



Havasupai Elementary School Board

P.O. Box 10 Supai, Arizona 86435

Phone: 928-448-2731

Email: dkaska2003@yahoo.com or payatammy@gmail.com

President: Dinolene Kaska Vice President: Tammy Grounds

Members: Emanuel Manakaja, Javarya Wescogame

MINUTES

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

DATE: 10-21-25 @ 5pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://wested.zoom.us/j/92224243498>

Meeting ID: 922 2424 3498

One tap mobile

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WELCOME

CALL TO ORDER 5:20pm

ROLL CALL – Present T. Grounds, E. Manakaja, J. Wescogame, D. Kaska (at 5:56pm)

ADOPTION OF AGENDA-Motion by E. Manakaja, 2nd J. Wescogame. Vote: 2Yay, 1Abstain, 1Absent.

Minutes from September – emailed to School Board on 9-17-25

Principal's Report – emailed to School Board on 10-15-25

Trust for Public Lands: BIE Foundation – new school playground

Presentation by Trust for Public Land and BIE Foundation – Schoolyard Project

Dr. Mr. Lucero (TPL) introduced the team and shared her background in tribal education and school construction. Expressed understanding of the community's challenges and commitment to supporting the schoolyard project.

Jen Ms. Santry (TPL) described the student- and community-centered design approach for the new playground. Emphasized urgency and shared plans for a December site visit to gather input from students and staff.

Mr. Clayton (BIE Foundation) confirmed funding support for the schoolyard project. Highlighted additional BIE Foundation initiatives: behavioral health, language immersion, and career development.

Mr. Clayton also plans to visit Havasupai in December with the TPL team.

Ms. Denk (TPL) expressed excitement about visiting the canyon and meeting the community in person. Emphasized a student- and teacher-led design process for the schoolyard to reflect local learning and play styles. Proposed a two-phase approach: (1) Initial phase to address immediate safety concerns with the current playground. (2) Second phase for a comprehensive redesign based on community input. Noted concerns shared by Mrs. Dr. Sandoval about unsafe playground surfacing (asphalt/aggregate). TPL team plans to assess the site and explore safer surfacing alternatives. Reaffirmed commitment to a collaborative process that meets the community's needs.

Mr. Manakaja asked what will be done beyond rebuilding the playground.



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Ms. Santry (TPL) explained the process includes:

Participatory design workshops with students, teachers, and community members.

Incorporating culture, language, and connection to the land into the schoolyard vision.

Fundraising support to secure resources for the full project.

A phased process: design → fundraising → construction.

Typical project timeline is 1–3 years, but the team is committed to accelerating the process due to the community's urgency.

Ms. Sinyella asked whether funding for the schoolyard is already secured or if needs must be assessed first.

Mr. Clayton (BIE Foundation) clarified:

The foundation is new (6 months old) and focused on raising private and philanthropic funds.

The schoolyard project will be funded separately from federal appropriations, allowing quicker progress.

Federal funds can be used for other needs once this project is completed.

Ms. Sinyella also raised concerns about mental health and youth engagement, suggesting a youth center or community play area.

Mr. Clayton and Dr. Mr. Lucero responded:

They are open to exploring additional projects like mental health services, telehealth, and youth programs.

TPL also works on land protection, trails, and parks, and will explore broader opportunities during their December visit.

Ms. Denk shared:

Phase 1: Address immediate safety concerns, such as improving the playground surfacing.

Phase 2: Implement a comprehensive redesign through a participatory design process.

he asked for input from the board and community on whether this phased approach is preferred or if all efforts should go toward the full redesign from the start. Emphasized the importance of community guidance in shaping how the project unfolds.

Special Education Services Update – Ms. Bravo

Current staffing:

2 full-time special education teachers

2 full-time special education aides

Additional support from Ms. Nichols and incoming teacher Mr. Hymes

Question from Mr. Manakaja: Asked how many special education staff are listed on the organizational chart.

Response from Dr. Winder:

3.5 special education teachers

2 educational aides

2 educational techs

Report on McKinney Vento Grant & 21st century grant – Ms. Sessions

Ms. Sessions (School Counselor) and Ms. Jackson presented two grants awarded to the school:

McKinney-Vento Grant – supports students experiencing homelessness.

21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant – supports after-school programs and enrichment.

The McKinney-Vento program at Havasupai is being implemented under the culturally respectful name “Havasupai Mu’ah Bajja” to avoid stigma.



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Key supports provided through McKinney-Vento:

Immediate school enrollment without documentation

Transportation, meals, tutoring, and after-school clubs

Cooking club planned to send meals home with students

Collaboration with Head Start to identify and support eligible students

Current identification: Up to 40 students identified as homeless under the grant's definition.

Clarification from Dr. Jojola: McKinney-Vento funds cannot be used to build structures.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant will be implemented with a 4-H theme, focusing on hands-on, project-based learning that supports youth development in areas such as health, science, agriculture, husbandry, leadership and citizenship.

The school board requested copies of the budgets for both the McKinney-Vento and 21st Century grants to review how funds are being allocated and spent.

Dr. Winder will provide once the budgets are finalized.

Honorarium (Student of the Month)

The School Board recognized September Students of the Month for their outstanding achievements in academics, behavior, and leadership.

Students were celebrated for demonstrating positive character, consistent effort, and school spirit. The board expressed appreciation to families and staff for supporting student success.

Ms. Sinyella asked about the status of BIE funding for the current school year.

