**Ozark Mountain School District**
Regular Session– Western Grove
October 15, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

**Board Members Present:** Travis Freeman, Andy McCutcheon, James Morris, Kenneth Hancock, Bart Beaver, and Travis Dixon

**Board Members Absent:** Allen Glidewell

1. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. The meeting was called to order by Board President Andy McCutcheon at 6:00 p.m.

3. Public Comment: None

4. Student Achievement: Kylan Hancock and Laith Lewis received first place in the Game Calling competition at the Arkansas Game and Fish contest. The students demonstrated their game-calling skills for the Board and will advance to the state competition. St. Joe Elementary was recognized as an Arkansas GEM School and received the OEP “Beating the Odds” recognition in Math.

5. Addressing Deficits: The District reviewed measures to address Western Grove Elementary’s D letter grade and Ozark Mountain High School’s C letter grade for the 2025–26 school year. The OUR Educational Cooperative instructional team has completed two walkthroughs and will provide additional observations and feedback at no cost to the District. Merica Howie, a state-provided elementary literacy coach, is also assisting at no cost. Four improvement plans have been issued to provide support, clear expectations, and additional monitoring, and personnel changes have been made.

The District has contracted with the Bailey Group to provide student tutoring and teacher support through the High Impact Tutoring Grant, including a tutor at Western Grove three full days per week for 11 weeks leading up to ATLAS testing. Approximately $40,000 in Section 1003 school improvement funds is anticipated from DESE. The District has developed an instructional model and classroom walkthrough form, with frequent observations focused on strengthening instruction, including higher-level questioning, grade-level reading, and basic math skills.

Dr. Casey Grinder addressed academic deficiencies reflected in student test scores and presented a PowerPoint outlining her company, Level Up. She discussed the company's instructional model and shared success stories demonstrating its effectiveness in improving student achievement.

A motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by James Morris to approve Dr. Casey Grinder's Level Up Tier 3 option, along with an additional $18 per student for the writing program. Motion carried.

6. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Travis Dixon to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2026 Regular Session. Motion carried.

7. Motion was made by Travis Dixon and seconded by Kenneth Hancock to approve the financial report for the month of September 2026. Motion carried.

Ending Balance: $8,276,195.53

8. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Bart Beaver to approve the AFR Level 1 Report (25/26 Actuals and 26/27 budget). Motion carried.

9. The Board entered executive session at 6:47 p.m. and reconvened in open session at 7:14 p.m.

10. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by James Morris to accept the resignation of Misty Binam, Paraprofessional at Western Grove. Motion carried.

11. Motion was made by James Morris and seconded by Travis Dixon to accept the resignation of James Williams, Paraprofessional at Western Grove. Motion carried.

12. Motion was made by Kenneth Hancock and seconded by Bart Beaver to accept the resignation of Miranda Tennison, District Wide Food Service Director. Motion carried.

13. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Bart Beaver to reassign James "Matt" Smith from Bruno-Pyatt Liaison to Homeschool Liaison. Motion carried.

14. A motion was made by James Morris and seconded by Kenneth Hancock to approve the additional duty assignment of Contessa Tramell as Journeyman. Motion carried.

15. Motion was made by Travis Dixon and seconded by Travis Freeman to reassign Jailyn Jackson from a Paraprofessional at Western Grove to Apprentice at Western Grove. Motion carried.

16. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Bart Beaver to add an Apprentice column to the salary schedule, as previously approved by the Personnel Policies Committee. Motion carried.

17. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Kenneth Hancock to approve the revised stipend schedule to include the Journeyman stipend and change the title of Bruno-Pyatt Liaison to Homeschool Liaison, with no change in pay. Motion carried.

18. Motion was made by Travis Dixon and seconded by James Morris to approve the slate of petitions for transfer. Motion carried.

19. A motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by James Morris to roll over the original $1,000,000 certificate of deposit (CD), including accrued interest, into a new 7-month CD at an interest rate of 4.08%. The projected rollover balance is $1,047,171.87. Motion carried.

20. Motion was made by Travis Dixon and seconded by James Morris to approve the Annual Equity Compliance. Motion carried.

21. Motion was made by Travis Dixon and seconded by Bart Beaver to approve the revision of Policy 7.6A, as previously approved by the Personnel Policies Committee. Motion carried.

22. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by James Morris to adopt the attached Proposed Budget of Expenditures with Tax Levy for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2028 to and including June 30, 2029 and to approve the related sample ballot. Motion carried.

23. Motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Travis Dixon to designate Andy McCutcheon as the District's qualified elector for the 2027 election and to adopt the attached resolution requesting the 2027 election be conducted by vote of the qualified elector. Motion carried.

24. Motion made by James Morris and seconded by Kenneth Hancock to adopt policies 4.64 and 5.10. Motion carried.

25. Bruno-Pyatt Future Options

Aliza Jones provided an update regarding the future of the Bruno-Pyatt campus. After consulting with the Department of Labor, it was determined that electricity must remain on; however, water service may be disconnected after the pipes are properly drained.

Options discussed included selling the property as-is with full disclosure of all findings, demolishing the building, or proceeding with remediation. Demolition would require removal of soft materials and asbestos abatement by a qualified contractor, along with notification to the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) at least 10 days prior to demolition.

Cody Kees reviewed the title work, and the District would also like to obtain a review by a real estate attorney. It was noted that proceeds from the sale of the property would be deposited into the operating fund.

The Board discussed state requirements regarding the disposition of unused school property. The property must be made available to charter schools for a two-year period; however, the District may request a waiver allowing for a 30-day notification period. If no charter school expresses interest during the applicable notification period, the District may proceed with publicly listing the property for sale.

The Board will continue discussing the future of the Bruno-Pyatt campus over the next several months.

26. General Discussion – Campus Updates

The Board discussed anticipated 2028 Partnership Program funding for roof replacements and upgrades to major building systems, as well as the possibility of an additional building expansion at Western Grove.

Prior to the meeting, a representative from Phoenix contacted the District and indicated that they anticipate moving and installing the modular building within the next two to three weeks.

The Board discussed the selection process for a Construction Manager for the proposed Western Grove addition. Phoenix currently serves as the District's CMA. The District discussed providing Phoenix with a seven-day termination notice before advertising a Request for Qualifications. The RFQ would be advertised in the newspaper for two weeks, followed by a review, scoring, and interview process. Interviews would be limited to 15 minutes per firm, with selections based strictly on qualifications rather than cost. A special board meeting may be scheduled for the selection process.

A motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Bart Beaver to approve the termination of Phoenix as the District's Construction Manager Advisor (CMA), with an addendum allowing Phoenix to complete the current modular building project, and to authorize the advertisement of an RFQ for a new CMA. Motion carried.

The Board agreed to reschedule the next regular board meeting from November 19, 2026, to November 17, 2026.

Enrollment: 475

27. A motion was made by Travis Freeman and seconded by Bart Beaver to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. Motion carried.

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Board President, Andy McCutcheon Board Secretary, Travis Dixon