



Sonoita Elementary School District
 Elgin School
 23 Elgin Rd
 Elgin, AZ 85611
 (520) 455-5514 Fax (520) 455-5516
 Daniel R. Erickson, Superintendent

SONOITA GOVERNING BOARD REGULAR BOARD MEETING
 TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026 @ 3:15 PM
 ELGIN SCHOOL CONFERENCE ROOM, ELGIN SCHOOL

MINUTES

BOARD ATTENDANCE:

Harry Dotson, President
 Nancy Webster, Vice President
 Anthony Fennell, Member
 Anne Przybyla, Member
 Aaron Thomas, Member

DISTRICT ATTENDANCE:

Daniel Erickson, Superintendent
 Clyde Dangerfield, District Attorney

OPENING

A. Call to Order ~ Harry Dotson called the meeting to order at 3:15 pm.

- Pledge of Allegiance ~ All in attendance stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Adoption of the Agenda ~ At 3:15 pm, Harry Dotson made a motion to adopt the agenda, Nancy Webster 2nd, motion carried 5/0.

B.Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain
H.D.	X		
N.W.	X		
A.F.	X		
A.T.	X		
A.P.	X		

PUBLIC COMMENT

~ None

ACTION ITEMS

B. DISCUSS / ACTION TO APPROVE – The Governing Board may vote to convene in executive session, pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.03(A)(3), for the purpose of receiving legal consultation from the attorney of the public body regarding the status of possible legal action (Santa Cruz County and the State of Arizona - embezzlement by the former Santa Cruz County Treasurer) and/or to instruct its attorney regarding settlement discussions conducted to avoid or resolve litigation and related matters.

~ At 3:16 pm, Harry Dotson made a motion to convene in executive session for the purpose of receiving legal consultation from the attorney of the public body regarding the status of possible legal action (Santa Cruz County and the State of Arizona - embezzlement by the former Santa Cruz County Treasurer) and/or to instruct its attorney regarding settlement discussions conducted to avoid or resolve litigation and related matters, Nancy Webster 2nd, motion carried 5/0.

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain
H.D.	X		
N.W.	X		
A.F.	X		
A.T.	X		
A.P.	X		

~The Board reconvened in regular session at 3:40 pm.

C. DISCUSS / ACTION TO APPROVE – Approval and Ratification of a Notice of Claim filed against the State of Arizona.

It is recommended that the Governing Board approve and ratify the attached Notice of Claim filed on Friday, February 27, 2026 against the State Auditor General for negligence in auditing of Santa Cruz County which allowed for the former County Treasurer, Elizabeth Gutfar to embezzle approximately \$39,000,000 from the County, which included \$424,246.70 of District funds. The ratification is necessary as the deadline for filing the notice of claim was Saturday, February 28, 2026.

Background Information: In an abundance of caution, the District submitted this Notice of Claim without conceding or admitting it is legally obligated to serve a Notice of Claim. Pursuant to A.R.S. §12-821.01 the statute requires “persons who have claims against a public entity” to serve notices of claim. Districts that are subdivisions of the State are not “persons” as defined by statute, but to avoid this potential legal argument a notice was filed in the proper time frame.

~ At 3:41 pm, Harry Dotson made a motion to approve and ratify the Notice of Claim filed against the State of Arizona, Tony Fennell 2nd, motion carried 5/0.

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain
H.D.	X		
N.W.	X		
A.F.	X		
A.T.	X		
A.P.	X		

D. DISCUSS/ ACTION TO APPROVE – Direction given to the Governing Boards attorney in executive session.

It is recommended that the Governing Board approve and authorize the direction given to the Governing Board’s attorney during the Executive Session identified as item B above regarding authorizing a settlement offer to Santa Cruz County and the State of Arizona in connection with the Gutfahr/County Treasurers theft matter in collaboration with other school districts and fire district victims of the theft.

~ At 3:43 pm, Harry Dotson made a motion to approve authorize the direction given to the Governing Board’s attorney during the Executive Session identified as item B above regarding authorizing a settlement offer to Santa Cruz County and the State of Arizona in connection with the Gutfahr/County Treasurers theft matter in collaboration with other school districts and fire district victims of the theft, Anne Przybyla 2nd, motion carried 5/0.

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain
H.D.	X		
N.W.	X		
A.F.	X		
A.T.	X		
A.P.	X		

STUDY ITEMS

A Board member or the Superintendent may request items be added for future study sessions.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A Board member may request items be added for future agendas

- Student Achievement
- AI
- Field Project ~ May 2026
- Khanmigo Update ~ Possibly May 2026
- Friday Academy Update ~ May 2026
- Step Schedules ~ Board Retreat
- Building a High School ~ Board Retreat

ADJOURNMENT

~ At 3:44 pm, Harry Dotson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:44 pm, Nancy Webster 2nd, motion carried 5/0

Member	Aye	Nay	Abstain
H.D.	X		
N.W.	X		
A.F.	X		
A.T.	X		
A.P.	X		