FINNEYTOWN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting- January 20, 2026
Brent Board Office Meeting Room
8791 Brent Dr
Cincinnati, OH 45231
Open Forum 6:00 PM
Regular Meeting 6:30 PM

The Finneytown Board of Education met in regular session on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, in the Brent Board Meeting Room, 8791 Brent Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45231. Ms. Catanzaro, Mr. Engleman, Ms. Laird, Mr. Plaut, and Mr. Reeb were present. The President called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

011-26 Mr. Engleman moved, seconded by Ms. Laird that the Board approve the agenda with the addition of an **Executive Session** to discuss the employment of a public employee, a **Transition Agreement**, and **discussion of Student Services Director** as carry-on items. With all Ayes, the motion passed.

012-26 Ms. Laird moved, seconded by Mr. Engleman, that the Board approve the minutes from the **Organizational Meeting and Budget Hearing of January 12, 2026.** With all Ayes, the motion passed.

Administrative Report

AP Students

Ms. Janell Sowders provided an overview of the Advanced Placement (AP) program at Finneytown. Finneytown offers AP in Calc, Government, Human Geography, Literature, Language (rotating), Psychology, and U.S. History. During the 2024-2025 school year 114 AP tests taken and 71 students scored 3 or higher on the test. This year: 147 AP tests enrolled. Additionally, Finneytown earned a place on the AP Honor Roll on January 9 after meeting the following criterion:

- with 48% of graduating cohort took at least one AP exam (threshold 40%),
- 31% scored 3 or above (threshold 25%), and
- 15% took five or more exams (threshold 2%).

Congratulations to Paige Schmidtgesling and Victor Schwartz who earned a 5 on the AP Test. Three other students also achieved a score of 5.

Facilities Update

Mr. Anderson shared that the new secondary campus building remains on schedule for a December opening next year with permanent power installed, Building A and double-height sections drying in, and electrical work planned for summer leading to fall finishes. Campus access will shift to the Fountainbleau side around winter break, as the Cherry Blossom side closes mid-January for demolition of older buildings.

Public Address

Lee and Katrina Harrill (Finneytown residents) highlighted a high special education population (21%) and identified several issues including staffing shortages and a leadership gap without a clear special education director. The reiterated their ongoing requests that include financial transparency, the establishment of a Special Education Advisory Committee with a specific request for a February board resolution, and an independent external review.

Mr. Michael Hamel (Finneytown resident) offered a prayer, welcomed new board members, and urged unity and focus on student well-being. He also expressed concerns about certain teachings, requested protection of children's exposure in schools and suggested exploring free curriculum resources from Hillsdale College, including training and foundational civic documents.

Board Coordination Matters

Board Members Reports

Mr. Reeb expressed his concern that the development plan, approved by the zoning board, specifies a minimum but not a maximum number of units, entrusting the township with the property's development. He requested updates from the Township on the property sale's progress and necessary steps, expressing a desire for groundbreaking as soon as possible.

Ms. Maggie Laird shared the After Prom meeting on the Jan 13th was well attended, indicating strong interest in the event. However, organizing After Prom requires many volunteers. Sarah Price and Christina Warden are the committee chairpersons, and the layout will differ from previous years due to construction. Fundraisers include selling Krispy Kreme donuts in February and a "donate for after prom" event in January twenty-fifth at Buffalo Wings and Rings, where ten percent of sales will be donated.

Ms. Amy Cantanzaro reported that the elementary PTA will help underwrite children's theater enrichment programming for K-2 and other grades to ensure equitable access. Additionally, elementary PTA is preparing for the carnival on April 11th, focusing on securing sponsors.

Mr. Seth Plaut reported that the theater department is currently working on "Into the Woods." The FMPA will host a mattress sale offering an opportunity to support their organization. The Finneytown Alumni Association will host an alumni basketball game on January 23rd with more information available at finneytownalumni.org. A Black History Celebration is planned for February 17th at the elementary school. Lastly, boosters are seeking volunteers to help with concessions during remaining basketball games.

