

**GRIFFITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**January 9, 2025**

The Board of School Trustees of the Griffith Public Schools met in regular session at the Griffith High School LGI Room, 600 N. Wiggs St. on the ninth of January at the hour of 6:00 p.m. pursuant to the rules of the Board. Followed by the Board of Finance meeting.

Mr. Adduci, of the Board of School Trustees, called the meeting to order.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, on call of the roll, members were shown to be present or absent as follows:

Present: Tina Adams, President  
Kathy Ruesken, 1st Vice President  
Emily Conner, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Jesse Adduci, Secretary  
Jason Jaques, Assistant Secretary

Absent:

Others Present: Leah Dumezich, Superintendent  
Terri Chance, Chief Financial Officer  
Joseph C. Svetanoff, Attorney

**1.2 Moment of Silence:**

**1.3 Reorganization Of Board And Committee Of Board Members:** Mrs. Ruesken stated that the Board slated their Board members and nominated the following individuals. President Tina Adama, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Kathy Ruesken, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President Emily Conner, Secretary Jesse Adduci, Assistant Secretary Jason Jaques. Mr. Adduci requested a motion to approve the nominated reorganization of the Board. Mr. Jaques made a motion to approve the reorganization of the nominated Board. Mrs. Ruesken seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Mrs. Ruesken stated that the Board slated their Board committee appointments. Mrs. Ruesken nominated for Griffith Park Board Representative Tina Adams, School Board Delegate/Legislative Liaison Kathy Ruesken, Board Negotiation Team Emily Conner, Town Redevelopment Committee Jason Jaques. Mr. Adduci requested a motion to approve the nominated reorganization of Board Committee Appointments. Mrs. Conner made a motion to approve the nomination of the reorganization of the Board Committee Appointments. Mrs. Adams seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

After the gavel was passed Mrs. Adams paused the regular Board meeting to go into the Board Of Finance meeting. after the conclusion of the Board of Finance meeting, the regular Board meeting continued.

**2.1 Appointment Of School Treasurer And School Attorneys:** Mrs. Dumezich present and asked the Board to appoint and approve Carrie \ with Ganci-Clodi Law Mediation as the Special Ed Attorney, Dave Dickson as labor attorney, Joe Svetanoff as Board attorney, and Kim Holmquist as Treasurer. Mrs. Ruesken made a motion to approve the appointment of school treasurer and school attorneys. Mr. Adduci seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**2.2 Delegations and/or Communications:** Pastor Bill Jones with Griffith First United Methodist church said a prayer.

**2.3 Superintendent Update:** Mrs. Dumezich wanted to apologize for the delay in the start of the meeting. We had the swearing in of the re-elected Board members. Mrs. Dumezich wanted to thank Gina from the town. Mrs. Dumezich wanted to share that she received one communication from a Gary resident regarding security at our

games. Mrs. Dumezich shared that she collaborates with the Athletic Director and Security team to figure out how many officers are needed per game. Mrs. Dumezich shared that with the increase in Middle school sports security may not be in attendance, but she will reach out to the police department to see if they could help. Mrs. Dumezich stated that we do not have security in the parking lots after a Middle school games. Mrs. Dumezich stated if you have an emergency in the parking lot after a Middle School game call 911. Mrs. Dumezich stated that she tries hard with scheduling activities and sports so that students who are in multiple extracurricular activities can attend everything such as the turnout.

**2.4 Panther Spotlight:** Mrs. Dumezich wanted to acknowledge and express sincere gratitude to Chief Mance as he retires. Chief Mance worked with the Griffith Police Department for 26 years and served as Chief since 2013. Mrs. Dumezich stated since her time as a Board member, school employee and superintendent the schools have always had a collaborative relationship with the Griffith Police Department. Mrs. Dumezich stated that Chief Mance had done an excellent job in this community, and she is proud of the work he has done for the schools. Working together Chief Mance brought in the social worker that works for the police department and the Griffith Public schools. Mrs. Dumezich stated that the district has a gift for him and that it will be sent to his house. Mrs. Dumezich wanted to welcome the new chief, Chief Tharp. We are excited to work with chief Tharp and will support him as he starts his role as the new chief. Mrs. Dumezich recognized pastor Bill Jones. Pastor Bill Jones stated that his congregation is moving back to Griffith. Pastor Bill Jones presented a check and school supplies to Wadsworth Elementary. Mrs. Dumezich stated no donation is too small and thanked Pastor Bill Jones for his donation and that it is appreciated. Mrs. Dumezich acknowledged that it is National School Board member appreciation day. Mrs. Dumezich stated that the Board works hard and more hours than what is presented by the Board. Mrs. Dumezich stated that she appreciates working for such a supportive Board who come to the table and do the best for the kids in Griffith.

