

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
ORONO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON APRIL 29, 2025
ORONO DISTRICT OFFICE - ASSEMBLY ROOM | 685 N OLD CRYSTAL BAY RD, LONG LAKE MN

Present: Sarah Borchers, Laura Wallander, Wendy Lundsgaard, Tim Usset, Gavin Tempero, Kristine Flesher

Absent: Todd Madson

Due to the Orono School District's inclement weather plan, The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278, originally scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2025, was held on Tuesday, April 29, 2025, and called to order by Board Chair, Sarah Borchers, at 7:01 PM.

2. - Pledge of Allegiance

3. - Consideration of the Agenda

4. - Consent Agenda

UPON MOTION by Laura Wallander, seconded by Wendy Lundsgaard, the Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Meeting held on April 14, 2025
- Approved the appointment of Madison Cleverly, full-time Long-Term Substitute Kindergarten Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary, effective April 21, 2025 through June 6, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of Nicole Daley, full-time Business Teacher at Orono High School, effective August 25, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of Norman Smith, full-time School Counselor at Orono High School, effective August 25, 2025.
- Approved the change of assignment of Colleen Westlund, 0.75 FTE Special Education Teacher at Orono Middle School to 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher at Orono Middle School effective August 25, 2025.
- Approved the leave of absence for Jill Jensen, full-time Kindergarten Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective April 17, 2025 through June 6, 2025.
- Approved the resignation of Mallory Purdy, full-time Special Education Teacher at Orono High School, effective June 6, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of Shawn Pirich, Seasonal Buildings & Grounds Employee at Orono Public Schools, effective April 28, 2025 through October 31, 2025.
- Approved the leave of absence for Jacklyn DeRoma, full-time Coordinator of Child Nutrition at Orono Public Schools, tentatively effective October 23, 2025 through January 15, 2026.
- Accept Donations Totaling \$8,173.71
- Approve Treasurer's Report for March 2025
- Approve Electronic Fund Transfers for March 2025

- Approve Bill Vouchers:321474-321562, EP Register: 902840-902853, EFT Vouchers:297-298, and Capital One: 53204-53219

Voting record: 5 aye votes for, 0 aye votes against. The motion passed.

5. – Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Dr. Flesher highlighted news of events around the district:

MSHSL Art Show | Orono students participated in the Minnesota State High School League art show at Chaska High School. This year Orono students received nine Superior awards–the highest honor–and five Excellent awards. Thank you to Dr. Shelagh Gamble for coordinating entries for our student artists. The following students earned Superior Awards:

- o Andrew Carlson for "Lit Towers" and "Space Away from Home"
- o Aya Hanson "Forgotten Treasure"
- o Amelia Hawley "The Journey"
- o Abbey Henry "Art Everlasting"
- o Lauren Masica "Female reflection"
- o Daria Mayo "The Final Draw"
- o Lydia Richardson "A Lifetime of Heart Energy"
- o Estella Ryskamp "Honey Pot"

The following students were honored with Excellent Awards:

- o Hailey Hansen, "Plate"
- o Leyla Lyu, "Daria Loves Music"
- o Annalisa Tedlund, "Ducky"
- o Maya Vanyo, "The Crack that Grew a Garden"
- o Charlett Winkler, "Underwater Vase"

State History Day | Thirty-one Orono seventh-grade students qualified to present their research projects at the Minnesota State History Day competition. Orono earned one 5th-place award and seven Honorable Mentions. Thank you to the OMS Humanities Team of Brian Kafura, Jared Shogren, Katie Stanley, and Kirsten Huppler who guide our students through this valuable research project over many weeks.

- o Aiden Sukow and Andrew Johnston placed 5th for their documentary, "Japanese Internment Camps"
- o Earning Honorable Mention:
 - Jonah Abell and Devan Kandanchatha - "Legacy of the Code" about the Navajo Code Talkers
 - Hayden Tyler, Lila Barnholdt and Svea Swenson - documentary, "Title IX"
 - Eva Loberg and Izzy Schoen - documentary, "Love Canal: Shattering the Illusion"
 - Asher Truax, Cole Brinkmeyer and Nicholas Lindquest - website, "The 54th Massachusetts Regiment." They also won the Civil War in History Topical Prize.
 - Kelsie Bostrom and Sofia Manzano Magnuson - exhibit titled, "Radium Girls"
 - Brekkyn Oslund and Elle Kindl - exhibit, "Women's Suffrage"

- and Elise Nelson and Mila Jeska - exhibit, "The Work of Margaret Sanger"

Minnesota AA State Speech Tournament | Eight Orono students competed at the Minnesota State Speech Tournament. Thank you to Barb Shofner for all her work and encouragement for our students this year! Congratulations to:

- Hannah Stegemann
- Sophie Middleton, who earned 6th place in Extemporaneous Reading
- Owen Marks
- Sydney Sloneker
- Jane Stavitzski
- Maya Haugen, earning 2nd place in Storytelling
- Meg Arneson, and
- Oliver Berg, who finished in 4th place in Creative Expression

