

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**
2 **OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
3 **HELD FEBRUARY 12, 2024**
4

5 A duly called Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Great Falls Public
6 Schools was held at the District Offices Building, 1100 4th Street South, on the 12th day
7 of February 2024.

8
9 **ROLL CALL:** Brian Patrick took roll call.

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11 **Trustees Present:** Gordon Johnson - Chairperson
12 Kim Skornogoski – Vice Chairperson
13 Bill Bronson
14 Mark Finnicum
15 Marlee Sunchild
16 Amie Thompson
17 Paige Turoski
18

19 **Others Present:** Tom Moore, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business
20 Operations; Lance Boyd, Heather Hoyer, and Jackie Mainwaring, Executive Directors
21 for Student Achievement; Tom Hering, Director of Information Technology, and
22 Stephanie Becker, Great Falls Public Schools Foundation Director.

23
24 Also present was Tom Cabbage, Great Falls Education Association President.

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26 At 5:30 pm, Chairperson Johnson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of
27 Trustees and asked Trustee Turoski to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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30 **ADOPT AGENDA**

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32 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to adopt the
33 agenda as presented.

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36 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

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38 Motion – Bill Bronson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda after a minor correction
39 made to the draft minutes from January 22, 2024, Page 11, Line 31 of the agenda
40 where the "Office of Public Instruction" should have read the "Board of Public
41 Education". Motion was Seconded by Marlee Sunchild to approve with the correction.

42
43 **A. Minutes of the January 22, 2024, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board approved
44 the minutes of the January 22, 2024, Regular Board Meeting with the correction made
45 to Page 11, Line 31.

46
47 **B. Personnel Actions** – The Board approved the Personnel Actions as presented.

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49 **C. Good Apple Awards** – The Board approved the nominations for Good Apple
50 Awards for Kirsten Conrad, Resource 2/3 Associate Coordinator TK-12 Teacher, Paris
51 Gibson Education Center; Chris Mee, Data Center Lead, Joseph Vance, Computer

1 Analyst, both District Office Annex, and Heather Spurzem, Benefits Analyst, Shannon
2 McKiernan, Human Resources Administrative Assistant, both District Offices; Bruce
3 Heun, 1st Engineer, Lewis and Clark Elementary School; Kathryn Elsing, Resource 1
4 Teacher, Longfellow Elementary School; Alexandra Procanin, Para Professional,
5 Longfellow Elementary School; and Erin Wilson, Para Professional, Giant Springs
6 Elementary School.

7
8 **D. Montana School Bus Drivers Certificates – OPI TR-35’s** – The Board approved
9 the Montana School Bus Drivers Certificate – OPI TR-35’s for the individuals listed in
10 the agenda.

11
12 **E. TR-6 Bus Route Reimbursement Claims for 2023-2024 First Semester** – The
13 Board approved the TR-6 Bus Route Reimbursement Claims for bus routes for both the
14 high school and elementary districts for the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year.

15
16 **F. Transitional Kindergarten Student Attendance Agreements at the Early**
17 **Learning Family Center for the 2023-2024 School Year** – The Board approved the
18 student listed in the agenda to attend the Early Learning Family Center for the 2023-
19 2024 school year due to exceptional circumstances per Board Policy 3100.

20
21 **G. Incoming Student Attendance Agreements for the 2023-2024 School Year** – The
22 Board approved the incoming student attendance agreements for the students listed in
23 the agenda Tuition will be paid for by the District of Residence.

24
25 **H. Student Activity Accounts for December 2023** – The Board approved the Student
26 Activity Accounts Monthly Report for December 2023.

27
28 **I. Great Falls High School (GFHS) and Charles M. Russell (CMR) High School**
29 **Business Professional of America (BPA) State and National Leadership**
30 **Conference Travel Request** – The Board approved GFHS and CMR High School
31 student travel to Billings, Montana March 10-12, 2024 for the BPA State Leadership
32 Conference and to Chicago, Illinois May 10-14, 2024 should the students qualify for the
33 National Leadership Conference.

