

GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 26, 2024

The School Board of Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 met in regular session on Monday, February 26, 2024, at the Mark Sanford Education Center with President Amber Flynn presiding.

Board Members Present: Josh Anderson, Dave Berger, Amber Flynn, Monte Gaukler, Joel Larson via phone, Eric Lunn, Jeff Manley, Bill Palmiscno, and Cynthia Shabb. **Absent:** None.

Student Board Members Present: Maggie Barker and Ryaan Alshami. **Absent:** None.

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.

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.

Reading of School Board Meeting Norms. Lunn read aloud the school board norms.

Shabb joined the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Approval of Agenda. It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Palmiscno to approve the agenda as written. Upon voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes. It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Berger to approve the minutes of February 12, 2024, as written. Upon voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments (non-agenda items). None.

Public Forum Planning. Updated draft information that will be presented at the school board public forum was reviewed. Transportation will be provided for families in need and childcare and interpreters will be available on site. The forum will be held on Monday, March 25, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The school board will also meet briefly in regular session at 6:00 p.m.

Consent Agenda. It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Manley to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- ◆ Appointment of Laura Wollmann, Teacher of Visually Impaired, salary \$57,514, effective

August 19, 2024;

- ◆ Family Care Leave of Absence for Shyanne Moen for 2024-2025
- ◆ Open Enrollment Applications as presented; and
- ◆ Resignations of Eric Puncochar, math teacher; Kiersten Brutger, elementary literacy specialist; Brooke Naughton, social worker; and Emily Manning, Head Start teacher, effective May 31, 2024.

Upon roll call vote as follows, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Gaukler, Berger, Anderson, Manley, Lunn, Larson, Palmiscno, Shabb, and Flynn. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Teacher Resignation and Waiving of Liquidated Damages – Brent Lloyd. It was moved by Manley and seconded by Anderson to accept the resignation of Brent Lloyd effective February 19, 2024, and to waive liquidated damages associated with the resignation. Upon roll call vote as follows, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Shabb, Anderson, Larson, Lunn, Palmiscno, Manley, Gaukler, Berger, and Flynn. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Finance Committee Report. Baumbach reported on the February 21, 2024, meeting of the Finance Committee. Discussion topics and topics for consideration are detailed below.

- Audited Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023. District #1 and District #14 received unmodified opinions. Consideration of the audits will take place at the March 4 Board meeting.

- Consideration of New Markets Tax Credit Resolutions related to the Career Impact Academy. Baumbach reported on the new markets tax credit (NMTC) program, financing partners, next steps to closing, and required resolutions for consideration. The District is seeking financing through the NMTC program from which the proceeds will help fund the Career Impact Academy. The Finance Committee recommended the adoption of the resolutions.

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Palmiscno to adopt the Resolutions of the Board of Directors, New Markets Tax Credit Transaction. Upon roll call vote as follows, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Gaukler, Lunn, Palmiscno, Berger, Anderson, Larson, Shabb, Manley, and Flynn. Nay: None. Absent: None.

- Valley Middle School Bid Results (Acceptance of Guaranteed Maximum Price for Construction). Participating in this discussion were Lance Monson and Ben Matson of Construction Engineers and Tom Wesley of ICON Architectural Group. Monson reported receiving very positive bid results and with all design alternates accepted, the Valley Middle School construction bids came in under budget. The Finance Committee recommended approval of a GMP of \$42,230,496 with soft costs and value engineering and alternate items #1-16 not to exceed \$53M. Since the Finance Committee meeting, the GMP was updated to \$44,584,385 and the total project estimate was updated to \$52,739,382. Construction Engineers is seeking approval of the guaranteed maximum price (GMP) for construction of \$44,584,385.

It was moved by Palmiscno and seconded by Manley to approve the guaranteed maximum price (GMP) of \$44,584,385 for the construction of the new Valley Middle School. Upon roll call vote as follows, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Manley, Palmiscno, Larson, Lunn, Gaukler, Berger, Shabb, Anderson, and Flynn. Nay: None. Absent: None.

- Budget Update. Dr. Brenner reported on the district administration's process to achieve a 15% general fund balance by June 30, 2026. For 2024-2025, the District administration has worked through a comprehensive process with building administrators and program directors to

attain a goal of reducing the salary and benefits budget by 5%.

Public comments were received by the board. Listed below are the names of all individuals who spoke and the topic of their remarks:

1. Jake Kalenze – reduction of funds from Fine Arts Department.
2. Easton Sivertson – music and German cuts, budget cuts.
3. George Beaver – restructuring of school funds.
4. Michael Loesevitz – German program being cut.
5. Brooke Meisel – restructuring of music and language programs.
6. Melanie Kayl – restructuring of music programs.
7. Christie Aleshire – reduction of music teachers.
8. Mairi Ferguson – reduction of music teachers.
9. Jonus Ferguson – reduction of music matters.
10. Eli Stevenson – proposed budget reduction.
11. Jonathan Haug – funding for school music.
12. Tommy Hoffarth – supporting the arts.
13. Mohammad A. – why we shouldn't cut music positions and lessons.
14. Jennifer Kolodka – computer science at RRHS.
15. Ryan King – music budget cuts.
16. Lee Cable – the importance of music and the arts.
17. Alena Kolodka – computer science at RRHS.
18. Owen Hull – don't cut German.
19. Ricky Chen – German program should not be cut.
20. Abbey Kinneberg – proposed budget realignment.
21. Ella McMullin – budget cuts and the effects it will have on families coming to Grand Forks.
22. Rose Green – plan to axe German and music programs.
23. Nellie Dachtler – budget cuts for music.
24. Arynn Rubash – German program.
25. Cassey Slater – library para budget realignment.
26. Mia Trevino – Music Department and Language Arts.
27. Eli Zerr – proposed cuts to various music

