APPROVED

Seaside School, Inc

Minutes

Special Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday October 1, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Location
Chamber of Commerce (Conference Room)

Founded in 1996
Serving Students in Grades 5 - 12

We seek to sustain an educational community where an emphasis on academic excellence is complemented by our concern for each learner's personal growth and intellectual, aesthetic, and psychological development. The curriculum is developmentally responsive – actively engaging students in learning skills in context; integrative – directing students to connect learning to daily lives; and exploratory – enabling students to discover their abilities, interests, learning styles, and ways that they can make contributions to society.

Information on procedures for public comment can be found on our Governance Page. (Click Here)

If anyone needs special assistance to participate in the public input session, every effort will be made to provide an appropriate accommodation. When requesting accommodations for public input, please allow no less than 1 business day notice prior to the scheduled meeting.

Specific issues about a particular student should only be addressed to the school's Director of Student Services, rather than the Board of Directors.

All public comments will be taken under advisement by the Board, but will not elicit a written or spoken response. The names of persons providing public comment and a brief summary of topics or input will be included in the meeting minutes published. A response will be provided to the stakeholder within seven (7) days.

Directors Present
A. Jordan, A. Weil, C. Cerise, C. King, D. Hahn, F. Brown, J. Mathis, K. Sandoe (remote), L. Branch, M. Harrison

Directors Absent
J. Doris

Guests Present
C. Cox, C. Fail, F. Barker, K. Tucker, Kim Mixson, M. Willcox, N. Vlahos, Shannon Widman (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Jordan called a meeting of the board of directors of Seaside School, Inc to order on Thursday Oct 1, 2026 at 9:01 AM.
A. Jordan acknowledged the work involved in the Executive Director search process by thanking Megan Harrison, the Executive Director Search Committee and Ken with Buffkin Baker.

II. Selection Committee

A. ED Candidate Selection

Megan Harrison presented an update on the Executive Director search. The committee received more than 50 expressions of interest, conducted initial interviews, and invited four finalists for in-person visits and community engagement. Following further evaluation, the committee identified Drew Ward, who was serving as Interim Executive Director, as its recommended candidate.
The Selection Committee recommended that Drew Ward be named Executive Director, effective immediately.
Nick Vlahos expressed support for the recommendation and commended the committee's work and the thoroughness of the search process. The Foundation subsequently voted to approve Drew Ward as the next Executive Director of Seaside School.

M. Harrison made a motion to name Drew Ward effective immediately as the Executive Director of Seaside School, Inc.
D. Hahn seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
The School Board discussed plans to establish a transition committee to support the incoming Executive Director. The proposed committee would meet regularly with Mr. Ward, identify resource and professional development needs, coordinate community engagement opportunities, and consider whether additional administrative hires may be necessary. The initial proposed members included representatives from the School Board and Foundation, with the possibility of expanding the committee to five members.
The Board also discussed communication and transition plans. An official press release is expected the following week, after appropriate notifications. School staff are to be informed of the leadership decision, with a request to refrain from public announcements until the official release.

III. Academic Excellence Committee

A. Approve the requested classroom instructional aids and materials as recommended by Academic Excellence Committee

The Board considered the classroom instructional aids and materials recommended by the Academic Excellence Committee for the middle and high schools.
C. Cerise reported that it had reviewed the requested materials and unanimously recommended approval. The materials primarily consisted of supplemental digital resources, online instructional tools, and books. Administrators reported that the review did not identify significant concerns requiring the requested materials to be excluded.
Board members discussed how potentially controversial instructional materials and books are identified and communicated to families. C. Fail explained that the school uses a library resource catalog that allows parents to search available materials and obtain parental permission regarding student access to classroom libraries.
C. Fail also reported plans to conduct a 90-day review of books on classroom shelves in response to recent state guidance. The review would involve library media specialists, teachers, and the Academic Excellence Committee. A temporary freeze on adding materials to classroom libraries would remain in place while the review is underway. C. Fail noted that instructional materials may be evaluated for suitability even when they have received state approval.
The Board discussed advance communication with families regarding novels and other instructional materials. Administration indicated that such information is generally included in course syllabi or communicated to parents by teachers before a novel is introduced.
C. Cerise made a motion to approve the requested classroom instructional aids and materials as recommended by the Academic Excellence Committee.
M. Harrison seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Finance Committee

A. Staff Contract Ammendment

The Board reviewed a state-funded teacher salary allocation totaling approximately $33,000 to support eligible teachers with ten or more years of service. The program required eligible teachers to receive a minimum $2,500 salary increase over the previous year. Of the 13 eligible teachers reviewed, five already met the requirement, while eight required additional salary adjustments. The Board reviewed the proposed adjustments, and revised contracts are needed to reflect the required increases.
F. Brown made a motion to approve the teacher salary allocation for the eight teachers and their salary adjustment.
C. Cerise seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. HVAC Maintenance Contract

A. Jordan reviewed proposals for ongoing maintenance of the HVAC system at the high school following the expiration of the building's initial one-year warranty.
Administration reported that three vendors had been contacted, two provided proposals, and one did not submit a quote. The proposed annual maintenance costs were:
Trane of Pensacola: $18,370 per year.
The Wright Company: Approximately $16,000 per year.
Mills Heating and Air: No quote submitted.
Administration recommended selecting Trane based on its familiarity with the building's HVAC equipment and its understanding of the system's maintenance and diagnostic requirements.
M. Harrison made a motion to approve the Trane of Pensacola HVAC maintenance contract.
D. Hahn seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

A. Jordan noted that the next board meeting on October 22nd would be held in Seaside.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:29 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Willcox

Documents used during the meeting

- Candidate Cover Letter (Ward).pdf
- Candidate Resume (Ward).pdf
- Evaluation_and_Adoption_of_Other_Classroom_Instructional_Aids_and_Materials__Responses__-_Form_Responses_1.pdf
- _26-27 faculty Steps.xlsx
- HVAC_PM_Synopsis_Seaside_School_Board.pdf
- Seacoast Intercollegiate High School CMSA 2026 09-11-2026 (1) Proposal.pdf