34
35 **J. Charles M. Russell (CMR) High School Health Occupations Students of America**
36 **(HOSA) State Leadership Conference Travel Request** – The Board approved the
37 CMR HOSA travel request to Billings, Montana April 3-4, 2024 for the State Leadership
38 Conference.

39
40 **K. Donation of Two Hundred Used Computer Monitors from Benefis Healthcare** –
41 The Board approved to accept the donation of two hundred used computer monitors
42 from Benefis Healthcare to Great Falls Public Schools with thanks.

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47 **COMMUNICATION**

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49 **A. Report of the Student Representatives**

50 Paris Gibson Education Center (PGEC) student representatives Karsynn Kidrick and
51 Mona Marceau reported PGEC has accepted fifteen (15) new students and twenty-six

1 (26) students have finished their high school career, including both Karsynn and Mona.
2 Students enjoyed learning about real life scenarios as they participated in the "Reality
3 Fair" at Great Falls High School as well as "Lunch with a Professional" at the Mighty Mo
4 restaurant in downtown Great Falls. Students reported on several different labs they
5 worked on in Science Enrichment classes. They have also been busy beading, with
6 over twenty (20) caps already beaded for graduation and more being designed. Juniors
7 and Seniors have been busy completing final projects in Social Studies classes as well
8 as English research projects. Students are working on a collaborative art installation
9 and learning how to curate their art. They are excited to have an arts class introduce a
10 yearbook because PGEC has not had a yearbook since 2019. Special offerings and
11 events students discussed were valentine grams, a music club, a blood drive, and
12 midterms. Karsynn and Mona recognized their fellow student representative, Morgan
13 Williams, who was one of the students selected to co-host the Ignite conference in
14 Helena.

15
16 Charles M. Russell (CMR) High School student representatives Lilli Skaer and Emerson
17 Hamma reported CMR has adopted the West Elementary School Wildcats. They are
18 proud to be building relationships and mentoring future Rustlers. Students also hosted
19 Eighth Grade Parent and Student Night that showcased the opportunities CMR has to
20 offer incoming freshmen students. Students reported on lessons they loved in Mr.
21 Crawford's Computer Design class, Forensics class, Mr. Hollern's Applied Physics
22 class, and Mr. Stewart's carpentry class. Congratulations were extended to Junior
23 Reserve Officer Training Corp (JROTC) students who held their awards ceremony and
24 earned additional rankings, Speech and Debate students who qualified for Nationals
25 being held in June in Iowa, Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) and
26 Business Professionals of America (BPA) students who competed and qualified at their
27 respective state competitions, and wrestling and swimming athletes who finished their
28 seasons by competing and earning awards at the state competitions. Both boys' and
29 girls' basketball teams were proud to earn victories over their crosstown rivals.
30 Orchestra and art students showcased their talents at an orchestra performance
31 featuring a guest conductor and an art show display at the Dark Horse Hall. The
32 Snowball dance was enjoyed by all who attended.

33
34 Great Falls High School (GFHS) student representatives Ryan Harrington and Seth
35 Royer reported that the GFHS student body thoroughly enjoyed putting pie in the face of
36 Principal, Mr. Habel, at the winter pep assembly as a reward for a successful food drive.
37 They reported on state tournaments in swimming and wrestling and highlighted
38 individual and team efforts. They also extended congratulations to several football
39 players and Coach Tchida for being selected for the Shrine Football Game. Favorite
40 classes and projects included cinnamon bear dissection in Biology class, a sterno
41 Chemistry lab, protein food labs in Culinary class, and roleplaying in Spanish class.
42 Students highlighted several DECA members who earned state titles and will advance
43 to Nationals in California, twenty-five (25) music students who were selected for All-
44 Northwest Choir, Orchestra students who had the opportunity to play music with a guest
45 conductor from Gonzaga University, Speech and Debate students who earned
46 accolades for their state performances, and JROTC cadets who earned additional
47 rankings at their first semester awards banquet. Fundraisers in progress and upcoming
48 events highlighted by the student representatives included *The Elephant Calf* drama
49 production, a Valentine's Crush fundraiser sponsored by National Honor Society, a
50 flower fundraiser sponsored by Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), and a

1 brick fundraiser to replace the old concrete path along Alumni Way. There were over
2 250 students who were recognized at the first semester Student Recognition Breakfast.

