

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**
2 **OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
3 **HELD MAY 12, 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 4th Street South, on the 12th day
7 of May 2025.
8

9 **ROLL CALL:** Brian Patrick took roll call.
10

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

18 **Trustee Absent:** Mark Finnicum - Excused
19

20 **Others Present:** Heather Hoyer, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business
21 Operations; Jackie Mainwaring and Lance Boyd, Executive Directors for Student
22 Achievement; Jeff Williams, Director of Information Technology; Luke Diekhans,
23 Director of Human Resources; and Stephanie Becker, Director of the Great Falls Public
24 Schools Foundation.
25

26 Also present was Tom Cubbage, Great Falls Education Association (GFEA) President.
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. He led the Pledge of Allegiance.
31

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33 **ADOPT AGENDA**
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35 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Paige Tursoki, passed unanimously to adopt
36 the agenda as presented.
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39 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**
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41 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Amie Thompson, passed unanimously to
42 approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
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44 **A. Minutes of the April 28, 2025, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board approved the
45 minutes of the April 28, 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 for Good Apple
2 Awards for: Wendy Morris, Holly Wulf, Charlotte Renfro, Kortnee Maiers, and Brianna
3 Little, Teacher Aides, Meadow Lark Elementary School; Paula Reed, Pam Fenner, and
4 Diane Pettit, Food Services Employees; Stacy Griffin, Administrative Assistant; and
5 Tayler Davison, Resource 1 Teacher, all from Valley View Elementary School.

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

10
11 **E. C.M. Russell High School Student Activity Account Closures** – The Board
12 approved the closures of the C.M Russell High School Student Activity accounts
13 *Graduation Matters, Color Guard, Moxie, Pop Fund, and Triple-R-Club* as they are no
14 longer being used and the balances have been cleared.

15
16 **F. Award Bids for Instructional and Office Paper Supply Order** – The Board
17 approved the following bids for the instructional and office paper supplies for the 2025-
18 2026 school year: Warden Paper - \$31,095.29, Pyramid Products - \$7,563.51,
19 Cascade School Supplies - \$1,023.10, and School Specialty - \$651.00.

20
21 **G. Montana High School Association (MHSA) Annual Dues, Liability Catastrophe**
22 **Insurance, and Concussion Insurance for 2025-2026** - The Board approved the
23 MHSA annual dues of \$250.00 per activity, per school for a total of \$5,750 per school,
24 the Liability Catastrophe Insurance Plan coverage cost of \$1,339 per school and the
25 Concussion Insurance premium of \$226.00 per school. In addition, if Boys Baseball is
26 able to meet their fundraising goal by July 31, 2025, MHSA will allow our District to add
27 that sport with the increased fees associated with adding the additional sport.

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30 **COMMUNICATION**

31
32 **A. Report of the Student Representatives**

33 Paris Gibson Education Center (PGEC) student representatives Conner Reisinger and
34 Mercury Baez shared updates on recent activities and achievements. The science
35 curriculum wrapped up rock and mineral objectives with a creative lesson on weathering
36 and erosion, culminating in student-made art pieces for Mother’s Day. The arrival of
37 bees marked the start of summer honey production, with a fall harvest anticipated. With
38 the State Music Festival taking place at PGEC, students engaged in a walking field trip
39 exploring local businesses, murals, and an art session at Brush Crazy. American Indian
40 Studies incorporated lessons on Native American rattles, where students demonstrated
41 impressive lace stitching skills. The GFPS Art Exhibition at Paris Gibson Square
42 Museum showcased student talent. At the Jobs for Montana Graduates (JMG) Spring
43 Conference in Helena, students excelled, with several students placing first and second
44 in various competitions. Students also attended workshops on Native American history
45 and toured NBC broadcasting and Fire and Rescue services. Upcoming events include
46 the Senior Luncheon, Eagle Feather Ceremony, and Graduation celebrations.