- and arts programs.
28. Niska Kempenich – cuts to German and eliminating teachers.
 29. Eden Williams – music.
 30. Andrew Foerster – cut to German class and elimination of music teachers.
 31. Suzanne Nelson – music and other staff cuts.
 32. Rachel Hafner – reduction in workforce – budgets - related to special education services.
 33. Sarah Gulbraith – music cuts to programs.
 34. Emily Huber – budget cuts to music programs.
 35. Tyler Nagel – support of GF music education and recognize March as Music in Our Schools Month.
 36. Matt Strand – proposed budget cuts to music programs.
 37. Sarah Prescott – proposed budget cuts.
 38. McKenzie – budget cut.
 39. Hayley Beller – Music Dept., World Language Dept. – budget cuts.
 40. Cora Scheffer – proposed cuts to music and language programs.
 41. Steven Lesmeister – importance of the German program.
 42. Chelsea Larson – budget/music cuts.
 43. Julie Reiten – all programmatic cuts due to budget.

Alshami left the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

44. Natalie Buchhop – music budget cuts.
45. Caleigh Carl – music cuts that are being planned.
46. Anika Suriano – proposed budget realignment.
47. Nicholas Bouvette – proposed budget realignment.
48. El Walsh – budget cuts in the GFPS school district and music departments.
49. Camdyn Antonenko – proposed budget realignment.
50. Nile Riedhammer – the District’s decision concerning the Music Department.
51. Ada Dactler – budget cuts in the Music Department.
52. Reagan Gaukler – proposed budget realignment.
53. Abby Boe – proposed budget cuts to GFPS departments.
54. Bobby Wek – proposed budget cuts and the

- cuts of teachers.
55. Oakley Oss – proposed school change for music teachers.
 56. Maia Green – Music Department teacher elimination/budget cuts/lesson cuts.
 57. Genevieve Ulrich – music program.
 58. Wesley Loesevitz – German program removal.
 59. Virginia Hutton – importance of music in the district.
 60. Tina Randle Black – German classes. Also read a statement from her daughter, Alyssa Black.
 61. Daniel Ulrich – SAIL program.
 62. Miley Pisenon – budget cuts to arts and German departments.
 63. Mary Ann Crow – German program.
 64. Jakob Kehrwald – Removal of the German program from courses.

The meeting recessed from 9:52 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

65. Nya Rout – music and arts program.
66. Adina Weinstein – German language cuts.
67. Vedant Srivastava – budget realignment in music and languages.
68. Brady Ritland – proposed cuts to music programs.
69. Henry Haug – budgeting in relation to Grand Forks music departments and their restructuring.
70. Jessica Stoppleworth – music programming and staffing 6-12.

Eight additional comment cards were completed however when called upon the individuals were either absent or chose to not speak.

General Fund Financial Statement. Baumbach reported the period of July 1, 2023, through January 31, 2024, total general fund revenues were \$70,457,947 and total general fund expenditures were \$63,828,012 resulting in revenues over expenses of \$6,629,935.

It was moved by Palmiscno and seconded by Berger to approve the General Fund Financial Statement for the period July 1, 2023, through January 31, 2024. Upon roll call vote as follows, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Anderson, Berger, Gaukler, Larson, Lunn, Manley, Palmiscno, Shabb, and Flynn. Nay: None. Absent: None.

District Calendar for 2024-2025 and Tentative Start and End Dates for 2025-2026. Gillach reported on the work of the District Calendar Committee that resulted in their recommendation for the 2024-2025 District Calendar and tentative start and end dates for 2025-2026. School Board Policy ABAB requires the Board to approve the start and end days and teacher blackout days.

APPROVED _____
(Date)

Amber Flynn, President

Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Gaukler to approve the 2024-2025 District Calendar start dates of Tuesday, August 27, 2024, for grades K-9 and Wednesday, August 28, 2024, for grades 10-12; 22 elementary school teacher blackout day on September 24, 25, 26, October 1, November 19, 21, December 3, 5, February 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 25, 26, 27, March 4, 6, and May 20, 21, 22, 27; 21 middle school teacher blackout day on October 3, 4, 7, 8, 24, 25, 28, 29, January 9, 10, 13, 14, February 13, 18, March 20, 21, 24, 25, and May 27, 28, 29; 19 high school teacher blackout days on October 3, 8, 24, 25, 28, 29, January 9, 10, 13, 14, February 13, 18, March 20, 21, 24, 25, and May 27, 28, 29; and to tentatively approve a start date of Wednesday, August 27, 2025, for grades K-9 and Thursday, August 28, 2025, for grades 10-12 for the 2025-2026 school year. Upon roll call vote as follows, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Palmiscno, Larson, Lunn, Manley, Berger, Gaukler, Anderson, Shabb, and Flynn. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Announcements. Dr. Brenner announced Alshami was voted the EDC Senior Athlete of the Year in swimming and diving and a relay team took first place.

Gaukler commented on her experience attending an E-Sports event at UND and the Anastasia performance at Grand Forks Central High School.

Board Requests for Future Consideration. None.

School Board Norms – How Did We Do? Lunn reported the board did very well in following its meeting norms.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m.