

**GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD**  
**GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 23, 2023**

The School Board of Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 held a regular meeting on Monday, October 23, 2023, at the Mark Sanford Education Center with President Amber Flynn presiding.

**Board Members Present:** Josh Anderson, Dave Berger, Amber Flynn, Monte Gaukler, Joel Larson, Eric Lunn, Jeff Manley, and Cynthia Shabb. **Absent:** Bill Palmiscno.

**Student Board Members Present:** Maggie Barker. **Absent:** Ryaan Alshami.

**Others Present:** Dr. Terry Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager; Catherine Gillach, Associate Superintendent of Secondary Education; Matt Bakke, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education; Brady Olson, Vice President, Grand Forks Education Association; and Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary.

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**Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance.** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Approval of Agenda.** It was moved by Larson and seconded by Manley to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Palmiscno.

**Approval of Minutes.** It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Shabb to approve the minutes of October 9, 2023, as written. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Palmiscno.

**Public Comments.** None.

**UND/GFPS Master's Program Partnership.** Dr. Brenner introduced the discussion on this partnership with a graduate degree program tailor-made for Grand Forks Public School District teachers who were interested in seeking an advanced degree. Sixteen GFPS teachers are now fully enrolled in the Master of Science Teaching & Leadership program that kicked off in August 2023.

UND's Dr. Laura Link and Dr. Joel Schleicher explained in detail the five-semester program including certification pathways and extended an invitation to attend the first of five Grand Gathering events on November 1 at the Gershman Graduate Center from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

**Reading of School Board Meeting Norms.** Flynn read aloud the school board meeting norms.

**Student Transportation Update.** Baumbach reported on the student transportation services, challenges, opportunities, driver shortage, length of rides, and steps taken by Valley Bus and the administration to resolve issues.

**Consent Agenda.** It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Berger to approve the consent agenda as follows: Updated FGA-E8, Parties Approved to Receive Student Data. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Palmiscno.

**Head Start Orientation.** Head Start Director Tracey Johnson provided orientation and an update on the fifth year of the five-year grant. Information provided included the historical framework of the program, funding, staffing, services provided, partnerships, student attendance, leadership structure and governance, in-kind support, school readiness goals, student outcomes, and links to the Head Start performance standards and the Head Start Act.

**Contracted Staff Resignations and Request for Release from Contract – Jeff Welsh and Maura Ferguson.** Dr. Brenner reported Jeff Welsh is currently on a one-year leave of absence and has expressed an interest in substitute teaching and serving as a part-time assisting wrestling coach at Grand Forks Central High School. The Teacher Negotiated Agreement provides that a teacher granted a long-term leave of absence shall not be entitled to receive any salary or fringe benefits during the entire term of the leave of absence. To create a clear pathway for Mr. Welsh to work for the District, his

resignation is necessary so that he would no longer be an employee of the school district. And because he is on leave and currently not on contract, there would not be any financial penalty/liquidated damages associated with his resignation. The Administration recommended approval of Jeff Welsh's resignation effective October 16, 2023.

Dr. Brenner reported Maura Ferguson is currently under contract as a social worker at Head Start. Her resignation creates a vacancy at Head Start and after visiting with Head Start Director Tracey Johnson, it became clear that Ms. Ferguson's resignation puts student and family support at risk. The Administration recommended approval of Maura Ferguson's resignation with the 5% liquidated damages under Policy DKBB under the condition that a social worker replacement can be found, hired, and successfully onboarded, and until that time, Ms. Ferguson should remain under contract for the 2023-24 school year as an employee at Head Start.

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Shabb to approve the recommendations concerning the resignations of Jeff Welsh and Maura Ferguson as outlined by the administration. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Palmiscno.

**General Fund Financial Statement.** Baumbach reported for July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023, total general fund revenues were \$14,976,546 and total general fund expenditures were \$17,270,055 resulting in expenses over revenues of \$2,293,509.

It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Anderson to approve the General Fund Financial Statement for the period July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023, as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Palmiscno.

**Consideration of Resolution Granting NDDOT a Temporary Construction Easement and Permanent Fee Acquisition for Rehabilitation Along Gateway Drive and Authorization of Signor.** Baumbach reported the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) will be doing some signal rehabilitation along Gateway Drive (US 2), North Dakota, adjacent to Wilder Elementary School. The anticipated start date is May 2025. To complete the work, a permanent right of way (fee acquisition) and a temporary construction easement is needed.

The fee acquisition (Parcel 5-1) is needed for a new signal, foundation, and equipment being installed 5 feet east of the existing signal. The surrounding area after existing signal removal will be filled in with concrete sidewalk. For this fee acquisition, the NDDOT is offering \$1,098.00, an amount that is based on an appraisal waiver valuation prepared by the NDDOT.

A temporary construction easement is needed for contractor access to the property to remove the traffic signal pole and foundation which is inside private property. Surrounding area after existing signal removal will be filled in with grass. For this temporary access, they are offering \$300 compensation, an amount that was determined a fair payment to compensate for the time the landowner would expend to review and sign the paperwork and does not represent any specific value.

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Shabb to approve the Resolution Granting NDDOT a Temporary Construction Easement and Permanent Fee Acquisition for Rehabilitation Along Gateway Drive and Authorization of Signor permitting the fee acquisition for parcel 5-1 and the temporary construction easement for parcel 5-2. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Palmiscno.

**Announcements.** Dr. Brenner announced the District Report Card to the Community event is Wednesday, October 25 at 7:15 a.m. at the Alerus Center.

**Board Requests for Future Consideration.** Gaukler requested information about school district education about ChatGPT.

**School Board Norms – How did we do?** Flynn reported the board did great in following its meeting norms.

**Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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Amber Flynn, President

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Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager