

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**
2 **OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
3 **HELD OCTOBER 27, 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 27th day
7 of October 2025.

8
9 At 5:30 pm, Chairperson Johnson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of
10 Trustees.

11
12 Chairperson Johnson reported that, per Board Policy 1420, all Board meetings are
13 recorded and posted on the District website for one (1) year.
14

15
16 **ROLL CALL:** Luke Diekhans took roll call.
17

18 **Trustees Present:** Gordon Johnson - Chairperson
19 Kim Skornogoski – Vice-Chairperson
20 Bill Bronson
21 Craig Duff
22 Marlee Sunchild
23 Amie Thompson
24 Paige Turoski
25

26 **Others Present:** Heather Hoyer, Superintendent; Luke Diekhans, Director of Business
27 Operations; Lance Boyd and Jackie Mainwaring, Executive Directors of Student
28 Achievement; Heather Spurzem, Interim Director of Human Resources; Jeff Williams,
29 Director of Information Technology; and Stephanie Becker, Director of Great Falls
30 Public Schools Foundation. Also present was Tom Cubbage, Great Falls Education
31 Association President.
32

33 Chairperson Johnson asked everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.
34
35

36 **ADOPT AGENDA**
37

38 Motion – Kim Skornogoski, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to adopt
39 the agenda as presented.
40

41
42 **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**
43

44 Motion – Bill Bronson, Seconded – Paige Turoski, passed unanimously to approve the
45 Consent Agenda with a minor grammatical correction to the Minutes of the October 13,
46 2025, Regular Board Meeting, provided by Trustee Bronson.
47

1 **A. Minutes of the October 13, 2025, Regular Board Meeting** – The Board approved
2 the minutes of the October 13, 2025, Regular Board Meeting with one minor
3 grammatical correction as noted by Trustee Bronson and Superintendent Hoyer.

4
5 **B. Personnel Actions** – The Board approved the Personnel Actions as presented.

6
7 **C. Good Apple Awards** – The Board approved the nominations for Good Apple
8 Awards: Renae Burleigh, District Wide Elementary Music Teacher; Christina Fries,
9 Maria Markegard, Brianna Daul, and Jamie Pierce, Core Teacher Aides at Riverview
10 Elementary School; and Chris Rinehart, Attendance Secretary at North Middle School.

11
12 Trustee Turoski recognized good apple recipient Renae Burleigh for her work
13 throughout the district.

14
15 **D. Incoming Student Attendance Agreement for the 2025-2026 School Year** – The
16 Board approved the incoming student attendance agreement for the 2025-2026 school
17 year for the student listed in the agenda. Tuition will be paid for by the District of
18 Residence.

19
20 **E. Establish New “Welding Club” Student Activity Account at Great Falls High**
21 **School** – The Board approved Great Falls High School’s request to open the “Welding
22 Club” Student Activity account.

23
24 **F. Charles M. Russell High School Weight Room Donation** - The Board approved
25 the donation of a Matrix Krankcycle from Michael Jensen with thanks.

26
27 **G. Charles M. Russell High School Key Club Youth Conference Attendance**
28 **Request** – The Board approved the attendance of C.M. Russell High School Key Club
29 students at the Montana Key Club Youth Conference being held in Great Falls, MT on
30 November 9-11, 2025.

31
32 **H. Charles M. Russell Student Activity Account Closures** - The Board approved the
33 closure of the following two (2) C.M. Russell High School Student Activity accounts as all
34 funds have been cleared, and the balances are zero: “Class of 2025” and “Rustler Gear”.

35
36
37 **COMMUNICATION**

38
39 **A. Character Strong – Giant Springs Elementary School** - Karla Miller, Giant Springs
40 Elementary School Principal, along with four (4) student representatives reported on
41 what responsibility, the *Character Strong* word of the month, means to Giant Springs
42 Elementary School and how they implement *Character Strong* within their school.

43
44 **B. Superintendent Report** – Superintendent Hoyer stated that Torgersons donated
45 642 pumpkins to first grade students. She reported that the ReStart Program created
46 Haunted Houses out of gingerbread houses.
47 She explained what the impact of the Federal Shutdown has been regarding grants and
48 requesting federal funds at the District level.

