



Great People...Great Falls Public Schools

August 2025,

Great Falls...

Since we last connected, Great Falls Public Schools has been hard at work—because learning, growing, and thriving never stop. This summer was a season of preparation and progress, and the fall brings forward an opportunity to **Build What Matters**—with and for our students, families, and community. Now, the squeak of shoes in the hallways, the joyful laughter on playgrounds, and the energy of student voices fill our classrooms, fields, and performance spaces. I am deeply grateful for the work accomplished this summer and incredibly excited for all that lies ahead. Together, we will continue to build a school district that reflects the pride, resilience, and strength of our Great Falls community. Welcome to the Back-to-School edition of GFPS Highlights with Superintendent Hoyer.

Hometown Pride – Celebrating the unique spirit and traditions of Great Falls.

- Fall is here, and that means Friday nights under the lights, crisp evenings on the course, and cheering from the stands! No matter the colors you wear or the team you back, our Great Falls Public Schools student athletes are ready to bring the energy and defend their school pride. The fall sports season is kicking off—check out the first competitions below and visit <https://gfps.k12.mt.us/departments/athletics-sports-schedules> for full schedules.

CMR	GFHS
Golf – 8/25 & 8/26 Great Falls Invite	Golf – 8/25 & 8/26 Great Falls Invite
Football – 8/29 vs Capital	Football – 8/29 @ Flathead
Soccer – 8/29 vs Skyview	Soccer – 8/28 vs Senior
Volleyball – 8/30 @ Glacier/Flathead	Volleyball – 8/30 @ Glacier/Flathead
XC – 8/29 Time Trials in Cut Bank	XC – 8/29 Time Trials in Cut Bank

High Hopes – Setting ambitious goals for our District’s future.

- We're excited to highlight our District’s annual financial publication. This comprehensive report offers an in-depth look at our finances, providing valuable insights into how our resources are managed to support the success of every student. In addition to a detailed financial overview, the publication also paints a broader picture of the District’s programs, accomplishments, and goals, ensuring transparency and fostering a strong connection with our community. You can find the 2025-2026 GFPS Budget Book link here <https://gfps.k12.mt.us/departments/business-services-and-operations/business-office-and-finance/district-budget-information>

Healthy Minds and Bodies – Summer support for our students and families

- Through our Summer Food Program and partnerships with the USDA, Benefis, and No Child Hungry Montana, we supported over 15,000 meals for hungry students in our community.

Helping Others Learn – Working together to support our community, state, and nation.

- This summer, our Indigenous Education Department continued to shine in their work of educating and inspiring all. They hosted a vibrant Culture Camp for students, creating opportunities to learn, grow, and celebrate traditions. In addition, Director Dugan Coburn and Instructional Coaches Jordann Lankford and Tawny Cale traveled to Juneau, Alaska, where they shared their deep knowledge and unwavering commitment to Indigenous Education at the *2025 Sealaska Heritage Culturally Responsive Education Conference*. We thank them for their passion and dedication to students and families across Great Falls Public Schools, Montana, and our nation.

Heroic Teachers – Applauding the dedication and hard work of our incredible educators.

- Great Falls Public Schools is welcoming 62 new licensed staff (teachers and specialists) to the Great Falls Public Schools Family. Educators from across our great nation, including Florida, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Illinois, Georgia, Washington, Colorado, New Mexico, Northern California, Hawaii, Alaska, and sister cities in Montana are choosing to call Great Falls home. Please help us welcome the new secondary teachers, elementary teachers, and specialists.



Harmonious Communities – Fostering strong connections between our schools and the community.

- The start of a new school year can bring its share of stress as parents, students, and teachers settle back into routines. Thanks to the generosity of our community, however, 68 new teachers were welcomed with open arms and thoughtful gifts—everything from pizza cutters to stress balls, coffee mugs to coupons and event tickets (and so much more). We are grateful to the many donors who made this possible, including the Great Falls Public Library, Bath & Body Works, Great Falls College, DA Davidson, Sletten Companies, Mother Puppies, Benefis Health System, Newberry/Big Dipper/Voyagers, Great Falls Clinic, TOURO University, Alluvion, Grand Canyon University, 1st Liberty Credit Union, Bravera Bank, and Jerri Rollins. Your kindness helps our new teachers feel truly at home in our amazing community.

Hands-On Learning – Embracing innovative and interactive educational experiences.

- Great Falls Public Schools recognizes that not every student masters their learning during August – June. This summer, we proudly supported student growth and success through a variety of learning opportunities. At the elementary level, 130 rising kindergarten through 3rd grade students, representing 79% of those who qualified—participated in our Elementary Jumpstart program, building skills and confidence in literacy and numeracy to prepare them for the year ahead. At the secondary level, 163 high school students earned 271 half credits through summer credit recovery, strengthening their path to on-time graduation. These efforts highlight our commitment to ensuring every student is equipped with the tools they need to thrive.

Historic Achievements – Building on the proud legacy of Great Falls Public Schools.

- On August 17th – 19th, teachers and teacher assistants from the CORE School at Morningside took part in an immersive two-day professional development seminar at the University of Montana Western. Working alongside college professors, leadership, and support personnel, they gained valuable insight into the operations of Great Falls’ first charter school while also learning from one another. The experience included attending the first day of in-person college courses, navigating campus resources, tackling teamwork challenges on the ropes course, and camping together at the historic Birch Creek Center—an inspiring start to their journey of innovation and collaboration.

Heartfelt Commitment – Finding our Upper Arrow

- During the 2025-2026 school year, Great Falls Public Schools is embracing the theme of *Build What Matters* for our students, families, employees, and community. We are committed to finding our “upper arrow” each day—those small but meaningful actions that elevate the experience of our students, families, and community partners. Whether it’s a kind word, an extra effort to solve a problem, or a focus on excellence in the classroom and beyond, our employees consistently go above and beyond. By combining these daily acts of service with our unwavering standards of educational excellence, we strengthen trust, build satisfaction, and affirm our dedication to serving this community with pride and purpose. Watch future Highlights for stories of our “upper arrows” this year.

Warm regards,

Heather Hoyer
Superintendent, Great Falls Public Schools