Review and agreement with Board Ethics

While serving as a member of the Board of Education, each member is expected to agree to abide by the following code of ethics promulgated by the Ohio School Boards Association:

A. remember that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of all students attending the public schools;

B. obey the laws of Ohio and the United States;

C. respect the confidentiality of privileged information;

D. recognize that as an individual Board member I have no authority to speak or act for the Board;

E. work with other members to establish effective Board policies;

F. delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent and staff;

G. encourage ongoing communications among Board members, the Board, students, staff, and the community;

H. render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment rather than succumbing to the influence of individuals or special interest groups;

I. make every effort to attend all Board meetings;

J. become informed concerning the issues to be considered at each meeting;

K. improve my boardman ship by studying educational issues and by participating in in-service programs;

L. support the employment of staff members based on qualifications and not as a result of influence;

M. avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof;

N. refrain from using my Board position for benefit of myself, family members, or business associates;

O. express my personal opinions but, once the Board has acted, accept the will of the majority.

In addition, the Board of Education believes that each member should agree to work cooperatively and effectively with others and conform his/her behavior to the following code of conduct by collectively and individually agreeing to:

A. abide by the code of ethics promulgated by the Ohio School Boards Association;

B. act as an advocate for the Schools and for children;

C. set high expectations for the work of the Board;

D. keep the Board's primary focus on the best interests of students;

E. strive sincerely to build better relationships with one another and the Superintendent;

F. set clear goals for the Superintendent;

G. support the Superintendent and help him/her to be as effective as possible;

H. prepare carefully before each meeting so that when each Board member has the floor, s/he can make comments that are concise, organized, and clear;

I. vote his/her individual convictions based on the available facts and his/her independent judgment and refrain from surrendering his/her judgment to particular individuals or groups;

J. devote sufficient time, thought, and study to proposed actions;

K. become well versed in parliamentary procedure;

L. listen carefully and with courtesy when other people have the floor and are speaking during Board meetings;

M. refuse to become involved with micromanagement;

N. emphasize planning, policymaking, and public relations rather than becoming involved in management of the schools;

O. establish clear goals for the District and ensure that the community is aware of these goals;

P. keep abreast of current educational issues within the District, throughout the State, and across the nation;

Q. select sound instructional strategies and materials and submit them to regular and impartial evaluations.

013-26 Mr. Engleman moved, seconded by Mr. Reeb that the Board adopt the **Treasurer's Consent Calendar** as follows:

Action by the Board of Education in adoption of the "Consent Calendar" means that all items appearing with an asterisk (*) after the title constitute the "Consent Calendar" and are adopted by one single motion, unless a member of the Board of Education or the Superintendent requests that any such item be removed from the "Consent Calendar" and voted upon separately.

a) Monthly Financial Report*

b) Depository and Investment Balances as of December 31, 2025*

U.S. Bank	0.0896%	$ 197,551.25
STAR Ohio (construction #1)	4.7000%	$ 4,562,730.00
STAR Ohio	4.7000%	$ 24,978,097.10
STAR Ohio (construction #2)	4.7000%	$ 3,338,338.06
STAR Ohio (OFCC state share)	4.7000%	$ 1,872,102.64

c) Interest Earned on Depository and Investment Accounts as of December 31, 2025*

General Fund 001	$ 86,671.22
Construction Fund 004	$ 26,748.54
Classroom Facilities Fund 010	$ 11,692.43

d) Monthly Bond Project Spending and Commitment Report*

[See attachment]

RC: Ms. Catanzaro, Yes; Mr. Engleman, Yes; Ms. Laird, Yes; Mr. Plaut, Yes; and Mr. Reeb. Motion passes.

