

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

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

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

Board Members Absent: None.

Student Board Members Present: McKayla Sagini and Adrianna Tande.

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; Michelle Shepperd, 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.

Lunn read aloud the school board's meeting norms.

Approval of Agenda.

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

Public Comments.

None.

Guaranteed Energy Savings Program Presentation.

Conner Dailey, Project Manager at CMTA Energy Solutions, presented data on the first year of the energy-savings project. The project, for which the Board approved investments totaling \$17.5

million to improve energy efficiency across the district and enhance air quality and conditioning, was designed to deliver guaranteed annual energy savings of \$347,969. The savings to date total \$820,732 for a Year 1 savings excess of \$475,776.

Budget Realignment Administrative Update.

An update on the ongoing committee work completed and the administrative meetings held since the last board meeting related to the \$4.4 million budget realignment was discussed. This included a discussion of whether sufficient analysis has been done on roles and responsibilities, suggesting that administrative duties should be reviewed, better delegated, and aligned with updated job descriptions before adding positions.

Government Affairs Committee Report.

A report on the February 26, 2026, committee meeting was heard. The committee meeting was well attended by local legislators and focused on budget challenges, property taxes, special education funding, and the future outlook. Concerns about the state's revenue outlook and how public education priorities will be reflected

amid the state's budget constraints were discussed, as well as questions about teacher salaries and school lunch funding, including potential impacts on Foundation Aid.

Consent Agenda.

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

- Open enrollment applications as presented;
- Teacher resignations of Madeleine Two Crow, Jessica Champion, Eva Vangness, Kurt Muus, Sharon Boschee, Mayra Dantas, Rita West, Steve Paintner, Tim Tandeski, JoEllen Paintner, and Maren Dewar, all effective May 29, 2026;
- Teacher appointments effective August 17, 2026, of Hailey Veitenheimer, Special Education teacher, salary placement at BA/BS, Step 1, \$51,477; and Max Harris, Special Education teacher, salary placement at BA/BS, Step 2, \$52,275;
- Teacher appointment effective March 4, 2026, of Taylor Dean, Social Worker, salary placement at BA/BS, Step 1, \$15,841.19;
- Long-term leave of absence requests effective for the 2026-2027 school year for Taylor Sampson and Jennifer Long;
- Long-term leave of absence request effective for the 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 school years for Samantha Walters;
- School-sponsored fundraising report as presented;
- February 23, 2026, Grand Forks School Board meeting minutes;
- Student travel request for Spanish Studies group to Costa Rica, June 7-18, 2027; and
- Student travel request for French Studies group to France, June 2027.

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

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

Superintendent Evaluation Committee Report – Superintendent's March Evaluation.

A report on the March 2, 2026, committee meeting, where Dr. Brenner and Committee members provided feedback and reflection on evaluation input that was provided by nine of nine Grand Forks School Board members and four of five Grand Forks Air Force Base School Board members regarding the job description areas of performance and the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan priority areas, was heard. The overall weighted average rating in all areas was between effective and highly effective.

Improvements with the new evaluation tool were shared, and Dr. Brenner summarized key feedback, including strengths in communication and areas for growth, such as HR and shared understanding, while emphasizing the broader leadership team's role. Concerns from a board member about the length and depth of the evaluation, and a suggestion for a clearer focus on professional growth and potential 360-degree feedback, were raised.

It was moved by Manley and seconded by Kleven that, upon review of Board member input and an overall weighted average ranging from 3.38 to 3.69 in all domains, the Superintendent Evaluation Committee and Grand Forks School Board find the superintendent's performance to be satisfactory. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Palmiscno, Lunn, Larson, Flynn, Anderson, Houdek, Manley, Kleven, and Berger.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

Virtual High School – Consideration of Continuation or Discontinuation.

The Board discussed whether to continue or discontinue the Virtual High School as part of the budget realignment process, including implications for students, staffing, and cost savings. Administration noted that, if closed, students could be served through alternatives, but the current model offers added value through hybrid supports. Questions were raised about

funding impacts and potential alternatives for achieving savings, as well as the importance of weighing program value against financial constraints.

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Kleven to discontinue the Grand Forks Public Schools Virtual High School as part of the District's Budget Realignment process, recognizing that its continuation removes the identified 0.5 FTE staffing savings from the overall reduction plan.

Concerns about the need to prioritize budget reductions were heard.

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Manley to amend the motion to set compensation for all board members for 2025-2026 at \$0, thereby saving \$46,000. Upon roll call vote, the motion failed. Aye: Lunn.

Nay: Kleven, Larson, Palmiscno, Manley, Flynn, Houdek, Anderson, and Berger.

Absent: None.

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

Nay: Lunn.

Absent: None.

Finance Committee Report.

A report on the March 3, 2026, committee meeting and resulting recommendations was heard.

- **Consideration of Bid Results Related to Safety and Security Enhancements at Century Elementary.** The bids received were \$23,293 less than projected, thereby reducing the total project cost estimate from \$506,652 to \$479,167.

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Houdek to approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price of \$406,074 (total project cost of \$479,167) for the safety and security enhancements at Century Elementary School. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Lunn, Palmiscno,

Flynn, Anderson, Kleven, Manley, Larson, Houdek, and Berger.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

- **Consideration of Bid Results Related to Safety and Security Enhancements at Ben Franklin Elementary.** The bids received were \$12,575 above projection, increasing the total project cost estimate from \$616,945 to \$637,137.

It was moved by Palmiscno and seconded by Anderson to approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price of \$535,409 (total project cost of \$637,137) for the safety and security enhancements at Ben Franklin Elementary School. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Anderson, Flynn, Kleven, Houdek, Palmiscno, Larson, Lunn, Manley, and Berger.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

Agreement between District Committee Report – Consideration of Amended 2026-2027 Joint Powers Agreement between GFAFB PSD #140 and GF PSD #1 for Educational Services.

A report on the February 9, 2026, committee meeting and resulting recommendation was heard. The Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation requested updates to the Twining School agreement to clarify site control and ownership details. It was noted that OLDCC is a funding partner and has been working closely with the district for nearly two years, with construction of the new Twining School expected to begin in May. Section 5 of the agreement outlines the respective responsibilities of the districts, and the recommended revisions do not change the existing relationship but rather formalize and clarify longstanding practices.

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Larson to approve the proposed amendments to 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 outlined. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Larson, Manley, Lunn, Palmiscno, Houdek, Anderson, Kleven, Flynn, and Berger.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

Announcements.

Kleven announced that the state DECA was held last weekend, at which Grand Forks Public Schools' students excelled.

Board Requests for Future Consideration.

Lunn requested a report on staff and student absences during the first two weeks in March 2025 and 2026.

Houdek requested a report from Community High School.

School Board Meeting Norms—How Did We Do?

Lunn concluded that the board did an excellent job in following its meeting norms.

Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
(Date)

Dave Berger, President

Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager