

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE RATON BOARD OF EDUCATION

****RHS Krivokapich Media Center****

1535 Tiger Circle, Raton, New Mexico

THURSDAY MARCH 19, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

Public Input #1 – Budget Hearing

MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

President Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Roll Call was answered as follows:

Mr. Phillips – Present

Mr. Boone – Present via Zoom

Mr. Walton – Present

Ms. Ferri – Present

Mr. Kamp - Present

II. Present and publicly review the operating Budget for the 2026-2027 School Year.

Ms. Medina explained the importance of budget planning and noted that the budget deadline is in May. She also provided a brief overview of the New Mexico statute governing the School Board Finance Committee, including its responsibilities. Additionally, she reported that the unit value has increased by \$75.75 and that the district will see rises in various insurance costs, along with a 1% salary increase, all of which were approved during the last legislative session.

Enrollment has increased slightly from last year and is sitting right under 800 students. For the first time in several years, the District is operating with a positive percentage of .48%.

Ms. Baird will schedule a time to meet with the Budget Committee as soon as she has firm numbers.

Ms. Medina opened the floor for questions, and no Board members had any for her. Sue Holland inquired about the School Board's approach to maintaining a positive budget rather than facing a deficit. Mr. Phillips responded that while the new insurance percentages are beneficial for staff, they could present challenges for the District's budget. He emphasized that staff are the District's most valuable asset and expressed his hope that any necessary cuts would come from areas other than personnel. He added that, if reductions became unavoidable, he would prefer they occur through attrition rather than a reduction in force (RIF).

Ms. Medina noted that there are currently no concerns with the budget. However, she agreed that if reductions were needed, attrition would be preferable to a RIF. She concluded by expressing confidence that the budget will remain stable and that no cuts will be necessary.

Mr. Phillips stated that, with current employees already receiving insurance, the District is in a stable position. However, this could change if many staff members shift their coverage to the school's plan after realizing it may be more affordable for their families than their existing policies.

Ms. Medina raised an additional concern regarding employees in federally funded program positions, noting that their salaries and benefits are not paid through regular SEG funds but are

instead covered by federal funding. She did note, however, that there have been some modest increases in federal funding.

Mr. Phillips added that the District may face some difficult decisions in the future.

III. Adjournment

Mr. Kamp mad a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Mr. Walton. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

- Regular Board meeting to begin immediately after the conclusion of this special meeting.



Jason Phillips, President



Brenda Ferri, Secretary