

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**  
2 **OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
3 **HELD NOVEMBER 13, 2023**  
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 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day  
7 of November 2023.

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

10  
11 **Trustees Present:** Kim Skornogoski, Vice Chairperson (arrived 5:36 p.m.)  
12 Bill Bronson  
13 Mark Finnicum  
14 Marlee Sunchild  
15 Amie Thompson  
16 Paige Turoski  
17

18 **Trustees Absent:** Gordon Johnson, Chairperson - Excused  
19

20 **Others Present:** Tom Moore, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business  
21 Operations; Tom Hering, Director of Information Technology; Luke Diekhans, Director of  
22 Human Resources; and Jackie Mainwaring, Heather Hoyer, and Lance Boyd, Executive  
23 Directors for Student Achievement.  
24

25 Also present was Tom Cabbage, Great Falls Education Association President.  
26

27 At 5:32 pm, Trustee Bill Bronson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of  
28 Trustees due to notification received that Vice Chairperson Skornogoski would be  
29 arriving a few minutes late to the meeting.  
30

31  
32 **ADOPT AGENDA**  
33

34 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to adopt the  
35 agenda as presented.  
36

37  
38 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**  
39

40 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to approve  
41 the Consent Agenda as presented.  
42

43 **A. Minutes of the October 23, 2023, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board approved  
44 the minutes of the October 23, 2023, Regular Board Meeting as presented.  
45

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

48 **C. Good Apple Awards** – The Board approved the nominations for Good Apple  
49 Awards for: John Hasner, Teamster Foreman, Great Falls Public Schools Warehouse;  
50 Casey Gibson, Counselor, Riverview Elementary School; Kelsey Hovel, Resource 3  
51 Teacher and Tanya Griffin, Special Education Paraprofessional, both of Riverview

1 Elementary School; Jessica Delancey, Elementary Student Advocate Paraprofessional,  
2 Giant Springs Elementary School; Alysha Konecny, Business Office Lead, Julie  
3 Shotnokoff, Lead Transportation & Safety Technician, Amie Smith, Purchasing  
4 Specialist, and Jamie Wanner, Finance Technician, all located at the District Office  
5 Building; Katie Allen, Lead Payroll Technician, District Office Building; Jennifer Gunter,  
6 School Registered Nurse, Riverview Elementary School; Amber Sapp, Core Teacher  
7 Aide, Riverview Elementary School; Callie Ross, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher, Riverview  
8 Elementary School; Chris Mee, Data Center Lead, District Office Annex; Darby Young,  
9 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, Mountain View Elementary School; and Lindsey Wicks-O'Brien, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
10 Grade Teacher, Sacajawea Elementary School.

11  
12 **D. Transitional Kindergarten Student Attendance at the Early Learning Center for**  
13 **the 2023-2024 School Year** – The Board approved the student listed in the agenda to  
14 attend the Early Learning Center for the 2023-2024 school year due to exceptional  
15 circumstances per Board Policy 3100.

16  
17 **E. Student Activity Accounts Monthly Report for September 2023** – The Board  
18 approved the Student Activity Accounts Monthly Report for September 2023 as  
19 presented.

20  
21 **F. C.M. Russell High School Student Activity Account Closures** - The Board  
22 approved the closure of the Student Activity accounts *Electrical IT Classes* and *Home*  
23 *EC Sewing* at C.M. Russell High School as they are no longer being used and the  
24 balances have been cleared.

25  
26 **G. Establish Student Activity Account at Great Falls High School** – The Board  
27 approved the opening of Student Activity account *1:1 Technology Fines* at Great Falls  
28 High School.

29  
30 **H. Great Falls High School Cross-Country Running Club trip to Meridian, Idaho** –  
31 The Board approved the Great Falls High School Cross Country Running Club’s trip that  
32 took place in Meridian, Idaho on November 9-12, 2023.

33  
34  
35 **COMMUNICATION**

36  
37 **A. Report of the Student Representatives**  
38 Paris Gibson Education Center (PGEC) student representatives Karsynn Kidrick, Mona  
39 Marceau, and Morgan Williams reported there are currently 218 students enrolled at  
40 PGEC. With the start of the new quarter, students are excited to shift to new classes  
41 being offered. Jobs for Montana Graduates (JMG) students traveled to Helena for their  
42 fall conference where Morgan Williams was awarded an all-expense paid trip to  
43 Washington, DC to attend the National Jobs for America’s Graduates Conference.  
44 Morgan was one of only four students selected from Montana. Students were given the  
45 opportunity to listen to two guest speakers. Motivational speaker, Kainan Lacasse,  
46 talked to students about the importance of perseverance and keeping a positive attitude  
47 throughout the struggles of life and guest speaker, Beth Barrett, discussed tips on  
48 searching for scholarship opportunities. Students encouraged the community to apply  
49 for two tutors/driver positions and an attendance secretary position needing filled at  
50 PGEC.

