Bank as the Official Depository for the district.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0)

Motion by Chandler Erickson seconded by Christina Pederson to approve the 2025 IRS approved rate of 72.5 cents/mile for mileage reimbursement for Chokio-Alberta Public Schools employees when using personal vehicle for district needs.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0)

Motion by Heidi Brethorst seconded by Chandler Erickson to approve the Pay and Benefits for Board Members to be as follows: \$60 for chair and \$50 for all others per meeting.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0)

Motion by Christina Pederson seconded by Heidi Brethorst to approve the meal reimbursement rate for board members and district employees as follows: Legitimate Itemized Expense.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0)

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Chandler Erickson to approve the authorization of Supt Jerome and/or designee to complete wire transfers and make investments of district revenues.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0).

Motion by Chandler Erickson seconded by Heidi Brethorst to approve the board committee assignments for 2026. See Attachment.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0)

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Christina Pederson to approve the regular meeting minutes from December 15, 2025.

Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0).

Motion by Christina Pederson seconded by Heidi Brethorst to approve the bills as presented \$216,992.99.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0).

Financial Report given by Blake Stoltman, Business Manager, via speakerphone.

Motion by Chandler Erickson seconded by Steve Howe to approve Blake Stoltman and Superintendent Jerome to go out for auditing service bids.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0).

No Public Comments

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Christina Pederson to approve resolution to require administration to make recommendations for reductions in programs and discontinuance of positions due to financial conditions and lack of pupils - by roll call vote.

Mark Gibson-N/A, Christina Pederson-Yes, Matt Westerman-Yes, Heidi Brethorst-Yes, Chandler Erickson-Yes, Steve Howe-Yes

Motion by Heidi Brethorst seconded by Steve Howe to approve the payout of scholarships to awarded recipients from our West Central Initiative managed scholarship fund in this fiscal year.

Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0)

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Christina Pederson to approve starting school before Labor Day on Tuesday, September 1st, 2026.

Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0)

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Heidi Brethorst to approve the updated 2025-2026 School Calendar.

Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0)

No Other Business – Update by Mr. Jerome.

Motion by Steve Howe seconded by Chandler Erickson to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried Unanimously (5-0).

Christina Pederson, Board Chair