1 Superintendent Hoyer stated that a large lodge was transferred to Dugan Coburn last
2 week and it will be left to Great Falls Public Schools for educational purposes. She also
3 stated that the Great Falls Police Department has “valid suspects” on the thefts of the
4 tipis at Chief Joseph and Loy Elementary Schools.

5 Starbase representative Kara Tangedal reported on their goal and explained that
6 STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. She stated that
7 there are eighty-one (81) locations with two (2) of those locations in Montana. She
8 reviewed the STARBASE program and stated that 90% of graduating seniors feel that
9 their time in STARBASE was valuable.

10 Erin Bucher and Lee Houle reviewed data on the McKinney-Vento program. They spoke
11 on identification guidelines, unaccompanied youth, transportation, food needs, and
12 outreach. They presented four (4) years’ worth of trends of: numbers of identified
13 students, services provided, and graduation rates.

14
15 **C. Audience Communication – None**
16

17
18 **ACTION ITEMS**
19

20 **A. 2026-2027 Budget Development Process** – Director of Business Operations Luke
21 Diekhans stated that District funding largely depends on student enrollment. When
22 enrollment is declining, current law allows for a three-year average for enrollment as
23 well as the ability to ask voters for additional funding up to the State Maximum Budget
24 (100%) to maintain the previous year’s budget. Luke said that after only one enrollment
25 count it is difficult to have an accurate revenue forecast for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.
26 He presented a Board Budget Committee recommended timeline for the 2026-2027
27 budget meetings with the main Board Budget Committee meetings scheduled for March
28 of 2026.

29
30 Motion – Paige Turoski, Seconded – Bill Bronson, passed unanimously to adopt the
31 2026-2027 Budget Development Process as presented.
32

33
34 **ACTION: OTHER**
35

36 There were no items extracted from the Consent Agenda to discuss.
37

38
39 **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**
40

41 **A. Review of Buildings & Grounds 2025 Summer Projects** – Facilities Director Brent
42 Cutler reviewed work responsibilities for the Custodians, Plumbers, Painters,
43 Carpenters, and Electricians. He also reported that the summer project work plan is
44 driven by building walkthroughs. Brent stated that most Great Falls Public School
45 buildings have been converted to LED lighting, windows have been/are being upgraded,
46 and water conservation is being implemented throughout the District to help with energy
47 conservation. In January of 2020 the Department of Health and Human Services, in
48 partnership with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, passed a ruling

1 stating that all accredited Montana schools must test for lead in the drinking water every
2 three (3) years and our next testing will be in 2027. Brent stated that lawn care was a
3 priority this summer as well as restriping parking lots. He stated that a total of 2,519
4 work orders have been completed, and back logged work orders are down.

5
6 Facilities Assistant Jack Norris reported on the summer projects completed including,
7 but not limited to, plumbing projects at various elementary schools as well as Great
8 Falls High School; electrical projects at multiple elementary schools, East Middle
9 School, and Great Falls High School; kitchen remodel at Lincoln Elementary School;
10 Library remodel at Sunnyside Elementary School; painting projects at various
11 elementary schools and C.M. Russell High School. Jacked reported that Playground
12 equipment was replaced at West Elementary School and playground slides were
13 replaced at Mountain View Elementary School. East Middle School football field's
14 irrigation system was rebuilt.

15
16 **B. Technology 2025 Summer Work Report** – Director of Information Technology, Jeff
17 Williams, provided a presentation of major accomplishments and projects completed
18 during the summer that were directly related to the long-term technology plan. Projects
19 included, but were not limited to, removal and replacement of network closets in seven
20 (7) schools; cleaning and repair of chromebooks; implementation of TimeClock Plus;
21 installation of new Firewall; and implementation of ParentSquare.

22
23 **C. First Reading of Lynx Grafix KUDs** - Secondary Curriculum Director, Beckie
24 Frisbee, reported that Industrial Technology teachers and Business teachers have met
25 to update the district standards (Know-Understand-Do; KUD). Lynx Grafix, which fits
26 under both classifications, is a course only offered at Paris Gibson Education Center
27 (PGEC). She stated that the KUDs are posted on the District website and a hard copy is
28 available in the Curriculum Office for review prior to the request for Board approval that
29 will take place at the next regular Board meeting.

30
31 **D. First Reading of Family and Consumer Science Resources** – Secondary
32 Curriculum Director, Beckie Frisbee, reported that Family and Consumer Science
33 Department updated their KUDs, Implementation Guides, and Common Content
34 Assessment (CCA) last spring. Once those elements were complete, the department
35 began looking at new resources to support their work in the classroom. They have
36 reviewed textbooks for Culinary, Interior Design, and Fashion Design. Beckie stated that
37 the four (4) books are available for review in her office prior to the request for Board
38 approval that will take place at the next regular Board meeting.

39
40 **E. First Reading of Revised Board Policies 2150 – Suicide Awareness and**
41 **Prevention; 2334 – Release Time for Religious Instruction; 2450 – Recognition for**
42 **Native American Cultural Heritage; 2600 – Work Experience/Internship Program;**
43 **and 5124 – Recruitment and Retention** – Superintendent Hoyer reviewed the
44 recommended language revisions from the Montana School Boards Association
45 (MTSBA) and the Board Policy Committee to each of the revised Board policies listed.
46 Language proposed brings policies into alignment with legislative directives and/or
47 cleans up confusing language. She asked if anyone had questions or concerns

1 regarding any of the new policies or revisions to contact her prior to the next regular
2 Board meeting.

3
4 **F. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments –**

5 Trustee Turoski reported that she was able to chaperone a fourth-grade field trip to the
6 college to view the lodges. She stated that every child was fully engaged the whole
7 time.

8 Trustee Thompson reported that this was her favorite *Data of the Day* presentation. She
9 also reported on the Superintendent evaluation process. She and Chairperson Johnson
10 met with Mrs. Hoyer regarding her goals. Trustee Thompson stated that the evaluation
11 process will now include a post self-assessment as the final step in the process.

12 Trustee Duff reported that he enjoyed the presentations tonight. He stated that he is
13 always impressed the building Custodians and the cleanliness of the buildings
14 regardless of events taking place within the building. He thanked Superintendent
15 Hoyer with the update on how the Federal shutdown is affecting the District.

16 Trustee Sunchild thanked Stephanie Becker and her team for their work with the annual
17 truck raffle. She thanked Lee Houle and his team for the work they do with the District's
18 homeless students. She also encouraged everyone to get involved with local food
19 banks and pantries during the holiday season.

20 Trustees Skornogoski, Bronson and Johnson stated that they attended the Montana
21 Conference of Education Leadership (MCEL). Trustee Skornogoski stated that former
22 Director of Business Operations, Brian Patrick, was recognized as Business Director of
23 the Year. She spoke on the pressures of education, educational testing, and how
24 education will evolve. She also reported on the government shutdown and the impact
25 on civilian jobs at Malmstrom Air Force Base and SNAP Benefits.

26 Trustee Bronson recognized Superintendent Hoyer for her excellent presentation the
27 day before MCEL. He stated that Lance Melton with the Montana School Board
28 Association (MTSBA) has been encouraging participation in the new health insurance
29 trust, however, there is still work that needs to be done with trust and Trustee Bronson
30 encourages patience. Trustee Bronson also reported on the Sunnyside Library remodel
31 and thanked the Cameron and Gray families for their continued support.

32 Chairperson Johnson thanked the District for continued support for the Board attending
33 MCEL. He stated that there are great learning opportunities about education through the
34 legislative view as well as educative view.

35
36
37 **UPCOMING EVENTS**

38
39 Chairperson Johnson said the next Regular Board Meetings are scheduled for Monday,
40 November 10, 2025, and Monday, November 24, 2025.

41
42
43 **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

44
45 Chairperson Johnson adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:15
46 p.m.

1
2
3
4

Luke Diekhans, Clerk

Gordon Johnson, Chairperson