Athletics Update:

- Track & Field - Congrats to Taylor Walsh, Delaney Stephens, Abby Daugherty and Ryanne Andreen on setting a new girls track and field school record in the 4x800 at the Hamline Elite Meet.
- Boys Tennis - ranked #7 in state.
- Softball - currently 6-3 overall on the season and are the top ranked team in their section.
- Baseball - is off to a 4-1 start and is ranked #10 in the state.
- Girls Lacrosse - has a 3-2 record on the season and is ranked #7 in the state. Congrats to Layla Nick who is currently the 3rd leading goal scorer in the state with 25.
- Boys Lacrosse - is off to a 3-1 start on the season and currently the top-ranked team in their section.
- Girls Golf - has taken 1st place as a team in each of the first three conference meets of the season. Congrats to Ava Hanneman who has earned medalist honors (top individual finish) in all 3 events.
- Boys Golf - has several top 3 finishes to open the season. Dylan Kringen, Nolan Jensen, and Cale Pfingsten have all been top individual finishers for the boys.

Jared Shogren | received the "Leo Weiss Courage to Teach Award." Several district staff members and administrators attended the recognition ceremony last week and were very moved to hear from Holocaust survivors and their families.

Staff completes Read Act Training | As of April 18, all Orono teachers and administrators completed their required 50 hours of Read Act training! Thank you to our resilient and dedicated staff for meeting state requirements and preparing to introduce a new reading curriculum to our students.

Wellness Expo Thursday, May 1, 5-7 PM | This free event will bring together more than 50 wellness organizations for hands-on service activities, resources, and the Empty Bowls fundraiser for IOCP & WeCAN. Community members of all ages are welcome to attend.

Foundation Bash | Thank you to the Orono Foundation for Education Board of Directors, Laura Kloss, and the countless volunteers who made this year's Foundation "Red & Blue Bash" a success. We are grateful to the Foundation for collaborating so closely with district administration and staff to ensure every donation fulfills a need for students' academic growth and staff professional development.

Performing Arts Events | check the website for the dates and times of our upcoming band and choir concerts and the middle school spring musical, "Frozen Jr."

6. – Board Members Questions and Comments

Facilities & Finance Committee Meeting Update: Director, Gavin Tempero reported that the Facilities & Finance Committee met on April 23 and discussed the budget assumptions that will be presented later in the meeting.

Policy Committee Meeting Update: Tim reported that the Policy Committee met on April 22 to review the remaining 400 series policies that will be presented for a first reading in new business.

Wendy Lundsgaard shared the highlights from her participation in the following committees and meetings:

Meet & Confer - Academic Calendar - legislature considering a waiver of starting the school year; met with Rep. Meyers - updates on legislative items, Q-Comp, LTFM updates; MSBA Friday Chat - inclusion of aligned Read Act curriculum.

Laura Wallander shared the highlights from her participation in the following committees and meetings:

Meet & Confer - conference studies, bussing update, TST procedures; Curriculum meeting - book materials presented.

Gavin Tempero attended the Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sarah Borchers shared the highlights from her participation in the following committees and meetings:

Special Education Parent Partnership - Coalition presentation; 'You Can't Take it With You' HS performance. Special thanks Ms. Balon, participants, and volunteers.

Tim Usset: shared the highlights from her participation in the following committees and meetings: Orono Coalition meeting - thankfulness and 988 Crisis Line campaign; Orono Community Ed - Discovery Center update; American Legion Coffee - a legion member shared that one of their grandchildren had been in the I Believe in You video.

7. – Old Business

7. A – Policy Review (ACTION)

Dr. Flesher presented three policies for approval. There were no significant changes since the policies were presented for their first reading on Monday, April 14, 2025.

1. Policy 414: Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse (previously Policy 411)
2. Policy 416: Drug and Alcohol Testing
3. Policy 417: Chemical Use and Abuse

UPON MOTION by Tim Usset, seconded by Laura Wallader, the board approved the revisions presented for Policy 414, Policy 416, and Policy 417.

Voting record: 5 aye votes in favor, 0 aye votes against.

7.B. Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

8. - New Business

8.A. - Termination and Non-Renewal of Probationary Teaching Contracts

Continuing contract law in the state of Minnesota requires that Boards of Education take explicit action to non-renew probationary teaching contracts, or the contract will continue automatically into the next school year. All of the individuals who are being proposed for non-renewal will have been notified prior to the evening of April 28, 2025.

Member Laura Wallander introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption.

RESOLUTION NON-RENEWING PROBATIONARY TEACHING CONTRACTS

WHEREAS, the following are probationary teachers in Independent School District No. 278:

Kari Heitke

Angela Turner

Michelle Tormanen

Ellie Davenport

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes section 122A.40, subdivision 5, states that the first three consecutive years of a teacher's first teaching experience in Minnesota in a single district is deemed to be a probationary period of employment and that the probationary period in each district in which the teacher is thereafter employed is one year; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes section 122A.40, subdivision 5, further states that any annual contract with a probationary teacher may or may not be renewed as the school board shall see fit, provided that the board gives the teacher written notice of the nonrenewal before July 1;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 278, as follows: Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 122A.40, subdivision 5, the School Board hereby declines to renew the annual teaching contract of the following probationary teacher(s) effective at the end of this school year: Kari Heitke, Angela Turner, Michelle

Tormanen, and Ellie Davenport.

