

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ORONO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON OCTOBER 13, 2025

Present: Kristine Flesher, Laura Wallander, Todd Madson, Wendy Lundsgaard, Timothy Usset, and Gavin Tempero. Mr. Madson served as Board Chair in Ms. Borchers' absence.

Absent: Sarah Borchers

Community Members Questions and Comments

No members of the community addressed the board.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, October 13, 2025 and called to order by acting Board Chair Todd Madson, at 7:02 PM

4. Consideration of the Agenda

5. Consent Agenda

MOTION by Lundsgaard, seconded by Wallander. VOTES 5 aye votes in favor, 0 (zero) aye votes against. The Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held on September 22, 2025
- Approved the resignation of Julie Nelson, full-time Student Support Specialist at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective October 15, 2025.
- Approved the leave of absence for Jennifer Runck, full-time Band Teacher at Orono High School, tentatively effective January 15, 2026, through April 6, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Frederick Isbell, part-time Cook at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective September 30, 2025.
- Approved the resignation of Brandon Scott, full-time Custodian at Orono Intermediate School and Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective October 3, 2025.
- Approved the resignation of Mary Fitzpatrick, part-time Classroom Paraeducator at Orono Intermediate School, effective October 1, 2025.
- Approved the resignation of Anne Thillman, full-time District Office Receptionist at Orono Public Schools, effective October 7, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of Justine Petit, part-time Member Services Associate at Orono Activities Center, effective September 29, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of Audrey Hyrkas, part-time Member Services Associate at Orono Activities Center, effective October 9, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of John Siracusa, Speech Team Assistant Coach at Orono High School, effective September 29, 2025.
- Approved a wage adjustment for substitute teachers for 2025-2026.
- Accepted donations totaling \$6,091.11
- Approved the Assurance of Compliance with State and Federal Law Prohibiting Discrimination
- Approved Bill Vouchers: 322755-322935, 1978-1987, EP Register: 903095-903103, EFT Vouchers: 308, 6635-6639, and Capital One items: 53400-53437

6. - Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Dr. Flesher opened her report by recognizing **Indigenous Peoples Day**, as proclaimed statewide by Governor Walz, and honoring the cultures, traditions, and resilience of Indigenous communities. She expressed gratitude to the **American Indian Parent Advisory Committee** and the students, families, and staff whose voices and partnerships enrich Orono Schools.

She shared highlights from the **Performing Arts**, noting:

- The middle school's fall production of *Too Many Ghosts*, presented through Orono Community Education and Four Community Theatre.
- The high school's *Pops Concert* directed by Jennifer Runk and Tim Arnold, featuring students who quickly prepared a new program following Homecoming events.

- Upcoming performances, including the **Fall Choir Concert** on October 27 at Wayzata Community Church and the **Fall Musical - *Tuck Everlasting*** opening November 14.

Dr. Fleischer recognized several **student achievements**:

- **Owen Marks** and **McKenna Monger** earned the National Speech and Debate Association's *Academic All-American Award*, an honor given to fewer than 2% of student members nationally.
- **Simon Forbes**, a junior, was selected to serve on the **Minnesota Youth Council**, reflecting his leadership and commitment to student voice and civic engagement.

She then highlighted accomplishments across **Athletics**:

- **Cross Country**: Boys' and girls' teams competing in the conference championship meet at Highland Greens.
- **Boys Soccer**: Reached the section final against Delano, held at Zimmerman High School.
- **Girls Swim & Dive**: Won the True Team Section 3A Championship and will defend their state title at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center.
- **Girls Soccer**: Advanced to the section final; *Ava Gower* and *Kate Spaniel* named *All-State Players*.
- **Girls Volleyball**: Concluding the regular season against New Prague and preparing for postseason play next week.
- **Girls Tennis**: Doubles team *Molly Hollerman* and *CeCe Sorensen* qualified for the state tournament after taking first place in their section.
- **Football**: Finishing the regular season and preparing for playoffs next week.
- **Winter Sports**: Registration now open in *MyPaymentsPlus*, with individual sport meetings scheduled in place of a single all-sports night.

Dr. Flescher concluded by noting the upcoming **MEA break**, with no school on Thursday and Friday, and expressed appreciation to **Orono Community Education** for offering engaging on-campus programs for students during the long weekend.

7. - Board Members' Questions and Comments

Facilities and Finance Committee Meeting Update: Mr. Tempero reported that district **enrollment numbers are strong** and meeting projections. **Insurance costs are decreasing**, thanks to proactive research and cost-containment efforts, including new collaborative strategies to reduce expenses.

Policy Committee Meeting Update: The committee reviewed **Policies 501-507**, covering student rights and responsibilities such as lockers, attendance, discipline, bullying prevention, and the prohibition of corporal punishment and prone restraint. These updates ensure alignment with Minnesota law and MSBA guidance.

Wendy Lundsgaard - Attended the **AMSD board meeting**, which featured a presentation from the Minnesota State Demographer highlighting trends in population, aging, and declining birth rates affecting schools statewide.

Todd Madson - In addition to the Policy Committee Meeting Update, Mr. Madson shared that the **PTO has welcomed several new board members** and praised the group's professionalism, organization, and dedication to supporting classrooms and school events through extensive volunteer coordination.

Gavin Tempero - Nothing to report.

Timothy Usset - Attended local and regional events, including the **Farm Bureau dinner and Independence Planning Commission**, where he engaged with elected officials about the upcoming **Coffee Conversation** with legislators.

Laura Wallander - Attended the **Discovery Center Parent Advisory Council** meeting, which introduced event-based recruitment to encourage family participation. The center is also hosting a **Spooky Saturday** community event on October 25 and planning an **outdoor classroom cleanup** to support connectedness.

8. - Old Business

8. A - Policy Review

The following revised policies were presented to the board for a second reading and approval.

- Policy 506: Student Discipline
- Policy 722: Public Data and Data Subject Requests
- Policy 806: Crisis Management

MOTION by Wallander, seconded by Usset. VOTES 5 aye votes in favor, 0 (zero) aye votes against. The board approved the proposed changes to Policies 506, 722, and 806.

8. B - Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

9. - New Business

9. A - Comprehensive Safety Framework

Members of the District Safety Team: Scott Alger, Kim Van Eyll, Tiffany Clifton, Corinna Graner, Sean Beaverson, and David Slomkowski presented the newly developed Comprehensive Safety Framework for Orono Schools. Dr. Flesher thanked additional safety team members, Aaron Ruhland, Chad Eischens, and Janet Franzen.

The newly adopted **Comprehensive School Safety Framework** aligns Orono Schools' longstanding safety practices with national best practices. The framework, adapted from the *Safe and Sound Schools* model, emphasizes both prevention and preparedness through seven key areas: mental health and connectedness, physical security, crisis response, staff and student well-being, environmental safety, and leadership and policy alignment.

Presenters highlighted the district's multi-layered approach, including partnerships with the **Minnesota School Safety Center**, law enforcement, and local emergency responders. The team outlined the importance of threat assessment, staff training, communication systems, and ongoing facility improvements such as updated entry security. They also emphasized the balance between maintaining a **welcoming and secure environment** and the shared responsibility of safety among staff, students, and families.

Board members expressed appreciation for the depth of the district's work, its proactive culture of prevention, and its focus on both physical and emotional safety for students and staff.

9. B - Policy Review

Dr. Aaron Ruhland, Executive Director of Learning and Accountability, presented the following revised or reviewed policies for first reading and review by board members. Dr. Ruhland offered brief descriptions of the proposed revisions for each policy.

- Policy 501: Weapons
- Policy 502: Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person

- Policy 503: Student Attendance
- Policy 504: Student Dress and Appearance
- Policy 505: Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees
- Policy 507: Corporal Punishment and Prone Restraint

9. C - Other New Business as Necessary

10. A - Informational Item - October Enrollment

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, October 27, 2025, at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

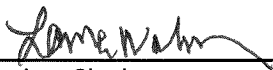
MOTION by Lundsgaard, seconded by Usset. VOTES 5 aye votes in favor, 0 (zero) aye votes against. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 PM.

The recording of the Orono Board of Education meeting is available online via the Orono School Board channel on YouTube.

Portions of this document were prepared with assistance from AI-based summarization software and reviewed by district staff for accuracy.



Sarah Borchers, *Chair*



Laura Wallander, *Clerk*