

GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 9, 2026

The School Board of Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2026, at the Mark Sanford Education Center, with President Dave Berger presiding.

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

Board Members Absent: None.

Student Board Members Present: Adrianna Tande and McKayla Sagini.

Student Board Members Absent: None.

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; Terry R. Snider, Sr., Vice President, GFAFB School Board; Brady Olson, President, Grand Forks Education Association; and Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary.

Call to Order and Voluntary Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Reading of School Board Meeting Norms.

Manley read aloud the school board’s meeting norms.

Approval of Agenda.

It was moved by Palmiscno and seconded by Manley to approve the agenda as written. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Flynn, Kleven, Anderson, Houdek, Palmiscno, Lunn, Manley, Larson, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

School Board Election Process Timeline.

Baumbach reported five Grand Forks School Board seats—held by Dave Berger, Josh Anderson, Dr. Sherry Houdek, Joel Larson, and Bill Palmiscno—will be up for election this year. Candidates must file required forms with the Business Office by 4:00 p.m. on April 6, 2026; ballot placement will be determined immediately afterward. The election will be held June 9, 2026,

in coordination with Grand Forks County, and forms and information are available on the District website or at the Business Office.

Public Comments.

Listed below are the names of citizens who spoke before the Board, along with the topics they indicated on their comment cards. The topics reflect what was written and may differ from the details of their spoken remarks.

1. Eli Stevenson – proposed budget cuts to the music programs.
2. Tyler York – proposed cuts to the music program.
3. Samantha Stordalen – music cuts.
4. Whitney Berry – budget realignment-music.
5. Eileen Clark – music.
6. Nick Thompson – music education jobs.
7. Logan Hartze – music cuts.
8. Michael Kelly – budget cuts.
9. Vedant Srivastava – budget realignment.
10. Mary Koponen – budget cuts.
11. Jack Berry – budget-music cuts.
12. Joshua Fischer – music.
13. Yvonne Kalka – speech.
14. Andrew Krauseneck – budgets and PILOTs.

Consent Agenda.

It was moved by Manley and seconded by Lunn to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- Appointment of Kasey Fortmann, speech language pathologist, effective August 17, 2026, salary placement at MA/MS, Step 1, \$56,3220;
- Open enrollment applications as presented;
- Resignation effective June 30, 2026, of Dr. Catherine Gillach;
- Resignations effective May 29, 2026, of Alexander Ruff, science teacher; Mary Thaden, art teacher; Kennedy Hanson, ELA teacher; Kathryn Brend-Wright, kindergarten teacher; and Jeffrey Bye, social science teacher; and
- January 5, 12, 16, and 20, 2026, school board meeting minutes as written.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Palmiscno, Manley, Lunn, Larson, Kleven, Houdek, Flynn, Anderson, and Berger.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

Consideration of 2026-2027 Joint Powers Agreement Between GFAPB PSD #140 and GF PSD #1 for Educational Services.

Dr. Brenner reported on the February 2, 2026, meeting of the Agreement between the District Committees of Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 and Grand Forks Air Force Base Public School District No. 140. The draft 2026–2027 Joint Powers Agreement for educational services was reviewed. Proposed revisions were limited to aligning the agreement’s duration with the fiscal year, updating dates, and making minor grammatical edits. The District No. 140 Committee approved the amendments, and the Grand Forks Air Force Base School Board will consider them at its February 17, 2026, meeting. Although a quorum was not present for District No. 1, members present discussed the revisions and reached an informal consensus to forward the draft to the full Board for consideration.

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Larson

to approve the 2026-2027 Joint Powers Agreement between Grand Forks Air Force Base Public School District No. 140 and Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 as revised. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Kleven, Manley, Houdek, Anderson, Flynn, Larson, Lunn, Palmiscno, and Berger.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

Consideration of \$4.4 Million Budget Realignment Recommendation.

The district’s financial outlook, alongside a significant shortfall in the State’s budget, was highlighted. It was also noted that Grand Forks Public Schools was not the only school district in the state dealing with budget shortfalls.

Board members acknowledged the extensive, inclusive process undertaken since August, which involved hundreds of staff and board members and thousands of hours, and most expressed support for the 52 proposed concepts as a result of this process, even if they were not explicitly included in the recommended action.

Questions were raised regarding specific program impacts, particularly the redistribution of workloads in music programs, the structure of CODA activities, and potential implications for elementary orchestra. Discussions also addressed the use of facilities, staffing considerations, virtual high school offerings, and potential partnerships to retain essential services such as nursing and transportation coordination.

The importance of communication, oversight, and advocacy for public education was encouraged.

Annual program evaluations and adjustments based on enrollment, participation, and academic outcomes are standard practice and will continue, with updates provided to the board as reductions are implemented.

District leadership explained that some pieces are still being worked on behind the scenes and

that specific program-level decisions will continue to be refined through the administrative process. It was clarified that any action to take the Virtual High School offline would require separate School Board approval at a future meeting.

Following discussion, it was moved by Palmiscno and seconded by Anderson to approve a \$4.4 million budget reduction in order to responsibly position the District for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried. Aye: Larson, Palmiscno, Kleven, Lunn, Manley, Anderson, and Berger.
Nay: Houdek and Flynn.
Absent: None.

Announcements.

Kleven announced a discussion about PILOTs at the last City Council meeting and urged people to read the staff report regarding feedback from the school board.

Board Requests for Future Consideration.

Flynn requested ongoing updates on the budget realignment, an update from the Grand Forks Foundation for Education, enrollment reports, and building efficiency reports.

School Board Meeting Norms—How Did We Do?

Manley concluded that the board did very well in following its meeting norms.

Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
(Date)

Dave Berger, President

Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager