

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**  
2 **OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
3 **HELD APRIL 28, 2025**  
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 28<sup>th</sup> day  
7 of April 2025.

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

10  
11 **Trustees Present:** Gordon Johnson – Chairperson  
12 Kim Skornogoski – Vice-Chairperson  
13 Bill Bronson  
14 Mark Finnicum  
15 Marlee Sunchild  
16 Paige Turoski  
17

18 **Trustee Absent:** Amie Thompson - Excused  
19

20 **Others Present:** Heather Hoyer, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business  
21 Operations; Jackie Mainwaring and Lance Boyd, Executive Directors of Student  
22 Achievement; Jeff Williams, Director of Information Technology; and Stephanie Becker,  
23 Director of the Great Falls Public Schools Foundation.  
24

25 Also present were Tom Cabbage, Great Falls Education Association President and Lisa  
26 Sapp, Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) liaison.  
27

28 At 5:30 pm, Chairperson Johnson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of  
29 Trustees and informed the participants and audience that the meeting was being  
30 recorded per Board Policy 1420. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.  
31

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33 **ADOPT AGENDA**

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35 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to adopt the  
36 agenda as presented.  
37

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39 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

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41 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Mark Finnicum, passed unanimously to  
42 approve the Consent Agenda as presented.  
43

44 **A. Minutes of the April 14, 2025 Regular Board Meeting** – The Board approved the  
45 minutes of the April 14, 2025, Regular Board Meeting as presented.  
46

47 **B. Personnel Actions** – The Board approved the Personnel Actions as presented.  
48

1 **C. Good Apple Awards** - The Board approved the nominations of Good Apple Awards  
2 for Tandee Doran, Second Grade Teacher, Scott Mayer, Fifth Grade Teacher, and  
3 Theresa Busch, Counselor, all from Sacajawea Elementary School.  
4

5 **D. Montana School Bus Driver Certificates – OPI TR-35** – The Board approved the  
6 Montana School Bus Driver Certificates – OPI TR-35s for the individuals listed in the  
7 agenda.  
8

9 **E. Student Activity Accounts for March 2025** – The Board approved the Student  
10 Activity Accounts Monthly Report for March 2025.  
11

12 **F. Request for Records Disposal – Human Resources** – The Board approved the  
13 request for the disposal of the Human Resources records listed in the agenda that are in  
14 compliance with the approved State, Local Government Records Committee Retention  
15 Schedule.  
16

## 17 **COMMUNICATION**

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19  
20 **A. Character Strong – Chief Joseph Elementary School** – Andrea Thares, Principal  
21 and Miranda Mahorney, Counselor, Chief Joseph Elementary School, along with six (6)  
22 student leadership representatives reported on what creativity, the *Character Strong*  
23 word of the month, means to Chief Joseph Elementary School. Student leaders  
24 presented plastic eggs to members of the Board, each containing a note written by a  
25 student describing ways to demonstrate creativity.  
26

27 **B. Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) Communication** – Malmstrom Air Force Base  
28 (MAFB) liaison, Lisa Sapp, reported on recent activities related to military-connected  
29 students, including the April 10th Purple Up Day celebrations recognizing Riverview  
30 Elementary School and three individuals for their support of military students and  
31 families. The *Build Montana* and High School House programs participated in tours at  
32 Malmstrom Air Force Base, including a visit to a new construction site and discussion of  
33 Department of Defense trades pathway opportunities. Upcoming events were  
34 highlighted, including the May 20th Law Enforcement Job Fair and additional  
35 Malmstrom Partners in Recognition events.  
36

### 37 **C. Superintendent Report** –

38 Superintendent Hoyer recognized Michelle Peterson, a co-recipient of the 2025 SHAPE  
39 America Western District Honor Award, for her nineteen (19) years of leadership in the  
40 Great Falls Public Schools (GFPS) district and twelve (12) years of service to the  
41 SHAPE organization. Trustee Skornogoski commended Ms. Peterson for her passion  
42 for education and genuine care for students and stated her positive impact extends  
43 beyond the classroom and is evident throughout the school community.  
44 The district celebrated Administrative Assistants in April with an appreciation breakfast  
45 and photos submitted of the collaboration between Administrators and their assistants.  
46 Superintendent Hoyer shared a successful ReSTART program lesson titled “The Slime-  
47 Life Analogy” and Legislative updates that included the passage of multiple education-  
48 related bills.