51

1 C.M. Russell (CMR) High School student representatives Emerson Hamma, Lilli Skaer,  
2 and Caroline Hermiller reported on fun and interesting lessons being taught in many  
3 different classes. Their *Character Strong* focus for the month is “attitude of gratitude”.  
4 Fall sports have concluded with Volleyball defeating crosstown rival Great Falls High  
5 (GFH) Bison as a final highlight. Clubs have been busy with several events including a  
6 blood drive, “Trunk or Treat”, “Trick or Treat so Kids Can Eat”, and a food drive. The  
7 Rustler Symphonic Band helped Valley View Elementary School celebrate Veteran’s  
8 Day with their military families. Students and staff are celebrating Native American  
9 Heritage Month with 750 individuals participating in the “Unreserved” project. The  
10 Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program continues to do great work in  
11 the community. Cadets from both CMR and GFH were recognized at an awards  
12 ceremony at the end of the first quarter. Students shared why they love their teachers  
13 during “Treasure our Teachers” week and stated “CMR teachers are always full of  
14 Rustler Pride!”

15  
16 Great Falls High School (GFHS) student representatives Brooklyn Griffin and Seth  
17 Royer reported on fall season sports wrap-ups with highlights of a sixth consecutive  
18 Crosstown Football win, season sweeps over CMR in boys’ and girls’ soccer, a State  
19 AA Boys Cross Country team championship, and a sixth place State finish for Hanna  
20 Boyd in golf. Advanced Placement (AP) art students took a trip to Arizona and had their  
21 portfolios reviewed by some of the top schools in the nation. Winter Prom is on  
22 December 2<sup>nd</sup> and is being moved this year from the Civic Center to the Newberry.  
23 Clubs were busy with events including Campus Cleanup, National Diabetes Awareness  
24 month, Mental Health / Depression Awareness, and attendance at the Montana  
25 Association of Student Councils (MASC) fall conference. The drama department just  
26 concluded a very successful fall production of “Midsummer Night’s Dream”. Students  
27 are enjoying fun and interesting lessons in various classes. Students encouraged the  
28 community to keep up with all the amazing things happening at Great Falls High School  
29 via their social media accounts.

### 30 31 **B. Superintendent’s Report –**

32 Superintendent Moore thanked the students and echoed the sentiments of Vice  
33 Chairperson Skornogoski on how extremely fun it is to hear from the student  
34 representatives. He appreciates the work the students and their principals are putting  
35 into their reports.

36 JROTC Cadets and their supervisors, Loy Elementary School, Chief Joseph Elementary  
37 School, and Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (MSDB) were highlighted for their  
38 various events celebrating Veteran’s Day.

39 Superintendent Moore introduced Anders Blewett – who made a substantial contribution  
40 to the Great Falls Public Schools (GFPS) District through a tax credit program. Mr.  
41 Blewett summarized the tax credit opportunity and encouraged the community to take  
42 advantage of it when available. Superintendent Moore presented Mr. Blewett with a  
43 “Difference Maker” coin. Brian Patrick encouraged the audience to talk to their  
44 accountant and read more about the opportunity on the GFPS web page.

45 Superintendent Moore introduced Carl Berg, Mark Yaeger, and Joe Wilkins – all  
46 instrumental in the success of getting communities partners together to support career  
47 pathways.

48 The Christmas Stroll is December 1<sup>st</sup> and students, clubs, or groups have the  
49 opportunity to sell their works at the “Pop Up Shop” – a large building storefront on  
50 Central Avenue. Superintendent Moore thanked Becky Nelson, GFPS Community  
51 Connections/Development Manager, for securing the large, visible building space and

1 also securing radio spots throughout the school year for any of the Great Falls Public  
2 Schools groups who want to get their events out to the public. North Middle School  
3 students took advantage of one of the radio spots recently to highlight their Teen  
4 Mentoring Project as they partner with Alliance for Youth and United Way.  
5 Superintendent Moore discussed events “Mo Tales” and “Business Goes to School”.  
6 He also stated the CORE School Advisory Panel applications (found on the GFPS  
7 website) close November 17 with a Principal being selected by mid-December. Staff  
8 selections will begin in January 2024 and information sessions will be held.  
9 District leaders and Board Trustees are currently reading “Gracious Space” and  
10 preparing for a professional development work session with the author, Pat Hughes, on  
11 December 6<sup>th</sup>.

