

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
ORONO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON MARCH 9, 2026
DISTRICT OFFICE ASSEMBLY ROOM | 685 OLD CRYSTAL BAY RD N, LONG LAKE MN 55356

Present: Wendy Lundsgaard, Todd Madson, Laura Wallander, Gavin Tempero, Timothy Usset, Kristine Flesher.

Absent: Sarah Borchers

Community Members' Questions and Comments

No members of the community addressed the board.

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, March 9, 2026, and called to order by Acting Chair, Todd Madson, at 7:00 PM.

Consideration of the Agenda

Acting Chair Todd Madson asked for a motion to move ITEM 9A to the next agenda item and move ITEM 9C before ITEM 9B.

Motion: Wallander

Second: Lundsgaard

Vote: Approved – 5 in favor, 0 against.

Student Recognition

Junior, Gideon Fish, was recognized as the Class A 1M Diving State Champion and for setting a new State Meet record & Minnesota All-Time Best with a score of 558.25. Chad Johnson, Diving Coach was recognized as well. Ben Hanson, Orono Head Coach Boys' Swim & Dive and Josh Johnston, Assistant Coach Boys' Swim & Dive were honored, but not in attendance.

Consent Agenda

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Meeting held on February 23, 2026.
- Approved Sarah Williams, Speech Language Pathologist at Orono Intermediate School, effective at the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year.
- Approved the resignation of Rebecca Schultz, Second Grade Teacher at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective June 5, 2026.
- Approved the Resignation of Quinn Montgomery, Social Studies Teacher at Orono High School, effective June 5, 2026.
- Approved Josie Vollbrecht, custodian II at Orono Middle School, effective February 26, 2026.
- Approved Lindsay Truax, part-time Health Office Specialist at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective March 9, 2026.
- Approved Lewis Dayton, Classroom Paraprofessional at Orono Schumann Elementary School, effective March 9, 2026.

- Approved the termination of Emma Mulvahill, Child Nutrition Cook at Orono High School, effective March 6, 2026.
- Approved the resignation of Thomas Hall, assistant boys hockey coach at Orono High School, effective March 6, 2026.
- Approved the resignation of Paul Antonenko, head girls hockey coach at Orono High School, effective February 26, 2026.
- Approved the Orono Education Association Master Agreement for 2025-2027.
- Accepted Donations Totaling: \$6,407.32
- Approved Voucher and Payment Registers, as presented:
 - o Bill Voucher Register: Nos. 320863-321071, 2028-2037,
 - o EP Register: Nos. 903305-903360
 - o EFT Vouchers: Nos. 6673-6679
 - o Capital One items: Nos. 53587-53593.

Motion: Lundsgaard

Second: Usstet

Vote: Approved - 5 in favor, 0 against.

Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Superintendent Dr. Kristi Flesher highlighted student achievements across activities, arts, and athletics. Orono DECA, led by advisor Joe Huber, sent 86 students to the Minnesota State Career Development Conference, with 32 advancing to finals and 19 qualifying for the international competition in Atlanta. Gold certification was earned by Avery Bollinger, Gretchen Fandel Thompson, Gideon Fish, and Olive Gladney. Additional top finishes were earned by Sarah Henkelman, Carlisle McNae, Carly Rausch, Eli Fish, Olive Gladney, Gabe Hallen, Carly Olson, Gianna Parrish, Evalyn Rosha, Matt Blue, and Morgan Larson. Students Andy Blue, Quinn Brassington, Mollie Hollerman, and Owen Schaber earned Thrive certification and will attend the Aspire Academy.

The Orono Speech Team, coached by Barb Shofner, placed second at the Princeton Tiger Head Invitational and first overall at the Minnesota Online Speech Series. At the Metro West Art Awards at Normandale Community College, Lydia Richardson received a Merit Award for her mixed media piece *Free Nose Job*. Dr. Flesher also recognized Dr. Shelagh Gamble for supporting student artists.

In athletics, Boys Nordic Ski Coach Brian "Speedy" McCollor was named Boys Nordic Coach of the Year by the Minnesota High School Nordic Ski Coaches Association. Boys' basketball advanced in section play with a win over Benilde-St. Margaret's, while the girls' basketball team concluded a strong 24-4 season. Boys' hockey's season ended in the Section 2A semifinal against Delano.

At the state swim and dive meet, Gideon Fish won the state diving championship and the boys team placed fifth overall. State medalists included Eli Fish, Gideon Fish, Bjorn Jaenchen, Ben Mitchell, and Ethan Weiss. Wrestler Brett Kiecker concluded his career with a semifinal appearance at the state tournament.

Dr. Flesher noted the start of spring athletics, including track and field practices, and shared that 42 students have registered for Orono's first girls flag football team, part of a statewide initiative supported by the Minnesota Vikings.

Board Members' Questions and Comments

Facilities & Finance Committee

The Facilities and Finance Committee met and reviewed the district's debt with Ehlers. The committee also discussed financing for the tennis courts through a lease levy expected to close in June and reviewed a potential bond refunding opportunity to reduce debt service costs.

AMSD Executive & Legislative Committees – Director Usset

Director Usset reported on meetings of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts executive and legislative committees, where members discussed the state budget forecast, legislative deadlines, and ongoing fiscal uncertainty. The group also reviewed issues including ADSIS funding, school meals, and a reported \$200 million aggregate shortfall among metro-area districts.

Orono Ice Arena – Director Wallander

Director Wallander reported that the Orono Ice Arena had a successful season with stable staffing and finances. The arena board has also begun fundraising efforts for a potential second sheet of ice through its nonprofit organization.

AMSD Board Meeting & Legislative Update – Director Lundsgaard

Director Lundsgaard reported on the Association of Metropolitan School Districts board meeting, including discussions regarding teacher licensure, literacy training requirements, and compensatory revenue. She also highlighted the Orono robotics team's participation in the Northern Lights Regional competition and noted that former Orono students Meg and Spencer Gustafson are competing in alpine skiing at the Paralympic Games.

Old Business: none

New Business

9.C. Approved Construction Bid for Tennis Courts Project

The board approved the low Base Bid of \$798,066, rejected Alternate #1, and approved Alternate #2, deducting \$12,416 to BCI Construction.

Motion: Usset

Second: Tempero

Vote: Approved – 5 in favor, 0 against.

9.B. Principal's Report

District K-8 principals presented an update on the work of the district's Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs), now in their third year supporting continuous improvement across

schools. The teams lead efforts related to professional learning communities, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), curriculum implementation, and mentoring while advancing the district's strategic goals of scholarship, character, and connectedness. Principals also shared examples of student learning, literacy curriculum implementation, and initiatives designed to strengthen student engagement, belonging, and academic growth across the elementary and middle school levels.

9.D. Other New Business as Necessary

No other new business was brought forward.

10. Informational Items

March Enrollment

The next Regular School Board Meeting will be held on Monday, April 13, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room, Orono District Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM

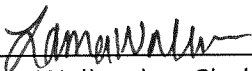
Motion: Usset

Second: Lundsgaard

Vote: Approved - 5 in favor, 0 against.



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.