3
4 Both CMR and GFHS student representatives encouraged the entire community to
5 attend the *Live the Dream* event at the GFHS Hub on February 21, 2024. It is a
6 collaborative effort to showcase diversity and inclusion of all students in the Great Falls
7 Public Schools system as well as all members of the Great Falls community.

8 9 **B. Superintendent Report**

10 Superintendent Moore thanked the students for their reports and mentioned the
11 students from Lewis and Clark Elementary School did not make it to the Board Meeting
12 for their Character Strong presentation - but they will be coming to a future board
13 meeting.

14 Superintendent Moore introduced Executive Director, Jackie Mainwaring and Ms.
15 Mainwaring reported on math growth during the past couple of years. Every grade level
16 has made as much or more than expected progress in their math growth. Math
17 Specialists Courtney Francetich and Holly Burwell have visited every school and meet
18 quarterly to discuss progress and assist with action plans for each school.

19 Superintendent Moore talked about the progress that has been made in the math
20 program and is very hopeful the trend continues. He thanked the Math Specialists,
21 teachers, and Principals for all of their work and continued efforts.

22 Superintendent Moore discussed the High Voltage weekend that ran in conjunction with
23 the Student Art Show at the Dark Horse Hall. He had a great time interacting with all of
24 the art students, teachers, and families. The High Voltage event brought 33 potential
25 teaching candidates to Great Falls for the weekend who interviewed for jobs with Great
26 Falls Public Schools. He thanked Becky Nelson, school Principals, the Jennings family,
27 Chairperson Johnson, Stephanie Erdmann, and the community sponsors for the long
28 hours they worked to make the event a huge success.

29 Superintendent Moore talked about how the students from all of the high schools are
30 talking about the importance of inclusion and embracing different cultures. Student
31 leaders have taken this into their own hands and have orchestrated a *Live the Dream*
32 event that he encouraged all to attend on February 21st. He thanked Principals Habel,
33 McGraw, and Jaques for their leadership and encouragement of these student groups
34 and events.

35 Superintendent Moore talked about the Career and Technical Education (CTE)
36 Proclamation and the start up of Build MT with current teacher Joe Wilkins. He thanked
37 local businesses, Torgersons and Caterpillar, for sponsoring Build MT. Governor
38 Gianforte was in Great Falls to sign the Proclamation and talk in support of the Build MT
39 program. Students were recognized at a City Commission meeting last week.

40 Superintendent Moore thanked newly elected City Commissioner, Shannon Wilson, for
41 attending the Board Meeting and supporting the students.

42 Superintendent Moore praised Lieutenant Colonel Holbein, Master Sergeant Wonch,
43 and all of the Cadets for receiving extremely high marks on their JROTC unit
44 inspections from Maxwell Air Force Base. Also, a big congratulations to all of the winter
45 student athletes who placed or earned awards as they were wrapping up their seasons
46 at state competitions.

47 The CORE school is moving forward as teachers have been interviewed and positions
48 are being filled. Work with the University of Western, the lottery system, and parent
49 nights are all coming up and updates will be provided at future Board Meetings.

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51 **C. Audience Communication** – No requests to speak.

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ACTION ITEMS

A. Financial Report and Check Register for December 2023 – Director of Business Operations, Brian Patrick, presented the financial report and check register for December 2023.

Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to approve the December 2023 Financial Report and Accounts Payable checks #131522 - #131929 in the amount of \$2,152,722.64 and Payroll checks #80036 – #80329 in the amount of \$858,649.43 as presented.