12  
13 Vice Chairperson Skornogoski announced it was Superintendent Moore’s birthday and  
14 the audience sang “Happy Birthday” to him. She dismissed students and thanked Mr.  
15 Blewett for his donations.

### 16 17 **C. Audience Communication –**

18 Community member Gerry Jennings encouraged community involvement and invited  
19 everyone to attend the “Great Falls Rising” meeting at the Episcopal Church on  
20 Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> to learn more about the homeless situations in Great Falls.  
21

## 22 23 **ACTION ITEMS**

24  
25 **A. Financial Report and Check Register for September 2023 –** Director of Business  
26 Operations Brian Patrick presented the financial report and check register for  
27 September 2023.

28  
29 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to approve the  
30 September 2023 Financial Report and Accounts Payable checks #129876 - #130499 in  
31 the amount of \$1,848,166.45 and Payroll checks #79238 - #79468 in the amount of  
32 \$394,448.13 as presented.

33  
34 **B. Request to Advertise for Warehouse Truck Purchase -** Director of Business  
35 Operations Brian Patrick reported that the warehouse needs a new truck to maintain the  
36 efficient delivery of mail, food, and supplies to 21 schools within the district. Due to  
37 estimated costs exceeding \$80,000, the purchase must be made by contract.  
38 Advertising guidelines and bid specifications were presented.

39  
40 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve  
41 the initiation of the bidding process for the purchase of a new warehouse truck as  
42 presented.

43  
44 **C. C.M. Russell Partial Roof Replacement Project –** Director of Business Operations  
45 Brian Patrick stated the C.M. Russell (CMR) High School roof project was initially bid  
46 last year. It was bid late in the year and a single bid submitted came in too high to  
47 complete the project with available funding. Mr. Patrick outlined the advertising and bid  
48 specifications for the project.  
49

1 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to approve  
2 the advertising for bids on the C.M. Russell Partial Roof Replacement Project as  
3 presented.  
4

5 **D. Trustee Financial Summary School Data Error Correction** – Director of Business  
6 Operations, Brian Patrick explained there were expenditures coded incorrectly for Indian  
7 Education for All (IEFA) on an initial submission of the Trustees Financial Summary  
8 (TFS). Board action corrects these coding errors and allows that no funding will be  
9 withheld from state payments for the 2023-2024 school year.  
10

11 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to approve  
12 the corrections made to the Trustees Financial Summary as presented.  
13

14 Community member, Rodney Meyers, asked if the District did spend the full amount of  
15 funds allocated for IEFA. Mr. Patrick replied “yes”.  
16

17 **E. Participation in the State of Montana Surplus Program** – Director of Business  
18 Operations, Brian Patrick stated our District has purchased driver’s education cars,  
19 school vans, technology equipment, and other items at substantially reduced costs  
20 through the State of Montana Surplus Program. The program requires the District to  
21 update the agreement every three years.  
22

23 Motion – Mark Finnicum, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve the  
24 resolution provided by the State of Montana Surplus Property Program with the  
25 information provided by the District as presented.  
26

27 **F. Superintendent Evaluation** – Vice Chairperson Skornogoski explained due to  
28 Superintendent Moore’s announcement at the last board meeting of his intent to retire at  
29 the end of June 2024, an evaluation to set improvement goals for the upcoming 2024-  
30 2025 school year would not be necessary.  
31

32 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to forego the  
33 annual Superintendent Evaluation Process for the 2023-2024 school year as presented.  
34  
35

## 36 **ACTION: OTHER**

37  
38

## 39 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**

40

41 **A. Review of 2021-2024 Technology Plan and 2023 Technology Summer Projects**  
42 – Director of Information Technology, Tom Hering, provided an extensive presentation  
43 of major accomplishments and projects completed that were directly related to the long-  
44 term technology plan. Projects included, but not limited to, installation of fiber optic  
45 network, 1:1 Chromebook implementation, video surveillance replacement, door  
46 security systems installed, new laptops installed for all teachers, wireless access points  
47 replaced, new employee portal to reduce costs associated with printing pay stubs and  
48 teacher contracts, new parent-teacher communication tool (REMIND), new wiring for  
49 the new construction projects at Meadow Lark Elementary School, tech support  
50 currently averaging 16 tickets per day helping teachers and staff with problems. Mr.