1 District data focused on the Stewardship and Accountability section of the Strategic  
2 Plan and showed positive trends, including an increase of Innovative Tax Credit donor  
3 participation despite reduced donations, and third-quarter significant increases in social  
4 media engagement. School-level highlights included strong parental involvement and a  
5 variety of student and family engagement activities across all grade levels. Budget town  
6 hall meetings were completed, and calendar survey participation trends were noted.

7  
8 **D. Audience Communication – None**  
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11 **ACTION ITEMS**  
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13 **A. Financial Report and Check Register for March 2025** - Director of Business  
14 Operations, Brian Patrick, presented the financial report and check register for March  
15 2025. He noted a \$130,000.00 reduction to the investment account for Medicaid. The  
16 funds were moved to the cash account in March in order to have a positive cash  
17 balance for this fund.

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19 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve the  
20 March 2025 Financial Report and Accounts Payable checks #138352 - #138792 in the  
21 amount of \$1,818,947.62 and Payroll checks #83458 - #83683 in the amount of  
22 \$535,287.12 as presented.

23  
24 **B. Second Reading of Revised Board Policies 2105 – *Grade Organization*; 2130 –**  
25 ***Program Evaluation and Diagnostic Tests*; 2132 – *Research Studies*; 2163 –**  
26 ***Traffic Education*; and 2166 – *Gifted Program*** – Superintendent Hoyer stated no  
27 additional comments or recommendations for changes were received since the first  
28 reading of the above policies at the April 14, 2025 regular Board meeting.

29  
30 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve  
31 revised Board policies **2105 – *Grade Organization*; 2130 – *Program Evaluation and***  
32 ***Diagnostic Tests*; 2132 – *Research Studies*; 2163 – *Traffic Education*; and 2166 –**  
33 ***Gifted Program*** as presented.

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36 **ACTION: OTHER**  
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38 There were no items extracted from the Consent Agenda to discuss.  
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41 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**  
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43 **A. First Reading of New Mathematics KUDs and Technology/Computer Science**  
44 **KUDs, (KUDs: Know-Understand-Do)** – Elementary Curriculum Coordinator Rachel  
45 Cutler reported on the first readings on three curriculum initiatives: updated K-12  
46 Technology Integration and Computer Science Standards, revised K-12 Math  
47 Standards, and the proposed adoption of a new K-6 math resource. The updated  
48 technology standards incorporate computer science as a distinct category, with a

1 greater emphasis on programming, data analysis, and ethical technology use. The  
2 revised math standards reflect clearer language, enhanced focus on mathematical  
3 practices and problem-solving, and improved alignment across grade levels.  
4 Additionally, the Amplify Desmos Math program was recommended as the new K-6  
5 math resource, selected for its engaging content, digital platform, and alignment with  
6 instructional goals, with an estimated five-year cost of approximately \$950,000. Ms.  
7 Cutler stated the KUDs will be posted online and copies will be available in the  
8 curriculum office for teachers and community members to view for the next two weeks -  
9 until the Board will be asked to take action to adopt the new KUDs at the May 12, 2025  
10 regular Board meeting.

11  
12 **B. First Reading of New Elementary Mathematics Curriculum Resource-Amplify**  
13 **Desmos Math (ADM)** – Elementary Curriculum Coordinator Rachel Cutler stated this  
14 agenda report item was incorporated into the presentation of report item A.