B. Second Reading of New and Revised Board Policies 3141, 3141P, and 3610 – Superintendent Moore reviewed and discussed minor grammatical changes to Board Policies 3141, 3141P, and 3610 since the first reading at the January 22, 2024 Board meeting.

Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to approve the new and revised Board Policies 3141, 3141P, and 3610 as presented.

ACTION: OTHER

There were no items pulled from the Consent Agenda to discuss.

REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES

A. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Allocation Correction for 2021-2022 School Year – Executive Director Lance Boyd reported that through the State of Montana audit process and work with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), it was discovered that a series of misallocations were made through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Boyd is working with the new director to get funds encumbered through the e-grant application process. Questions from Trustees Finnicum and Skornogoski concluded with responses that Great Falls Public Schools was the only district under allocated and districts that were over allocated would not be asked to return funds.

B. First Reading of New and Revised Board Policies 2320, 2320R, 8132, and 8132R – Superintendent Moore reviewed new and revised Board policies 2320, 2320R, 8132, and 8132R. He highlighted language changes made to the policies and one request from Tom Cabbage to change “valid first aid *card*” to “valid first aid *certificate*” noting there was a definite distinction between a card and certificate. He stressed the importance of new language to the “lodging” and “room assignments” portions of new Policy 8132 as well as language in Policy 8132R pertaining to not allowing students to drive themselves on school trips. Superintendent Moore thanked Trustees Turoski and Bronson and the Policy Committee for their continued work on updating and reviewing policies as well as Tom Cabbage for his input.

C. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments

1 Trustee Thompson thanked Executive Director Jackie Mainwaring for a private tour of
2 the new Meadow Lark addition because she could not attend the open house
3 ceremony. She also attended the crosstown wrestling and swimming meets and
4 recognized Coach McNamee and the impact he has had on students' lives. She stated
5 there were also some amazing pieces of art on display at the Celtic Cowboy student art
6 show.

7 Trustee Finnicum appreciated hearing about the math achievements and commended
8 the Policy Committee for their work.

9 Trustee Turoski stated the mindsets on math are changing in the District and she
10 thanked everyone for their hard work in making that happen. She said our CORE
11 School application received statewide recognition for being very innovative.

12 Trustee Sunchild gave a shout out to the increase in Measure of Academic Progress
13 (MAP) scores and is hoping that English Language Arts (ELA) scores will follow suit.

14 Trustee Bronson stated the significance of Executive Director Heather Hoyer's
15 statements regarding the agreement with TOURO Medical College and the outreach
16 they are engaged in with GFPS and is looking forward to future reports. Initial scores in
17 math reflect incredible efforts made by faculty and students. He received a very nice
18 email from a former Board member who is writing an article on budgeting in schools and
19 had heard there were many AA school districts having budgeting trouble but had not
20 heard of any difficulties in the Great Falls Public Schools district.

21 Trustee Skornogoski stated the survey for choosing the school calendar for the 2025-
22 2026 school year is out now and encouraged everyone to fill out the survey and voice
23 an opinion. She commended the work of mentor groups talking about the mental health
24 crisis. She praised the work on the improvement of math scores and stated how
25 uplifting it was to have your own child come home and be proud of the improvements
26 made on their own test scores.

29 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

31 Chairperson Johnson discussed the following upcoming events:

32 February 14th is the Meet and Greet at Paris Gibson Education Center. It is an
33 opportunity for the public to meet the Superintendent candidates and provide input to
34 the Board through written comment by 8:00 a.m. the following morning. The two
35 candidate profiles were placed on the viewing screens.

36 February 15th will be interviews with Cabinet, Community, and Leadership teams as well
37 as the Board conducting interviews at 5:00 p.m. The public is invited to watch the
38 interviews with the Board only, but no public comment will be accepted until the
39 February 20th Special Board Meeting.

42 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

44 Motion – Chairperson Johnson, Seconded – Marlee Sunchild, passed unanimously to
45 adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:02 p.m.

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Gordon Johnson, Chairperson

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Brian Patrick, Clerk