

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
MEETING MINUTES
April 16, 2026

The Grand Forks School Board Government Affairs Committee met on Thursday, April 16, 2026, with Josh Anderson presiding.

Committee Members Present: Josh Anderson, Jay Kleven, Dr. Terry Brenner, Brandon Baumbach, and Dr. Catherine Gillach.

Committee Members Absent: Amber Flynn and Matt Bakke.

Others Present: Senator Jonathan Sickler; Senator Scott Meyer; Principal Dr. Kris Arason; School Counselor Melissa Mickelson; CTE Executive Director Eric Ripley; Principal Leslie Bjelde; Brady Olson, GFEA President; and Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary.

Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at noon.

Kleven joined the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

Baumbach joined the meeting at 12:06 p.m.

Discussion of Legislative Topics.

The group discussed a range of legislative topics with a focus on fiscal responsibility, collaboration, and education funding. Staff outlined efforts to reduce expenditures and explore nontraditional revenue sources, suggesting a need for coordinated strategic planning. Legislators expressed support for collaboration and information sharing, with interest in a potential in-person meeting later in the summer.

Staff also provided updates on interim committee work related to funding and teacher shortages, noting a shift from information gathering to developing recommendations, including exploring AI tools to streamline processes. Significant attention was given to disparities in special education funding, particularly how current formulas may not reflect rising SPED populations, placing added strain on general funds. Related discussions touched on

differences between urban and rural districts, student placement settings, and upcoming work on funding formulas and intensive support options. Additional conversation addressed dual credit access and its implications for rural students, emphasizing the importance of equitable access and informed decision-making. The group also discussed potential collaboration with neighboring districts and institutions, workforce-related course offerings, and capacity considerations, including anticipated growth in program participation and opportunities for cooperative arrangements to expand student access.

Approval of Minutes.

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Anderson to approve the minutes of February 26, 2026, as written. Upon a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously. Absent: Flynn.

Next Meeting Date.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2026, at noon, via Zoom.

Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

APPROVED _____
(Date)

Josh Anderson, Meeting Chair

Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager