APPROVED

Arlee Joint School District #8

Minutes

Arlee Board of Trustees

Special Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday February 25, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Location
Elementary Commons - please enter through the new building

Trustees Present
Brian Johnson BigSam, Lindsey O'Neill, Lisa Koetter, Phaedrus Swab (remote), Samantha Lytle

Trustees Absent
None

Guests Present
Brandon O'Brien, Callie Difulgentis, Cameron Lytle, Cory Beckham, Desiree Fox, Dori Knoll, Elizabeth Beibinger, Emily Messer, Jason LaRance, Jeff Lammerding, Jerome Brovold, Karen Smith, Kelsi O'Brien, Ken Hill, Laura Curtiss, Lonnie Morin, Makenzie Felsman, Mary Stranahan, Melissa Zachariason, Nicole LaRance, Rhonda Kinney, Sarah Sorenson, Sierra Keating, Stephanie Hendrickson, Wendy Swab, Whitney Larson

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

C. Public Comment

II. New Business

A. Roots to Rise Contract with Side by Side

Samantha Lytle made a motion to approve the Roots to Rise contract with Side by Side.
Lindsey O'Neill seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Approve to request change from 6B to 7B for FY2027

Lindsey O'Neill made a motion to to request to change from District 6B to 7B for FY2027.
Samantha Lytle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Tabled item from February 10, 2026: Recommendation to consolidate to K-8 in the new build

Lisa Koetter made a motion to move to consolidate to a K-8 in the new build.
Lindsey O'Neill seconded the motion.
Public Comment

Stephanie Hendrickson: Opposed the consolidation. Written comments on file with the District .

Kelsi O'Brien: Opposed the consolidation. Written comments on file with the District.

Sierra Keating: Expressed concerns about the consolidation. She has students in both buildings and is concerned about the bigger kids with vulnerable younger kids

Melissa Zachariason, Arlee teacher: Expressed that the elementary has its issues, and the JH has its own set of issues. She believes that in order to have a cohesive building, we should get the behaviors under control in the K-6, before even considering bringing in the 7-8 students. She also expressed concerns about the 5-6 graders with 7-8 and asked that a strong plan be in place before a decision is made.

All Board members thanked the community for coming to the meeting and encouraged them to continue to be involved with the District. They also expressed appreciation to those that spoke during public comment. Each member also expressed their view on the consolidation and the District's current budget crisis.

Chair, Brian Johnson BigSam, called for a vote on the motion.

The motion unanimously did not carry.

III. Closing Items

A. Next Regular Meeting: March 10, 2026

B. Adjourn Meeting

Lisa Koetter made a motion to adjourn.
Lindsey O'Neill seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Koetter