Dr. Jojola explained the forward funding process, which means that BIE schools receive their funding in advance of the school year, rather than waiting for the federal budget cycle to conclude. This process ensures financial stability and continuity of operations, even if there are delays in the federal appropriations process. Dr. Jojola assured the board that funding for the current school year is secured.

Ms. Frans Presentation

Current Schedule:

Morning hours at Head Start providing support to staff and parents.

Remainder of the day at Havasupai Elementary.

Emphasized opportunity to develop a local monitoring system starting in November.

Planning daily school activities and evening movie events focused on substance abuse prevention and related IDEA topics.

Ms. Frans plans to attend all future board meetings to provide regular updates and gather feedback.

Compliance Report

HES Compliance Update Summary – October 21, 2025

Work Plan:

90-day written work plan submitted on September 17 and posted online by October 8.

Next update due December 8, 2025.

Compliance documents available at school website [Havasupai Elementary School | Home of the Eagles](#)

Instructional Program:

All teaching positions are filled with certified educators.

Curriculum mapping training held on September 24; follow-up on October 3.

Teachers are using a new lesson plan template and uploading weekly plans.

Instructional walkthroughs completed for all teachers.

Station teaching strategies shared to enhance student engagement.



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Library/Media Center:

Phase 2 of compliance plan in progress:

Surveys will be conducted with staff, students, and parents.

E-Library system will be selected.

Book cataloging and organization underway.

Training on Little Library System held September 19.

Library Policy Handbook is in final review.

Counseling Services:

Two full-time counselors implementing a program aligned with the ASCA model.

Counseling program manual under review.

Grading and Promotion:

NASIS report card formats updated to meet federal standards.

Upcoming Dates:

December 8, 2025 – Next work plan update due.

January 12–16, 2026 – Fiscal and programmatic monitoring visit.

Contact:

Frankie Chretien, Compliance Specialist

Email: frances.chretien@bie.edu

Phone: (771) 233-7521

Question from Mr. Manakaja regarding when school counselors started work at HES. Response from Dr. Winder – August 19, 2025.

Facilitator's Report –Dr. Sandoval

Dr. Sandoval emphasized her role in facilitating communication between the tribe, community, and school to support compliance with the Stephen C. v. BIE Settlement Agreement. Currently she is focused on chronic absence as a key area for collaboration:

Defined as missing 10% or more of school days for any reason. Chronic absence in early grades is linked to lower academic achievement and reduced graduation rates.

Attendance impacts learning, social connection, safety, and healthy meals. Encouraged discussion on how families and the community can support student attendance and engagement.

Discussion Highlights:

Ms. Frans asked about incentive programs – Dr. Winder confirmed a perfect attendance program is in place.

Mr. Sinyella suggested bringing back a truancy officer to increase community involvement.

Dr. Jojola clarified that truancy officers would need to be employed by the community, not the school or BIE.

Mr. Sinyella also recommended advertising school board meetings to increase community participation.

Dr. Winder responded that meetings are currently posted on the school marquee and committed to working with the school board brainstorm additional outreach strategies to include contacting the tribe's social media liaison to post when meetings are held.

Motion from Mr. Manakaja to open the floor to community members at meeting.

Open Floor Discussion – Policy Approval Concern

Mr. Sinyella raised a concern regarding a policy amendment that was presented as “approved by the school board” in a handout, despite the motion failing during the previous board meeting. She expressed



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concern that this misrepresentation undermines the authority of the school board and could discourage community involvement.

Dr. Winder stated she did not recall labeling the document as board-approved and deferred to Dr. Jojola for clarification.

Dr. Jojola (Education Program Administrator) explained:

The amendment was required for compliance and to inform families about promotion and retention policies.

Although the board did not approve it, she signed and authorized the amendment under her authority as EPA for bureau-operated schools.

The board serves in an advisory capacity, and while collaboration is preferred, non-concurrence cannot delay compliance-related actions.

Mr. Sinyella acknowledged the importance of the content but emphasized the need for transparency and respect for board processes.

Dr. Jojola agreed and appreciated the feedback, noting the importance of balancing compliance with community trust.

Ms. Kaska expressed disappointment that a policy addendum was added to the school handbook after the school board voted against it. She clarified that while she did not oppose the content itself, she did not want it formally added to policy without board concurrence. Suggested the information could have been shared with families as a notice, rather than as a policy change. Noted that trust was undermined when the document was signed on behalf of the board without their approval. Also mentioned she had requested two minor revisions to the addendum that were not incorporated.

Dr. Jojola responded:

She believed it was clear during the meeting that she would approve the amendment as the Education Program Administrator (EPA).

The amendment was necessary to comply with federal requirements and ensure families are informed about promotion, retention, and intervention tiers.

Acknowledged the board's advisory role and emphasized that compliance and legal obligations sometimes require moving forward without board concurrence.

Appreciated Ms. Kaska's feedback and reiterated the importance of transparency and communication.

Mr. Manakaja expressed concern that Dr. Jojola signed in the space designated for the school board president on a policy addendum, despite the board not approving it.

He stated that in all his years on the board, this had never occurred, and such a signature should only happen in the absence of a school board.

Dr. Jojola responded that it is policy and practice for the Education Program Administrator (EPA) to sign when there is no concurrence from the board, especially when compliance is required.

An agreement was reached to include a statement in the addendum clarifying that:

The school board president did not sign the document.

Dr. Jojola signed in her capacity as EPA due to non-approval by the board.

Motion to adjourn was made and the meeting concluded at 7:16 PM.