**2.5 Finance:** Mrs. Chance presented the finance report for the month of December.

**2.6 Board Reports:** none

**Consent Agenda:** Mrs. Adams requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Conner made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Mr. Adduci seconded the motion. The consent agenda contains the following items: Minutes, Agreements/Contracts, and Claims for Payroll 12/20/2025-1/3/2025.

Accounts Payable 12/13/2025-1/9/2025, Professional Leaves, Fundraisers, Donations, Overnight request, and the following Personnel report:

PERSONNEL REPORT					
January 9, 2025					
Name	Administrator	Replacing	Effective Date(s)	Pay Rate	Hourly, Daily, Seasonal, Yearly Contract
	<i>Certified</i>				
Shana Chelich	MS/HS Spanish Teacher	Castulo Perez	1/13/25	\$55,500.00	Contract
	<i>Non- Certified</i>				
	<i>Extra-Curricular/Athletics</i>				
Julie Wencloff	International Club Sponsor	Castulo Perez Resigned And Was Splitting Stipend, Juile Wencloff Will Receive Full Stipend.	12/20/24	\$946.82 For Remaining Of The 2024-2025 School Year.	Contract
	<i>Clubs</i>				
	<i>Separations</i>				

Castulo Perez	HS/MS Spanish Teacher	Resignation	12/20/24	\$75,500.00	Contract
Castulo Perez	International Club Sponsor	Resignation	12/20/24	\$198.18	Contract
	<i>Other</i>				
* Backgrounds Pending Approval					

**4.1 Second Reading And Approval Of Policies:** Mrs. Adams requested a motion to approve the second reading of policies. Mr. Jaques made a motion to approve the second reading of policies. Mrs. Ruesken seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

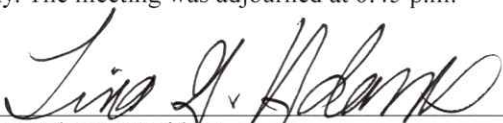
**4.2 Approval Of Resolution # 2025-01 Transfer From Rainy Day Fund To The Textbook Reimbursement Fund:** Mrs. Dumezich presented and asked the Board for approval of resolution #2025-01 transfer from rainy day fund to the textbook reimbursement fund. Mr. Jaques made a motion for the approval of resolution #2025-01 transfer from rainy day fund to the textbook reimbursement fund. Mrs. Ruesken seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Audience Participation:** One audience participant stated that pastor Bill Jones and his congregation are the ones that donated items to the Panther closet. One of the members of the congregation wanted to know if we need any other items for the Panther closet. Ms. Chance stated she will check the inventory and let them know what is needed. Another audience participant wanted to know what the best way is to contact the state representatives. Mrs. Dumezich stated she will get contact information for state senators and post them online. Mr. Jaques shared how they could find state representative information online.


**Good Of The Corporation:** Mrs. Dumezich wanted to remind everyone to sign up for the Polar Plunge for polar moon on January 24, 2025 for the Special Olympics. Mrs. Dumezich stated she would like to see Athletics involved and is hoping to get more students involved. Mrs. Dumezich wanted to remind everyone of the Frozen production. Everything is on par, and she is excited for the students who worked so hard. On the 19<sup>th</sup> the Frozen cast will have a meet and greet in the cafeteria. The Frozen production will be held on January 30, January 31, and February 2, 2025. Mrs. Dumezich thank Gina Smith again and Don McCarter. Mr. Jaques stated on National police day we are grateful for our SRO's and how they communicate with our students. Mrs. Jaques stated he walked around in the buildings and the students recognize that he is not the SRO. Mrs. Dumezich stated we are fortunate and grateful to our officers. We have officers that are in and out of our building that are not our SROs connecting and getting to know our students.

**Upcoming Board Meeting:** The next Regular School Board meeting will be on March 13, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the LGI room at the High School.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Adduci motioned to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Jaques seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

  
Tina Adams, President

  
Kathy Ruesken, First Vice President

  
Emily Conner, Second Vice President

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Jesse Adduci, Secretary

  
Jason Jaques, Assistant Secretary

# MEMO

DATE: January 9, 2025

**Swearing In Of Board Members:** Griffith Treasurer Mrs. Smith swore in Mrs. Conner and Mr. Jaques as re-elected Griffith Public Schools Board Of Trustees. The Swearing in of the re-elected Board members took place before the January 9, 2025 Board meeting started.