

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ORONO  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278  
HELD NOVEMBER 10 2025

Present: Sarah Borchers, Todd Madson, Wendy Lundsgaard, Gavin Tempero, Timothy Usset, and Kristine Flesher

Absent: Laura Wallander

1. Community Members' Questions and Comments

No members of the community addressed the board.

2. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, November 10, 2025, and called to order by Board Chair, Sarah Borchers at 7:00 PM.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Consideration of the Agenda

5. Consent Agenda (ACTION)

MOTION by Madson, second by Usset. VOTES 5 aye votes in favor, 0 (zero) aye votes against, the Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Meeting held October 27, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of Owen Dailey, as full-time Band Teacher (LTS) at Orono High School, tentatively effective January 15, 2026 through April 6, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of James Buck, as part-time Activities Center Lead Monitor at Orono Activities Center, effective November 3, 2025.
- Approved the appointment of Lauren Sells, as full-time Human Resources Coordinator at Orono Public Schools, effective November 10, 2025.
- Accepted Donations Totaling: \$11,765.93
- Approved Bill Vouchers: 323082-323188, 1988-1997, EP Register: 903122-903131, EFT Vouchers: 6641-6647, and Capital One items: 53454-53472

6. – Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Dr. Flesher reported that before the board meeting, the district held its annual recognition ceremony honoring high-achieving students and dedicated staff. A total of 50 students were recognized, including Advanced Placement Scholars of Distinction, National Merit Scholars, and AP Capstone Diploma recipients and candidates. Additionally, 18 educators were honored for achieving faculty tenure.

She celebrated their accomplishments and thanked students, staff, and families for their commitment and participation, noting the strong turnout and culture of excellence.

## Upcoming Events

- The community was invited to the Veterans Day Program, taking place the following morning at Orono High School, with guest speaker Todd Madson, Board Vice Chair and Army veteran.
- Orono High School's performance of "Tuck Everlasting" will open on Friday, November 14, with multiple performances across two weekends.

## Community Service Highlight - "We Scare Hunger"

More than 3,100 pounds of food were collected — more than double last year's total. Dr. Flesher recognized Owen Patrick (Orono Intermediate School) for leading personal collection efforts, including obtaining donations from his grandmother's condo and purchasing 200+ food items.

## Athletics Update

Girls Swim & Dive - Section 3A Champions for the third consecutive year. Dr. Flesher celebrated the team's repeated success and listed state competitors:

- Audrey Crawford
- Celia Howard
- Sophie Berg
- Sofie Dyvik
- Graycin Andreen
- Lola Schottler
- Ainsley Francis
- Ileana Berg

These student-athletes qualified across multiple events, including 200 Medley Relay, 200 Free, 200 IM, 100 Fly, 100 Free, 500 Free, 200 Free Relay, 100 Back, and 400 Free Relay.

## Football - State Semifinals

The Orono Spartan Football team defeated Fergus Falls (36-14) and advanced to the Class 4A State Semifinals at U.S. Bank Stadium, where they will face Marshall.

## Cross Country - State Meet Results

- Boys Cross Country earned 3rd place, with All-State performances by:  
Gabe Hallen (2nd place overall)  
Cooper Munch (13th overall)
- Girls Cross Country placed 5th at state.

## Winter Sports Launch

- Girls Hockey kicked off the winter season with a decisive 8-1 victory against Cloquet-Esko-Carlton.

## 7. – Board Members' Questions and Comments

Sarah Borchers – Ms. Borchers reported no updates.

Todd Madson - Mr. Madson provided a Facilities & Finance committee update, noting that the district received a clean, unmodified audit opinion with no findings and expressed appreciation for the Finance and Business Services team. He noted that the district remains in a strong financial position, with future reduction in debt service allowing capacity for large capital projects such as roofing. Mr. Madson also shared updates from the Orono Foundation for Education (OFE), including:

- Character Counts Week was held October 19-25 and continues to be funded fully by private donations.
- The school year sponsorship program has exceeded OFE's annual fundraising goal, with the upcoming installation of a recognition banner at Old Crystal Bay Road and Wayzata Boulevard.
- The annual OFE fundraising event, now titled Spartan Soirée, will be held Friday, May 1, at Wayzata Country Club, shifting to a more casual and community-connection-focused format.

Wendy Lundsgaard - Ms. Lundsgaard reported attending the AMSD meeting, where legislative priorities, school funding, and advocacy strategies were discussed and shared by legislators and AMSD representatives. She plans to share relevant information with the Orono Action Committee.

Gavin Tempero - Mr. Tempero reported no updates.

Timothy Usset - Mr. Usset reported that the Policy Committee continues to review district policies using MSBA-recommended language and the district's current language to identify necessary alignment. He noted that AI has been a useful tool to assist with policy comparisons and drafting. He further reported that negotiations with teachers are ongoing and collaborative.

## 8. – Old Business

### 8.A – Other Old Business as Necessary

No other old business was brought forward.

## 9. – New Business

9. A – Audit Report – LB Carlson, LP

Director of Business Services Nick Taintor and Auditor Bill Lauer (LB Carlson) presented the 2024-25 audit and related reports, noting a clean, unmodified audit with no findings. MOTION by Tempero, second by Usset. VOTES: 5 aye votes in favor, 0 (zero) aye votes against, the Board accepted the 2024-25 audit and the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report as presented.

9. B – Elementary Literacy Curriculum Implementation Update

District Literacy Coordinator Beth Pearson, Cindy Verville (2nd Grade), and Lindsey Nelson (3rd Grade) provided an update on implementation of the Arts & Letters core curriculum and UFLI Foundations, highlighting professional development, instructional impact, and early positive student outcomes.

9. C – Policy Review (First Reading)

Dr. Aaron Ruhland presented the following policies for a first reading. These policies will be presented for approval at the December 8 meeting.

Policy 509: Enrollment of Nonresident Students

Policy 510: School Activities

9. F – Other New Business as Necessary

No other New Business was brought forward.

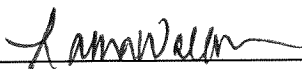
The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, December 8, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

MOTION by Usset, second by Lundsgaard. VOTES 5 votes aye, no votes against, the regular meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

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*