As a result of this Resolution, the District's employment relationship with the above-named probationary teachers will terminate effective June 30, 2025.

3. The School Board has reviewed and hereby approves the written notice of nonrenewal for each affected probationary teachers. Each teacher may make a written request that the Board of Education state its reasons for the non-renewal of her/his teaching contract. Such a request must be made, however, within ten (10) days after receiving notice of School Board action.

The School Board Clerk is directed to sign the written notices on behalf of the School Board. The reasons for non-renewal are classified as private personnel data under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, unless the non-renewal represents the final disposition of disciplinary action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Human Resources Executive Director, or a designee, is directed to serve the affected teachers with a copy of this resolution and the approved written notice for that teacher before July 1.

NOTICE OF NON-RENEWAL

Dear [INSERT NAME],

At a meeting held on April 28, 2025, the School Board of Independent School District No. 278 adopted a resolution non-renewing your annual teaching contract and terminating your employment effective at the end of this school year. The School Board took this action pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 122A.40, subdivision 5. A copy of the School Board's resolution is enclosed for your review.

You may make a written request that the Board of Education state its reasons for the non-renewal of your teaching contract. Such a request must be made, however, within ten (10) days after receiving this notice.

Appropriate supervision was furnished to you during your probationary employment in the form of direct supervision by a licensed administrator and/or your participation in the teacher evaluation process. This supervision provided the District with a sufficient opportunity to evaluate your performance.

The School Board wishes you well in future endeavors.

Sincerely,
SCHOOL BOARD CLERK
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #278

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Wendy Lundsgaard and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Timothy Usset, Laura Wallander, Sarah Borchers, Wendy Lundsgaard, and Gavin Tempero.

There were no votes against the same.

Board Member Todd Madson was absent for the vote.

Hereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

8. B – Policy Review (First Reading)

Dr. Flesher introduced Dr. Aaron Ruhland, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning who presented twelve policies reviewed by the Policy Committee and their recommended updates. These policies will be presented for their second reading at the May 12 School Board meeting.

- Policy 102: Equal Education Opportunity
- Policy 418: Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School
- Policy 419: Tobacco-Free Environment; Possession and Use of Tobacco, Tobacco-Related Devices, and Electronic Delivery Devices; Vaping Awareness and Prevention Instruction
- Policy 420: Students and Employees with Sexually Transmitted Infections and Diseases and Certain Other Communicable Diseases and Infectious Conditions
- Policy 421: Gifts to Employees and School Board Members
- Policy 422: Expense Reimbursement
- Policy 423: Employee-Student Relationships
- Policy 424: License Status
- Policy 425: Donations to Athletic Teams, Coaches or Other Staff
- Policy 426: Workload Limits for Certain Special Education
- Policy 427: Employee Publications, Instructional Materials, Inventions, and Creations
- Policy 428: Conflict of Interest

8. C - Q-Comp/ATPPS Report Approval (ACTION)

Dr. Aaron Ruhland, Executive Director of Learning & Accountability and Jessica Hovland, Kelly Leibfried, and Teresa Widen shared with the Board the Q-Comp/ATPPS report and requested approval from the Board. Highlighting the process of selecting a new rubric model for evaluation this year, the process of review across staff groups, staff voting, and what is next in the process.

UPON MOTION by Timothy Usset, seconded by Laura Wallander, the board approved the Q-Comp/ATPPS plan for 2025-2026.

Record of the vote: 5 aye votes for, 0 aye votes against. The motion passed.

Dr. Ruhland, Dr. Flesher and Chair Borchers shared their gratitude for Teresa Widen's work in the Orono School District over the past 25 years. Ms. Widen was offered, and has accepted, the role of Director of Teaching and Learning in the PACT Charter School.

8. D - 2025-2026 Budget Assumptions

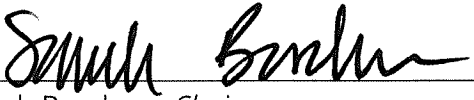
Dr. Flesher introduced Nick Taintor, Director of Business Services, who made remarks regarding the underlying assumptions being used in the development of the Proposed 2025-26 District Budget. Mr. Taintor outlined the process and future steps the board will take to review and approve the budget. The full budget will be presented in June for review and final approval.

8E. - Other New Business as Necessary

No other new business was brought forward.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2025 at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

UPON MOTION by Timothy Usset, seconded by Laura Wallander, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 PM.



Sarah Borchers, *Chair*



Laura Wallander, *Clerk*

A recording of the board meeting is available online at oronoschools.org/about/school-board.