1 C.M. Russell (CMR) High School student representatives Lilli Skaer, Emerson Hamma,
2 and Lydia Comstock reported students participated in a wide range of enriching
3 academic and extracurricular activities. Highlights include interdisciplinary learning,
4 such as fly fishing and fly-tying lessons in English classes and the integration of 3D
5 printing into auto mechanics projects. Advance Placement (AP) Calculus students
6 concluded their review with creative practice resources, while Honors Chemistry
7 students conducted spectrophotometry labs. Physics students launched bottle rockets,
8 and science classes prepared for chick-rearing projects. Students celebrated Special
9 Olympics athletes with signs, cheers, and in-person support. The CMR Theatre
10 students wrapped up performances of *12 Angry Jurors*, and various clubs, including
11 BPA and Speech & Debate, engaged in state and national competitions. Music and art
12 students participated in concerts and field trips, and senior Melena Gangi was selected
13 for the prestigious Al Neuharth Free Spirit and Journalism Conference. Athletics
14 celebrated senior nights and playoff qualifications, with standout performances in track,
15 tennis, and softball. Scholarship Night honored student achievements and community
16 support. Upcoming events include the AP Student Art Show and Leap Up Day for
17 incoming freshmen. The first-ever Rustler Olympics pep assembly brought the school
18 community together in spirited competition.

19
20 Great Falls High School (GFHS) student representatives Brooklyn Griffin, Seth Royer,
21 and Kaitlynn Fulbright reported that GFHS celebrated numerous achievements and
22 events this month. The wrestling team was awarded the Montana High School
23 Association (MHSA) Sportsmanship Trophy, a prestigious honor recognizing excellence
24 in conduct. The Advanced Placement (AP) Studio Art & Design students are
25 showcasing their work in the Dahl Gallery, with a reception to be held May 15.
26 Academic highlights included engaging labs in biology and woodshop, and a
27 memorable lamprey dissection. The drama department staged a successful production
28 of *Saint Joan*, and the symphonic band and chamber orchestra toured Spokane,
29 attending *Hamilton* and participating in university clinics. Spring sports are concluding
30 with strong performances, and multiple student-athletes signed to compete at the
31 collegiate level. Celebrations included Cinco de Mayo festivities in Spanish class, the
32 Outstanding Junior Awards breakfast, and a spirited spring pep assembly announcing
33 next year's student council officers. Additional events included a well-attended JROTC
34 awards ceremony, the 100th National Honor Society class graduation, a student-staff
35 basketball game, and recognition of our dedicated educators during Teacher
36 Appreciation Week.

37

38 **B. Annual Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) Update**

39 Great Falls Public Schools (GFPS) Career Pathway Advisor, Mark Yaeger, introduced
40 advisors and student leaders from Business Professionals of America (BPA), Health
41 Occupation Students of America (HOSA), and SkillsUSA. The students highlighted
42 achievements, honors, awards, and new incoming officers for their respective student
43 organizations. Other CTSO groups, including Distributive Education Clubs of America
44 (DECA), Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), and the Junior
45 Reserve Officers Training Corp (JROTC) were unable to attend the Board meeting due
46 to prior commitments.

47

48 **C. Superintendent's Report**

1 Superintendent Hoyer congratulated Randi Rains of North Middle School, who was
2 recognized by the Montana Council of Administrators of Special Education as the 2025
3 Special Education Teacher of the Year. She also recognized Great Falls Public Schools
4 Community Relations Director Becky Nelson, who accepted an invitation from the
5 Governor of Montana to serve on the Board for the Montana Commission on
6 Community Service. Superintendent Hoyer reported on the district's response to the
7 increasing number of students opting for homeschool – 206 in the past year and 416
8 over the past two years. In response, GFPS is developing a support model aimed at
9 accommodating up to one hundred (100) homeschool students starting in the 2025–
10 2026 school year. The program will initially launch in secondary schools and use
11 *Edgenuity* to align with district content standards, with daily teacher office hours and
12 options for hybrid schedules to access electives. Expansion to elementary schools will
13 be considered in the future. This initiative responds to family needs tied to travel, health,
14 military, and personal preference. In other news, this month celebrates Principals, Food
15 Service, Teachers, and Nurses, as well as the 47th High School House interior design
16 showcase. Academic updates included data-driven instructional planning across all
17 levels: elementary math task force initiatives, middle school Multi-Tiered Systems of
18 Support (MTSS) implementation, and high school departmental data analysis. The
19 district continues to support instruction through targeted professional development, task
20 forces, and instructional coaches. The Advanced Placement (AP) testing window was
21 also highlighted, involving three hundred twenty (320) students, fourteen (14) proctors,
22 twenty-five (25) exams, and six (6) testing sites.

23

24 **D. Audience Communication**

25 Community member Lindsey Fenton discussed school safety concerns and the need to
26 obtain more education on how safety concerns and additional support can be provided
27 to the District.

28

29 Community member Debra Chilbroski questioned the policies and procedures regarding
30 renewing or non-renewing contracts when there is a shortage of teachers in the District.

31

32 Community member Judy Mortensen proposed a new motto for the District: Education
33 Provides the Wings That Give Flight to Dreams. She discussed the following three
34 subjects for consideration: 1.) No public school for children before the age of four years
35 old; 2.) Chromebooks do not have the software needed for use and education as
36 needed in today's educational environment; and 3.) the suggestion that the current drug
37 problem be prioritized by insisting the laws that were enacted along with the legalization
38 of marijuana at the state and county level be enforced.

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40

41 **ACTION ITEMS**

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43 **A. Warehouse Cooler Renovation – Lowest Qualified Bidder** – Director of Business
44 Operations Brian Patrick stated three qualified proposals were received for the
45 Warehouse Cooler Renovation Project. Detailed Construction presented the lowest bid
46 of \$570,085.00.

47

48 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve

1 Detailed Construction, with a bid of \$570,085.00, as the lowest qualified bidder on the
2 Warehouse Cooler Renovation project.

3
4 **B. The Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers** – Director of Human Resources Luke
5 Diekhans provided an addendum to the Board of Trustees with the names of three non-
6 tenured teachers recommended for contract non-renewal.

7
8 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve
9 the non-renewal of the three non-tenured teachers listed on the addendum.

10
11 **C. Second Reading of New High School and Middle School Theatre and High
12 School Health Science District Standards (KUDs: Know-Understand-Do)**

13 Secondary Curriculum Director Beckie Frisbee stated the KUDs have been posted
14 online and copies have been available in the curriculum office for review since the first
15 reading of the new high school and middle school Theatre and high school Health
16 Science KUDs were presented at the April 14, 2025 Board meeting. No public
17 comment was received.

18
19 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve
20 the new high school and middle school Theatre and high school Health Science KUDs
21 as presented.

22
23 **D. Second Reading of New Elementary Mathematics Curriculum Resource
24 Amplify Desmos Math (ADM)** – Elementary Curriculum Director Rachel Cutler stated
25 resources have been placed online and copies have been available at the District
26 Offices Building since the first reading of the new elementary math curriculum at the
27 April 28, 2025 Board meeting. No public comment was received and the only
28 adjustment made since the first reading was the reduction in purchase price from
29 \$949,050.00 to \$910,650.00.

30
31 Trustee Turoski thanked the Curriculum Department for their thorough review of the
32 new curriculum and stated she is looking forward to the new curriculum being
33 implemented.

34
35 Community member Judy Mortensen asked if the curriculum has been accepted by
36 secondary Math teachers. Beckie and Rachel reiterated that middle school instructors
37 are pleased with the curriculum but stated the curriculum only goes through Algebra, so
38 it is not available to high school students at this time.

39
40 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Kim Skornogoski, passed unanimously to approve
41 the new elementary mathematics curriculum resource Amplify Desmos Math.

42
43 **E. Second Reading of New Mathematics KUDs and Technology/Computer Science
44 KUDs (KUD: Know-Understand-Do)** – Secondary Curriculum Director Beckie Frisbee

45 stated no comments were received since the first reading of the new Mathematics and
46 Technology/Computer KUDs were presented at the April 28, 2025 regular Board
47 meeting. KUDs have been posted online and copies have been available in the
48 curriculum office since the first reading.

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2 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve
3 the KUDs for K-12 Mathematics and K-12 Technology and Computer Science as
4 presented.

5
6 **F. Second Reading of the 2025-2028 Information Technology Strategic Plan**

7 Director of Information Technology Jeff Williams stated he has received no comments
8 since the first reading of the Strategic Plan at the April 28, 2025 regular Board meeting.
9 Given the current uncertainty of federal and state funding, the plan will be reviewed and
10 adjusted as more information becomes available.

11
12 Trustee Bronson noted that if the committee is reviewing and developing a
13 recommendation regarding a potential technology-related levy, it's important to note that
14 similar levies in other districts have previously been rejected by voters. Currently, many
15 districts are opting to pursue general fund levies instead of technology-specific levies.

16
17 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve the
18 adoption of the 2025-2028 Information Technology Strategic Plan as a guide to
19 implementing and enhancing technology within the Great Falls Public Schools District.