1 Hering touched on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it will affect school learning. He  
2 said more guidance will come on how to use AI appropriately in schools.

3  
4 Vice Chairperson Skornogoski commented that, as a parent, REMIND has been a huge  
5 improvement as communication with parents is critical. She was extremely thankful for  
6 Mr. Hering's long-term vision with where technology is going.

7  
8 **B. *Build MT Pilot*** – High School Coordinator of Curriculum, Beckie Frisbee, reported  
9 that Great Falls Public Schools is adding a new component to its Career and Technical  
10 Education (CTE) program in January 2024. *Build MT* is a heavy equipment program  
11 created by the Montana Contractors Association and implemented in Billings. The  
12 pathway will provide a heavy machinery career option to senior students. Students will  
13 be offered hands-on instruction with a variety of industry partners from the community.  
14 Current GFPS teacher, Joe Wilkins, will provide daily instruction and management of  
15 the students.

16 Community partners Jen Ulsh, Human Resources from Sletten Companies, and Jack  
17 Murray, Store Manager from Tractor and Equipment, spoke in support of the program.  
18 They stated the program would help businesses and allow them to build relationships  
19 with the students and see what a career path could look like for them.

20  
21 Trustee Bronson stated he was at a Chamber of Commerce event last week and  
22 received a preview of the program. He said this is a tremendous opportunity for our  
23 young community.

24  
25 **C. Career Prep KUDs (Know-Understand-Do)** – High School Coordinator of  
26 Curriculum, Beckie Frisbee, reported that our current “Financial Tech” course is being  
27 revised and updated to meet new state level requirements. Whereas the current course  
28 focuses on technology tools, the new focus will be financial literacy. The course name  
29 will change to “Finance and Career Prep”. New KUD documents can be found on the  
30 Great Falls Public Schools website until they are presented for adoption at the next  
31 regular board meeting on November 27, 2023.

32  
33 **D. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments –**

34 Trustee Thompson stated the Board Meeting was amazing and she learned so much. It  
35 was an incredibly busy Fall and she thanked the District for being inventive across all  
36 boards – the CORE School, Business Pop-Up Shop, Mo Tales, and Tom Hering  
37 keeping up with technology – she said the passion truly shows in the dedication from all  
38 involved.

39 Trustee Turoski also thanked all teams for their continued hard work. She informed  
40 everyone that there was a policy meeting last week and changes have been made on  
41 the District website, and are continuing to be made, that reveal more prominence of the  
42 policies that affect students and families.

43 Trustee Sunchild reported she had a great time spending Veteran's Day reading to  
44 students at Lewis and Clark Elementary School. She encouraged the community to  
45 visit Tracy's Diner on Friday, November 17 because 25% of proceeds will help defray  
46 medical costs for a North Middle School student. Street Burgers in Great Falls will also  
47 donate a portion of sales proceeds during the month of November to the student's  
48 family as well.

49 Trustee Finnicum responded with a “ditto” to all prior comments. He thanked everyone  
50 for their continued efforts.

1 Trustee Bronson thanked the District for the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp  
2 (JROTC) support and help with the Veteran’s Day celebration. He reminded everyone  
3 about the CORE School information session being held Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at  
4 5:30 p.m. at Morningside Elementary School.

5 Vice Chairperson Skornogoski attended Great Falls High’s drama production  
6 “Midsummer Night’s Dream” and appreciates how the drama teacher shows so much  
7 passion in his work. He puts his own twist on the productions, with this production  
8 ending with a Cher song. The audience and students loved every minute of it.  
9

10  
11 **UPCOMING EVENTS**  
12

13 Vice Chairperson Skornogoski said the next Regular Board Meetings are scheduled for  
14 Monday, November 27, 2023 and Monday, December 11, 2023. There is also a Board  
15 Work Session on Collaborative Leadership on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 and an  
16 Audit Review Board Work Session on Monday, December 11, 2023 prior to the regular  
17 meeting.  
18

19  
20 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**  
21

22 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to adjourn the  
23 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:43 p.m.  
24  
25  
26

27  
28 

---

Kim Skornogoski, Vice Chairperson

29  
30 

---

Brian Patrick, Clerk  
31