014-26 Ms. Catanzaro moved, seconded by Ms. Laird that the Board adopt the **Superintendent's Consent Calendar** as follows:

Action by the Board of Education in adoption of the "Consent Calendar" means that all items appearing with an asterisk (*) after the title constitute the "Consent Calendar" and are adopted by one single motion, unless a member of the Board of Education or the Superintendent requests that any such item be removed from the "Consent Calendar" and voted upon separately.

a) Acknowledgement of Resignations*

The Board acknowledged the following resignations, which have been previously accepted by the Superintendent:

Jerri Green	Educational Assistant	effective May 29, 2026 (retirement)
Constance Turner	Intervention Specialist	effective December 19, 2025(personal)

b) Approval of Contracts - One Year Limited Classified*

The Board approved one-year limited contracts for the following new classified staff members, effective January 8, 2026 through May 29, 2026:

Mariah Rucker	Special Education Aide

c) Approval of Contracts - One Year Limited Classified*

The Board approved one-year limited contracts for the following new classified staff members, effective January 20, 2026 through May 29, 2026:

Joshua Hargrove	Special Education Aide

d) Approval of Contracts - One Year Limited Classified*

The Board approved one-year limited contracts for the following new classified staff members, effective January 26, 2026 through May 29, 2026:

Brenda Silva	Health Aide

e) Approval of Contract - Athletic Supplemental 2025-2026*

That the Board approved the following supplemental contract, effective August 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026:

Briona Alcorn	Head 8th Grade Girls Basketball Coach	$1,795.00
Adam Coffey	Head Varsity Boys Wrestling Coach	$7,179.00
Kelley Davis	Boys Varsity Assistant Basketball Coach	$3,484.00
Blake Fuller	Boys Freshman Head Basketball Coach	$2,534.00
Quelyah Gaines	Head Varsity Cheer Coach - Winter	$1,372.00
Chevy Harris	Head 7th Grade Boys Basketball Coach	$2,428.00
Brandon Robinson	Head Varsity Boys Basketball Coach	$6,335.00
Lynn Volz	Head MS Wrestling Coach	$2,956.00
Montavious Webley	Head 7th Grade Girls Basketball Coach	$1,900.00

f) Adoption of School Calendar 2026-2027*

The Board adopted the following school year calendar for 2026- 2027, which was originally presented for consideration at the Regular Meeting of December 15, 2025:

August 17, Monday	Staff In-Service – Staff Only
August 18, Tuesday	Staff In-Service – Staff Only
August 19, Wednesday	First Day for Students
September 7, Monday	Labor Day - No School
October 15, Thursday	1st Quarter Ends (41 days)
October 16, Friday	Records Day - Staff Only
October 19, Monday	Fall Break - No School
November 25, Wednesday	Conference Release Day-No School
November 26 & 27, Thursday & Friday	Thanksgiving Break - No School
December 18, Friday	2nd Quarter Ends (41 days)
December 21, Monday	Professional Development-Staff Only
December 22, Tuesday	Records Day - Staff Only
December 23, Wednesday-January 1, Friday	Winter Break - No School
January 4 & 5, Monday & Tuesday	Professional Development - Staff Only
January 6, Wednesday	School Resumes
January 18, Monday	Dr. MLK, Jr. Day - No School
February 12, Friday	Conference Release Day-No School
February 15, Monday	Presidents Day - No School
March 18, Thursday	3rd Quarter Ends (49 days)
March 19, Friday	Records Day - Staff Only
March 22, Monday - March 26, Friday	Spring Break - No School
March 29, Monday	School Resumes
May 27, Thursday	Last Day for Students
	4th Quarter Ends (45 days)
May 28, Friday	Records Day
	Last Day for Staff

g) Adoption of School Calendar 2027-2028*

The Board adopted the following school year calendar for 2027-2028, which was originally presented for consideration at the Regular Meeting of December 15, 2025:

August 16, Monday	Staff In-Service – Staff Only
August 17, Tuesday	Staff In-Service – Staff Only
August 18, Wednesday	First Day for Students
September 6, Monday	Labor Day - No School
October 14, Thursday	1st Quarter Ends (41 days)
October 15, Friday	Records Day - Staff Only
October 18, Monday	Professional Devolvement- Staff Only
November 24, Wednesday	Conference Release Day-No School
November 25 & 26, Thursday & Friday	Thanksgiving Break - No School
December 17, Friday	2nd Quarter Ends (41 days)
December 20, Monday	Records Day - Staff Only
December 21, Wednesday-December 31, Friday	Winter Break - No School
January 3, Monday	Professional Development - Staff Only
January 4, Tuesday	School Resumes
January 17, Monday	Dr. MLK, Jr. Day - No School
February 11, Friday	Conference Release Day-No School
February 14, Monday	Presidents Day - No School
March 16, Thursday	3rd Quarter Ends (49 days)
March 17, Friday	Records Day - Staff Only
March 20, Monday - March 24, Friday	Spring Break - No School
March 27, Monday	Professional Development – Staff Only
March 28, Tuesday	School Resumes
May 25, Thursday	Last Day for Students 4th Quarter Ends (45 days)
May 26, Friday	Records Day Last Day for Staff

h) Adoption of Resolution - Payment In Lieu of Transportation*

The Board adopted the following resolution declaring transportation impractical for a certain pupil, pursuant to the requirements of Ohio Revised Code §3327 and the procedures set forth by the Ohio Department of Education:

WHEREAS the student identified below have been determined to be a resident of this school district, and eligible for transportation services; and

WHEREAS after a careful evaluation of all available options, it has been determined that it is impractical to provide transportation for this student to the selected schools; and

WHEREAS the following factors as identified in Revised Code §3327.02 have been considered:

a. The time and distance required to provide the transportation
b. The number of pupils to be transported
c. The cost of providing transportation in terms of equipment, maintenance, personnel, and administration
d. Whether similar or equivalent service is provided to other pupils eligible for transportation
e. Whether and to what extent the additional service unavoidably disrupts current transportation schedules
f. Whether other reimbursable types of transportation are available; and

WHEREAS the option of offering payment-in-lieu of transportation is provided in Ohio Revised Code:

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Finneytown Local School District Board of Education hereby declares that it is impractical to transport the student identified below and offers the parent/guardian of said student payment-in-lieu of transportation:

William Dean, Myra Dean and Zoey Dean (Kristin Dean, parent)

i) Acceptance of Donations*

The Board accepted the following donation(s):

A cash donation of $200.00 to the Finneytown High School Art Department from Conover Dental, 9312 Winton Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45231 on December 09, 2025.

A cash donation of $700.00 to the Finneytown Local School District from J.Ernest and Sharon Doering, 8788 Woodview Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45231 on December 15, 2025.

RC: Mr. Engleman, Yes; Ms. Laird, Yes; Mr. Plaut, Yes; Mr. Reeb, and Ms. Catanzaro, Yes. Motion passes.

015-26 Mr. Engleman moved, seconded by Ms. Laird that the Board approve the **Transition Agreement.**

RC: Ms. Laird, Yes; Mr. Plaut, Yes; Mr. Reeb, Ms. Catanzaro, and Mr. Engleman, Yes. Motion passes.

The next regular meeting of the Finneytown Board of Education will take place on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, Brent Board Office Meeting Room, 8791 Brent Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45231. Open forum will begin at 6:00 pm.

016-26 Ms. Laird moved, seconded by Mr. Engleman that the Board enter the **Executive Session** according to ORC 122.21(g)(1) to discuss the employment of a public employee**.**

RC: Mr. Plaut, Yes; Mr. Reeb, Ms. Catanzaro, Mr. Engleman, Yes; and Ms. Laird, Yes. Motion passes.

Enter Executive Session: 7:45 PM

Exit Executive Session: 8:11 PM

017-26 There being no further business, Ms. Laird moved, seconded by Mr. Engleman that the meeting be adjourned. By consensus the meeting adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Seth Plaut, President

ATTEST:

Anita E. Ruffin, Treasurer