15  
16 **C. First Reading of the Technology Strategic Plan** – Director of Information  
17 Technology Jeff Williams provided the Board with an update on the revised Great Falls  
18 Public Schools Technology Strategic Plan, which is updated every three years to align  
19 with the District’s educational and operational goals. Developed through a collaborative  
20 process involving staff, administrators, Information Technology (IT) personnel, and  
21 community input, the new three-year plan outlines strategies for integrating technology  
22 into instruction and operations, enhancing infrastructure and access, and supporting  
23 staff through training. Due to ongoing uncertainties in federal and state funding, the plan  
24 will be reviewed and adjusted as needed to ensure financial feasibility, with funding  
25 sources anticipated from a variety of district funds, grants, and donations.

26  
27 **D. First Reading of Revised Board Policies 2333 – *Participation in***  
28 ***Commencement Exercises; 2413 – Credit Transfer/Assessment for Placement***  
29 ***from Non-Accredited and/or Nonpublic Schools; 2420 – Grading and Progress***  
30 ***Reports; and 2520 – Animals/Pets in School*** – Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the  
31 recommended language revisions from the Montana School Boards Association  
32 (MTSBA) and the Board Policy Committee to each of the Board policies listed. She  
33 asked if anyone had questions or concerns regarding any of the policy revisions to  
34 contact her prior to the next regular Board meeting.

35  
36 **E. Superintendent Evaluation Process** – Chairperson Johnson asked Sherri Clark to  
37 review the remainder of the evaluation process. Sherri stated only one public comment  
38 was received. The results of that comment, along with the evaluation survey link, were  
39 sent to Board members. Board member evaluations are due by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Trustee  
40 Thompson, the evaluation committee chairperson, will compile all responses into a  
41 single document and disseminate the results to Board members. The Board will have  
42 the opportunity to discuss the results of their evaluations with Superintendent Hoyer at  
43 the May 12, 2025 Board Meeting.

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46 **F. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments –**

1 Trustee Sunchild appreciated the Character Strong presentation from Chief Joseph  
2 Elementary School and praised Rachel and her team for the KUDs program, noting the  
3 difficulty in finding math programs that genuinely engage students.  
4 Trustee Finnicum commented on the funds needed to incorporate new KUD standards,  
5 expressing relief that such changes are not needed often. He also thanked Jeff for his  
6 work on the Technology Strategic Plan and reflected on Michelle’s positive impact on  
7 many students.  
8 Trustee Turoski expressed gratitude for the KUDs program and shared that Valley View  
9 Elementary School’s Stacy Griffin will be stepping down as the Administrative Assistant.  
10 She also mentioned the excitement among students about the new book vending  
11 machine at Valley View Elementary School.  
12 Trustee Bronson reported that the Insurance Committee reviewed a presentation from  
13 school trust representatives but would like to see hard data before making a  
14 recommendation to the Board. He added that the current legislative session has been  
15 more favorable than previous years, potentially benefiting budget development.  
16 Trustee Skornogoski thanked Rachel and the curriculum team and encouraged  
17 community members to get involved in the educational process by reviewing and  
18 commenting on the curriculum standards. She also commented on the field trip she took  
19 with 7th and 8th graders, where they visited the Capitol and had the opportunity to  
20 observe the vote on the Student and Teacher Advancement for Results and Success  
21 (STARS) Act.  
22 Chairperson Johnson thanked Great Falls Rising for organizing the school board  
23 candidate forum and expressed appreciation to the Great Falls Education Association  
24 for their involvement in the election process.  
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27 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

28  
29 Chairperson Johnson reminded the community of Scholarship Night on April 30<sup>th</sup> and  
30 that May will be a busy month filled with celebrations, awards programs, and graduation  
31 ceremonies.  
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33  
34 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

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36 With no further comments or items to be discussed, Chairperson Johnson adjourned the  
37 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 6:45 p.m.  
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42 \_\_\_\_\_  
43 Gordon Johnson, Chairperson

44 \_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Patrick, Clerk