20
21 **G. Second Reading of Revised Board Policies 2333 – *Participation in***
22 ***Commencement Exercises; 2413 – Credit Transfer / Assessment for Placement***
23 ***from Non-Accredited and/or Nonpublic Schools; 2420 – Grading and Progress***
24 ***Reports; and 2520 – Animals/Pets in School*** – Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the

25 minor language changes suggested by the Montana School Boards Association
26 (MTSBA) and the Policy Committee of the policies listed above. She stated she has not
27 received any public comment about the changes since the first reading of the policies at
28 the April 28, 2025 Board meeting.

29
30 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to approve
31 revised Board policies **2333 – *Participation in Commencement Exercises; 2413 – Credit***
32 ***Transfer / Assessment for Placement from Non-Accredited and/or Nonpublic Schools;***
33 **2420 – *Grading and Progress Reports;*** and **2520 – *Animals/Pets in School*** as
34 presented.

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37 **ACTION: OTHER**

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

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41 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**

42
43 **A. Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) Compliance Public Notice** – Director of
44 Information Technology Jeff Williams reported that Great Falls Public Schools (GFPS)
45 continues to meet compliance requirements under the Children’s Internet Protection Act
46 (CIPA), which is necessary to receive E-Rate program discounts. GFPS provides web
47 content filtering for student Chromebooks through LightSpeed Relay, which blocks
48 inappropriate websites and allows site-specific restrictions by staff. An additional layer

1 of filtering is provided for staff through the district’s Sophos firewall. Internet safety and
2 acceptable use are governed by School Board Policies 3612, 3612P, and 3612F for
3 students, and 5450 - 5450F for staff. These policies outline acceptable use and
4 responsibilities for all users. The annual subscription cost for internet filtering is covered
5 in the Information Technology Department’s General Fund budget.
6

7 **B. First Reading of the 2025-2026 Board Meeting Calendar** – Director of Business
8 Operations Brian Patrick presented a calendar of proposed Board meeting dates, times,
9 and places, in compliance with Board Policy 1400, for the 2025-2026 school year.
10 Suggestions for changes to the calendar may be made until the second reading and
11 adoption of the calendar at the May 27, 2025 regular Board meeting.
12

13 **C. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments** – Chairperson Johnson
14 presented an open forum for trustee discussion. Trustee Skornogoski thanked the
15 many community members present at the Board Meeting for being engaged in our
16 public school system. She thanked the three community members who spoke during
17 the public comment section and assured them that the Board would review their
18 concerns and suggestions and provide feedback. Trustee Skornogoski stated she was
19 a new trustee on the School Board when the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp
20 (JROTC) was implemented and seeing the growth of the program has been a valuable
21 investment. She acknowledged and thanked Mark Yaeger for the growth in the Career
22 and Technical Education (CTE) programs during his seven-year tenure and
23 congratulated Becky Nelson for her appointment by the Governor to the *Montana*
24 *Commission on Community Service* Board. She congratulated fellow trustees for their
25 re-election to the School Board and welcomed newly elected trustee Craig Duff.
26

27 **D. Superintendent Evaluation** – In accordance with Montana Code Annotated (MCA)
28 2-3-203(3), Chairperson Johnson stated this portion of the evaluation process may be
29 conducted in closed session. Superintendent Hoyer exercised her right to be evaluated
30 in closed session and Chairperson Johnson recessed the Board meeting at 7:20 p.m. to
31 continue the evaluation in closed session.
32

33 Chairperson Johnson reconvened the regular Board meeting at 8:05 p.m. Trustee
34 Thompson provided details of Superintendent Hoyer’s evaluation stating scores of fours
35 and fives were documented from the single community evaluation received and from all
36 seven Board members. Trustee Thompson spoke on behalf of the Board and was
37 pleased with the progress and career readiness pathways championed by
38 Superintendent Hoyer. The Board reflected overall confidence in Superintendent
39 Hoyer’s ability to lead the District. A summary of the evaluation will be prepared and
40 shared with the community on the school district website.
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42 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

43

44 Chairperson Johnson reminded the community of the many upcoming celebratory
45 events still remaining in the month of May.
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47 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

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With no further comments or items to be discussed, Chairperson Johnson adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 8:07 p.m.

Gordon Johnson, Chairperson

Brian Patrick, Clerk