

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
ORONO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 278
HELD ON MAY 11, 2026
DISTRICT OFFICE ASSEMBLY ROOM | 685 OLD CRYSTAL BAY RD N, LONG LAKE, MN

Present: Sarah Borchers, Todd Madson, Wendy Lundsgaard, Gavin Tempero, Timothy Usset, and Kristine Flesher

Absent: Laura Wallander

1. Community Members' Questions and Comments

No members of the community addressed the board.

2. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Orono Independent School District No. 278 was held on Monday, May 11, 2026, and called to order by Board Chair Sarah Borchers at 7:00 PM.

3. - Consideration of the Agenda

Chair Borchers requested that ITEM 9D (Resolution Awarding Sale of Lease) be moved ahead of ITEM 9B.

5. - Consent Agenda

- Approved Minutes from the Regular Meeting held on April 27, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Payton Kuenzi, full-time School Psychologist Intern, Orono Middle School, for the 2026-27 school year.
- Approved the appointment of Elsa Kasten, full-time School Psychologist Intern, Orono Middle School, for the 2026-27 School Year.
- Approved the 3-5-year mobility leave of absence, according to Section 8.3 of the Master Agreement, for Gregory Pusch, full-time Science Teacher, Orono High School, effective beginning June 5, 2026.
- Approved the 3-5-year mobility leave of absence, according to Section 8.3 of the Master Agreement, for Iris Erickson, full-time Special Education Teacher, Orono High School, effective beginning June 5, 2026.
- Approved the resignation of Sarah Olson, full-time Special Education Paraeducator, Orono High School, effective June 5, 2026.
- Approved the termination of Kathleen Danielson, full-time Special Education Paraeducator, Orono Intermediate School, effective April 30, 2026.
- Approved the appointment of Logan Halvorson, Orono Activities Center Coordinator, Orono Public Schools, effective May 13, 2026.
- Approved the resignation of Alexia Greenwaldt, Discovery Kids Assistant Teacher, Orono Discovery Center, effective April 28, 2026.
- Accepted Donations Totaling: \$41,655.70
- Approved Bill Vouchers and Payment Registers, as presented:
 - o Bill Voucher Register: Nos. 324657-324812, 2048-2057
 - o EP Register: Nos. 903396-903402

- EFT Voucher Registers: Nos. 6689-6695
- Capital One Transaction Register: Nos. 53658-53678

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda: Madson

Second: Usset

Vote: APPROVED - 5 in favor, 0 against, 1 absent

6. – Superintendent's Report on Excellence

Dr. Kristine Flesher highlighted significant student and staff achievements:

Academics:

- 5th Grade World's Fair: Hosted the inaugural "Curiosity Unites Us" showcase featuring passion projects from 62 students.
- Math Masters: 37 fifth-graders competed among 122 participants. Notable achievements include Xander Raja (4th place individual) and the Orono Yellow team (2nd place).

Activities & Arts:

- Performing Arts: Sophomore Gabriella Daly was selected for the Minnesota Soprano-Alto All-State Choir.
- Speech: The team placed 5th overall at the state tournament, the highest ranking in school history. Simon Forbes also earned 4th and 6th place finishes at the national Tournament of Champions.
- Student Leadership: Junior Cora Palm was elected Vice President of Service for the National Association of Student Councils, becoming the first-ever student from Minnesota to hold a seat on this national board.
- DECA & Science: The DECA chapter earned Gold Chapter certification, with Carly Rausch placing in the top 20 internationally. Schumann Elementary is preparing for the annual Imagination Fair with 185 student participants.

Athletics:

- Team Rankings:
 - Boys Golf: Ranked #1 in the state; recently set (and then matched) a new school record score of 284.
 - Baseball: Ranked #2 in the state.
 - Girls Lacrosse: Ranked #3 in the state with an eight-game winning streak.
- Championships: Boys Tennis secured the Metro West Conference Championship; Track & Field (both boys and girls) won the True Team Section Championships.
- School Records: Three new track records were established by Gabe Hallen (1600M), Jocie Hallen (3200M), and Alivia Uselding (100m hurdles).

Upcoming Key Dates:

- May 18: High School Choir Pops Concert (Wayzata Community Church).
- May 22: Prom Grand March at 6:00 p.m. (OHS Gym).
- June 4: Annual Commencement Program at 7:00 p.m. (Pesonen Stadium).

7. – Board Members' Questions and Comments

Finance & Facilities: Todd Madson reported on the annual Long-Term Facilities Maintenance (LTFM) review, noting that the district manages over \$200M in assets with a restricted levy that accounts for less than 1% of the overall budget.

Legislative Update: Wendy Lundsgaard provided a report on the legislative session, noting potential cuts to compensatory revenue and the impact of unfunded mandates, such as the Minnesota Paid Family Medical Leave.

Community Engagement: Gavin Tempero highlighted the success of the Middle School production of *Madagascar*, which saw record-breaking ticket sales.

Special Education: Chair Borchers attended the Special Education Parent Partnership Committee, which featured a presentation on sensory integration by Dr. Riley Alger.

8. – Old Business

A. – Policy Review (Second Reading)

Policy 601: School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals
Policy 602: Organization of School Calendar and School Day
Policy 603: Curriculum Development
Policy 604: Instructional Curriculum
Policy 605: Alternative Educational Services
Policy 606: Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Motion to approve policy changes as presented: Usset

Second: Lundsgaard

Vote: APPROVED – 5 in favor, 0 against, 1 absent

B. - Other Old Business as Necessary

No old business was brought forward.

9. – New Business

9. A – Three Rivers Park District Update – Commissioner Marge Beard, District 1

9.D – Adopt Resolution Awarding Sale of Lease

The board reviewed five competitive bids for the \$777,000 lease to fund the middle school tennis court project.

Motion to award the sale of lease purchase to Citizens Bank of Roseau: Usset

Second: Lundsgaard

Vote: APPROVED. Roll Call Vote: Usset – aye, Borchers - aye, Madson – aye, Lundsgaard – aye, Tempero – aye. 5 in favor, 0 against, 1 absent.

9.B - Long Term Facilities Maintenance Plan Approval for Orono School District 278

Motion to approve the District's 10-year LTFM plan for FY 2028-FY 2037: Usset

Second: Madson

Vote: APPROVED. Roll Call Vote: Usset – aye, Borchers - aye, Madson – aye, Lundsgaard – aye, Tempero – aye. 5 in favor, 0 against, 1 absent.

9. C– Long Term Facilities Maintenance Plan Approval for Intermediate School District 287

Motion to approve the district's proportionate share of the LTFM plan for Intermediate District 287. The district's share is \$47,401.24 for fiscal 2028: Madson

Second: Lundsgaard

Vote: APPROVED. Roll Call Vote: Usset – aye, Borchers – aye, Madson – aye, Lundsgaard – aye, Tempero – aye. 5 in favor, 0 against, 1 absent.

9.E. - Policy Review (First Reading)

9.E.1. Policy 625: Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence

9. F – 2027-28 Academic Calendar (First Reading)

9. G - Other New Business as Necessary

No other new business was brought forward.

10. – Informational Items

10.A May Enrollment

The Next Regular Meeting will be held on Monday, June 8, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the District Office Assembly Room, Orono District Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM

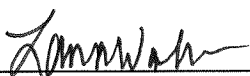
Motion: Lundsgaard

Second: Usset

Vote: APPROVED - 5 in favor, 0 against, 1 absent



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 or on the oronoschools.org website.