

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
ORONO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON FEBRUARY 9, 2026
DISTRICT OFFICE ASSEMBLY ROOM – 685 N OLD CRYSTAL BAY RD, LONG LAKE MN

Present: Sarah Borchers, Kristine Flesher, Wendy Lundsgaard, Gavin Tempero, Laura Wallander

Participating Remotely: Timothy Usset attended the meeting remotely while out of state for a military commitment.

Absent: Todd Madson

Before the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education, Superintendent Flesher, Board Chair Borchers, along with members Lundsgaard, Tempero, and Wallander, hosted a casual conversation with 10 members of Orono High School student senate.

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, February 9, 2026, and called to order by Board Chair, Sarah Borchers at 7:04 PM.

4. Consideration of the Agenda

5. Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as follows:

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held on January 26, 2026
- Approved the part-time Second Grade Teacher job share request at Orono Schumann Elementary School for Emily Purnell and Kristina Mochinski, effective for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Approved the appointment of Gregory Fish as a full-time Long-Term Substitute Mathematics Teacher at Orono High School from February 6, 2026, through May 15, 2026.
- Approved the resignation due to retirement of John Avaloz, Fourth Grade Teacher at Orono Intermediate School, effective June 8, 2026.
- Approved the resignation due to retirement of Julie Doyle, Special Education Paraprofessional at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective February 28, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Nicholas Ruhland, Activities Center Lead, effective January 26, 2026.
- Approved a Revised Substitute Cook rate for Child Nutrition Substitutes.
- Approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the Paraeducator Group
- Accepted donations totaling \$5,378.99
- Approved Bill Vouchers: 323817-323955, 2018-2027, EP Register: 903290-903294, EFT Vouchers: 318-319, 6665-6671, and Capital One items: 53559-53573

Motion: Wallander

Second: Lundsgaard

Roll Call Vote: Approved - 5 in favor, 0 against.

Usset – aye

Wallander – aye

Borchers – aye

Lundsgaard – aye

Tempero - aye

6. – Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Scholastic Art Awards

- Five student works were recognized through the Scholastic Art Awards, a national, blind-judged program evaluating originality and craftsmanship.
- Gold Key
 - Ava Dahl – *Good Morning New York*
- Silver Key
 - Ava Dahl – *Fruity Diabetes*
 - Ava Dahl – *Take Me Back*
 - Lydia Richardson – *I Was Supposed to Be There Too*
- Honorable Mention
 - Jordan Flesher – *Peace and Beauty*

Advanced Placement Recognition

- Orono High School earned Platinum Level distinction on the AP School Honor Roll.
- Per Brandy Randall, Orono High School is the only public, non-charter Minnesota school to receive this distinction.
- Recognition reflects expanded access to AP coursework and strong student performance on AP exams.

Speech Team

- Competed at the Apple Valley Tournament with more than 800 competitors from 23 schools across multiple states.
- Earned 1st Place – Small School Division and the team's first Team Apple Award.
- Individual awards:
 - Oliver Berg – Apple Award, 3rd Place, Varsity Creative Expression
 - Alexa Houtari – Apple Award, 1st Place, Novice Discussion
- Several additional students advanced to semifinals and earned top-five finishes.

Boys Hockey

- Current record: 9-11-3 following a win against Chaska.
- Jackson Knight recorded six goals in the Chaska game and became the all-time leading scorer in Orono Schools history with 91 career goals.

Girls Hockey

- Season concluded with a 13-13 record following a Section Semifinal loss to Westonka.

Alpine Ski

- Danny Kinzer qualified for the MSHSL Alpine Ski State Championship after placing second at Sections.

- Additional Section participants: Ethan Tulkki, Bergen Dankey, Montie Bolgar, Vincent Monico, Parker Stevens, Brooke Tulkki, Ava Tulkki, Brielle Baumann, Sophie Dyvik, Olive Gladney, and Mollie Hollerman.

Boys Nordic Ski

- Qualified for the MSHSL State Meet with a 2nd-place team finish at Sections.
- Marks the first time in school history the boys team has qualified as a team.

Boys Swim & Dive

- Finished the regular season 5-1, conference runners-up.
- Section meet scheduled for February 19 and 21 at St. Catherine University.

Dance Team

- Both Jazz and Kick teams qualified for State after winning Section Championships.
- State competitions:
 - Jazz – February 13, Target Center
 - Kick – February 14, Target Center

Girls Basketball

- Current record: 7-0 following a win over Bloomington Jefferson.

Boys Basketball

- Current record: 4-4 following a win over Bloomington Jefferson.

Wrestling

- Finished the regular season with 12 wins, the second-most in school history.
- Team Sections begin February 12; Individual Sections February 20-21.

Spring Activities

- Spring sports and activities registration is open in MyPaymentsPlus.
- Spring Sports Information Night: March 2 at 7:00 p.m., Orono High School Gym.

7. – Board Members' Questions and Comments

Facilities & Finance Committee Report – The committee met on February 2 to review the enrollment update and a mid-year general fund budget review. The committee also discussed the timeline for upcoming bids for windows and doors and received an update on the tennis court financing timeline, with additional items to be brought forward to the full Board as they are finalized.

Timothy Usset – no report

Laura Wallander – no report

Wendy Lundsgaard – Ms. Lundsgaard, Ms. Flesher, and Ms. Wallander attended the AMSD Legislative Preview, where they heard the AMSD legislative platform and legislative priorities from area legislators, including the local Senate representative Ann Johnson Stewart. Legislators noted anticipated budget constraints and emphasized that the current session is a policy-focused year.

Sarah Borchers – Chair Borchers reported that Board members met with members of the Student Senate as part of the annual engagement and reviewed results from a student

survey. The Student Senate's analysis aligned closely with district goals, and the Board expressed appreciation for the students' work and participation.

Todd Madson (absent)

8. – Old Business

8. A. – Policy Review

The Board approved Policies 522-531 following a second reading.

Policy 522: Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination

Policy 524: Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use

Policy 525: Violence Prevention

Policy 526: Hazing Prohibition

Policy 527: Student Use and Parking of Motor Vehicles

Policy 528: Student, Parental, Family, Marital Nondiscrimination

Policy 529: Notification of Staff of Violent Behavior by Students

Policy 530: Immunization Requirements

Policy 531: Pledge of Allegiance

Motion: Wallander

Second: Lundsgaard

Roll Call Vote: Approved - 5 in favor, 0 against.

Usset – aye

Wallander – aye

Borchers – aye

Lundsgaard – aye

Tempero – aye

8. B. – Other Old Business as Necessary

No other Old Business was brought forward.

9. – New Business

9. A. – Creating Conditions for Success: Strengthening MTSS through The Science of the Positive – Ali Chorley, Director of The Orono Coalition

The presentation described how the district is integrating MTSS with the Science of the Positive to support whole-child education by strengthening belonging, safety, regulation, and connectedness. The approach focuses on cultural transformation through consistent, evidence-based adult practices and classroom environments, supported by ongoing professional development to embed the work into the district's culture.

9. B. – Construction Bid for 2026 Window & Door Repairs

The Board approved the low base bid of \$383,850, including Alternate #1 (\$40,900) and Alternate #2 (\$70,500) to CM Construction Companies, Inc.

Motion: Usset
Second: Tempero
Roll Call Vote: Approved - 5 in favor, 0 against.

Usset – aye
Wallander – aye
Borchers – aye
Lundsgaard – aye
Tempero - aye

9. C. – Other New Business as Necessary
No other New Business was brought forward.

10. Informational Items

Chair, Sarah Borchers, pointed out that the February Enrollment was included in the packet.

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, February 23, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room.

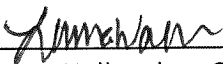
The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.

Motion: Wallander
Second:
Roll Call Vote: Approved - 5 in favor, 0 against,

Usset – aye
Wallander – aye
Borchers – aye
Lundsgaard – aye
Tempero – aye



Sarah Borchers, Chair



Laura Wallander, Clerk

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

A recording of this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education is available online on the Orono School Board YouTube Channel.