

GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
RETREAT MINUTES
January 16, 2026

The School Board of Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 held a retreat on Friday, January 16, 2026, at the First Presbyterian Church, 5555 South Washington, Grand Forks, ND, with President Dave Berger presiding.

Board Members Present: Josh Anderson, Dave Berger, Amber Flynn, Dr. Sherry Houdek, Jay Kleven, Eric Lunn, and Jeff Manley.

Board Members Absent: Joel Larson and Bill Palmiscno.

Others Present: Dr. Terry Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager; Dr. Catherine Gillach, Associate Superintendent of Secondary Education; Matt Bakke, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education; Dr. Kris Arason, Principal, Red River High School; Jon Strandell, Principal, Grand Forks Central High School; Dave Nowatzki, Principal, Schroeder Middle School; Tad Schye, Principal, Valley Middle School; Eric Ripley, Executive Director of Career and Technical Education; Angie Jonasson, Principal, Lewis & Clark Elementary School; Loren Hoheisel, Principal, Viking Elementary School; Stacey Skarperud, Principal, Ben Franklin Elementary School; Mike Biermeier, District Activities Director; Terry Bohan, Principal, Community High School, Jeff Seabloom, Orchestra Teacher and District Music Coordinator; Leslie Bjelde, Principal, Wilder Elementary School; Dr. Holly Larson, Principal, Century Elementary School; Dr. Elisa Diederich, Executive Director, Grand Forks Special Education; Brandon Vandervort, Assistant Director, Special Education; Jay Hepperle, Associate Principal, Red River High School; Jodi Dodson, Associate Principal, Discovery Elementary School; Darin King, Information Technology Manager; Amy Bartsch, Chief Academic Officer; Kelli Tannahill, Principal, Kelly Elementary School, Travis Neil, Principal, South Middle School; Griffin Gillespie, Director, Human Resources; Ivona Todorovic, ML Coordinator; Brady Olson, President, Grand Forks Education Association; Joe Drumm, Vice President, Grand Forks Education Association, Melissa Buchhop, Government Relations, Grand Forks Education Association; and Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary.

Call to Order.

The retreat was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

Budget Realignment Discussion.

Berger and Dr. Brenner provided open remarks. Berger clarified that this was an opportunity for board members to ask questions and verify information regarding the 52 budget realignment concepts presented to the board on January 12.

Gillespie joined the meeting at 8:05 a.m.

Flynn joined the meeting at 8:06 a.m.

Board members, executive administrators, other administrators, and staff offered clarifications and general explanations regarding current programs and proposed changes. These

included, but were not limited to, instructional coaches and grant-funded positions, music education, physical education requirements, low-enrollment courses, nursing, the Virtual High School, student transportation coordinator, and MSEC administration.

Gillespie left the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Discussion continued about the ML program, interventions, orchestra, and technology.

Bjelde left the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Berger thanked participants for their dedication and acknowledged the challenges of the work. He

highlighted the increasing complexity and personal nature of the discussions and expressed appreciation for the valuable contributions made on behalf of children.

Adjournment.

There being no further business, the retreat adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
(Date)

Dave Berger, President

Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager